



SESSION 17: 6TH CENTURY, JUSTINIAN, 5TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL & GREGORY THE GREAT – READINGS

“There are two great gifts which God, in his love for man, has granted from on high: the priesthood and the imperial dignity. The first serves divine things, while the latter directs and administers human affairs; both, however, proceed from the same origin and adorn the life of mankind. Hence, nothing should be such a source of care to the emperors as the dignity of the priests, since it is for their welfare that they constantly implore God. For, if the priesthood is in every way free from blame and possesses access to God, and if the emperors administer equitably and judiciously the state entrusted to their care, general harmony will result and whatever is beneficial will be bestowed upon the human race.”

- Justinian

Patriarch Eulogius of Alexandria addressed Pope Gregory as the ‘Universal Pope’ a second time, after Gregory had asked him not to. Gregory’s response:

“I beg you never let me hear that word again. For I know who you are and who I am. In position you are my brother, in character my father. I gave therefore no commands, but only endeavoured to point out what I thought was desirable. I said you ought not to use such a title in writing either to me or to any one else; yet now, in your last letter, notwithstanding my prohibition, you have addressed me by the proud title of Universal Pope. I beg your Holiness, whom I love so well, not to do this again. I do not consider that anything is an honour to me, by which my brethren lose the honour that is their due. My honour is the honour of the Universal Church, my honour is the united strength of my brethren. Then and only then am I truly honoured when no one is denied the honour which is justly his. But, if your Holiness calls me Universal Pope, you deny that you are yourself that which you say I am universally. God forbid! Far from us be the titles which inflate men’s pride and deal a wound to charity!”