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THE PRIMACY OF THE APOSTLE PETER AND OF THE ROMAN POPES IN A REFLECTION OF PROFESSOR MIKULÁŠ RUSSNÁK (1878-1954)¹

PRYMAT APOSTOŁA PIOTRA I RZYMSKICH PAPIEŻY W REFLEKSJI MIKULÁŠA RUSSNÁKA (1878-1954)

ABSTRACT

Profesor Russnák zajmuje się w swoich dziełach *Primat Rimskaho Otca* zagadnieniem prymatu papieża. Swoją analizę prymatu dzieli na pięć części, które znajdują się w trzech tomach. Pierwsza część zajmuje się prymatem Piotra, druga – kontynuacją misji Piotra, trzecia – naturą prymatu papieża rzymskiego i czwarta – nieomylnością tegoż. Piąta część zawiera dane literatury dotyczącej prymatu papieskiego. W niniejszym artykule podejmujemy analizę dwóch pierwszych tomów. Trzeci tom, *Primat Rimskaho Otca III. (Primat Rimskaho Papy)* analizuje zagadnienie papieskiej nieomylności.

Professor Russnák, in his writings *Primat Rimskaho Otca*, deals with the primacy. He divides the analysis of primacy into five sections, which is found in three files, or here, in two of them. The first part deals with the primacy of Peter, the second part deals with the continuing mission of Peter, the third part – about the nature of primacy of the Roman Pope and in the fourth – about the infallibility of the Roman Pope. The fifth section consists of the literature issues about the primacy of the Roman Pope. In this paper we analyze the first two files. The third file, *Primat Rimskaho Otca III. (Primat Rimskaho Papy)* analyzes the issue of Papal infallibility.

Every community is as much incidental, in as much as it gets to know personalities and the works of its own history. To get to know the personality and work of Professor Russnák means to step forward to the deeper identity of every member of the Catholic Church in Slovakia. The university Professor, Mikuláš Russnák, (a prelate, a canon, a Professor of divinity, a collegiate doctor) came from a family of many priests. In the year 1901, after a successful passing of the obligatory exams (at the age of 23 years) in Budapest, Russnák was conferred with the degree of Doctorate in Divinity. He began to lecture in 1902 at

¹ This contribution was written by the project VEGA 1/500/10 – with the title ‘The Ecumenical Aspect of Life and Work of Professor Mikuláš Russnák (1878-1954) in the Context of the Contemporary Interreligious Dialogue’.

the Theological Academy in Prešov and at the Theological Faculty in Bratislava in 1936, where in the academic year 1946-1947 became its dean. He held the office of a general vicar for nine years (1918-1927). Mikuláš Russnák wrote 143 works in Latin, 36 works in Hungarian language and 9 works in Russian language.² In the personality of Mikuláš Russnák we may admire his abilities as a Professor and his scientific literary activity.³

The main feature of Professor ThDr Mikuláš Russnák's personality was his deep faith and devotion to God. He loved punctuality, Efficiency, and especially neatness contributed to his great fervour. The work of Professor Russnák has a wide scope and includes all important theological branches/ specializations. With courage we can call him 'a Thomas Aquinas' of the Greek catholic church in Slovakia.⁴ In his collection of papers Professor Russnák writes about the primacy: *Primat Rimskaho Otca I., Primat Rimskaho Otca II., Primat Rimskaho Otca III. (Primat Rimskaho Papy)*, which were published in Russian, written in Roman type character and *Primatus Romani Pontificis I. – Приматъ Римскаго Отца – De primatu Romani Pontificis I. a Primatus Romani Pontificis II. – Приматъ Римскаго Отца – De primatu Romani Pontificis II.* written in Russian alphabet. Writings which are written in Russian alphabet contain many notes, some terms are being changed, added and some parts are less coherent. In these files one can discover three types of page numeration. The writings written in the Roman type character are corrected and the page quotation is all right. In this article, we use the term 'the Orthodox disunited' for the Orthodox, because so we can find it in the work of Professor Russnák. The analysis of the primacy we find in three files or here two of them, which Professor Russnák divides into five sections. In the first section, he deals with the primacy of Saint Peter; in second section, he treats the apostolic succession of Saint Peter; in the third section, about the character of primacy of the Supreme Pontiff, in the fourth about the immunity from error in teaching of the Supreme Pontiff. The fifth part includes literature on themes about the primacy of the Supreme Pontiff. In the papers we analyze the first two files. The third file *Primat Rimskaho Otca III. (Primat Rimskaho Papy)* analyzes mostly the papal immunity from error.⁵

Praefatio

The first visible difference between the Catholics and the Orthodox, according to Professor Mikuláš Russnák, is the problem of different interpretation of the authority of the Supreme Pontiff (Rimskij Otec) as a head of the Church.⁶ At the beginning of the study it is required to clarify the conviction of the Catholic

² V. Boháč, *Dr. Mikuláš Russnák*, Prešov 2002, p. 3-18.

³ P. Šturák, *Dejiny Gréckokatolíckej cirkvi v Československu v rokoch 1945-1989*, Prešov 1999, p. 35.

⁴ J. Babjak, *Zostali verní I*, pp. 124-125.

⁵ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca III.*, Prjašev 1927, pp. 20-125.

⁶ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca I.*, Prjašev 1927, p. 3.

Church, since the community between the Christian Catholics and the Orthodox is nowadays so interlinked, that only slight differences remain as obstacles to fuller unity⁷, which justify the communal celebration of the Lord's Eucharist.⁸

The truth about the Roman Pope can be found in the Holy Scriptures and in the Holy Tradition, which are the two inseparable sources of the divine revelation. This problem itself handles also with 'the Orthodox disunited' (vostočnych neso-jedinennych), who together with the Greek-catholics have the same ceremony and the same canonical discipline and by this way (Lat. *ad hominem*) also Professor Russnák tried to reason it. Holy Tradition can be also found in the rite of the Orthodox Church. According to Mikuláš Russnák, the Orthodox disunited confess daily the doctrine about the primacy of the Supreme Pontiff. As an example, he gives the patriarch of Constantinople, John XI Vekkos (since 1275), who by selected readings of the Church Fathers comes to the conclusion, that the East as well as the Latin rite's teachings were the same in the items of the church papal primacy. Professor Russnák realized that the importance of the truth about the primacy of the apostle Peter and the Roman Popes. According to him, the East will be lost (in Latin *propadet*), if it doesn't adopt the principles of the spiritual life and if it will not "enter into the bosom" of the Holy Mother Orthodox-Catholic Church. The Fathers of the Eastern Church proclaimed the primacy of the Head of the Church. The Roman Popes emphasised and pointed out the guidelines for the Christian East. These statements, Professor Russnák confirms by citing quotations belonging to Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758), Leo XIII (1878-1903), and Benedict XV (1914-1922).⁹

The Message of the Holy Mother Orthodox-Catholic Church

The Church of Christ (Ecclesia) Professor Russnák calls 'Holy Mother Orthodox-Catholic Church'. This Church includes members, who proclaim the true faith, who accept mercy in the holy sacraments under the authority, which was constituted by Jesus Christ, especially the Supreme Pontiff. It is called the catholic (*katoličeskaja, catholica*), because it is common (*sobornaja*) for all the people.¹⁰ We call her also the orthodox (in Lat. *orthodoxa*), because it teaches the truth and it is the mother, because it is for us a spring and the Effector of our rebirth. Christ by the words, 'Go and teach all the nations' (Mt 28:19-20), has constituted the teaching and direct authority in Church. Christ is a rock, a base, but after his ascension Christ remains an invisible base. Christ told the apostle Peter, that he is *petrus*

⁷ J. Budniak, *Jednoczeni w różnorodności*, Katowice 2009, pp. 174-220.

⁸ *Katechizmus Katolíckej cirkvi*, Trnava 2007, § 838.

⁹ N. Russnák, *Primat Rímskaho Otca I.*, pp. 3-13.

¹⁰ The term 'catholic' means 'common' in the sense 'whole' or 'entire'. The Church is catholic, because Christ is present in it. From Christ the Church receives the fullness of the means for salvation: the confession of the true and the full faith, the full sacramental life and the service of the consecrated in the apostolic succession. Also the Church is catholic, because Christ sends it to the entire human mankind. *Katechizmus Katolíckej cirkvi*, § 830.

(cf. rock) (Mt 16:18).¹¹ The contemporary *Catechism of the Catholic Church* according to the intentions of the Second Vatican Council presents the primacy in the context of cooperativeness, because Christ called the Twelve in the way of college or a permanent group, with Peter established as the head of this group.¹²

The Primacy in Church

The Catechism of the Catholic Church today states, that the Pope, the Roman bishop and a successor of St. Peter, is a stand and visible principle and base of the bishop's unity, as well as of a great amount of the believers.¹³ This Christian doctrine Professor Mikuláš Russnák has analyzed in his files. Jesus Christ in his Church appointed a visible head (the apostle Peter and his successors). Peter became a rock, base, 'gate-keeper' of the heavenly kingdom and the highest shepherd of the entire earth. The Roman Pope leads the Church as a visible head of Church and by bishops as the apostles' successors. The highest Peter's power and of his successors (the Roman Popes) we call the primacy. The primacy (in Lat. *primatus* – priority, a foremost place; in Lat. *primula* – first, foremost) stands for the primacy, comes from the Saviour and has relationship with control of Christ's Church.¹⁴ At this primacy we can look from four aspects. In the first place, it is the primacy of respect (honour, in Lat. *honoris*). It is honour of the first place between the members, who are coequal with each other (in Lat. *primus inter pares*). This primacy is only by name and has no power of control in itself. The primacy of control (*direkcii, primatus directionis, et hegemonias*) stands for power of observation of the external order. Further Professor Russnák mentions the primacy of inspection (in Lat. *primatus inspectionis* – research, inspekcii), that is of a primacy in office, who has the power to observe, to supervise, so that legally declared commands were observed in the community. The primacy of the own power (jurisdiction, in Lat. *primatus iurisdictionis*) is the higher power of control, which to the one who possesses it, it is his own and typical. The primacy of jurisdiction includes in itself the fullness of power control: 1. legislative (*zakonodatel'naja*, in Lat. *potestas legifera*), 2. juridical (*sudebnaja*, in Lat. *potestas iudicaria*) and 3. punitive (*vlast' nakazaniya*, in Lat. *potestas coactiva seu punitiva*). According to the teachings of the Holy Mother Orthodox-Catholic Church, Jesus Christ himself

¹¹ N. Russnák, *Primat Rímskoho Otca I.*, pp. 14-19.

¹² *Katechizmus Katolíckej cirkvi*, § 880.

¹³ *Ibidem*, § 882.

¹⁴ The Lord Jesus Christ made the rock of his Church only Simon, to whom he gave the name Peter. To him he gave the keys, he made him the shepherd of the sheeps. But we can be sure, that the power to tie and untie, which was given to Peter, was given also to the college of apostles united with their Head. This pastoral mission of Peter and of the rest of the others apostles belongs to the foundations of the Church. The bishops are continuing in it under the primacy (the preeminence) of the Roman Pope. *Katechizmus Katolíckej cirkvi*, § 881.

gave to the apostle Peter and his successors, the Roman Popes, full and own power of primacy and control, the primacy of jurisdiction.¹⁵

When we analyze the primacy, we talk about a higher faculty, which has been constituted by Christ in his Church. The meaning of primacy we can find in God's revelation, ie. in a scene of the Mathew's gospel (Mt 16:18), when Christ mentions a stone, a rock in connection with apostle Peter. Neither of the terms "Peter's primacy," nor "the Trinity" can be found in the Holy Scriptures. We can find them located in the teaching of the Florence Council. There, we can find mentioned the concept that, the Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff has primacy over the entire earth and that the Roman Pontiff is the successor of Saint Peter and is the real representative and deputy of Christ (in *Lat. vicarius*); he is the head of the Church, the father and teacher of all Christians (*Decr. Unionis Graec. Laetentur Coeli*). The Roman Pope is a real representative of Jesus Christ, is a head of Christ's Church, the only highest shepherd and teacher of all the Christians. He has the full power to shepherd, rule and govern (in *Lat. pascendi, regendi et gubernandi*). The Roman Pontiff is the successor of the first visible head of the Christ's Church, the apostle Peter. The teaching about the primacy of Peter's jurisdiction and also of his successors is a doctrine of the divine revelation, as the First Vatican Council teaches.¹⁶

Reservation of the Eastern Disunited (Churches) to the Primacy

The Catholic doctrine concerning the primacy of the Roman Pontiff is based upon the statement that Jesus Christ gave to Peter personally and to his successors, full power over the whole Catholic Church. It is the primacy of the higher faculty, the uppermost jurisdiction (law).

The Eastern disunited (Christians) refuse the primacy of papal jurisdiction, but they present their own specific point of view at the papal primacy. In the first place they state, that the Roman throne as the "chair of the apostle Peter" has an apostolic origin, but they do not see in it a higher primacy above the universal Church, but only the primacy between the apostolic sees. In this sense, the Roman See is the first among equals (in *Lat. primus inter pares*) and the primacy of Saint Peter they interpret in the context of the primacy of respect. In such an understanding, they point out to the existence of the patriarchal system, and they appeal to the First Nicaea, First Constantinople and the Chalcedon Councils, at which they declare, that these councils gave accentuated power to every patriarch over his own territory. Furthermore, the Eastern disunited (as Professor Russnák uses this term) on justification of primacy mention the historical and political conditions. The primacy had to be then the product of history. Primacy of one church in front of the second one had to have its spring in a political meaning of an important town. The primacy of the Roman bishop has to be connected with Rome, which was in the ancient times the main town. The Fathers of the Nicaea Council

¹⁵ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca I.*, pp. 21-26.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 26-29; F. Dluhoš, *Prierez cirkevnými dejinami*, Levoča 2008, pp. 1963-1966.

by the organisation of the external Church organisation used the political subdivision of the Roman Empire. By this argumentation the disunited (Christians) arrive to autonomy of the Eastern patriarchies, which had to be defined by the canonical laws of various councils. Subsequently, the Eastern disunited (Christians) declare, that the primacy of Peter and his successors in the interpretation of the Latin (Church) is an expression of desire to rule and govern.¹⁷

The Holy Scriptures and the Primacy

Professor Russnák primarily points out the fact that Christ speaks about the appointment of Peter's primacy. As an example, he references the pericope in John's Gospel, where the Lord speaks to Simon, Andrew's brother, saying: 'You are going to be called Cephas, which means Peter' (rock, John 1:42; cf. Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14). This change of name attributes at the same time, its dignity and title, as we can see in the case of Abraham and the patriarch Jacob. When Christ changed Simon's name to Peter, he symbolically committed him to his future mission, namely that Peter will be a stone, a rock of the Church. Peter's name has its connection with the role of primacy, explicitly it is simultaneous with the primacy in Church. Citation Mt 16:13-19 is an evidence of Peter's primacy, by which Christ assigned Peter as the head of Holy Mother Orthodox-Catholic Church ('You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church... I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven...'). Saint Cyril from Alexandria interprets this from the perspective that Peter is the leader; he is the head of the other apostles, when he invokes Jesus' title in the following manner: 'You are the Christ, the Son of God'. In this pericope, Christ clearly chooses Peter when he identifies him as a distinguished person, for Peter turns himself towards the Christ. He indicates him as Peter (Cephas) and gives him the uppermost power of the control. The same expression of this official doctrine lies within the Eastern Church. This can be seen from the solemnity of the apostles, Saints Peter and Paul (June 29th; Peter is recalled as saying 'I am not an ashamed stone', the base, the rock of faith, a gate-keeper of the amnesty¹⁸).¹⁹

Consequently, Professor Russnák points out the relationship between Peter and the Church, which is similar to the relationship between a fundament and a building. Mission of the base itself is interpreted by Christ's words, who states, that the 'gates of hell' will not overcome the Church. Christ's Church is unconditionally necessary for salvation, and therefore it is needed, that it would exist till the end of the world. The metaphor of the Church base is at the same time a proof of the juridical faculty of Peter above the whole Church. Christ calls Peter by name, by which also he specifies his relation as a Savior towards the Church, because Christ is the cornerstone of the Church (Eph 2:20). Christ has the full power over Church, but with the name given to Peter, he gained the power, as

¹⁷ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca I.*, pp. 29-39.

¹⁸ *Velikij cerkovnyj izbornik*, Užhorod 1925, pp. 525, 530.

¹⁹ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca I.*, pp. 39-48.

well. Prophets and apostles were shown as the base, because they mediated divine revelation, but Christ was their cornerstone. Christ, an invisible stone, designates Peter to be a visible stone (rock) of the Church. Peter is the gate-keeper of the Heavenly Kingdom (Mt 16:19). The Kingdom of heaven, Professor Russnák identifies with Christ's Church, formally it is a pilgrimage church which struggles on its walk through history. In its fuller sense, Christ's Church includes a militant church (in Lat. *Ecclesia militans*), a suffering church (in Lat. *purgativa*) and a glorified church (in Lat. *triumphans*). The keys is a means of the Church's juridical and leading power over the faithful, which was commissioned to Peter; it includes the power over the others apostles and bishops, which is expressed by the imagery of 'binding' and 'unbinding.'²⁰

Christ verbally assigned Peter as a head of church: 'Feed my lambs, feed my sheep' (Jn 21:15-17). Professor Russnák uses the Greek text, which applies on the word 'to shepherd' the two expressions (in Greek *boskein*, *poimanein*). The first stands for feed a herd and the second control the herd. The sheep and lambs take in the whole herd. Subsequently, Peter has to reinforce in faith, what Christ did (Lk 22:31). The primacy of Peter is focused within various texts of the Sacred Scriptures. Peter is always designated in the first place, and he is foremost when he is called explicitly, however, this is only the case with the other apostles from time to time.²¹

Mikuláš Russnák, following in the footsteps of the Holy Scriptures, declares what the Church states in the present *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, quoting *Lumen Gentium*, the dogmatic constitution of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), that only the Supreme Pontiff has on the basis of his office, the role of Christ's representative and shepherd over the entire Church: the full, uppermost and universal power over the Church, that he can always exercise freely.²² It is imperative to state that Christ is the head of the body – the Church (Col 1:18). Christ has the primacy in everything, primarily in the Church, through which the Church widens its kingdom. The Church is one with Christ.²³

The highest Church power includes a sacramental, teaching and pastoral power; the apostle Peter himself has implemented this power. Peter himself is shown as the highest shepherd. As an example Professor Russnák mentions the first council in Jerusalem, where Peter declares, that God has chosen him, in order to pagans from his mouth could hear the words of the gospels (Acts 15:7). Finally on the Jerusalem council they have accepted the teaching of Saint Peter. As an interpretation of these sections Professor Russnák brings a reflection from Saint Jerome. Peter is a credible witness of the resurrection. Consequently, Saint John of Russia's interpretation of the apostle Matthias' election is mentioned

²⁰ Ibidem, pp. 49-57.

²¹ Ibidem, pp. 58-68.

²² *Katechizmus Katolíckej cirkvi*, § 882. *The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* states also about the immediate power of the Pope. *Kompendium Katechizmus Katolíckej cirkvi*, § 182.

²³ *Katechizmus Katolíckej cirkvi*, § 792.

(Acts 1). Christ entrusted his herd to Peter and he was the leader in the community. The issue of Peter's primacy, he allocates to Peter's first pastoral speech after Pentecost (Acts 2). Peter has been using the relentless power attributed to a judge (Acts 5:8). Peter occupied this role as the highest judge. Paul accepted Peter's primacy, when he went to Jerusalem to see Peter, (Gal 1:18).²⁴

The Fathers of the Church

In his works, Professor Russnák quotes some of the Latin Fathers of the Church. Saint Cyprian recounts that the primacy is given to Peter, to show the unity of the Church. Furthermore, the martyr Cyprian asks, 'Can anyone who does not hold fast to this unity of Peter, can they imagine that they still hold the faith? If they desert the chair of Peter upon whom the Church was built, can they still be confident that they are in the Church?' Saint Optat of Milevit states about Peter, that he is the head of all the apostles and in the Roman chair the unity of all should be conserved. As the third Saint Ambrose is given with his well-known statement, 'Where is Peter, there is the Church' (in Lat. *Ubi Petrus, ibi Ecclesia*). Ambrose represents the doctrine of the East, because he had the Eastern formation and he does not quote Saint Cyprian. According to Saint Augustine in the Roman Church there has been always present the primacy of the apostolic see. Especially Saint Jerome writes about the primacy of Saint Peter. Jesus made Peter a rock so that after Christ's mission, Peter could become the rock of the Church. As the last Latin Father of Church, Professor Russnák cites Saint Prosperus from Aquitania. The aforementioned Fathers of the Church are also being honoured by the Orthodox disunited, and the teaching of these Fathers of Church is the teaching of the Eastern Church itself. The witnesses and teachers of Saint Peter's primacy within the Eastern Fathers of the Church, are named by Mikuláš Russnák as follows: Origen, Saint Ephrem of Syria, Saint Basil the Great, later Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Gregory Nazianzus, Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, Saint Epiphanius of Cyprus, Saint John of Russia, Saint Isidor of Pelusium, Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Saint Nil Sorsky, Saint John of Damascus, Saint Theodore, the Studite. According to Professor Russnák the evidences about the primacy, which are present in the works of the Eastern Fathers, are absolute. Also, those in opposition to the issue of 'primacy' allocate that the Fathers of the Church, in the first centuries heaped praise on Saint Peter; based upon his faith and eagerness they called him 'the first among the apostles,' but at the same time they allocate, that these Fathers' verbalizations were in rhetorical style.²⁵

²⁴ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca I.*, pp. 69-76.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 76-106.

The Primacy and the Eastern Liturgical Books

Professor Russnák mentions the quotations and articles about the primacy in the Eastern liturgical books. These texts are used also by the Eastern disunited, therefore, they allocate that what they refuse, they confess it in their ceremonies. Professor Russnák, to vindicate his statement, he cites the Eastern liturgical books of the disunited. At first they are the evidence of the primacy of Saint Peter. Commemoration of Saint Peter, the highest apostle and the head of Church, every year is mentioned in the Christian East, within three individual holidays. The Eastern united and disunited celebrate January 16th, adoration to the respectable chains of the apostle Saint Peter, June 29th. Saint Peter is honoured, during the feast day of the Saints Peter and Paul, the reknowned and elevated apostles, and June 30th, we commemorate the group of the Twelve apostles'.²⁶

Professor Russnák pumps evidence about Peter's primacy from the feast day of the apostles Peter and Paul, which is June 29th,²⁷ then he analyzes the ceremonies of the Twelve Apostles – June 30th,²⁸ and the liturgical texts to the honour of Saint Peter's chains²⁹ and finally from the other spiritual ceremonies, when Peter is given as an example for the other apostles, and it is during the feast day of the Saint, bishop and martyr Cornelius (September 13th), during the day of the proto-martyress, Saint Thecla (September 24th), during the day of the Synaxis of the Archangel Michael and the Other Bodiless Powers (November 8th), during the day of Saint Clement, the Supreme Pontiff (November 25th), during the feast of Saint Andrew (November 30th), during the day of Saint Sylvester, the Supreme Pontiff (January 2nd), during the day of mother and Saint, Xenia (January 24th), during the day of Saint Hippolytus, Supreme Pontiff (January), during the day of Saint Meletius, the Archbishop of Antioch (February 12th), during the day of Saint Leo, the Supreme Pontiff (February 18th), Saint Martin, the Supreme Pontiff (April 13th), on the feast of the Evangelist, Saint Mark (April 25th), during the day of Saint Peter Antonius (June 12th), during the day of Saints, bishops and martyrs Poncratius (July 9th), during the day of apostles and deacons, Saints Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon and Parmenash (July 28th), during the feast day of the Holy Maccabean Martyrs (August 1st), on the vigil of the Transfiguration of the Lord (August 5th), on the feast day of the Dormition of the Theotokos (August 15th).³⁰ In the synaxar during the Great and Holy Thursday ceremony, he recalls that to Peter, all the land was given. Christ enabled Peter's renunciation, so that he would be merciful to the sinners.³¹ The primacy of Peter is proved by various attributes (in *Lat. epiteta ornantia*), that can be found in the Church's liturgies.

²⁶ Ibidem, pp. 107-110.

²⁷ Ibidem, pp. 110-129.

²⁸ Ibidem, pp. 129-133.

²⁹ Ibidem, pp. 133-138.

³⁰ Ibidem, pp. 138-166.

³¹ Ibidem, pp. 138-167.

They distinguish themselves from those that are addressed also to the other apostles (ie. Peter is *osnovaniye apostolov*, a root, the base of apostles).³²

Professor Russnák highlights Peter's primacy from the works of Saint Peter, as they are written in the liturgical books. At the same time, he shows a comparison between the status of Peter and the other apostles. Here, the apostle Peter is being shown as the head of all the apostles. Peter has the specific and paramount title and rank among the apostles. The remaining apostles are commissioned to proclaim the gospel (Mt 28:18-20); they are ordained to become the founders of the churches (Eph 2:20), but they are answerable to Peter who is the head leader. The apostles are standing on the invisible rock, which is Christ (Eph 2:20) and on the visible rock, which is Peter (Mt 16:16-19).³³ Furthermore, other proofs are following from the liturgical files of the disunited Russians, which were composed to the honour of men and women, those who are being honoured as Saints. Explicitly, Professor Russnák recalls Stephen, the Confessor, of Sucrose, from Crimea (December 15th), Michael Klopsky (January 11th), Alexey, the metropolitan for then entirety of Russia, furthermore the date (June 27th) his remembrance of the victory, and on metropolitan Peter (August 24th).³⁴

In § 24 of the first sheaves Mikuláš Russnák analyses the Latin liturgical text from the feast day of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29th). This part is written in Latin. He cites an antiphon for *magnificat* from the first vespers, where he recalls, that Peter is a sheep-master, a prince apostle, to him are given the keys of the Heavenly Kingdom.³⁵ Identically, in the Eastern and in the Latin rite allocate in contrast between the head of Church, Peter and a selected vessel, Paul. Simon Peter is a gate-keeper to the kingdom (in Lat. *clavicularius regni*) and Paul is the light of the earth (in Lat. *lumen orbit terrae*).³⁶

The Eastern Disunited

Besides the fact, that Professor Russnák argues in favour of Papal primacy from the liturgical books, from the files of the Eastern and the Latin Fathers, he also defends the primacy also from the doctrine of the Eastern disunited. As the first one he ushers Filaret, a metropolitan of Moscow from the 19th century, who tells us, that Peter received from Christ a special mission to reinforce his brothers – the other apostles. Further Filaret states, that without the Latin Church, without the Roman Pope he cannot convoke a general council. Secondly, he cites Vladimir Solovjev. According to Russnák Solovjev, who clearly taught about the primacy of Peter and his successors (the Roman Popes) ie. in the book, *The Russia and the Common Church*, Solovjev states that Peter became a spiritual father

³² Ibidem, pp. 168-178.

³³ Ibidem, pp. 178-187.

³⁴ Ibidem, pp. 187-196.

³⁵ “*Tu es pastor ovium, princeps Apostolorum: tibi sunt traditae claves regni coelorum.*”

³⁶ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca I.*, pp. 179-199.

of a new Christian generation. The common Church is the fullness and the conclusion of Abraham's faith and the theocracy in Israel. The Roman Apostolic See is an icon representing all Christianity.³⁷ As the third Orthodox theologian, Professor Russnák cites Dimitri Rostovski, subsequently Tichon Belavin, Sylvester, the archbishop of Omsk, Andrej Uchtomski and the others.³⁸ In § 26 Professor Russnák brings some rational proofs, which are enlightened by divine grace.³⁹ In § 27, 28 and 29 the answers to the objections of disunited to the primacy of the highest Peter are presented.⁴⁰ Section 30 is a reflection upon the question, who was, in history the head of the Russian Church since the period of Peter the Great?⁴¹ In the following paragraphs, Professor Russnák continues to reflect upon the analysis of the objections of the Orthodox.⁴²

The Roman Pope – a Successor of the Apostle Peter

In the second volume of his file, *Primat Rimskaho Otca I.*, Professor Russnák states, that the basic tenet of a doctrine belonging to the Holy Mother Orthodox-Catholic Church is thus: that Saint Peter, who rank is the head of the Church; he received his mission from Christ, not only for himself as for the human being, but he was established as the base of the church until the eschatological era. The Primacy in Christ's Church is a continual and constant office and system, as the First Vatican Council promulgates. Professor Russnák wrote this year 1869 in parenthesis in his paper.⁴³ However, we know, that the dogmatic constitution concerning Christ's Church, *Pastor Aeternus* was approved in the year, 1870 (July 18th).⁴⁴ This constitution allocates that, there exists in Christ's Church the tenet that the office of Saint Peter is everlasting. In the languages of Latin and Russian, the Council's decision: 'who could tell that he does not come from Christ, the Lord or from God's law; that Saint Peter has his primacy over the whole Church in the permanent successors, or that Roman Pontiff is not the successor of Saint Peter, let him be *anathema*'.⁴⁵

The Supreme Pontiff is the successor of the apostle, Saint Peter. The power of the Church depends upon its base (Mt 7:25-25) and such a firm stone Peter is

³⁷ S.V. Solovjov, *Una sancta*, Bratislava 2004, p. 302.

³⁸ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca I.*, pp. 199-210.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 211-222.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 223-237.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 237-247.

⁴² *Ibidem*, pp. 247-317; H. Русснэк, *Primatus Romani Pontificis I. – Приматъ Римскаго Отца – De primatu Romani Pontificis I*, Пряшевъ 1927, p. 232.

⁴³ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, Prjašev 1927, p. 3.

⁴⁴ *Dokumenty Prvního vatikánského koncilu*, Praha 2006, p. 83.

⁴⁵ *Si quis dixerit, non esse ex ipsius Christi Domini institutione seu iure divino, ut beatus Petrus in primatu super universam Ecclesiam habeat perpetuos successores; aut Romanum Pontificem non esse beati Petri in eodem primatu successorem: a. s. (da budet proklat).* *Dokumenty Prvního vatikánského koncilu*, p. 89. Professor Russnák cites it letter for letter. N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, p. 4; H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum*, Friburgi Brisg. 1953, § 1825.

(Mt 16:16), upon whom it rests until the end. Peter remains in the Church through his successor, who fulfills here the same mission of Peter. Peter as a shepherd resides in the person of his successor (Jn 21:15-17). The meaning of the primacy we can see also in the context of preservation of the unity of Church.⁴⁶ This is also taught via the First Vatican Council.⁴⁷ His thesis confirms Professor Russnák by the statement of Saint Jerome, that between the Twelve there was the one chosen as a head, that there should no risk of schism⁴⁸, that salvation in the Church depends of the highest Pontiff, since many schisms could rise up since there as many priests.⁴⁹

It is a historic fact, that the apostle Peter, the head of the Church, exercised the primacy in Rome, therefore he founded the Church, ruled her, and finally, he also died there, for that reason, in Rome, we should seek the guidance of Saint Peter.⁵⁰ In § 35 Professor Russnák gives the testimony, that apostle Peter lived in Rome. According to Eusebius, Peter founded a Church in Antioch and then he left for Rome. This fact, the Valdenses negate via the followings of Viklef, the Protestants and the rationalists. About the fact, that the apostle Peter lived in Rome, many historical testimonies bear witness. We can find it in the first letter of Peter (1 Pt 5:13; the Church in Babylon). Here the term Babylon is used in its metaphorical sense. In that period of time Christians called this way Rome (cp. Zjv Revelation - Rev 14:8). Identically Saint Jerome interprets it. The presence of Peter in Rome the official liturgical texts of the Eastern Church mention.⁵¹ According to these and the other texts the disunited Eastern author Solovjev writes, that the Eastern disunited believe in the Orthodox tradition, that Saint Peter worked in Rome and before his death he constituted his successor.⁵² Peter's mission in Rome is disputed by the Eastern liturgical books from the feast days of the Russian Saints, whereby Professor Russnák acknowledges that this fact is being doubted by the Eastern Patriarchs and bishops.⁵³

Section 36 includes the apology of the fact that Peter founded the Church in Rome; according to some authorities he chaired the role for 25 years. To the honour of the group of the twelve apostles, the Eastern Church prays to Peter as the first bishop of Rome. According to Professor Russnák this statement is clearly

⁴⁶ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 3-7. H. Pycnak, *Primatus Romani Pontificis I.*, p. 232.

⁴⁷ *Ut vero episcopatus ipse unus et indivisus esset, et per cohaerentes sibi invicem sacerdotes credentium multitudo universa in fidei et communionis unitate conservaretur...*, H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion...*, § 1821; *Dokumenty Prvního vatikánského koncilu*, p. 89.

⁴⁸ *Propterea inter duodecim (Apostolos) unus fuit electus ut capite constituto schismatis tolleretur occasio.*

⁴⁹ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 7-10.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 10-11.

⁵¹ *Timže i Rim sradujetsja*, in: *Velikij cerkovnyj izbornik*, p. 525. *You did not leave Rome and with your handcuffs you came to visit us, as the first apostle...* (a strophe from January 16th) – *Pane zmiluj – Modlitebnik a spevnik gréckokatolika*, Prešov 2009, p. 328. *Rima svitlaja udobrenija*, in: *Velikij cerkovnyj izbornik*, p. 521.

⁵² S.V. Solovjev, *Una sancta*, p. 330.

⁵³ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 11-19.

demonstrated in the liturgical texts rooted in the honour of the Roman Popes, who are distinguished as students of Saint Peter and also his duty. This truth is also included in the lists of the Roman Popes, whose catalogue begins with the name of the apostle Peter, as found in the writings of Irenaeus.⁵⁴ Consequently, Professor Russnák presents key information, such as, Peter died in Rome, in addition to what the liturgical texts and the Fathers of the Church state.⁵⁵

From these facts, the following results can be reasoned, that in Peter's successor we seek the apostle himself, in the location where Peter died. The successor of the apostle Peter is the Roman Pope. A very commendable chapter is a description of the canonic proofs of the primacy of the Roman Popes, which are declared by councils. At the First Nicea Council (325) the Roman See is considered the highest and as an example, how the others bishops should act. Also, some Orthodox confirm, that here is a reference to a patriarchal law of the Roman See over the western regions. Further councils follow, including: the First Constantinople Council (381), the Ephesus Council (431), then the Chalcedon Council (451), the Trullan Council (692), and the Fourth Constantinople Council (869).⁵⁶ In § 41 Professor Russnák analyzes the declarations of the councils after the Eastern schism (July 16th, 1054). Explicitly, he cites the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, which declared, that the Church of Rome has primacy of the control faculty (*in Lat. ordinariam potestatem*) over the others, because she is the mother and teacher of all the believers. Subsequent councils follow: the Fourteenth General Council in Lyons (1274), the Seventeenth General Council in Florence (1439), the First Vatican Council (1869-1870)⁵⁷ and the old *Codex of Canon Law* are recalled.⁵⁸

About the primacy of the Roman Pope the liturgical texts and books give the testimony. The Christian East honoured the Roman Popes as the Saints: Saint Leo the Great (February 18th), Saint Sylvester (February 2nd), Saint Agapitus (January 2nd). The term 'Pope' has the Greek etymology (in gk. *páppas* – father). The Supreme Pontiff as Peter's successor is a visible head of Church, is the highest teacher; he is the highest priest over the entire earth (*vselenskij archijerej*). Professor Russnák recalls the fact that, the Patriarch of Alexandria only called himself the Pope in later times. Professor Russnák analyzes in more detail, the statement from the liturgical texts in honour of Saint Leo the Great, whom he beholds as the head of the Orthodox Christ's Church.⁵⁹

In the section 43 Professor Russnák brings a liturgical proof of the primacy of the Supreme Pontiff from the Latin texts. In this section he notes that the primacy of the Supreme Pontiff in the Latin texts to the honour of Saint Leo the Great

⁵⁴ Ibidem, pp. 19-24.

⁵⁵ Ibidem, p. 24-26. *Rim tvoju krov prijemyj i toj chvalitsja*, in: *Velikij cerkovnyj izbornik*, p. 528.

⁵⁶ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 27-56.

⁵⁷ H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion...*, § 1821-1840.

⁵⁸ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 57-71.

⁵⁹ Ibidem, pp. 71-105.

is not mentioned as this explicit positive, as it is in the East.⁶⁰ The Church Fathers of the East and West teach unanimously, that in first place, the successor to Saint Peter within Christ's Church is the Supreme Pontiff. The disunited Eastern author Vladimir Solovjev also agrees with this sentiment when he writes, that Roman primacy as a heritage of Saint Peter is an acknowledgement of the constant tradition of the general Church.⁶¹ From the Latin Fathers, Professor Russnák cites: Saint Cyprian, Tertullian, Saint Optat of Milevit, Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine. From the Eastern Fathers he cites: Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Saint Irenaeus of Lyons, Saint John of Russia, Saint Gregory Nazianzus, Saint Basil the Great, Saint Athanasius the Great, Saint Cyril of Alexandria, Blessed Theodore of Cyprus, Sergey, Cyprian, the bishop, Saint Tarcisius, the Constantinople Archbishop, Saint Nikifor, the Constantinopoli Archbishop, Saint Theodore, the Studite.⁶² After the analysis of the proofs from the archives of the Holy Fathers, follow the historical facts from lifes of the Fathers of the Church, who in the problematic church situations searched the solution at the Roman Popes. As an example, Professor Russnák cites: Saint Polycarp, Saint Dionysius of Alexandria, Saint Athanasius the Great, Saint John from Russia, Blessed Theodore, and Saint Theodore, the Studite.⁶³ Section 48 includes evidences of Papal infallibility from the historic education: acting of Saint Clement, the Roman Pope, decisions of Victor I. and Saint Stephen I. The Fathers of the Church at the Chalcedon Council (451) unanimously shouted, '*Peter has spoken through Leo*' (in Lat. *Petrus per Leonem locutus est*). On the primacy of the Supreme Pontiff speaks also of the activity of the Slavonic apostles, Cyril and Methodius, whom Pope Hadrian II promoted to the Episcopal rank.⁶⁴

Solovjev and the Papal Primacy

At the page 163 the author cites Vladimir Solovjev, the Eastern author of the disunited, who writes, 'As the member of the right honourable Orthodox Eastern or the Greek-Russian Church, which doesn't speak with the mouth of the anti-cannonical (*antikatoliceskaho*) synod, neither through the civil officers, though through the voice of its great Fathers and teachers, it remains as the highest judge in the religion matters the one, whom was abiden also by the Saints: Irenaeus, Dionysus the Great, Athanasius the Great, John of Russia, Saint Cyril, Flavian, Blessed Theodore, Saint Maximus, the Confessor, Theodore, the Studite, Ignatius and the others – that is apostle Peter, who lives in his successors and who no

⁶⁰ Ibidem, pp. 105-107. *O Doctor optime, Ecclesiae sanctae lumen, beate Leo, divinae legis amator, deprecare pro nobis Filium Dei.*

⁶¹ S.V. Solovjev, *Una sancta*, Bratislava 2004, pp. 329-334.

⁶² N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 107-133.

⁶³ Ibidem, pp. 134-144.

⁶⁴ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 144-167; H. Русснак *Primatus Romani Pontificis II. – Примать Римскаго Отца – De primatu Romani Pontificis II*, Пяршевъ 1927, p. 383.

uselessly heard the words of Lord, You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church. Strengthen your brothers. Feed my lambs, feed my sheep.⁶⁵

The Different Evidence of the Papal Primacy

Section 49 presents the proof that the Papal orders contain.⁶⁶ In the following section the proofs of the Eastern disunity can be found. The formal cause of the Eastern schism in 1054 was the denial of the primacy of the Roman See. Resolution of the Eastern patriarchs in 1848 contains otherwise an affirmation of the primacy of the Roman See, although they bring their own interpretation. Another proof of the primacy of the Roman Pope is the event after the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, when the disunited Russian bishops turn on Pope to help them.⁶⁷ They clearly and formally express this truth, as the Russian non-united author Solovjev writes in his book, *Russia and the Common Church*. The Apostolic See in Rome is a rock from the gospels. The entire content of the book by Solovjev, concerning the question of Peter's primacy and his successors, is direct and expressive evidence of the well-educated Eastern disunited author. Professor Russnák, probably enthusiastic for Solovjev, ushers again the same already quoted part from the page 163.⁶⁸ Section 51 mentions the arguments that have their root in the human's intellect, enlightened by the divine design. In the following paragraphs he answers to reservations towards the Papal primacy.⁶⁹

The Character of the Roman Pope's Primacy

From § 55 Professor Russnák analyzes the inner character, the meaning of the Papal primacy (*ob objeme primata rimskaho Papy*; in Lat. *de vi et ratione primatus*). At the fourth Lateran Council (1215) the primacy of the proper power over the others is mentioned (*in Lat. primatus ordinariae potestatis super omnes alias; o pervenstve obyčnej vlasti nad vsemi druhimi*)⁷⁰, alike the Lyon Council⁷¹, the Florentine Council (*in Lat. pascendi, regendi et gubernandi*).⁷² However,

⁶⁵ S.V. Solovjev, *Una sancta*, p. 163; N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, p. 163.

⁶⁶ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 167-180.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 180-183.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 183-184.

⁶⁹ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 184-241. H. Pycnák, *Primatus Romani Pontificis II.*, pp. 383-466.

⁷⁰ ... *ut post Romanam Ecclesiam, quae disponente Domino super omnes alias ordinariae potestatis obtinet principatum, utpote mater universorum Christi fidelium et magistra*. H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion...*, § 436.

⁷¹ *Summus et plenus primatus et principatus super universam Ecclesiam Christi*. H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion...*, § 466.

⁷² *Item diffinimus, sanctam Apostolicam Sedem, et Romanum Pontificem, in universam orbem tenere primatum, et ipsum Pontificem Romanum successorem esse beati Petri principis Apostolorum et verum Christi vicarium, totiusque Ecclesiae caput et omnium Christianorum patrem et doctorem existere; et ipsi in beato Petro pascendi, regendi et gubernandi universalem Ecclesiam a Domino nostro Iesu Christo plenam potestatem traditam esse; quemadmodum etiam in gestis*

the brightest and the most exact this teaching is being presented in the documents of the First Vatican Council.⁷³ All the councils teach about the proper faculty (*o obyčnej vlasti*, in Lat. *potestas ordinaria*) and about the fullness of this proper faculty of control (in Lat. *plenitudo supremae potestatis iurisdictionis*). The aim of the primacy is to guarantee the unity of the Church. This power is proper and full (in Lat. *potestas ordinaria et iurisdictionis*). The primacy has not only the connection with faith and morale, but also with the control of the Church. This power is immediate (in Lat. *immediata*). The Supreme Pontiff is the highest judge of the Church in all the questions.⁷⁴ In § 56 Professor Russnák analyzes the relationship between the primacy of the Supreme Pontiff and mission of the bishops. As Christ constituted Peter's primacy and these of his successors (the Roman Popes), Christ had also constituted the episcopacy. By defined relationship between the mayor and episcopacy oneself calling off Professor Russnák at the old *Codex of the Canon Law*, at which allocates, that dogmatically doctrine in Church is merely the only one. The Episcopacy under the presidency of the Supreme Pontiff has the divine origin in the context means of the grace of the sacerdocy (*tainstvo svjascestva*), but also in the context of the control faculty.⁷⁵ The Pope can't destroy (*uničtožit'*) the episcopacy, because the Church should be administered by bishops. By such a character of the episcopacy, the power of the Supreme Pontiff is neither unabated, nor limited. Nor the episcopal power is limited by the fact, that also the priests can celebrate the liturgy. The nomination of the bishops belongs to the rights of the Supreme Pontiff, because he has the right to shepherd the common Church. So it is codified in the old Codex.⁷⁶ During the Early stage of Christianity, the bishop was picked out by the bishops of the appurtenant area. This tradition is preserved in the Eastern Catholic Churches. For example, the Maronites choose a bishop during the synod, and the choice has to be confirmed by a Patriarch, who later informs the Pope. On Papal nomination of the bishops, the right to transfer, penalise, remove is limited to Papal sanctioning. The Pope is able to delimit the juridical power of the individual bishops (ie. the right to shift from power).⁷⁷

In § 56 Professor Russnák presents the nature and character of the relation of the Supreme Pontiff and the ecumenical councils. The council and the synod Mikuláš Russnák defines as a collegium of the bishops, who analyse and discuss the Church's issues pertaining to the areas of faith and morals. When the synod

oecumenicorum Conciliorum et in sacris canonibus continetur. H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion...*, § 1694.

⁷³ *Si quis itaque dixerit, Romanum Pontificem habere tantummodo officium inspectionis vel directionis, non autem plenam et supremam potestatem iurisdictionis in universam Ecclesiam, no solus in rebus, quae ad fidem et mores, sed etiam in iis, quae ad disciplinam et regimen Ecclesiae per totum orbem diffusae pertinent... anathema sit.* H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion...*, § 1831.

⁷⁴ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 242-249.

⁷⁵ *Episcopi residentiales sunt ordinarii et immediati pastores in diocesibus sibi comissis.*

⁷⁶ *Eos (episcopos) libere nominat Romanus Pontifex.*

⁷⁷ N. Russnák, *Primat Rimskaho Otca II.*, pp. 242-256.

represents something, it represents the entire Church, so it is discerned to be an ecumenical council. Christ assigned, that to the teaching Church the Supreme Pontiff and the bishops belong, whereupon from this point of view may be considered the councils as the divine institution, but not in that sense, that the Church had to invoke councils, but that the membership of the teaching Church can descend during the councils taking place. The Jerusalem Council brings an inspiration, how should the councils look like. The council itself is gathered together from these components: the Supreme Pontiff, the eparchial bishops and according to Professor Russnák also the titular bishops, who do not have their own eparchy. Pope Pius IX also invited to the First Vatican Council the Eastern disunited bishops. The ecumenical council is the conference of the teaching Church. This statement by Professor Russnák is affirmed by various proofs. In § 59 it is stated that, to invoke the ecumenical council is the right only of the Roman Pope as the Head of the Church. At some time the Pope invoked the council himself, some other time he agreed with another way of invoking the council. The Pope himself chairs to the council or via his laic. The approval of the council's conclusions belongs to the Pope. It is the supreme act belonging to the jurisdiction of the Pope's faculty to invoke, to preside, to suspend, to fix agenda, to take out matters and to approve the council (in Lat. *actus potestatis iurisdictionis supremae*). Continuing from the period of the Eastern-Western split, the Eastern disunited recognises only the first seven ecumenical councils as official ecumenical councils. Professor Russnák confirms this also by the statement of Solovjev. He concludes that in the Middle Ages councils were invoked by the Popes, who in turn, presided over these councils and then approved their teachings by promulgating them.⁷⁸

Conclusio

Professor Mikuláš Russnák in his files mentions the importance of the reflection about the primacy of the apostle, Saint Peter and the successive Roman bishops. At first, he analyses Peter's primacy and subsequently, the primacy of the Supreme Pontiff. The Greek-Catholic theologian analyzes the problem of primacy in the context of ecclesiology, the so-called science about Church. At this point he refers to the Eastern and Latin Fathers of the Church; he refers to the Eastern liturgical texts and thinking of the Eastern theologian, at which he does not forget to mention the Latin testimonies. It is shown as *peritus* in Russian, old Slavonic language, Latin, Greek and Semitic languages. The Holy Scriptures interpret in the context of Tradition, which the Fathers of the Church and the liturgical texts represent. Mikuláš Russnák dealt with the liturgical text of the various liturgical traditions. His work can be enrichment for the 21st century, in which he states, that the biggest ecumenical obstacle is Papal primacy. The ecumenical issue of Papal primacy is analysed by Professor Russnák, mostly from the perspective of the Orthodox authors; the Protestant point of view is being represented only marginally. Besides this,

⁷⁸ Ibidem, pp. 256-291.

he quotes numerous times the well-known Solovjev. The inter-religious aspect found in the reflection in the continuity of the Church (Christianity) and Judaism. Actuality and the contribution of the works of Professor Mikuláš Rusnák we can see in the fact that he mentioned the theological and spiritual richness which is found in the official liturgical texts of the Eastern Churches, where we nearly always forget. As an academic pedagogue by his writings he also enriched, not only the seminarians in Prešov, but also Bratislava's listeners, because according to Professor Rusnák, the liturgical texts of the Eastern Church more clearly and convincingly teach about the primacy of Peter and the Roman Popes (in Lat. *lex orandi, lex credendi*) because the Latin texts and the dogmatic teaching in the Church is one unity.

Słowa kluczowe: Kościół grecko-katolicki, prymat papieża, ekumenizm

Keywords: Greek-Catholic Church, primacy of the pope, ecumenism