

Part I. The essence and challenges of reconciliation

Introduction to Part I

In the previous chapter I have analysed the religious situation of Ukraine, the identities and relations between the traditional Ukrainian Churches and the religiosity of Ukrainians. In the current part I will turn to the immediate subject of this research, that is to say the reconciliation discourse of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.

I have divided this part into three logical steps and dedicated a chapter to each of them. The reading of the documents of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church shows that the leadership of that Church repeatedly refers to particular spheres of conflicts which I will examine at first. All the analysed official pronouncements unfold reconciliation in several thematic groups: the Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation, the Russian-Ukrainian reconciliation, the reconciliation between the Ukrainian Churches, the all-Ukrainian or Ukrainian-Ukrainian reconciliation and dealing with the competing memories of World War II. Therefore, at the start I will determine where the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church envisions the reasons for conflicts in those spheres. For instance, the text will give answers to the question whom the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church considers guilty in the Polish-Ukrainian conflicts. Besides extracting and emphasising the key ideas of the Church discourse the official point of view will be deepened with the relevant historical information in a concise form.

Having spoken about the alleged victims and perpetrators I will proceed to the notion and elements of reconciliation. The understanding of reconciliation, its source and protagonists will be clarified and then critically engaged with the thoughts of John Paul Lederach, Robert Schreiter and Miroslav Volf. It is for the first time in the book that those reference authors come on stage. The final task of this part concerns the elements of reconciliation – repentance, forgiveness and justice – which will be analysed using the same methodology of bringing the theology of the Church in conversation with the works of the reference authors. The overall task of part I is to figure out what the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church strives for with her reconciliation theology.