

## **The Bible as the Book of Faith Symposium (4<sup>th</sup> Edition), Lviv-Briukhovychi, March 25, 2017**

Rev. Stanisław Wronka.

Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow

stanislaw.wronka@upjp2.edu.pl  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1582-8540>

The Biblical symposium from the The Bible as a Book of Wisdom cycle was held in the St. Jozef Bilczewski Theological Institute in Lviv-Briukhovychi. It was organized by the aforementioned institute (which is a branch of the Faculty of Theology of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin), the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, and the Biblical Work of the Diocese of Radom. The symposium was held on the morning of March 25, 2017. Its participants included students of the Latin Rite Major Seminary of the Archdiocese of Lviv and the Theological Institute. Rev. Dr. Jacek Uliasz, the director of the institute, led the sessions.

The program included six papers prepared by Polish Biblicists from Krakow and Radom as well as a Carmelite friar working in the Archdiocese of Lviv. Rev. Prof. Dr. Hab. Tomasz Jelonek of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow and the Theological Institute in Briukhovychi presented the paper *One or Two Descriptions of the Creation of the World?*. In his view, the second Biblical description of creation (Genesis 2 : 4b–25) speaks instead of the transformation of heaven and earth, which had been created previously, and focuses on man. The Biblical author does not use the verb בָּרָא *bārā*, a technical term that refers to the activity of creating, here. It is worth noting that extra-Biblical literature does not at all know the concept of creation. Rev. Dr. Hab. Stanisław Wronka of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow talked about *Job's Dialogue with God*. In light of the misfortunes that the Biblical book's protagonist has experienced, he despairingly looks for God's justice, in which he believe despite everything and ultimately calms his heart. Job is an example of man's selfless, persistent love for God. Meanwhile, in reference to the slogan of the 2016–2017 pastoral year of the Catholic Church in Poland, "Go into the Whole World and Proclaim the Gospel," Dr. Anna Maria Wajda (the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow) presented on *The*

*Factors Conducive to Evangelization in the First Century of the Christian Era.* She mentioned the *Pax Romana* and the established Roman administration, the impressive network of land (in this case, the Romans drew on the Persians' experience) and nautical transportation, the common use of the κοινή Greek language, and the postal system. This situation in the Mediterranean Basin made it easier for Jesus' disciples, especially St. Paul, in preaching the Gospel to various nations.

After a break, Mr. Roman Potykiewicz, the librarian of the Theological Institute, read the text *God as a Healer in the Old Testament*, which had been prepared by Rev. Dr. Janusz Jankowiak, OCarm, of the Theological Institute in Briukhovychi, who was unable to attend the symposium. The books of the Old Testament present God as the Creator, Father, King, and the One who heals (נפֿרָ rāpā') both man and nations physically and spiritually. In order to be healed, man must sometimes fulfill certain conditions, usually prayer and penitence. Next, Rev. Dr. Hab. Bogdan Zbroja (the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow) presented the paper *The Theology of the Heterogenic Books of Revelation*. In it, he presented five different books (marked by the terms βίβλος, βιβλίον, and βιβλαρίδιον): the book of John, the book of the Lamb, the book in the hand of the angel, the book of life, and the book of deeds. Only the latter book was written by man himself. Next, Mr. Roman Potylkiewicz read another text in the absence of its author, Rev. Dr. Jacek Kucharski of the Major Diocesan Seminary and the Biblical Work of the Diocese of Radom: *Who Are the Women Following Jesus? An Attempt at Identification on the Basis of Luke 8: 1–3*. The author is inclined to believe that women performed all the mentioned functions. Jesus freed them from evil and, despite the customs of the time, allowed them to remain in their surroundings. After some additional remarks by Rev. Prof. Tomasz Jelonek about the women who accompanied Jesus as well as themes in the Book of Job, Rev. Dr. Jacek Uliasz concluded the sessions.

The symposium concluded with a Mass on the occasion of the Annunciation celebrated by Rev. Prof. Tomasz Jelonek. In his homily, he emphasized the faith of Mary, who accepted God's invitation to cooperate with her in the work of salvation, giving birth to Jesus and accompanying Him in His mission. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus renewed creation, narrowing the chasm dividing man and God that had been created by sin. Mary did not always understand everything she participated in, but she wisely and valiantly participated in the pilgrimage of faith in which she leads us. She

also presented woman's greatest vocation, that which is superior to all others: the vocation of giving birth to good.

The Theological Institute's director's gratitude and hospitality were expressed in his kind care and invitation to the Lviv Opera to watch one of the best classical operas by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Don Giovanni*. The exact title of the two-act opera is: *Il dissoluto punito ossia il Don Giovanni (The Punished Libertine, or Don Giovanni)*. The author of the libretto, which is based on Molière's play *Dom Juan or The Feast with the Statue*, is Lorenzo Da Ponte. This dramatic, although at time humorous, work was fitting for Lent, as it reminded all that "one will die as one lives."