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Sunday, May 8, 2011

**THIRD SUNDAY OF PASCHA:
THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN & RIGHTEOUS
JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA
HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST MARK**

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE TWO:

When You did descend to death, O Life Immortal, You did slay hell with the splendor of Your Godhead! And when from the depths You did raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: O Giver of Life! Christ our God! Glory to You!

TROPARION TO JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA - TONE TWO:

The noble Joseph, when he had taken down Your most pure Body from the tree, wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices, and placed it in a new tomb. But You did rise on the third day, O Lord, granting the world great mercy.

TROPARION TO SAINT MARK - TONE FOUR:

From your childhood the light of truth enlightened you, O Mark, and you loved the labor of Christ the Savior. Therefore, you followed Peter with zeal and served Paul well as a fellow laborer, and you enlighten the world with your holy Gospel.

KONTAKION TO SAINT MARK - TONE TWO:

When you received the grace of the Spirit from on high, O Apostle, you broke the snares of the philosophers and gathered all nations into your net, bringing them to your Lord, O glorious Mark, by the preaching of the divine Gospel.

KONTAKION TO THE MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN - TONE TWO:

You did command the myrrh-bearers to rejoice, O Christ! By Your Resurrection, You did stop the lamentation of Eve, O God! You did command Your apostles to preach: The Savior is risen!

PASCHAL KONTAKION - TONE EIGHT:

You did descend into the tomb, O Immortal; You did destroy the power of death. In victory did You arise, O Christ God, proclaiming "Rejoice" to the myrrh-bearing women, granting peace to Your disciples, and bestowing resurrection on the fallen.

INSTEAD OF "IT IS TRULY MEET...":

The angel cried to the Lady full of grace: Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again I say: Rejoice! Your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb! With Himself He has raised all the

dead! Rejoice, all ye people! Shine! Shine! O New Jerusalem! The glory of the Lord has shone on you! Exult now and be glad, O Zion! Be radiant, O pure Theotokos, in the resurrection of your Son!

INSTEAD OF “WE HAVE SEEN THE TRUE LIGHT...”:

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (*once*)



The Myrrh-bearing Women



Righteous Joseph of Arimathea

EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

THE PROKIMENON IN THE 6TH TONE:

O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance.

ACTS 6: 1-7

In those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

FOR SAINT MARK, I PETER 5: 6-14

Brethren, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son. Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

THE ALLELUIA VERSES:

Lord, You were favorable to Your land; You did restore the fortune of Jacob. Mercy and truth have met; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

COMMENTARY ON ACTS 6: 1-7

'Hebrews' refers to Jewish Christians of the Jerusalem area who spoke Aramaic, the contemporary language of the Jews. 'Hellenists' were Greek-speaking Jewish Christians from other places of the Hellenized world who had moved to the Holy City. They complained that their widows were neglected in the program of daily distribution of food by the Apostles as practiced in the early Jerusalem church. The Apostles recognize the need for assistants to serve the growing Church, a first indication of the development of ministries in the history of the Church; they themselves ordain the first deacons.

COMMENTARY ON I PETER 5: 6-14

The devil explores us individually, looking for our weaknesses, appealing to the desires of our senses in order to discourage us from heavenly pursuits. When temptation isn't as easy, he uses fear to try to make us betray our faith. "Babylon" used here is almost certainly a reference to ancient Rome, where Peter and Paul were martyred.



GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

MARK 15: 43 – 16: 8

At that time, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. Then he bought fine linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James observed where He was laid. Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away - for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples - and Peter - that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.” So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

FOR SAINT MARK, MARK 6: 7-13

At that time, Jesus called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff - no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts - but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics. Also He said to them, “In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!” So they went out and preached that people should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

COMMENTARY ON MARK 15: 43 – 16: 8

Not all members of the Sanhedrin were opposed to Jesus: Joseph of Arimathea was an exception, as was Nicodemus (John 3: 1-4; 7: 50; 19: 39). Joseph was waiting for the kingdom of God, sympathetic to Jesus’ message. According to tradition, Joseph went on to evangelize the British Isles. The women seek to fulfill the Jewish custom of anointing the body, courageously exhibiting great love and devotion for Jesus.

COMMENTARY ON MARK 6: 7-13

“They went out and preached that people should repent” echoes the call to repentance by John the Baptist (Matthew 3: 2) as well as Jesus (Matthew 4: 17). Anointing the sick with oil has not only medicinal value but sacramental value: as God’s healing power is bestowed through creation, oil is a vehicle of God’s mercy and healing in the Church.

SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

From The Prologue for April 25/May 8 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic:

The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark

Mark was a traveling companion and assistant to the Apostle Peter, who, in his first Epistle, calls him his son—not a son according to the flesh but a son according to the spirit (I Peter 5:13). While Mark was in Rome with Peter, the faithful begged him to write down the saving teaching of the Lord Jesus, His miracles and His life for them. Thus Mark wrote his Holy Gospel, which the Apostle Peter himself saw and bore witness to as true. Mark was appointed as bishop by the Apostle Peter and was sent to Egypt to preach. And thus St. Mark was the first preacher of the Gospel and the first bishop in Egypt. Egypt was entirely oppressed by the thick darkness of paganism, idolatry, soothsaying and malice. With the help of God, St. Mark succeeded in sowing the seed of the teaching of Christ throughout Libya, Ammonicia and Pentapolis. From Pentapolis St. Mark came to Alexandria, where the Spirit of God led him. In Alexandria he succeeded in establishing the Church of God, in ordaining bishops, priests and deacons, and in firmly strengthening them all in the honorable Faith. Mark confirmed his preaching through many great miracles. When the heathens raised accusations against Mark as a destroyer of their idolatrous faith, and when the governor of the city began searching for Mark, he again fled to Pentapolis, where he continued to strengthen his earlier work. After two years, Mark returned to Alexandria, to the great joy of all the faithful, whose number had greatly multiplied. On this occasion, the pagans seized Mark, bound him tightly, and began to drag him over the cobblestone pavement, crying out: “Let us drag the ox to the pen.” Wounded and bloodied all over, Mark was cast into prison, where at first a heavenly angel appeared to him, encouraging and strengthening him. Then Lord Jesus Himself appeared to him and said: “Peace be to thee, Mark, my Evangelist!” To this Mark replied: “Peace be to Thee also, my Lord Jesus Christ!” The next day the vicious men brought Mark out of prison and again dragged him through the streets with the same cry: “Let us drag the ox to the pen.” Completely exhausted and worn out, Mark uttered: “Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.” Mark expired and his soul went to the better world. His holy relics were honorably buried by Christians and, through the centuries, have given people healing from all afflictions, pains and diseases.

Saint Anianus, Second Bishop of Alexandria

When St. Mark stepped out of the boat onto dry land in Alexandria, the sandal on one foot became torn. He then saw a cobbler and gave him his sandal for repairs. In mending the sandal, the cobbler pierced himself in the left hand with the needle. Blood began to flow, and the cobbler screamed in pain. Then the apostle of God mixed some dust with his spittle and anointed the wounded hand, and suddenly the hand became whole again. Astonished at this miracle, the cobbler invited Mark to his home. Hearing Mark’s preaching, Anianus—such was the cobbler’s name—was baptized, with his entire household. Anianus displayed so much virtue and so much zeal for the work of God that St. Mark consecrated him bishop. This holy man was the second bishop of the Church in Alexandria.



HYMN OF PRAISE: The Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark

Mark the Evangelist flew to Egypt
As a bee with honey. And Egypt experienced
The sweetness of Christ's honey, the sweetness of living knowledge.
And the people were amazed at Christ:
How He was incarnate in His divine care for the world,
How He humbled Himself for the sake of man's salvation,
And how He resurrected in glory and in power.
"Until now we walked through thick darkness!"
Said the Egyptians: "Now the sun rises for us.
Let us rejoice, O people, in this bright day!"
Mark watered his wonderful crop with his blood,
And due to this, all the idols collapsed,
And Egypt was baptized: the land of the pharaohs
Became the field of God, the Apostolic Church.

REFLECTION

The devil quickly finds work for idle hands, but an angel quickly finds work for diligent ones. In this world of constant movement and constant change, a man must always be busy, whether he wants to or not, either with good works or with evil ones. The idle man is actually not lazy. He is a diligent worker for the devil. An idle body and an idle soul are the most suitable field for the devil's plowing and sowing. St. Anthony the Great says: "The body needs to be subdued and immersed in prolonged labors." St. Ephraim the Syrian teaches: "Teach yourself to work, so that you will not have to learn to beg." All of the other Holy Fathers, without exception, speak of the necessity of work for the salvation of the soul of man. The apostles and all the saints give us an example of continuous and concentrated spiritual and physical labor. That the idle man, by his

idleness, does not extend his life on earth but shortens it, is clearly shown by the longevity of many saints, the greatest laborers among the laborers in the world.

CONTEMPLATION

Contemplate the resurrected Lord Jesus:

1. How His Resurrection incites us and strengthens us for every good work, physical and spiritual;
2. How His Resurrection enlightens our every good work with the light of hope in the Living God, Who counts our works, measures them and preserves them for the Day of Judgment.

HOMILY

on the apostles' love of labor

Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you (II Thessalonians 3:8).

First fulfill, then teach. All the apostles and all of the saints of God adhered to this rule. Thus the Apostle Paul, even before he spoke the command *that if any would not work, neither should he eat* (II Thessalonians 3:10), declared for himself, and for his assistants in preaching, that they not eat anyone's bread for free, but that by effort and labor they earn their bread. *Wrought with labor and travail night and day!* Behold the true laborers! Behold the honey-bearing bees of Christ! Daily and nightly toil—where is there time for sin? Daily and nightly toil—where is there room for sin? Daily and nightly toil—where can the devil weave his nest of passions? Daily and nightly toil—where is there cause for scandal? In some Egyptian and Palestinian monasteries there lived about ten thousand monks. They all lived by the labor of their hands: by weaving beehives, baskets and mats, and by other types of handiwork. Daily and nightly toil, and daily and nightly prayer. When a monk sold his beehives in town for a price higher than that which the abbot designated, the monk was punished for it. For the ascetics it was not a matter of enrichment but only of the most essential nourishment and the simplest clothing. In this, the ascetics were and are the true followers of the great apostles. O my brethren, let us flee from slothfulness as from a cave of wild beasts. If by some chance we fall into a cave of wild beasts, let us quickly flee from it, before the wild beasts totally seal off the entrance. The cave is the dwelling place where the slothful man seeks rest. The wild beasts are evil spirits, who feel more at home in such a dwelling place than near their king in hades. O Lord, Who art wonderful in all the works of Thy creation, awaken us from slothfulness and encourage us to labor day and night, by Thine encouraging Holy Spirit. To Thee be glory and praise forever. Amen.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

2011 Dates to Remember

Diocesan Camp St. Sava

GOLDEN JUBILEE - REUNION AND FUNDRAISER

Memorial Day Weekend, May 28 – May 29, 2011

July 17 – August 6

Diocesan Summer Camp

Saint Sava Mission, Jackson, California

Week One begins July 17, 2011 - Week Two begins July 24, 2011 -

Week Three begins July 31, 2011

Friday, September 2nd

Annual Diocesan Assembly

Saint Steven's Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, Alhambra, CA

Friday, September 2nd – Sunday, September 4th

15th Annual Diocesan Days Gathering

Saint Steven's Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, Alhambra, CA

October 7th

Cathedral Slava,

Saint Steven's Serbian Orthodox Cathedral, Alhambra, CA

December 4, 2011

Diocesan KSS Slava,

Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos

From His Grace, Bishop Maxim...

СВИМ СВЕШТЕНИЦИМА ЕПАРХИЈЕ ЗАПАДНО-АМЕРИЧКЕ

Драга браћо свештеници,

Христос васкрсе!

Пишем вам ово писмо да вас обавестим о следећем:

Приликом боравка Министра Вера Републике Србије, Господина Богољуба Шијаковића, имали смо прилику видети добар део библиотеке покојног Професора Ђорђа Вида Томашевића, која је привремено смештена у просторијама наше цркве у Саратоги. По жељи покојног Проф. Томашевића библиотека је завештана нашем Универзитету у Београду. Библиотека укључује књиге од непроцењиве вредности, штампане у више светских језика, а којих у универзитетској библиотеци у Београду нема. Дагле, ова вредна дела послужиће генерацијама младих српских студената.

Сходно жељи покојног професора Томашевића, наша Епархија одлучила је да помогне у организацији транспорта наведене библиотеке. Контејнер који ће то преузети коштаће око \$4000 долара мада ће тек мали део контејнера бити заузет овим књигама, па смо решили да вам се обратимо и сугеришемо начин на који ово можемо значајно да ублажимо. То би било овако:

- Ако међу вама има оних који би хтели да пошаљу неке предмете као што су књиге, покућство, намештај итд., уз преузимање неког пропорционалног (простор, тежина) процента у надокнади за транспорт, било би то од велике помоћи.
- Ако сами ви свештеници нисте заинтересовани за тако нешто или се не покаже ваш интерес довољним, да онда у својима парохијама овакву могућност понудите вашим благочестивим парохијанима.

На овај начин сви ћемо уштедети значајна средства, па вас молим да ово што пре испитате и јавите о учињеном. Унапред хвала!

TO ALL PRIESTS OF THE WESTERN AMERICAN DIOCESE

Dear Brothers in Christ,

Christ is Risen!

I am writing you this letter to inform you about the following:

During the visit of Serbian Minister of Religion, Mr. Bogoljub Šijaković, we had a chance to see a good part of the library of the late Professor George Vid Tomasevic, which is temporarily housed in the premises of our church in Saratoga. By the will of late Professor Tomasevic this library has been bequeathed to our University in Belgrade, Serbia. The Library includes books of invaluable contents, printed in several languages (English, French, German, etc.), which University of Belgrade Library does not have. Therefore, these books will serve generations of young Serbian students.

Pursuant to the last will of the late Professor Tomasevic, our Diocese has decided to help the organization of transport of these books to final destination in Belgrade, Serbia. The container that will be used for transportation will cost about \$ 4,000.00, although only a small portion of the container will be occupied with books. In order to minimize the cost for this transportation we would like to present you with an idea and suggestion how you can help. That would be as follows:

- If there are those among you who would like to send to Serbia some items such as books, household items, furniture, etc., with the assumption of a proportional (space, weight) percentage of the fee for transport, it would be of great help.
- But, if you priests are not interested in something like this, or do not show enough of interest, you may ask your pious parishioners to use this opportunity.

This way everyone will save significant funds, so please act as soon as possible, and report back to me on what you have accomplished. Thank you in advance!

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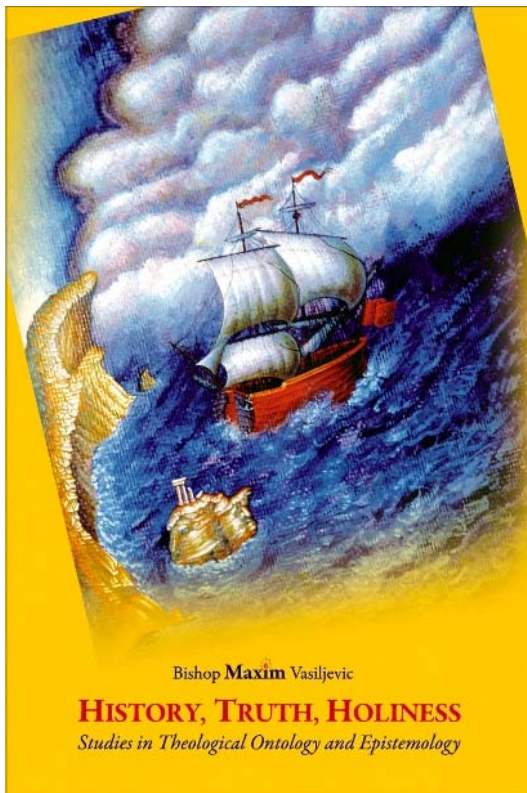
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by Bishop Maxim Vasiljevic



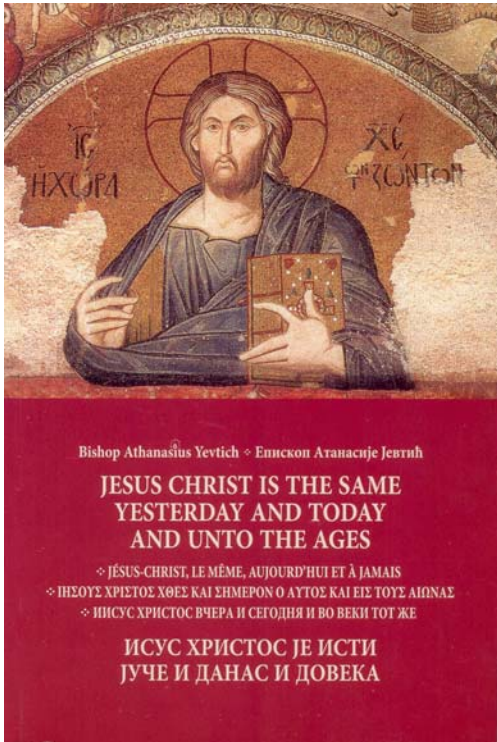
The first half of the book consists of studies concerned with theological ontology and gnoseology, while the second half is dedicated to the theological questions posed by modern theology. The first part includes studies on holiness as otherness, truth and history, as with the biochemistry of freedom, while the second half contains studies which consider the existential actuality of dogma and various Christological questions, along with a study in ecclesiology, another in liturgics, and a number dealing with the theology of icons.

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Soft Cover

JESUS CHRIST IS THE SAME YESTERDAY AND TODAY AND UNTO THE AGES

Bishop Athanasius Yevtich



In this latest and, in every respect, meaningful study, Bishop Athanasius, in the manner of the Holy Fathers, and firmly relying upon the Apostles John and Paul, argues that the Old Testament name of God, “YHWH,” a revealed to Moses at Sinai, was translated by both Apostles (both being Hebrews) into the language of the New Testament in a completely original and articulate manner. In this sense, they do not follow the Septuagint, in which the name, “YHWH,” appears together with the phrase “the one who is”, a word which is, in a certain sense, a philosophical-ontological translation

(that term would undoubtedly become significant for the conversion of the Greeks in the Gospels). The two Apostles, rather, translate this in a providential, historical-eschatological, i.e. in a specifically Christological sense. Thus, John carries the word “YHWH” over with “the One Who Is, Who was and Who is to Come” (Rev. 1:8 & 22...), while for Paul “Jesus Christ is the Same Yesterday, Today and Unto the Ages” (Heb. 13:8).

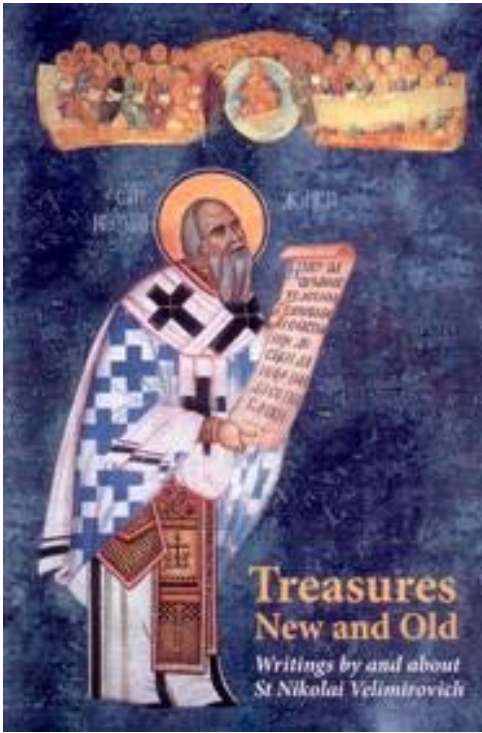
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St. Nikolai Velimirovich, Bishop of Ohrid and Zhicha (1880 - 1956), who along with his many other attributes is regarded, with good reason, as an Enlightener of the Americas, The renewed interest in this man and his works has resulted in the materialization of this book for English-speaking readers who wish to become acquainted with this extraordinary person. The collected texts provide an extensive overview of his life, present important testimonies about his personality, and offer essential insights into his theology. The authors penetrate the depths of his thought with remarkable precision and also

elucidate his actions. The authors agree that the appearance of Nikolai Velimirovich marks an era of change in the ecclesiastical and theological paradigm as a result of his spirituality, ecclesiastical work, and theological position.

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