

Father Thaddee Barnas on Receptive Ecumenism

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A priest from the Chevetogne Monastery (Belgium), editor of the journal *Irenikon* and an active member and participant of numerous ecumenical initiatives and seminars **Father Thaddee Barnas** had an online lecture to the students of DLMPES on October, 28. During the video-conference father shared some thoughts on the theme of *Receptive Ecumenism*.

An interesting new approach to ecumenical work called *Receptive Ecumenism* has been the subject of much discussion in recent years. It was Paul Murray, a Roman Catholic theologian at Durham University, in England, said father Thaddee, who first launched the idea. According to Father Thomas Ryan, "The essential principle of Receptive Ecumenism is that the primary ecumenical responsibility is not to ask "What do the other traditions of Christian faith need to learn from us?" but "What do we need to learn from them?" The assumption is that if all were asking this question seriously and acting upon it then all would be moving in ways that would both deepen our authentic respective identities and draw us into more intimate communion. Receptive ecumenism offers itself as an interim strategy to keep some wind in the sails. It's a remarkably simple but far-reaching strategy that now places at center stage a value that has already been implicitly at work in all genuine ecumenical encounters: What can we learn and receive from the other that would enrich and strengthen our own faith and practice?"



Summarizing fr. Barnas adds that this simple, if somewhat minimalist, ecclesiology can be seen as an invitation to Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants alike to refocus on the fundamental tasks of the Church, while discovering "or rediscovering" one or the other of the two dimensions, too often underestimated by some of the Christian traditions.

In the end of the lecture fr. Thaddee received many questions from the students concerning the discussed topic. Coordinator of DLMPES fr. Roman Fihás wished professor Barnas on the occasion of his 70-th birth anniversary "Many happy years of life" and constant God's blessing.

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