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INTRODUCTION

By observing history of “Warsaw Pastoral Studies” we can open, since 14th number of the magazine, a new chapter: the magazine will appear, as it was till now, in printed polish version but, at the same time, it will appear online. Therefore, our magazine will have two versions: polish and english, which contain two “aspects” of the same magazine. On the web side of “Warsaw Pastoral Studies” (www.warszawskiestudiapastoralne.pl) everyone can find detailed description of new version of the magazine.

Profile of “Warsaw Pastoral Studies” doesn't change: it should be a scientific forum, which publish the latest achievements of practical theology. Pastoral theology or practical (both names are right) is a theological science, but theological – pastoral studies have interdisciplinary character. This is why, in the magazine will appear theological articles, but as well research works from general religious, humanistic and social fields. Additionally, works from exact, natural, medical and art sciences, if they touch the life and activity of church community members, will appear in our magazine. This wide topical spectrum enables many specialists to publish works from different fields and scientific branches, to whom I'm sending an invitation to co – operate.

Interdisciplinary character of “Warsaw Pastoral Studies” confirms the content of the following number. Articles have been divided into two main parts. The 1st one contains publications regarding church practice, the 2nd one shows different aspects of theology application in practice.

Number 14th of “Warsaw Pastoral Studies” has an experimental character. Therefore, we are ready to introduce other changes, improvements and suggestions regarding both essential establishments of the publications and the way of appearance of the magazine. We are very thankful for any remarks to the address of our magazine (e-mail: warsawpastoresstudies@gmail.com).

Rev. Prof. Edmund Robek SAC

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A woman in the advertisement consumption or dignity of the person?

The situation of women in the last century has changed significantly. However, not everybody is happy with these changes. Such situation takes place in advertisement. For some advertisement is fascinating, for others - outrageous. More and more often it is recognized as a contemporary, trashy, commercial art, postmodernism and a modernity label, sales support and profits. Sometimes it is snobbish, supports hedonism, breaks numerous taboos and at the same time acts as a magnet, lures with colour, better and uncomplicated world, the centre of which is a human being. It has been developed about and for people, and is the result of human needs and progress. Woman in advertisement is full of provocative scenes aimed at using natural, human curiosity. Advertisement often makes use of the attributes of a feminine body.

This study tries to depict methods and outcomes of how the advertisement perceives women. A woman as a wife, mother or partner becomes “a tool” to achieve the consumerist goal set by advertisement. Advertisement, all the time, balances at two poles – sight and feelings – presenting the picture of an emancipated woman, focused on herself and her appearance. The body is depicted superficially and externally.

The second chapter is the theological thinking about woman’s dignity and theology of a body. I would like to present that human body is a value and one should remember about that. The conclusions from this subject are based on Christian bringing up for the dignity of the human body. Parents, school, religious education and pastoral work are a chance for bringing up, change of mentality and bad customs in the contemporary world.

1. Image of woman in the TV commercials

The majority of producers perceive women as the most important group of buyers and they address to them the advertisement campaigns prepared with considerable outlays.

Advertisement does not create clichés. It only uses them to sell the product in the best possible way. The best method to get the customer is to refer to order and hierarchy which is then reflected in the daily behaviour and division of labour, i.e. in social life rituals. It reduces women to the lowest common denominator of mothers, wives and lovers, attributing to them a range of chores they should be performing to be near perfection. In this way a girl is given yet another image which can be perceived as one of the elements of "a hidden programme" of social teaching, telling her how to behave and what ideal strive for.

Advertisements presenting women in the role of mothers focus mainly on their duties as feeders and care takers. A woman is presented as a modern person who must always keep up with the perfection of feminine beauty. The mother presented in these commercials rarely plays with children, draws or reads for them¹. She seems to be devoid of any other social functions. In commercials women talk to washing powders or margarine and this does not question their sanity. The presence of such image of women in commercials constitutes the extension of a popular saying that "women are like children" so they and their actions should not be treated seriously. The majority of commercials present women as unintelligent, performing simple tasks which cannot be even treated as work.

And woman performing all those chores should still be attractive and young. Often the only message is a beautiful, well-groomed body as perfection strived for and an object of men's sexual thoughts. The woman is reduced to the object which is under masculine dominance and power. Mostly beautiful and slim – is merely the submissive body aimed at fulfilling men's fantasies.

Women play similar roles in cars' commercials. This confirms masculine supremacy. The Xantia commercial uses the *ars arandi* dictionary to describe a car: "Excitement, expression, ecstasy, and compelling chassis". Car's pictures are put on the picture of a passionately kissing couple. Espero car is recommended by a masculine specialist, and at the end, for a moment, we can see a slim, naked woman sitting at the back seat. For the producers of car's commercials it is obvious that their targets are men. A woman can merely choose the colour of a car².

It is characteristic for the preset times that on one hand the false shyness is rejected and on the other – it is strengthened³.

¹ J. Bator. *Wizerunek kobiety w reklamie telewizyjnej*. wyd. Instytut Spraw Publicznych. Warszawa 1998. p. 42.

² *Ibidem*, p. 123.

³ J Bator, *Wizerunek kobiety w reklamie telewizyjnej*, wyd. Instytut Spraw Publicznych. Warszawa 1998. p.125.

A woman must also always look young. Judging from the advertisements in women's press, women are more and more absorbed by their own appearance than household.

When it comes to more serious matters, women in such advertisements are absent. However this absence has the same meaning as presence: the image of the woman in advertisement is defined by advertisements which both pass her over and use her. The representatives of big companies, businessmen are always men. Women are missing in those commercials talking about the advantages of computers, cars or TVs. They are sometimes a nice background⁴.

Those working in advertisement and taking programme decisions are first of all men. Advertisement is a tool of their power, strengthens their masculine way of perceiving the world and woman's position in this world, domination and men's authority, subordination and women's submission⁵.

Advertisement with the image of a woman is aimed at practically all consumer groups. A woman in the advertisement is a sexy seducer or a wife, a mother, a housewife. The first one uses the best cosmetics, dresses smartly, attracts men's looks, is independent, young and very slim and wants to be emancipated and independent.

At this point, it is worth asking a question on the consequences of naked women and sex which is only an advertisement trick treated as something normal. Several research have shown that anorexia and teenage parents can have their beginning in the sexualisation of media. The contemporary media present and promote a modern man on the top. Omnipresent sex is the daily situation that leads to indifference to it.

When looking at this phenomenon in depth, there is neither respect to woman's dignity nor to her body. The image of a young woman promoted by the media as the sexual object constitutes a threat to the physical and mental development of girls – warn American researchers from the Task Force on the Sexualisation of Girls of the American Psychological Association. Omnipresent sexualisation can lead to uncertainty to own body and depression as well as eating disorders. Girls suffer in this way and the beauty is defined in an artificial way. Therefore, more and more girls hate their bodies. Pictures presented in different advertisements can have an influence on their sexual development. Media activities presenting a woman in advertisement through sexualisation lead to understanding relating personal values to only sexual attractiveness or behaviour as a sexual object only. The

⁴ Ibidem. p. 131.

⁵ S. Borowska, "Matka, żona, przedmiot pożądania - modelowe wizerunki kobiet". praca magisterska obroniona na Wydziale Dziennikarstwa UW. Warszawa 1998. p. 89-92.

consequences of these activities are already seen in Poland: prescribing hormone contraceptives to minors and the growing number of pregnancies among young girls. According to the statistics of the Police Headquarters in 2007 there were 1453 crimes of sexual abuse among the minors under 15 year of age (Penal Code Article 200). The contemporary society remains indifferent to sexual messages presented in advertisements and does not see the consequences of such actions and decisions. All those short sighted actions will have their consequences in the future. Advertisement shows women as a product and men as consumers. The important problem, especially among young people, of decreasing respect of men towards women and women respecting themselves less and less is not perceived. Each phenomenon can develop and reduce depending on the media impact and information which results in yet greater area for paedophiles, zoophiles and other sexual deformations. The proposed image is a threat to women and induces men to treat women as things. It is a common truth that there is no better sales product than sex in advertisement. Erotic plots are visible everywhere, both in advertisement of chocolate/yogurt or mobile telephones provider. At present, eroticism advertises everything – food products, cigars, alcohol, cars and of course fashion. The picture of a naked body stimulates both the feeling of beauty, and perfection, something extraordinary or the promise to meet the desire. Creators of advertisement perfectly know that stimulations induced by erotica increase the process of remembering. For advertisement producers it is important for the product to sell. Such phenomenon is more and more common and important in bringing up young generation and shaping respect for other person. At present media have become one of the stronger structures, shaping and presenting the ways of bringing up and thinking. Ethical and moral rules limit a man, so freedom, emancipation and sex should be presented through advertisement and the Church should be perceived as an old fashioned institution.

2. Theological reflection

The teaching of the Church tries to present the truth about human who frees but who does not damage or deprive of dignity. The dignity of a human body is lost when the border of shame is crossed, i.e. personal sensitivity to things related to human body and its nakedness. The proper truth of human is the basis of a standard, on the basis of which the good and bad of certain activities, behaviours, customs and situations are shaped. Human defines the body and this is the truth that needs to be seen as, in particular personal and internal, determining clear limits which should not be crossed. All values and messages of human body can be

shaped and deepened by audiovisual means, but can be deformed and damaged in the man's soul. Christ in the Sermon on the Mount stated that in looking, the heart desire will be born⁶.

Paul VI, in his *Humane Vitae*, talks about the respect to a woman” Another effect that gives a cause for alarm is that a man who grows accustomed to the use of contraceptive methods may forget the reverence due to a woman, and, disregarding her physical and emotional equilibrium, reduce her to being a mere instrument for the satisfaction of his own desires, no longer considering her as his partner whom he should surround with care and affection” (HV 17)

The theology of a body allows perceiving the body, sexuality in the aspect of faith and deeper sense of humanity and respect to life. God gave a woman great sensitivity, greater perceptiveness and more subtle judgement to understand and solve delicate problems of life, in particular home and family. So one should make a plea to the world to accept and understand the psyche of a woman, her requirements and to respect and give justice, to protect and elevate femininity. During general audience on 10 January 1979 John Paul II perceived great and specific effort of each woman in the life of the world. He stressed that the woman's dignity should be taken care of and be taught to young generation as not to decrease the power and authority of a woman – mother in the family and social life as well as in our legislation, publication and bringing up.

John Paul II in *Familiaris Consortio* shows that there is the mentality to treat women as not people but things, objects of sales and purchase of egoistic interest and self happiness (FC24). Many times and at many occasions John Paul II defended the dignity of a woman, going back to the beginning and indicating that God, from the moment of man and woman creation, gave them dignity as he gave them life to this picture and likeness.

The Christian teaching presents the opinion on woman's dignity, based on biblical description of the human creation, selection of the one who gave birth to the Christ and relations of Christ with women. The teaching of the Catholic Church, from the very beginning, contributed to the social promotion of woman. The Communist authorities believed this to be old fashioned way to achieve woman's dignity. The consequences of this way of thinking we feel even today.

At present, woman in advertisement loses her dignity as a person and woman and therefore it is worth referring to the letter of John Paul II to women, in which he pleads to give women the full respect of their dignity and role back. Humiliations and sexual abuses should

⁶ Cf. Jan Paweł II. *Mężczyznę i niewiastę stworzył ich*. Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1986. pp.239-251.

not be left unattended and without sensitivity. The respect for woman's dignity does not only disclose the discrimination and injustice, but foremost development of specific development plan which includes all spheres of woman's life, the basis of which is re-understanding the dignity of a woman. The image of a woman should be created in an ethical and social sphere, which accounts for both interpersonal and spiritual advantages.

The contemporary attitude to recognise the value of a woman is the Christian awareness of each person's dignity. Unfortunately in many aspects of social life, as presented in the advertisement, a woman is treated as an object. This problem is valid and still growing. In the era of media, Internet and mobile technology the flow of information is rapid. When receiving the messages there is no time for thinking, reverie or verification of these values or for proper conclusions. It must be stressed that advertisement "makes us crazy" what is reflected in behaviour of children, teenagers and adults.

The Christian laymen are assumed to fight with all examples of such mentality, even when they are reflected in plays and advertisement encouraging to consumption.

The Church must defend the human body against contempt, reminding all the time of the spiritual aspect of human, in order not to lead to ban on spiritual and body relations⁷. The Church shows the human beauty and the ability to admire as the element necessary in the mature Christian life. God becoming a human hallows human body and give it the eschatological significance. Life should not be reduced to emotional and physiological level. The internal human beauty should be perceived, as human is the inseparable state of a spiritual and physical sphere. The Church must defend justified women's rights.

Women on their own should fight for their personality to be respected. They should not agree to any form of cooperation which is against their dignity. Education explaining the human dignity should be present in the family, as a basic social unit. The family is the natural environment shaping the personality and respect for other people. Parents showing world to their children should show human body with sensitivity, emotion and respect. Thanks to a proper bringing up and talks of mother and father, daughter respects own body having the feeling of her own dignity. She is not influenced by advertisements, propaganda of the contemporary world, but with responsibility and dignity evaluates and draws conclusions from the messages received. Dignity also obliges. Therefore, the Church often reminds tasks related to having dignity. Tasks stated in marriage, family, Church or

⁷ Cf. Służyć prawdzie o małżeństwie i rodzinie. Konferencja Episkopatu Polski. 46.

society are based on the woman's predispositions to fulfil them and at the same affirming the femininity.

The directions of Christian thinking are presented during pastoral teaching for teenagers at school where lost girls, often without the support of their next of kin, seek acceptance through various forms of attractiveness. It often leads to personality disorders, lack of acceptance and damage of own body. Growing girls look for an example, on the basis of which they will create their own personality. The ability to provide psychological, pedagogical and theological assistance, among other in the teenage pastoral teaching, will give chances for normal personality development and perceiving woman both from masculine and feminine side.

Each woman looking at Mary discovers the secret of dignified experiencing of own femininity. When determining the special mission of women, Primate of the Millennium, referred to the example of the Holy Mother, stressing that the path of Mary is the path every woman should follow. The behaviour of Mary is an encouragement for all women who have woken the virtues given by God. In order to see it, one does not need to idealize, one needs to be in truth, you just need to get to know the life of Mary.

Mary is the most perfect example for every woman at various stages: youth, maternity and seniority. She is the woman who took care of all feminine virtues, i.e. purity, maternity and strong faith. Since *virginity included all virtues since purity of the body is the symbol of spirit purity*.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to present a woman devoid of dignity by means of an advertisement. When analysing the contemporary image of a woman we perceive the lack of respect for women. Advertisement of sexual character becomes one of the elements of bringing up, which impact the sub-consciousness. The care for woman's dignity is extremely important nowadays. It results from the attempt to make a woman the feminine equivalent of man. The Church teaches women, through positive heritage, that they should be proud of their femininity. Respect for a woman and her body should have an impact on the other as to become the common desire to affirm the woman's dignity in society.

Many issues being part of this study, due to the complexity of the problem, have been only signalised. These issues for sure should be described in details; however they are beyond

the scope of this work. Let the words of John Paul II from the general audience on man and woman equality, their mutual supplementation and praise of woman's dignity be the summary of all the considerations.

In our time, there are many voices calling for respect for the dignity of women and recognition of real equality of human rights so as to give him the opportunity to fully fulfill its role in all sectors and at all levels of society.⁸

⁸ *Jana Pawła II - audiencja generalna na 22 czerwca 1994 .*

The Vertical Nature of Sunday

Sunday is the oldest and most original of Christianity's holidays. Its meaning needs to be constantly reinforced and – what seems to be even more important – endlessly deepened. It seems to be more true now than ever, considering the progressing „crisis of celebration”. Easily grasped social processes, such as secularization, commercialization or the mechanization of jobs, have made their negative imprint in experiencing a holiday, including Sunday as understood by Christianity.¹ If there really is a crisis of celebrating holidays, it could be laid down to the fact of losing what is the most important aspect of it – the vertical, or sacral meaning of Sunday as a Holy Day and, in consequence, the ability to celebrate it. The insensitivity to sacrum while lacking in faith, with the added dehumanization of modern civilization lead to a peculiar state of experiencing Sunday. Leopold Staff called Sunday a „Celebration of Urban Melancholy”. He wrote about it as a murderer of hope, the uncoverer of emptiness and a panderer of boredom. Even preceding him, Juliusz Słowacki complained about it to his mother in a very characteristic way in one of his letters: „What am i supposed to do then, always and forever doing nothing. My life is an endless Sunday”.² No matter whether it is a problem of using Sunday's free time, or the lack of it made by an alienating workplace and commerce, if modern society truly continues to fabricate the anthropological model of homo faber, with no place for homo festivus, the most important answers to the

¹ The consequence of progressing socio-economic changes was at the base of the question of whether man is capable of celebration. This question was asked in a modified form on the Third Liturgical Congress in Moguntia: Is the modern man capable of experiencing liturgy? Pr. B. Nadolski, a famous liturgist, points out that there is a certain logic in this question, since because a holiday finds its climax in a liturgical celebration, the inability to experience liturgy would mean the inability to celebrate. See. B. Nadolski, *Pochwała święta*, Pallottinum, Poznań 1997, p. 6 – 7. Agreeing with this „logic” of a respected liturgist, it must also be noted, that a holiday or celebrating one has a much larger meaning than just a liturgical celebration, which, as pr. B. Nadolski, mentions, is the holiday's climax. Perhaps the „logic” of this thesis should be turned about and changed to the following: The modern man, who lost the ability to celebrate, will not be able to experience liturgy's mystery, though probably both these realities: a liturgical celebration and the ability to celebrate influence each other.

² Quote by B. Nadolski, *Niedziela dniem Kościoła i człowieka*, in: *Niedziela. VI Tydzień społeczny*. 6 – 9. V. 1999r. Warsaw 1999, p. 65.

meaning of Sunday-as-a-Celebration and the pre-human ability to celebrate should be found in its vertical, sacral character and the ability to accept this priceless gift.

The phenomenon of Sunday, like every religious celebration, is characterized with many different levels of the idea of celebration. However, as was reminded before, this is the oldest and most original Christian holiday. Independent from the Judaistic Sabbath or ancient pagan holidays, the vertical nature of Sunday is probably caused the most by the fact that its Creator is Jesus Christ. It needs to be emphasized with the strongest means that the roots of Sunday, like every Christian holiday, is not in the workings of humans, but that, which God has made in Christ and embodied with the powers of the Holy Spirit.³

The connection of Sunday with liturgy is organic. God's work, meaning the Mystery realized in Jesus Christ, especially the Paschal Mystery, which Jesus Christ's entire life was directed toward, became the event of creation for Sunday and that is how it was understood since the beginning. This mystery, presented by liturgy, and especially the Eucharist, not named the Lord's Gift without reason, expanding from its Paschal source, anticipates its final destiny. We are perfectly reminded of it by the ecumenical constitution of liturgy in article 8: „The earthly liturgy gives us a kind of preview of participating in the heavenly one, taking place in the holy city of Jerusalem, to which we go on a pilgrimage, where Jesus Christ sits on God's right hand as the servant of the temple and truest shrine. In the earthly liturgy we sing to the Lord a hymn of glory with all of the heavenly hosts. In it we remember with honor the sanctified and we expect to receive a communion with them. In it we await the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, until he appears as He, who is our lives, and we will appear with Him in glory”. The earthly liturgy, according to the ecumenical constitution, is connected with this earth's reality, or rather all of the aspects of our horizontal pilgrimage, but let us notice that its purpose – that, which, according to the old metaphysical rule, defines the workings of being – is definitely vertical and assigns with all its might the idea of Sunday celebrations to the celebration which, because it is part of the reality of heaven, knows no end.

Thus we can say that Sunday is the reality of heaven, the Lord's Day. Its godly heritage proves the New Testament. All Gospels agree that Jesus rose from the dead „on the first day after Sabbath” or „the first day of the week”, which according to the Jews ended with Sabbath (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2.9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1). Furthermore, The Gospel of John states that Jesus Christ appeared to his students on the first day after Sabbath in the day of his resurrection (John 20:19) and also the eighth day, that is a week after he rose, where we

³ See S. Nagy, *Sakralny charakter niedzieli*, *Communio*, 2(1982) issue 3, p. 17 – 25.

have the story of Thomas the Apostle (John 20:19-29). The moving tale of students going to Emaus, according to Luke's Gospel, is on the same day as the resurrection (Luke 24:13). Finally, the resurrection's greatest fruit – the coming of the Holy Spirit, which came fifty days later was, according to Saint Luke, again on the first day after Sabbath. All of this has fundamental meaning! The resurrection, his epiphany and the gift of the Holy Spirit – three basic eschatological events, are placed on the first day of the week, not on the day of the Sabbath or anytime else! The root Christian society, accepting the Jewish calendar, have ascribed the first day after Sabbath a very important meaning. The day couldn't receive any other name than the Lord's Day and thus it became the celebration of the Paschal Mystery. This is why the Psalmists call: „This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalms 118:24), as John Paul II reminds us in the *Dies Domini* Apostolic Letter, was very prophetic and, in Sunday, found its most full expression.

The New Testament also shows that the expression of „first day of the week” connects with important actions for Christians. The New Testament also shows that the Resurrected's epiphany is in an atmosphere of a meal, which He ate with his students – a fact not without importance. During the breaking of the bread, Jesus lets himself known to two students in Emaus (Luke 24:30–35). The meal with the student's society on the first day after Sabbath is also mentioned by Saint Luke in a different place: the 24th chapter, verses 41 to 43. According to the time rhythm used in the Gospel, approved at the beginnings of the Acts of the Apostles, in forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension, Jesus Christ appears before his students and eats with them (Acts 1:3-4). John tells in his Gospel about the Resurrected, who, by appearing to his students at the Sea of Galilee, invites them to eat (John 21:9-14). These are definite allusions to the Eucharist. This directly shows that the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist wants to be a continued Easter meal of the Lord with his students. In other words, it is about the connection of the Paschal events as a whole, that characterizes the first day of the week, with the Eucharistic life and actions of great importance to Christian communities. Saint Paul in the First Letter to the Corinthians, 16:2, asks to put something aside on the first day of every week – a money gathering, which Saint Paul used to support poorer communities. Saint Luke, while describing the activities of Paul the Apostle mentions that the first day of the week appeared to be the day of the gathering of the community for the breaking of the bread and listening to teachings. It should be noted that describing Sunday or

the Eucharist as „the breaking of the bread” show judaic influences, but this act is characteristic to the first day of the week.⁴

Naming Sunday as „the first day of the week” remains under the influence of the Judaic calendar, especially the weekly celebration of Sabbath. The hebrew week was laid down in accordance to Shabbat, its last day, and the remaining days were called, in order: the first, second, third, fourth day after Shabbat, not including Friday which was named the preparation, or – as it could be translated - „pre-Saturday”. It is thought that the first Christians, especially around Palestine or coming from Judaism, in this context keep the institute of Sabbath on one side, but they also have a need to celebrate the remembrance of Jesus Christ's resurrection and coming to a meal called „the breaking of the bread”, or the Eucharist. It is most probably during the evening on Shabbat, being in Jewish tradition the beginning of the Lord's Day, or the morning.⁵ It also needs to be said that celebrating the Lord's Day quickly, even in a sort of an opposition to Shabbat, became a test of the Christian Spirit. In the second century, saint Ignatius of Antioch demands in the Letter to the Magnesians to celebrate not Shabbat, but the Lord's Day, the day in which, he concludes, our life was created by Him and His death (9:1)⁶

In the context of Judaism we approach another name for Sunday, that is: „the third day”. This name, too, is filled with the vertical aspect, moving the celebration of Sunday mostly into the realm of God. Not without consequence was the fact that during his public activity Lord Jesus announed this „third day” as the day of his resurrection: „And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again”. (Mark 8:31) Even in the Old Testament we find the use of the term „third day” to mark a quick divine intervention of God and the act of redemption. Belonging to this category are events such as: Isaac's Salvation (Genesis 22:4), the rescue of Jacob's sons thanks to Josef (Genesis 42:18), the passing of Law on Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:16), freeing Jonah from the fish's mouth (Jonah 2:1), the return of the deported from Babylon (Nehemiah 8, 15.32), the salvation of Izrael thanks to Esther (Esther 5, 1) and, finally, the text of marked significance, that is, that the third day is to be the day of resurrection according to Hosea 6:2. The New Testament

⁴ See. Bianchi, Niedziela. Dzień Pana – dzień człowieka, transl from W. Babicz, Wyd. „W drodze”, Poznań 1998, pages 103 – 107. Compare J. Miazek, *Msza święta pierwszych chrześcijan*, in: *Eucharystia pierwszych chrześcijan*, (red.) M. Starowieyski, Kraków 1997, p. 27 – 32.

⁵ See. E. Bianchi, Niedziela. Dzień Pana – dzień człowieka, quot., p. 106 – 107 .

⁶ See. P. Grelot, *Dzień Pański*, *Communio*, 2(1982) issue 3, p. 3 – 16 .

mentions the „third day” 15 times clearly in relation to the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:21;17:23;20:19;27:63-64; Mark 8:31;9:31;10:34;Luke 9:22;18:33;24:7.21.46; Acts 10:40; 1 Corinthians 15:4). It is important to remember that the Lord Jesus Christ was buried on the day of preparation to Sabbath, meaning his vigil, and he was resurrected the first day after Sabbath, that is, in relation to the Jewish counting method, with its fragment, the resurrection occurred on the third day. The close proximity of Sabbath and the influences of the Jewish calendar made their imprint on the early shaping of and experiencing of the Christian Sunday. However, what is underlined by specialists on the subject, the idea of Sunday as an extension of Sabbath is not enough. The Holy Father John Paul II, working his thoughts about Sunday in relation to Sabbath, shows forward a very important proof of his predecessor, pope Gregory the Great: *For us, the true Sabbath is the person of our Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ.* (Dies Domini 18) Sunday, as the day of resurrection, has received a new and exceptional meaning. It is the resurrection that makes it the first day among others, with its light shining on the rest of them. The experiencing of the Paschal Mystery was later enriched with reflecting on the created. On the first day, as we read in Genesis 1:3–5, God created light. In a seemingly natural way, Sunday as the First Day becomes a reminder of the First Day, when light was created, or, in other words, the first day of creation became a typical day for the first day of the Christian Week, in which the light of Christ wins over darkness and begins its new creation in Christ.⁷

This thought is picked up with preference by the Church of the first centuries. As a justification for Sunday meetings, Justin in the First Apology shows exactly this first day in which God defeated the darkness and matter, and on the same day he rose from the dead. (LXVII:7) The connection of creation and resurrection, meaning the first and the new creation, essentially enriches the Paschal layer, which is carried by Sunday. It is aptly grasped, with the sacral layer of Sunday taken into account, by Saint Ambrose: „As the first day of creation, this day is already privileged, but it owes its character to the resurrection of Christ”. (Enarr. In Ps. LXVII) Pope Leon I the Great, among the most important salvation histories made in Sunday, counts, among the Paschal events, also the creation of the world. The theology of Sunday as the first day of the first and the new creation in the day of resurrection, in the most interesting to us, vertical aspect, was even more fully observed by Eusebius of Alexandria: „On this day the Lord gave beginning to all creation in the world and, on this same day, gifted the world with first resurrections; he also wanted to celebrate holy Mysteries on this day. A

⁷ See E. Bianchi, quot., p. 109, 134.

day like that is the source of all blessing, the beginning of the creation of the world, the beginning of resurrection, the start of the week". (Sermo XVI, 1)

The Christocentrically understood Sunday, which we can celebrate properly in Eucharist, shows the unity of creation and salvation. The Paschal event has a cosmic, universal meaning within it. It may be that for Sunday shaped in our thoughts like that in the early ages was influenced one of the more theologically bearing texts of Saint Paul about Christ as the image of God, in whom, by whom and for whom everything was created and, finally, by whom was united. (Colossians 1:15–20) Salvation has its reference to the creation's plan as a unified godly economy of engodifying everything in Christ. In the shortest possible way it is told in the Paschal Vigil speech, read after proclaiming the text about creation: „God, You made man in the strangest way and in an even more miraculous you gave him salvation, let us resist the temptation of sin and earn the endless joy with our will”.

In a seemingly obvious way, considering Sunday in the aspect of creation, there is the idea of celebrating as a connection to the Creator's rest. This antropomorphic vision shouldn't be taken as a shallow non-action, as noted John Paul II in *Dies Domini*. Additionally, it should be mentioned that this is the Polish root of the word „sunday”. Lord Jesus, speaking of the order to celebrate Sabbath, says highly characteristically: „My Father worketh hitherto, and I work”. (John 5:17) The Pope explains that the act of creation, being the foundation of the world, is happening constantly and endlessly. The rest on the seventh day underscores the perfection of God's creation and a, full of joyful contemplation, stop to consider everything that was Very Good. This is a look that is not shared by his next creations, but lets one enjoy the beauty of what was created and, in the end, leads to the final creation of Man. If considering Sunday resting like that, there is – obviously – something of a loving character, which is the relation that God wants to have with the created, which will next unfold in the Synaitic Covenant with its very characteristic commandment: „Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy” and which will fulfill its destiny in Jesus Christ. (nr 11)

Sunday being called *ipssisima verba* as the Lord's Day is found in Revelation 1:10 : Saint John writes: „I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day”, and it needs to be said that this name is quickly accepted. You could argue whether it means Sunday or, with the superior for Revelation eschatological optic, an intervention of God in humanity's history, called the Lord's Day. It should be noted however that in the original name for the Lord's Day - *hemera kyriou* – a genetivus is used. *Hemera Kyriou* was never used to name Sunday, but to underscore God's intervention in history. In the Septuagint is the day of *Parousia*. John's naming of „Lord's Day” in original is *kyriake hemera*, meaning an adjective is used. The choice of the

adjective *kyriakos* instead of the genitive *tou kyriou* implied a different meaning. If John really wanted to point to the Judgement Day without naming directly a Sunday, he would have used *hemera tou kyriou*, systematically called by the Septuagint to name the hebrew *jom Jhwh* and used by Paul to mark the Judgement Day: 1 Thessalonians 5:2; 1 Corinthians 1:8; 5:5. An additional explanation could be a different use of the adjective *kyriakos* in the fragment of 1 Corinthians 11:20, where it is called the Lord's Supper. However closely sounding, the name *kyriakos* in the written cloth of the New Testament is inseparably connected to the Eucharyst and Sunday, and is evidence of something more than just artistic licence.⁸

However, the fact is that celebrating Sunday very quickly took on a more eschatic character. Theologically it is understandable. The joy, which John experienced in Sunday, shows Christ as the Lord of our universe, the Judge of both the alive and dead, whose enthronement was in his resurrection and which aht the same time is the beginning of the last days.⁹ (Revelation 1:5-7;18) It could be accepted then, that the Lord's Day means the Paschal Memory and Parousia. It found it's way in early eucharistic celebrations, when a certain formula was used: *Maranatha*, which was used in the original Church as a name restricted only to the celebration. If, on that day the resurrected Jesus appeared before his students and sat with them for a meal, the characteristic element of early celebrations of Sunday by the young Christianity was shown in *Maranatha's* Eucharist plead – Come, oh Lord, appear before us during the Lord's Supper – the Eucharist, during the breaking of the bread. The spiritual presence of Christ in the Church is His pledge of His righteous coming on the end of days. The ancient prayer of *Maranatha* is, at the same time, the statement of epiphany of the Resurrected, since it is also possible to translate it *Maran-atha*, or „The Lord has Come”, that being a call for His appearance during the eucharistic supper and an announcement of the final Parousia, which – we must add – is also to be as part of the messianic feast.¹⁰

Staying in the eschatic mood of Sunday, we need to point out another of it's specific, very symbolic names, which in a very high capacity carries it's vertical character, that being the name „eighth day”. Sunday not only is the first day while Saturday is the seventh, but as an expansion of Sabbath it leads to eternity. This day's symbolism is related to the six days of creation and the seventh day of rest, which embody earthly time. The eighth day answers to

⁸ See E. Bianchi, quot., p. 113 – 116.

⁹ See. B. Nadolski, *Niedziela. Historia, znaczenie, symbolika*, Kraków 2010, p. 19 – 20.

¹⁰ See J. Daniélou, *Teologia judeochrześcijańska. Historia doktryn chrześcijańskich przed soborem nicejskim*, transl from French. St. Basista, WAM, Kraków 2002, p. 389 – 390.

eternity however. Not coincidental is the meaning of the Christian Octave, the celebrations which open on eternity. Saint Augustine in speech 260:1 even used the name „Sacrament of the Octave”. The octave of newly baptized is a day of Christ, a day without dawn. Eight in Christian symbolism always showed exceptional connections with the paschal sacrament and water. Eight people entered the Ark before the Flood and eight were rescued. Baptisteries raised on the octagonal plane and eight-sided baptismal font symbolized the entry into a new life of eternal perspective. Equally not coincidental is that the artistic motif of eight, symbolizing eternity, was used to decorate candlesticks in which the Paschal candles were placed.¹¹ This mirrored Sunday, which was so tightly connected to resurrection, which was to lead us into eternal bliss. It is thought that the first time the expression of the „eighth day” was used in the Epistle of Barnabas 15:8–9, written approximately in 130. The author, arguing with the Jews, points to Sunday as the eighth day, created by the Lord, in which Christ, through his resurrection, epiphany and ascension, gave beginning to the new world. Justin in the Dialogue with Trypho (41:4) wrote, that the first day of the week, if counting it after all days of the week cycle, is the eighth day, which doesn't stop it from being the first day at the same time, conceding that it contains a certain mystery. Let us add that this mystery is in a sense obvious in light of the evangelic message of Sunday. Jesus appeared to his students also on the eighth day since his resurrection, which is attested in the story of Thomas the Apostle.

The aspect of Sunday as the eighth day is very visible in John Paul the Second's contemplations: „The celebration of Sunday, the first and eighth day at the same time, leads a Christian to the road to eternal life. (no. 26) On the coming Sundays the Church follows the road leading to the final Lord's Day, to Sunday, which will have no end”. (no. 27) It may be that thinking about Sunday without accenting it's eschatic nature - „until it comes” - is one of the reasons for the crisis in celebrating it. Sunday, understood as the eighth day, strongly underlines the sacral, vertical character and, as such, is already on this earth as mentioned in the liturgical constitution, the inaugurating participation in a celebration being the true existence of heaven.¹² This is why, as John Paul II mentions, it is needed to look on Sunday in this aspect, as a day of promise and Christian hope. (Dies Domini no. 38)

The creation of the Christian Sunday – the Lord's Day and also His gift, was marked with it's vertical imprint. This character is probably the most present in the eucharistic gathering, which John Paul II calls the heart of hope. „If Sunday is the day of resurrection, it

¹¹ See D. Forstner, *Świat symboliki chrześcijańskiej*, Warszawa 1990, p. 48 – 50.

¹² See B. Nadolski, quot., p. 21 – 23, 39 – 41.

is not only as a memory from the past, but as a celebration of the living presence of the Resurrected amongst the faithful". (Dies Domini 31) However, as the Pope mentions, to creatively experience this presence, the disciples of Christ cannot just stop on individual prayer or remember His death and resurrection only on their inside, in their hearts. This reality realizes itself not only in the Eucharist but also, in a way, descends from it. This is why the title of the pope's encyclical: *Ecclesia de Eucharistia vivit* – the Church lives on thanks to the Eucharist, chronologically began after the Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini*. In the third article of the previously mentioned encyclical, the Pope defines the threads contained in *Dies Domini*: „The Church is born of the Paschal Mystery. This is why the Eucharist, which is in its utmost degree a sacrament of the paschal mystery is the center of ecclesial life". In other words it is an eucharistic offering. We might add that the Sunday's Eucharist has a special meaning here, being in the center of the Church's growth. The Pope does not hesitate to say it up front: „There exists a cause-and-effect relation between the Eucharist and the beginnings of the Church". (Ecclesia de Eucharistia 21)

The connection between the Eucharist and the communion is important enough that the special meeting of the Bishops' Synod in 1985 considered the «ecclesiology of communion» as a central and basic idea contained in the documents of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. According to this optic, the Sunday eucharistic gathering bears a communion and teaches one to be in it. It does not have place skipping other sacraments or other forms of liturgical life, but appears as its source and leader, thanks to which we achieve a perfect communion with our Heavenly Father through identification with the Oneborn Son, thanks to the work of the Holy Spirit. According to the Pope, this unity becomes visible when Christians gather in a community, since they realize and prove to the world that they are redeemed people, made up of people of every generation, language, country and creed (Revelation 5:9). (Dies Domini 31) At the same time, John Paul II reminds that the communion of the eucharistic gathering is a communion with its bishop and its Pope. The Bishop is a constant and visible foundation of unity practiced in his Church. This creates an ecclesial rule, which is presented in various ways by liturgy, meaning that every eucharistic celebration is done not only in unity with its bishop, but also the Pope, with the Bishop Collegium, with the clergy and all people. (Ecclesia de Eucharistia 39)

Of course, the role of the Eucharist in Sunday celebration is undisputable, but it doesn't deplete all of its possibilities. It seems so natural to move from an eucharistic gathering to celebration in the family or a brotherly group. In the quoted before letter of *Dies Domini* there are proposals of giving forms like these a vertical character. John Paul II points

out the possibilities that a Sunday lessons and the celebration of the Liturgy of Hours, especially since on our Polish ground we have some prior experiences like, for instance, celebratory vespers. Since one of the elements of sacrum is the experience of the different, the liturgy of blessing time fills this role perfectly, since it lets one split from the frames of earthly chronos, to taste a different form of time – the godly kairos. Another proposition to give free time a more sacral character are pilgrimages to sanctuaries. Finally, the Pope suggests, everything that helps Christians do that, which is the most perfect and most pleasing to God, is worth not only attention but also use in life. (Dies Domini 52)

In light of the above, of special value is a certain comment by the Pope on the Sunday eucharistic celebration, a valuable comment, since not only is it very personal, but actually very mystique: „It is beautiful to stop with Him and, like a favored Student, lay your head on His chest (compare John 13:25), to feel the touch of the endless love of His heart. (...) How many times, my dear Brothers and Sisters, have I experienced this and received renewed strength, comfort and support!” (Ecclesia de Eucharystia 25) The most important here seem to be those feelings of: „strength, comfort and support”, irreplaceably needed for a personal experience of the Eucharist. An understanding and experiencing it like that forwards in the most existential way to God and remains in strict connection with other sacral layers. A religious man in contact with the sacrum wants to sate himself fully on God's existence. If Godly life, with all it's richness, can become a real share for us right now, it cannot change man from the inside, like nature and grace do. Also in this context John Paul II needs to be quoted: „On this foundation flourished also a *rich heritage of art*. Referring to the Christian Mystery, architecture, sculpture and music found an exact or inexact motif of great inspiration in the Eucharist”. (Ecclesia de Eucharistia 49) The vertical character of Sunday, situating us relative to God, shapes our participation in the community of faithful, to finally find its expression in creations specifically human. It reminds one of a concise in its meaning saying of our great compatriot, that faith without its reflection in culture is dead.

Church towards the phenomenon of aggression in sport

The phenomenon of aggression in sport has been one of the biggest problems to world of sport for several decades. It cannot be solved even by the police. According to the Police Headquarters, most of the misconducts (more than 70%¹), which took place during mass events in 2010, were committed by football supporters (about 63% - 1065 of 1690 - at football matches). Football supporters also committed more than 80% of crimes (75% - 530 of 701 - at football matches) at all mass events in 2010. However, Polish football stadiums are much safer now than they used to be a couple of years ago.

Church in its teaching has been paying attention to the phenomenon of aggression in sport for many years. It is a result of the fact that “man is the primary route that the Church ought to pace in fulfilling its mission”. (RH 14) If aggression in sport is a huge problem which has a destructive influence on athletes and football supporters, there is a necessity to solve it. In the Second Vatican Council’s documents a sports activity is commendable and sport is the way to build and preserve ” equilibrium of spirit even in the community, and to establish fraternal relations among men of all conditions, nations and races”. (GeS 61) So it is necessary to try to diagnose the phenomenon of aggression in sport.

Causes of aggression

It is not easy to find the causes of aggression in sport as well as in everyday life. Scientists depict many contrary answers about causes of aggression. The issue is complex and can have many causes, too. Researchers of this issue think that there are two groups of aggression causes. One of them consists in inborn and hereditary features. The second one is acquired by individuals during socialisation. There are followers of both theories. Some of them think that the most important is natural selection which favours an aggressive organism².

¹ All information according to the Police Headquarters. (2011). *Report. The safety of mass events in 2010*. Warsaw.

² Dale P. Wranghan R. (1999). *Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence*. Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy. Warsaw. s. 233.

They also believe that the observation of aggressive behaviour (as a way of solving problems) favours the adoption of aggression in human behaviour³.

Scientists pay attention to the influence of genes⁴, hormones (testosterone⁵) and neurotransmitters (serotonin⁶), which can be causes of aggression. Unfortunately, there is no simple answer about causes of aggression. However, most of scientists agree that influence of social surroundings is the most important aspect of aggressive behaviour's incidence. Even a person who prefers aggressive behaviour can comport him - or herself calm if his or her environment does not accept aggression as a reaction to other people's behaviour. On the other hand - even a calm person may be aggressive if physical strength is valued in his or her environment. The influence of environment and upbringing is one of the most important reasons of being an aggressive or a non-aggressive person.

Researches give us a number of factors which are recognised as favourable conditions in occurring aggressive behaviour. These are: frustration⁷ (linked with feelings of anger), pain and discomfort⁸ (linked with temperature, congestion, noise, air pollution), alcohol and drugs⁹, poverty¹⁰, aggressive signals¹¹ (weapon, people associated with unpleasant experiences) and mental disorders¹².

Causes of aggression can also be researched on the basis of documents of the Church. John Paul II paid attention to this factor in his encyclical *Centesimus annus* emphasizing that "man, who was created for freedom, bears within himself the wound of original sin, which

³ Bandura A. Ross D. Ross S. A. (1961). *Transmission of aggression through imitation of aggressive models*. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology. Nr 63. s. 575-582.

⁴ Żekanowski C. (2002). *Czy istnieje gen kryminalisty? Spojrzenie genetyka*. [in]: Machinek M. (red.). (2002). *Agresja i przemoc w świetle nauk przyrodniczych i humanistycznych*. Wydawnictwo Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego Metropolii Warmińskiej „Hosianum”. s. 24.

⁵ Kenrick D. T. Neuberg S. L. Caldini R. B. (2002). *Social Psychology. Unraveling the Mystery*. Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne. Gdańsk. s. 520.

⁶ Vetulni J. (2002). *Neurobiologia w agresji. Fenomen agresji w świetle biochemii i fizjologii mózgu*. [in]: Machinek M. (red.). (2002). *Agresja i przemoc...* op. cit. s. 41.

⁷ Krahe B. (2006). *The Social Psychology of Aggression*. Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne. Gdańsk. s. 38-40.

⁸ Aronson E. Wilson T. D. Akert R. M. (1997). *Social Psychology. The Heart and the Mind*. Wydawnictwo Zysk i S-ka. Poznań. s. 440.

⁹ Vetulni J. (2002). *Neurobiologia w agresji...* op. cit. s. 45.

¹⁰ Kenrick D. T. Neuberg S. L. Caldini R. B. (2002). *Social Psychology...* op. cit. s. 501.

¹¹ Krahe B. (2006). *The Social Psychology...* op. cit. s. 70-72.

¹² Kenrick D. T. Neuberg S. L. Caldini R. B. (2002). *Social Psychology...* op. cit. s. 508-509.

constantly draws him towards evil and puts him in need of redemption.(...) Man tends towards good, but he is also capable of evil. He can transcend his immediate interest and still remain bound to it". (CA 25) Due to the sin men turn their backs on God and others. He also builds a wall of hostility around himself. When we think that other people are our enemies, we open the way for aggressive behaviour. The Bible's researchers think that the transition from love to aggression can be perceived in original sin¹³ and in murder of Cain¹⁴. John Paul II said that "violence was always an insult for both – its perpetrator and its victim. Violence is absurdity, especially when it takes place during sports events¹⁵".

The Church in its teaching takes the position that symptoms of aggression are evil so they are sins. It is possible even in sport. As we know, frustration is one of the causes of aggression. Frustration is linked with anger and hatred towards other persons or things, too. According to the teaching of the Church "if anger reaches the point of a deliberate desire to kill or seriously wound a neighbor, it is gravely against charity; it is a mortal sin". (CCC 2302) The same thing goes with hatred. If it is intentional, it is against love. "Hatred of the neighbor is a sin when one deliberately wishes him evil. Hatred of the neighbor is a grave sin when one deliberately desires him grave harm." (CCC 2303) Similarly, this is a sin when you want to use violence to "punish the guilty, frighten opponents, or satisfy hatred is contrary to respect for the person and for human dignity". (CCC 2297)

Aggression in sport in the documents of the Church

Episcopates from Poland, Portugal and Italy have been interested in the issue of aggression in their letters for decades. In the pastoral note *Sport and the Christian life* (SeVC) clergyman from Italy paid attention that problem of aggression could not be restricted only to world of sport. It is connected with everyday life. There are many psychosocial problems in our life. Level of humans' frustration is rising as well as level of resentment. All of them can be causes of aggression. Sport, especially in the most popular disciplines, can take up a particular position where aggression exists and is an opportunity to use violence. In this way sport becomes a reality where a demon of self-destruction sneaks into. Its negative influence

¹³ Bramorski J. (2007). *Grzech jako „mur wrogości” źródłem agresji w sporcie*. [in]: Dziubiński Z. (2007). *Sport a agresja*. Zakład Socjologii Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego w Warszawie. Salezjańska Organizacja Sportowa Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej. Warsaw. s. 299-301.

¹⁴ Chrostowski W. (2002). „*Gdzie jest brat twój, Abel? (Rdz 4,9)*. *Biblijne spojrzenie na przemoc i gwałt*. [in]: Machinek M. (red.). (2002). *Agresja i przemoc...* op. cit. s. 193-209.

¹⁵ John Paul II (1980). Speech to the members of Luciano Re Cecconi Foundation. Rome. 28.01.1980.

is the reason why nihilism destroys all values and causes negation and rejection of life and death. (SeVC 3)

Aggressive behaviour of football supporters can be allowed by authorities or government. In that situation aggression is red herring that stimulates the interest of society concerning football hooligans. On the other hand, society does not have enough time to think about real social problems. The Italian episcopate considered the fact that sport was some kind of safety valve and psychological shock absorber which allows to equalise tension that arises as a result of cultural and economic stratification of society. This explains why violence at football stadiums is so often tolerated and why enormous costs of destructing sports objects and engaging forces of public order, which presence at any sports events has become a tradition, are concealed. (SeVC 24) Fans from the Polish Union of Football Supporters Associations see this in a similar way. They believe that the aim of media campaign against fans is to divert people's attention from important policy issues and purposely to present supporters' behaviour as unambiguously bad which requires improvement¹⁶.

Episcopate from Portugal focuses in the pastoral note *Sport in the service of integral human development and the community of nations* (OdaS) on other aspects of aggression in sport. In its opinion rejecting noble values which should be important in sport is the reason why sport is full of aggression. If winning is the most important aim for a human being, he can think that he or other people are only instruments to achieve it. In a such situation it is easy to forget about human dignity. What counts is winning at any price. The ethical value is the least important. Corruption, excessive sport commercialisation or even a pharmacological stimulants and aggression "become" something natural and acceptable. Before UEFA European Football Championship 2004 began, which took place in Portugal, bishops from this country had focused on problems that were important for sport. "We repeatedly participate in a pitiful spectacle, in which we are witnesses of aggressive behaviour towards opponents, in 'psychological warfares', due to which the final results of the game are determined off the pitch. We hear about pressure exerted on referees, about attempts to manipulate public opinion or to influence the institutions to settle controversial issues in football. In other words, football is no longer a vehicle thanks to which people can unite and to foster the community spirit. It is becoming a source of division, hatred, antagonism and violence." (OdaS 12). Bishops from Poland add that Church "is opposed to such kinds of sport in which there are phenomena of falsehood and deceit". (WODZ)

¹⁶ <http://www.ozsk.pl/?p=552> (June 2011).

Preventing aggression in sport

In its activity the Church is focused on preventing against aggression in sport. Preventing is a task that should be important for athletes, sport activists and supporters. All of them should remember that the most important aspects in sport consist in its true values. Bishops consider that "the masters are responsible, more than society, for audience, especially for people who are psychologically vulnerable. A public person may have a significant influence on large numbers of teenagers and young people, especially when life of a public person is disordered and he has wrong attitude to money, family, violence, etc." (SeVC 40) Athletes should remember that they can become role models for young people. They have to know that "their conduct on the pitch should be full of nobility, respect and love for all participants of sports competitions. In this way they can furnish moral value role model for many fans, especially for children and youth." (WODZ)

Bishops also draw attention to the negative behaviour of fans. Portuguese episcopate reminds us that "there is a phenomenon of football hooliganism which casts a shadow over world of football. These persons try to strive after the support of their football clubs in a specific way of celebration, during which it comes to acts of intolerance and aggression, ending in serious acts of vandalism. Insulting words towards opponents, racist provocations, lack of respect for persons or public property is not a good way of cooperation during the festival of sport. They do not contribute to the transformation of sport into an instrument of spreading harmony between individuals." (OdaS 13) Italian bishops emphasise that "the membership of the various football fan clubs can lead to degradation of the individual; using the mass media sport creates ambiguous and even distorted forms of membership, mutual exaltation and aggressiveness, which often exceeds the ability of self-control. Such accidents, unfortunately, become commonplace in hot and nervous atmosphere of today's stadiums, questioning the dignity of the person and sport." (SeVC 27) Polish bishops try to pay football supporters' attention to the fact that "during performances, especially football matches, they should not commit acts of violence and aggression. The good name of their team should not be defended with a stone or a knife, but their behaviour should build sports humanism and confirm its educational and ethical values". (WODZ)

Due to the fact that issue of aggression is complex, bishops from Portugal address their speech even to sports activists and journalists. "Let the sport activists protect the true meaning of the game, so that they properly guide the institutions and structures they chair, favouring transparency in sport and helping to gain respect for the institutions; let their work be impeccable and as educators they ought to promote culture of the highest values, such as

loyalty, friendship, tolerance and respect for truth; let them reject and reveal the lies, dirty business, aggression, lack of respect for the opponent. Let the journalists fulfil their duty regarding informing the public. They should avoid the dissemination of unjustified suspicions or the use of situation that might lead to tension or conflict, keeping in mind that the spread of sports culture has its origins in the dissemination of accurate and objective information, aloof from cheap sensationalism.” (OdaS 17)

The Church tries to take practical measures to prevent aggression in sport. In the first half of 2011, the Polish Episcopate objected to planned sales of alcohol during football matches. Polish Episcopate Conference Workgroup for the Apostolate of Temperance protested against these plans and showed that alcohol at football stadiums is going to reduce security and is going to affect the public health¹⁷. Allies of the Church are in this case supporters from the Polish Union of Football Supporters Associations. They are working on an act that would prohibit the sale of alcohol during sports events¹⁸.

The Polish Church decided to use the UEFA European Football Championship 2012, which takes place in Poland and Ukraine, as an opportunity to restoring positive values of sport. To achieve this goal specialists have prepared handouts of catecheses¹⁹ which can be used in lessons at primary schools, junior high schools and high schools. Subjects of these catecheses are: roles of spectators in athletes’ struggles, behaviour of athletes and coaches as people who have a major impact on the education of young people and the importance and impact of sport on society.

Another issue is preventing aggression through upbringing to sports and education through sport. The Episcopate of Italy pointed out that this task should appeal to many aspects, such as education to selflessness, competition, losing and winning. This task should be a duty of family, the Christian community, diocese, parish, public institutions, schools, sports associations, sports organisations and other formators. In Poland, education through sport and to sport is done in Catholic sports associations, such as the Salesian Organisation of the Republic of Poland SALOS, the Association Parafiada of Saint Joseph Calasanctius and the Catholic Sports Association of the Republic of Poland.

¹⁷ http://ekai.pl/wydarzenia/temat_dnia/x42809/bez-alkoholu-na-stadionach/ (June 2011).

¹⁸ <http://kibiczabezpieczenstwem.pl> (June 2011).

¹⁹ All handouts are available at the internet site <http://www.sport.episkopat.pl/euro/katechezy/> (June 2011).

Created by God in a different way. The right of disabled person to knowing God.

1. Let's first ask ourselves: who is a disabled person? A question about the identity of the disabled is therefore important as we are about to examine the possibility of knowing God by a person *created by Him in a different way*. I use this phrase on purpose, immediately directing our analysis into an existential sense rather than looking at life from medical or moral point of view. Does this mean that God wants there to be a disabled person? And if so, how such existence matters for God? And what is really the meaning in the creation of a disabled person?

John Paul II said that *every person is a reflection of a look cast on him/her by his/her environment*. We may immediately modify this sentence into a similar one: *every person is a reflection of a look cast on him/her by God*. While in the Pope's words lie the truth about the value of our existence, not only in relation to ourselves but to others as well - then the disabled person is simply a challenge to our own suffering, we can somehow deal with - so much in the second instance, there is an even greater perspective of life: we talk about a relationship which can overcome such suffering. And it is a very appealing proposition: overcoming the suffering of a disabled, looking at ourselves and the world to see the disabled in this dimension of his/her existence, which shows in our human eyes beyond physical limitations (and not as crippled, deformed, distorted or defective) (see EV 58).

The identity of the disabled therefore depends on that *reflection of a look* God has and people have (including disabled persons as well). As a result, such a *look* depends also on whether the disabled will be able to recognize themselves as valuable and full participants of human society. Other people will recognize the disabled in the same perspective. So, if disability proves to be an obstacle to the recognition of the fullness of humanity, which has a disabled person, it is then we should protest: God who created that person differently, gave to him/her the same that He gave to other people: a gift of full of life¹. And what makes this we cannot see (know), due mainly to our inability to overcome human suffering.

¹ Cf. K. Rahner, *Teologia a antropologia*, „Znak” 21 (1969), 1533-1551.

However, God created the disabled differently for one more reason. He wanted to be present in a newborn child with disabilities, and in such a person God apparently is needed to the world. And since we cannot overcome the suffering, and we can only sympathize with, it may seem very unjust from the part of God. And this disagreement has its consequences: for example, the idea of eliminating people with disabilities before they are to be born or before they are able somehow to live independently. This may be an extreme situation, however, and difficult to understand the plan of God. It's difficult to explain this to the parents of a sick child, as their child is a gift from God, and that they are in this situation as chosen by Him, as special parents².

Therefore, if we speak about the disabled person's identity, we initially assumed that he/she is really created by God in a different way. Although she/he has the same rights as everyone else - but has something special from God, which other people are not able to grasp - until they find themselves in a situation where they have the opportunity to overcome the suffering. The presence (creating) of the disabled, therefore, leads us to where we are a bit closer to God's unfathomable plan, showing a human being as a more complete sense of his/her humanity (creation). This fullness consists in existence of both ability and disability, and in their integration in such a way that the person may experience a greater fullness of life. And this needs to be in order to overcome the suffering (disability), which goes beyond this understanding of life where it counts only if physically healthy.

In professional literature the concept of disability has not yet found one universally accepted definition - it is relative to the fact that people differ from each other in many ways³. From the theological point of view the value of the human being does not depend on the physical or mental ability, but instead on the dignity that every person has from conception, and regardless of the conditions in which he/she lives or the capability of self expressing. "The disabled person, with all the limitations and suffering that scar him or her, forces us to question ourselves, with respect and wisdom, on the mystery of man. In fact, the more we move about in the dark and unknown areas of human reality, the better we understand that it

² In one newsletter «Do not be afraid», issued by the parish of the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ in Warsaw, a handicap child's mother wrote: "After the last ultrasound, we were told that our child is very sick. We did not know that the Providence had prepared for us a 'surprise' and God was giving us a special, unique baby. She was born with multiple defects (...) Our daughter is a chosen child of God, and we are chosen parents. [Happy mother]".

³ Such a definition would be important to obtain disability status, which allows to exercise certain rights and to claim for some due benefits.

is in the more difficult and disturbing situations that the dignity and grandeur of the human being emerges. The wounded humanity of the disabled challenges us to recognize, accept and promote in each one of these brothers and sisters of ours the incomparable value of the human being created by God to be a son in the Son”⁴. This important quote contains the key elements that can determine the identity of persons with disabilities.

Therapeutic value which appears from the Pope’s quotation allows us to say one more thing: the diversity characterizing the disabled is also part of our personal identity, the identity of each person⁵. It does not let us put the final confidence in what we believe is good and healthy, when God saw that everything created was very good (see Gen. 1.31)⁶. The measure of self-respect is the acceptance and adoption into our human identity of the disability, which comes to us through others. It is something more than treating people with respect. It is recognition of our own disabilities which needs God for acceptance, love and elevation. Indeed what is needed here is love, not a “repairing” or “fixing”. The fullness of humanity is, in fact, realized in the way of knowing God, who is love.

We see then that disability cannot be seen just as a problem one should take care of. The disability is for the disabled person a proper place to find God. The way to reach God may be also through formation or teaching the catechism, and even more through the Liturgy. These three means, which are usually combined, can be sometimes very limited for some persons. And they are not the only one – if not, we could not talk about the possibility of knowing God by the people with severe mental disability.

Another issue requires clarification here. We can affirm God’s will regarding the existence of the disabled – created in a *different way*; using the language of Genesis we could say: *the other day*, or in the Gospel’s language: *in a different time*. The creation of a disabled person is relevant for God’s salvation because it leads to a deeper perception of human life, moreover, allows us to see the essence of the meaning of creation. As Christ saw the leper, the woman suffering from haemorrhage, the paralyzed or at the dead Lazarus? We may need to enter into

⁴ John Paul II, Message on the occasion of the International Symposium on the Dignity and Rights of the Mentally Disabled Person, 5 January 2004, 2.

⁵ L.V. Toth writes: “Every person is ‘willed’ by God, even the one with a handicap. Everyone is entitled to his/her own value given by God. Because we are all the same and each of us has the same right to life. Through Jesus we are called to unity, and our external and internal differences are overcome and reconciled”; L.V. Toth, «Integrative kirchliche Einrichtungen», in: A. Pithan, G. Adam, R. Kollmann (eds.), *Handbuch Integrative Religionspädagogik. Reflexionen und Impulse für Gesellschaft, Schule und Gemeinde*, Gütersloh 2002, 318.

⁶ Cf. Ibid.

personal relationship with a person with disabilities, exactly as Jesus did, in order to sense and value creation in a different way. Such personal encounters inevitably requires the abandonment of what we know for sure about ourselves, about life, about happiness, indeed the abandonment of everything that we invented, planned, designed for our future. Only then, it would appear that our image of God also needs to be changed, just as sick people from the Gospel cried for change-*healing*. If we believe that God exists and that God knows every hair on our human head, it would be impossible to believe that a disability person does not make sense for Him⁷.

2. Let us go to what in the topic was formulated as a right. I would first suggest the figure of Mary Grzegorzewska, which with her motto: “there is no cripple – there is a human being” was trying to convince other people, sometimes successfully, that every child, whatever born healthy or sick, shall have the right of human dignity⁸. She teaches us today to protect the less fortunate, to stand up on the side of those who are considered weak in the eyes of the world, who sometimes have not even the right to exist. But we have to raise the question: why is there a right to exist? We need to answer to this question.

Today, every human being has the right to be protected. Such a right is meant to protect, and therefore it cannot be used against anybody, the right should always be used for the benefit of people (according to the principle: the law is for people and not people for the law). In the context of what we already know about a person with disabilities – that is, in the context of inexplicable presence of God the Creator – let us ask the question: what rights does a person with disabilities have?

The answer is actually simple: the same as other people. This is the assertion that comes from the juridical studies and can be found in many ecclesiastical and serious civil court pronouncements⁹. Since disability does not enter into the definition of being a person – and here is the foundation of human dignity – a disabled person has inalienable rights like everybody else. These rights are not acquired but innate and so cannot be violated by anyone,

⁷ Therefore, disability is a specific asset and a gift not only for disabled people, but mainly for the society they live within. See the Address of John Paul II at the Ceremony of the Anointing of the Sick given in Southwark’s Cathedral, May 28, 1982, during his Apostolic Journey to Great Britain (May 28 – June 2 1982).

⁸ Cf. K. M. Lausch, *Teoretyczne podstawy katechizacji osób głębiej upośledzonych umysłowo*, Warszawa 1987, 5.

⁹ Cf. A. Dzięgiel, «Prawa edukacyjne osób niepełnosprawnych (prawo międzynarodowe i polskie)», in: J. Stala (ed.), *Katecheza specjalna dzisiaj. Problemy i wyzwania*, Kielce 2003, 133-151.

including any public authority¹⁰. Thus, once again, a disabled person has the same rights enjoyed by every human being. A defective fetus is human. Handicapped, sick and dying person does not cease to be human. How can any disease make someone less human¹¹? So this is the first and fundamental right we are talking about: the right to be treated equally because of human dignity.

By saying that a disabled person has been created by God *in a different way*, we need, however, to define this statement more precisely. For some time now, there has been created in various parts of the world's programs integrating disabled people within the rest of society (integration schools)¹². These initiatives come from the awareness that a disabled person is an integral part of society, an integral part of life. Only with such acceptance does the reality of

¹⁰ Cf. W. Chudy, «Sens filozoficzny kondycji człowieka niepełnosprawnego», in: D. Kornas-Biela (ed.), *Osoba niepełnosprawna i jej miejsce w społeczeństwie*, Lublin 1988, 107-108, 433. For more about the personality of human being and his/her rights see: F. Compagnoni, *Prawa człowieka: geneza, historia i zaangażowanie chrześcijańskie*, Kraków 2000. John Paul II wrote also about the subjectivity and human rights of disabled questioned in nowadays; see for example Encyclical letter *Evangelium vitae* (1995) or Apostolic letter *Salvifici doloris* (1984). "The so-called 'culture of well-being' often involves an inability to see life's meaning in the situations of suffering and debilitation that accompany human beings as they approach death. This inability is all the worse when it occurs in a humanism closed to the transcendent, and is often expressed as a loss of trust in the value of the human person and life"; from John Paul II' talk on the dignity of the dying in address to the Pontifical Academy for Life, February 27, 1999.

¹¹ "In opposition to such trends of thought, I feel the duty to reaffirm strongly that the intrinsic value and personal dignity of every human being does not change, no matter what the concrete circumstances of his or her life may be. A man, even if seriously ill or disabled in the exercise of his highest functions, is and always will be a man, and he will never become a 'vegetable' or an 'animal'. Even our brothers and sisters who find themselves in the clinical condition of a "vegetative state" retain their human dignity in all its fullness. The loving gaze of God the Father continues to fall upon them, acknowledging them as his sons and daughters, especially in need of help"; Address of John Paul II to the Participants at the International Congress: «Life Sustaining Treatments and the Vegetative State: Scientific Advances and Ethical Dilemmas», March 20, 2004.

¹² The integration in the educational process takes place in the family, at school and among peers and adults. Among many educational concepts dominate two: total integration and partial integration. The aim is to provide a total integration of persons with disabilities, to allow them to lead a normal life having the same opportunities as other members of specific social groups. Integration into the school - which is more complicated because it is not always possible to prepare disabled children for learning with other students - is to enable a disabled child study in the community of their peers with no handicap. So far, there have been highlighted the following forms of education of children and youth with disabilities: Special classes, remedial and compensatory teams, organized learning of individuals at home and integrated teaching (along with disabled peers). A special contemporary education implies a complete rehabilitation in the facilities that are open to the outside world; cf. R. Kościelak, *Funkcjonowanie psychospołeczne osób niepełnosprawnych umysłowo*, Warszawa 1996, 12-23.

life become full or more complete. While the notion of fullness of life is not simply a sum of different ways of life, but an indication of the presence of all aspects of life or most of the qualities of life that a single person can enjoy in the on constant act of creation. Disability, although it seems to be a lack of something, in fact in the act of creation is replaced by the exceptional quality of life, thanks to which humanity can not be reduced to biological (i.e., healthy body) or psychological needs (e.i., healthy emotions), but thanks for the disabled person whose human rights are gaining a unique character¹³. On one hand it is a manifestation of the law and in this sense is a challenge to the world (which would prefer to avoid suffering, to eliminate pain); on the other hand, it allows access to greater humanity¹⁴. Therefore if we say, for example, the right to life, if we are talking about specific disabilities the right to life, the lack of which is more than absence. Next, if we are talking about the right to freedom, as in the case of the disabled, who sometimes rely completely on other people, we see that if it missing there is something more than slavery. And if we talk about human rights to property, in case of some specific disability the lack of it is more than sacrifice. In this sense, we say that respecting the right of the disabled to all this, we are on the side of what is weak in the eyes of the world, and even what is not. It is the presence of a disabled living within society that reminds us that what is fragile, has its own unique quality¹⁵. Accepting a disabled under

¹³ “In this regard, the care of the emotional and sexual dimensions of disabled persons deserves special attention. This aspect is often ignored, glossed over and reduced or even dealt with ideologically. Instead, the sexual dimension is a constitutive dimension of the human being as such, created in the image of the God of Love and called from the outset to find fulfilment in the encounter with others and in communion. The premise for the emotional-sexual education of disabled persons is inherent in the conviction that their need for love is at least as great as anyone else’s. They too need to love and to be loved, they need tenderness, closeness and intimacy. Unfortunately, the fact is that disabled persons find themselves living these legitimate and natural needs in a disadvantaged situation that becomes more and more obvious as they grow from infancy to adulthood. Despite the damage to the mind and the interpersonal dimension, disabled people seek authentic relationships in which they can find appreciation and recognition as persons”; John Paul II, Message on the occasion of the International Symposium on the Dignity and Rights of the Mentally Disabled Person, 5 January 2004, 5.

¹⁴ Which does not mean abandonment of helping to relief a person who suffer, nevertheless only by overcoming the suffering (and not its elimination) there can be a real way to remedy human misery.

¹⁵ John Paul II wrote: “Disabled people are, instead, living icons of the crucified Son. They reveal the mysterious beauty of the One who emptied himself for our sake and made himself obedient unto death. They show us, over and above all appearances, that the ultimate foundation of human existence is Jesus Christ. It is said, justifiably so, that disabled people are humanity’s privileged witnesses. They can teach everyone about the love that saves us; they can become heralds of a new world, no longer dominated by force, violence and aggression, but by love, solidarity and acceptance, a new world transfigured by the light of Christ, the Son of God who became incarnate,

our roof (expression adopted from the Roman Missal: I'm alone, my soul), is recognizing that what is weak and fragile in the eyes of the world, seemingly missing something - has the right to exist, and even to manifest itself as it is coming from God, fully valued and experienced for the new world and new earth. What we are talking about in the catechetical and religious sense means conversion and transformation, something that can therefore be concluded in this way: a disabled person has a special right from God, even a privilege of introducing into the reality of humanity a certain depth, a new quality. Furthermore, a disabled person can help others to a better and deeper participation in the fullness of life.

Having said that, we still are aware that a disabled may fear the world. Facing this fear, the Church invites the disabled to get to know God. But is he/she able - because of his/her physical and mental condition - to participate in the process of cognition? And if so, how?

3. But what is knowledge of God? We know that it is not just some kind of theoretical knowledge. The prophet Hosea cries: "Let us acknowledge the Lord; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth" (Hosea 6, 3). We see from this quote that the knowledge of God is not difficult. It appears as something very natural, like a nature phenomena and almost without our participation. We see immediately that the knowledge of God is more His own initiative - He makes Himself known and allows to be found. Human involvement here is associated only with the specific mode of awareness. Jesus says: He who has ears, let hear - directing our attention to what can be heard. But - as heard, and did not believe - we know that it is not a simple sensory experience.

How do we associate the knowledge of God with a disability? Recalling once again our human rebellion against the presence of suffering in the world, we see a disabled person coming into this world as an inscrutable mystery, which may provoke in us a kind of disbelief. This disbelief, in a certain sense, is something we need very much: it make us ready to deal with larger, more important questions than those that we asked ourselves previously, the questions that reach to the very essence of creation, and perhaps even the nature of God (in case when our disbelief may question that He is love). Giving up the confrontation with this disbelief is, in fact, our surrender of trying to get to know God, who is not ashamed of his

who was crucified and rose for us"; John Paul II, Message on the occasion of the International Symposium on the Dignity and Rights of the Mentally Disabled Person, 5 January 2004, 6.

creation. Sometimes, only in the context of certain disability or suffering, we can understand that positive religious experiences of the mystery of God, that His presence is also hidden in failures, suffering, injustice, loneliness, helplessness. All this is what a disability may illustrate from one point of view.

Here is one more reason why we call the disabled a creation *in a different way*: God gives a disabled person a direct involvement in that part of His pain, which creates a new kind of life (prophet Isaiah wrote that *by his wounds we are healed*; Isaiah 53: 5). And in that sense to know God for the disabled can mean: to agree on how he/she was created. But surely this is much (or more) difficult as for us as it is difficult to accept the disabled with joy into the house and accept his/her presence in our world as something meaningful. This acceptance provides the answer to the question of what does it mean to know the Lord (at least for Christians). And this means that the mindfulness with which disabled persons should be treated is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. This is a mystery of mercy, which carries a deep life relationship with Christ, inviting Him under our roof. This is the goal of our catechetical activities (see GDC 80)¹⁶.

The knowledge of God, therefore, is related to the experience, sometimes mystical, of God the Creator. It is the experience of His will, which implements the plan for the salvation of human being - that is, finding a life (new life), which has been lost (see Genesis). All of catechetical activity, which is incorporated in the plan of salvation, tends to show God bringing every person closer to the source of life. It consists not so much in providing the knowledge (which is also important and very useful for students motivated to explore the world in the perspective which goes beyond the empirical data), but more in deepening the relationships between people, which carry the love of Christ¹⁷. So we can say that the disabled - who by virtue of His creation is itself a sign of God's love - is entitled to a response from other people. In this way, he/she knows what love is and who the Creator is. And if because of his/her disability he/she is deprived of such consciousness (of course only in the sense in which we use the consciousness), there is always someone who helps to perceive it, specifically in the context of creation – a deepening self-awareness¹⁸.

¹⁶ Holy See document: “General Directory for Catechesis” issued by the Congregation for the Clergy, August 11, 1997.

¹⁷ W. Kornilowicz said: “That is the secret of the saints, their holiness manifests itself primarily in their relationship with people; T. Mazowiecki, *Ludzie Lasek*, Warszawa 1987, 117.

¹⁸ We can also add that if the knowledge of God involves the whole person: mind, emotions, ability to trust, life's experiences, in the case of a disability means the opportunities available to that person.

We must reaffirm – especially as believers in God, that a disabled person should be concretely integrated through universal access to religious instruction: the children, adolescents and adults. A family catechesis is most urgently needed because of the favourable environment for a better efficiency. However, the right we acknowledge to the disabled requires their presence in the public. General Directory for Catechesis says, and even strongly points to the need of catechesis for every human being: “Every Christian community considers those who suffer handicaps, physical or mental, as well as other forms of disability—especially children—as persons particularly beloved of the Lord. A growth in social and ecclesial consciousness, together with undeniable progress in specialized pedagogy, makes it possible for the family and other formative centres to provide adequate catechesis for these people, who, as baptized, have this right and, if non-baptized, because they are called to salvation. The love of the Father for the weakest of his children and the continuous presence of Jesus and His Spirit give assurance that every person, however limited, is capable of growth in holiness” (GDC 189)¹⁹. The legal acts issued in the last half-century by various international and national institutions affirm that disabled people deserve special protection, including having - like others - the right to education²⁰. We realize that learning about the world without seeing it from many different perspectives, especially understanding the ultimate meaning of human life and suffering would deprive something relevant. For a person with a disability it would mean a denial of his/her capacity to experience such love, by which every act of creation - including his/her disability, brings sense. Even if a person, because of his/her disability, is not able to

¹⁹ In this spirit was written the Foundation for the Program of the Catechesis of the Catholic Church in Poland: “Catechesis of people with special needs is addressed to all those who for various reasons, require other forms of catechesis than that which the Program indicates for preschool catechesis and the catechesis corresponding all the stages of school education” (98). Much more specific are the guidelines of the document about the care of the disabled, issued in 1998 by the Episcopal Conference of England and Wales: *Valuing Difference: People with disabilities in the life and mission of the Church*. This document shows the central role that disabled people are to play in the life and mission of the Church. These ideas were extended in the following document (2005): *Diversity and Equality Guidelines*. The second document recognizes the central role of disabilities in the life of the Church and recommend to include them in the pastoral, spiritual, liturgical, social and educational dimensions of the life of the Church.

²⁰ We may recall At his point the Fifth principle of the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child: “The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition” (1959). The Warsaw Declaration calls on all people of good will to respect the dignity of persons with mental handicap and to provide for them conditions for full development; cf. J. Wyczesany, *Pedagogika upośledzonych umysłowo*, 2002.

comprehend such reasoning, it is contact with someone (for example, a teacher of religion) who shows him/her love, that the process of salvation starts and its most important consequence is the renewal of creation. In theology we call this a *divinization* - a union with Christ, present in every human person.

Therefore, the task of integration of disabled people in all spheres of social life is still valid. It also requires continuous improvement of methods of education working with a student with disabilities. Every child is a unique gift from God, and as a particular vocation for the catechesis should be to show the value of this gift. A disabled person, by virtue of the rights that flow from God's saving plan - the creation *in a different way*, should find in catechesis an adequate space to get to know the Creator. Perhaps in this lies the biggest, most important reason to organize religious instruction for persons with disabilities.

4. In conclusion, I quote the words of Prof. Waclaw Hryniewicz: "In most religions, believers unite the concept of God with the idea of fullness and perfection. Fullness disclaims any lack. Meanwhile, the idea of a state of kenosis is voluntarily chosen. Christ emptied Himself, divested Himself of divine glory due to him, only to find Himself close to people, close to the feeling of emptiness and abandonment. Such an interpretation of the kenosis of Christ reveals the extraordinary depth of God's plan. It implies the fullness of wealth, abundance and power. Nakedness and emptiness express the desire to go forward, the assimilation, or the mystery of love. God transcends Himself toward the opposite expectation of humanity. God becomes a humble, somewhat in the shadow of elimination. It is not God in all His fullness and power, which overwhelms and attract the attention of people. It is a God who is able to diminish Himself. In this way He can expect a voluntary response from His creation"²¹.

In the right of a disabled person to know God is reflected very clearly the idea of the incarnation of God. If the role of the catechesis is to unite man with Christ, we must remember that Christ is crucified, the disabled - in a world created perfect by God. The meaning of the Incarnation is therefore even more significant in the light of human disability and - through it - a more complete picture of God whose excellence is based not on some perfectionism but for a specific charity. The world of suffering is involved in the mission of the Son of God, in God's action²². God becomes man and is ready, He wants to be disabled.

²¹ W. Hryniewicz, *Nadzieja drogą teologa*, in: *Nowe światło. Kościół a teologia dwudziestego wieku*, Kraków 2008, 236-237.

²² Cf. O. Fuchs, *Wprowadzenie do teologii wyzwolenia*, 204.

Thanks to His saving initiative we see more of this saving, full reality – which is the condition to transcend ourselves, indicating the openness to the infinite due to the fact that what is finite cannot satisfy the human being.

The catechesis takes into account this perspective, thus including the right of the disabled to meet with God the Creator, in God's Son present in humanity, in every human being, and integrating his/her experience of happiness and unhappiness. We can say that the integrative catechesis describes the best atmosphere in which we meet God in the fullness of His love. And in this sense, the right of the disabled to know God becomes a grace which transforms what is weak and brittle in this person, so God, the Creator of heaven and earth, may become everything for everybody. Furthermore, such a catechesis can give in a sense, a strong foundation for any teaching and educational activity which triggers the enthusiasm of those who work with disabled people, seeing in them their own fragility and through it - the living Christ.

The Objectives of the New Evangelization

When discerning the signs of the times both John Paul II and Benedict XVI not only put forward a thesis about the need for world renewal, but also pointed to the vital work needed to support the renewal, which is the new evangelization. First and foremost, the new evangelization represents the attitude of a Christian – it is an act of trust in Christ who makes all things new. It is also an act of courage and enthusiasm to change the face of the earth. Finally, it is the joyful Christian testimony that the Gospel is always contemporary, yet it must be proclaimed with renewed zeal and fervour, with new methods and means as well as taking into account the new areas of human life.¹ The lifestyle of believers calls for genuine credibility.

John Paul II claimed that the new evangelization is necessary for the most fundamental reason, and not only for a purely situational one, namely: “this [evangelization] challenge is posed not so much by the social and cultural milieu which she [the Church] encounters in the course of the history of how the order of the Risen Christ defines the very reason for the Church's existence: «Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation! »” (Veritatis splendour 106).²

¹ Exhortation of Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii nuntiandi* and a number of addresses of Pope John Paul II on the new evangelization have contributed to the publishing of new theological publications. There are many of them in Polish, too. These include: J. Salij, *Ewangelizacja: uwagi elementarne (Evangelization: Elementary Remarks)*, Znak 10 (1992), pp. 4-16; *Nowa ewangelizacja (The New Evangelization)*, “Communio” collection, vol. 8, ed. L. Balter, S. Dusza, F. Mickiewicz, S. Stancel, Poznań 1993; *Nowa ewangelizacja odpowiedzią na wyzwania obecnego czasu (The New Evangelization as an Answer to the Challenges of the Present Times)*, ed. by K. Góźdz, Lublin 1993; A. Lewek, *Nowa ewangelizacja w duchu Soboru Watykańskiego II (The New Evangelization in the Spirit of the Second Vatican Council)*, vol. I, Katowice 1995; K. Pawlina, *Nowa ewangelizacja i jej realizacja w Polsce po 1989 roku (The New Evangelization and Its Execution in Poland after 1989)*, Warsaw 1995; W. Seremak, *Miłosierdzie Boże a nowa ewangelizacja. Znaki czasu (The Divine Mercy and the New Evangelization. The Signs of the Times)*, Lublin 2001, pp. 15-38; J. Przybyłowski, *Znaczenie nowej ewangelizacji dla duszpasterstwa młodzieży (The Significance of the New Evangelization for the Ministry of the Youth)*, Lublin 2001; W. Przyczyna, *Teologia ewangelizacji (The Theology of Evangelization)*, Kraków 1992; K. Jeżyna, *Moralne przesłanie nowej ewangelizacji. Wezwanie do odnowy Kościoła i świata (The Moral Message of the New Evangelization. A Call for the Church and World's Renewal)*, Lublin 2002; *Ibid.*, *Maryjny wymiar nowej ewangelizacji w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II (Marian Dimension of the New Evangelization in the Teaching of John Paul II)*, *Salvatoris Mater* 5 (2003), pp. 278-298; Cz. Parzyszek, *Nowa ewangelizacja – drogą Kościoła do nadziei. Refleksje w oparciu o nauczanie Jana Pawła II (The New Evangelization – the Church's Road to Hope. Reflections Based on John Paul II's Teaching)*, Ząbki 2010; *Ewangelizacja odpowiedzią Kościoła w Polsce na wyzwania współczesności (Evangelization as an Answer of the Church in Poland to the Challenges of the Modern Day)*, ed. by W. Przygoda, E. Robek, Sandomierz 2011.

² We can view the need for evangelization from two perspectives: a doctrinal one and a cariological one. The doctrinal perspective allows us to understand the very essence of the Church as the evangelization message is not

In *Christifideles laici*, a post-synodal apostolic exhortation, in the section entitled “The Hour Has Come for a Re-Evangelization”, we find a profound and exhaustive substantiation of the need for the new evangelization, which is also presented with regards to the new situation of the world. The new evangelization is necessary as a result of the constant spreading of indifference, secularism and atheism, which particularly concerns traditionally Catholic countries. “Whole countries and nations where religion and the Christian life were formerly flourishing and capable of fostering a viable and working community of faith, now face a severe test, and in some cases, are even undergoing a radical transformation, as a result of the spread of indifference to religion, secularism and atheism. This is of particular concern to countries and nations of the so-called First World, in which economic well-being and consumerism, even if coexistent with an unparalleled situation of poverty and misery, promotes the principal of a life lived «as if God did not exist». This indifference to religion and the practice of religion devoid of true meaning in the face of life's very serious problems are nonetheless as alarming and destructive as explicit atheism itself. Sometimes the Christian faith, while maintaining some of the externals of its tradition and rituals, tends to be separated from those moments of human existence which have the most significance, such as, birth, suffering and death. In such cases, the questions and formidable enigmas posed by these situations, if remaining without responses, expose contemporary people to overwhelming despair and disillusion or to the temptation of eliminating the truly humanizing dimension of life implicit in these problems” (ChL 34).

According to John Paul II, the objective of the new evangelization is not only to respond to the challenges the Church has to face and to try to cope with them in this way, but, above all, to seek to complete a certain positive programme seen as a task for not only the whole Church, but also for particular continents and countries. The task consists of the renewal of the world, the rebuilding of this worldly order according to the evangelical principles, the formation of a new man and a new community and the building of the civilization of love. The Church is an institution commissioned to evangelize, and to proclaim the Good News to all people as well as being a depositary for the preservation of this Good

an addition but belongs to the essence of the Church. The cariological perspective indicates that the need for the new evangelization stems from the new situation of the modern world, thus, new challenges and threats, including threats to new opportunities and possibilities of preaching the Gospel. The Church has always embarked on the evangelization mission taking the conditions of a particular period in history into consideration. While participating in the doing of the new evangelization, the Church should contribute to the renewal and transformation of the world.

News.³ The general objective of the new evangelization is set in such a way that it should lead to the building of the Christian communion. The building, reinforcing and enhancing the unity of faith among the community of believers is the main goal of the new evangelization (cf. San José 2nd March 1983).⁴

It concerns the permeation of faith into the hearts of people, in particular, youths, educated people, workers and their families as well as social and political structures.⁵ The new evangelization is to help return to the moral and cultural values instilled in the Christian tradition, as well as helping Christians discover their identity and enabling them to build a new civilization and contribute to the development of a strong faith of a new society.⁶ The point is to build a new mankind through developing in the world a new lifestyle and a new social bond by respecting the evangelical principles, in particular, of love and solidarity.⁷ To renew the temporal order so as to shape it to suit the greatness of man, it is necessary that all Christians join in.⁸

John Paul II pointed out that the objective of the new evangelization also includes: the renewal of the temporal order so as to suit the greatness of man;⁹ putting people right with God and supporting people and nations' endeavours to reconcile and unite;¹⁰ bringing new hope and new joy;¹¹ offering the world the lifestyle of Christian civilization;¹² inoculating believers with aspiration for holiness, enabling them to rediscover the Christian values and their reception as well as offering assistance in being faithful to Jesus Christ, and overcoming

³ Cf. John Paul II, *Przesłanie Ojca Świętego do uczestników Międzynarodowych Kongresów Mariologicznego i Maryjnego w Huelvie (Message of the Holy Father to the Participants in the International Mariological and Marian Congresses in Huelva)*, OR 14 (1993), no 1, p. 10-11; A. Kmiecik, *Posyłam was. Misja Chrystusa Odkupiciela powierzona Kościołowi (I Send Thee. Christ the Redeemer's Mission Entrusted to the Church)*, Warsaw 1995, pp. 78-80. W. Seremak, *Miłosierdzie Boże a nowa ewangelizacja. Znaki czasu (The Divine Mercy and the New Evangelization. The Signs of the Times)*, op. cit., p. 191.

⁴ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Możemy ująć w ręce ster naszej historii (We Can Be At the Helm of Our History)*, OR 4(1983), no. 3, pp. 31-22.

⁵ Cf. id. *Nowa ewangelizacja, postęp człowieka, kultura chrześcijańska (The New Evangelization, Man's Progress, Christian Culture)*, OR 13(1992, no. 12, pp. 28-30; *ibid. Eucharystia i ewangelizacja (The Eucharist and Evangelization)*, [Natal 13.X.1991], OR 12(1991), no. 11, pp. 5-6.

⁶ Cf. id. „*Okaż, żeś jest Matką*” (*Show That You Are a Mother*), OR 12(1991), no. 11, p. 7; *ibid. Co to jest wiara (What is Faith)*, OR 12(1991), no. 11, pp. 13-15; K. Pawlina, *Nowa ewangelizacja i jej realizacja w Polsce po 1989 roku (The New Evangelization and its Introduction in Poland After 1989)*, op.cit., pp. 57-66.

⁷ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Program ewangelicznej odnowy świata, ludzi i struktur (Program of Evangelical Renewal of the World, People and Structures)*, OR 4(1983), no. 5-6, p. 6; *ibid. Pomóżcie budować społeczeństwo nowe (Help Build a New Society)*, OR 4(1983), no. 5-6, p. 14-15.

⁸ Cf. id. *Musimy przygotować dla jutra świat na miarę wielkości człowieka (We Must Prepare the World for Tomorrow to Suit the Greatness of Man)*, OR 4(1983), no 7-8, pp. 11-12.

⁹ Cf. id. *Kulturalna wspólnota kontynentu nie jest zrozumiała bez chrześcijańskiego orędzia*, OR 4(1983), nr 9, s. 14.

¹⁰ *Ibid. Kościół i świat w przededniu wielkiego Jubileuszu Roku Dwutysięcznego*, OR 5(1984), nr 1-2, s.14-15; J. Rodriguez, *Nowa ewangelizacja Europy w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II*, w: *Nowa Ewangelizacja* (kolekcja „Communio”, t. 8), Pallottinum, Poznań 1993, s. 175-179.

¹¹ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Głosząc Ewangelię pokoju, niesiecie nową nadzieję*, OR 5(1984), nr 6, s. 25-26.

¹² Cf. id. *Zaproponujcie światu model cywilizacji chrześcijańskiej*, OR 6(1985), nr 2, s. 14.

distrust and divisions.¹³ The new evangelization is supposed to make everyone hear Christ's message, learn that God loves them. It expects them to become converted, which should be linked with a transformation of not only personal life, but also a renewal of family life and a transformation of social structures in a way which would respect the requirements of justice.¹⁴

John Paul II included in the new evangelization the renewal of the Christian fabric of society and formation of genuine Christians;¹⁵ making the present-day world a world which is genuinely human, more worthy of being inhabited by man who is called to be in communion with God and the gradual "transformation" of the human community into the kingdom of God. Referring to Europe the Pope said that the objective of the new evangelization is to build a civilization of tomorrow, to rebuild the culture of Europe and renew the society in order to restore and revive Europe's identity in the power of Christ's message.¹⁶ The new evangelization of Latin America was supposed to bring the renewal of faithfulness to the Gospel,¹⁷ aid the promotion of justice and peace and bring about a just division of wealth and respect for the dignity of the human being.¹⁸ The Holy Father expects that by engaging in the new evangelization we will work out a new model of evangelization, and he called to build a new just society quoting the principles of such an evangelization.¹⁹ John Paul II wrote in his message to the youth of the world²⁰ about the civilization of love as a task believers are facing.

In the *Christifideles laici* exhortation we can read that the objective of the new evangelization is the continuing formation of mature Church communities. Faith in such communities should transpire and become realized "as an adherence to the person of Christ and His Gospel, as an encounter and sacramental communion with Him, and as an existence lived in charity and in service" (ChL 34). The new evangelization is connected with John Paul

¹³ Cf. id. *Nowa ewangelizacja* [Lima 2.II.1985], OR 6(1985), nr 3, s.19-20.

¹⁴ Cf. id. *Ewangelizacja* [Piura 4.II.1985], OR 6(1985), nr 3, s. 24-25.

¹⁵ Cf. id, *Wobec nowych potrzeb ewangelizacji*, OR 6(1985), nr nadzw. II, s.25; tenże, *Pole działania jest ogromne* [Liège 19.V.1985], OR nr nadzw. II, s.34-35; tenże, *Misja biskupów w Indiach*, OR 7(1986), nr 1, s. 18-19.

¹⁶ Cf. id, *Chrześcijańska tożsamość Europy*, OR 7(1986), nr 5, s. 17; J. Rodriguez, *Nowa ewangelizacja Europy w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II*, w: *Nowa Ewangelizacja* (kolekcja „Communio”, t. 8), dz. cyt., s. 165-171, 175-176.

¹⁷ Cf. Jan Paweł II, „*Odwagi, Ja jestem, nie bójcie się!*”, OR 8(1987), nr 4, s. 17.

¹⁸ Cf. id, *Nowa ewangelizacja*, [Salto, 9.V.1988], s. 19-20.

¹⁹ Cf. id, *Macie budować społeczeństwo sprawiedliwe*, OR 7(1986), nr 7, s. 4-5.

²⁰ Cf. *Orędzie Jana Pawła II do młodzieży całego świata z Okazji Światowego Dnia Młodzieży*, OR 7(1986), nr 11-12, s. 13; Jan Paweł II, *Jako apostołowie nowej ewangelizacji budujecie cywilizację miłości*, OR 8(1987), nr 6, s. 27-28.

II's striving to build in the name of Jesus Christ, a society which is just, free and reconciled, freed from all forms of idolatry.²¹

The new evangelization – as formulated by John Paul II – is also supposed to restore unity among Christians, thus serve ecumenism, but also help local Churches develop as well as strengthen the bond with the Holy See.²² Apart from that, the new evangelization should contribute to the building of a new generation, with people of God acting as kind of “living stones” and the Church where the fullness of life should be brought back to its Christian roots. People united by God should contribute to building a new world where selfless love will prevail.²³

During his fourth pilgrimage to Poland (2nd June 1991) in Rzeszów, John Paul II said that today we need new faith, new hope and new love, and, in addition, that we need to renew our awareness of God's law and be redeemed by Christ. This goal, though set for the Polish Church, refers to the task lying before the whole Church.²⁴ He reminded the people that Europe needs re-evangelization. He explained that the objective of the new evangelization is to revive the presence of the Church in the vast field of Christian love and mercy as well as in culture and the transformations which were taking place after 1989 both in Poland and Europe, and, generally, in the world as well.

The goal of the new evangelization is for the eternal truth of God to reach man and society in a new way, thus, to make the Church read God's plan to a fuller extent and fulfil it, doing it in such a way so as to make it the most adequate response to the needs of our times, to make it “fit our times”.²⁵ In Olsztyn, on 6th June 1991, John Paul II said that Christians are charged with a task of rebuilding the Church and building a Church of the third millennium, which will be completed if believers adopt a new lifestyle of being Catholic characterized by the fact that they would become an evangelical leaven.

The objective of the new evangelization is also the Church's renewal so as it may enter the third millennium with a new force. In Fatima, on 13th May 1991, while referring to the *Christifideles laici* apostolic exhortation John Paul II stated again that the restoration of the Christian fabric of the Christian communities themselves in countries dominated by secularism and de-Christianization is necessary to enable the restoration of the Christian

²¹ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Rozpoczęta przed 500 laty ewangelizacja trwa nadal*, OR 11(1990), nr 6, s. 7-8; tenże, *Z Chrystusem jesteście silni*, OR 11(1990), nr 6, s. 9-10.

²² Cf. id., *Co Duch Święty mówi Kościołowi przez doświadczenie wschodniej i zachodniej Europy*, OR 11(1990), nr 6, s. 1, 16-17.

²³ Cf. id., *Życie pełni nadziei, naśladowując Chrystusa*, OR 11(1990), nr 6, s. 20-21.

²⁴ Cf. id., *Chrześcijananie w pełnym tego słowa znaczeniu*, OR 12(1991), nr 5, s. 14-16.

²⁵ Cf. id., *By szukać skutecznych dróg reewangelizacji chrześcijańskiej Europy*, OR 12(1991), nr 5, s. 51.

fabric of the whole human community.²⁶ These words contain a vision of unity of the whole Church, the new society and the civilization of love. Achieving the objective is a prospective task for the new evangelization. In the *Letter of the Holy Father John Paul II to the Bishops of the European Continent*, addressed to those of Fatima, also on 13th May 1991, this objective was clearly presented. Emphasis was put on the need to bring the nations and states of the European continent closer, to make them cooperate with each other and to make the values of both spiritual traditions of Europe meet. Making nations learn about each other and exchange their values was also emphasised.²⁷ It must be noted that an objective of the new evangelization, set in such a way, incorporates the issue of ecumenism and stems from the striving for unity of the whole Church.

During a general audience (23rd October 1991) while giving an account of the visit to Brazil held from 12th to 21st October 1991, John Paul II said that that task of the new evangelization is the transformation of the world in the spirit of Christ's Gospel, the shaping of new Christians so as to make them ready to start building the civilization of love.²⁸ During the visit of Brazilian bishops "ad limina" on 10th September 2010, Benedict XVI also reminded people of the need of the new evangelization as many Catholics leave the Church while we observe a rapid expansion of Protestant Evangelical and Pentecostal communities.²⁹

According to John Paul II the objective of the new evangelization is the reconciliation of people with God and our neighbours as well as the reconciliation of nations on an international level. He noticed that the unification of the European continent on the principles of the Gospel will create for the Church an opportunity to proclaim to the world the truth about Christ's kingdom.³⁰ During a Christmas Eve meeting with Poles on 24th December 1991 John Paul II said that the aim of the new evangelization is the renewal of man, the nation and humanity, which is caused by Christ arriving as truth and a source of every renewal.³¹

The new evangelization is also the carrying of Jesus Christ's message to all corners of the World because the anticipation of salvation is great. The act of proclaiming the Gospel must be constant and never cease therefore, assuring that Christ would be recognized by future generations and, thus, people reconciled with God would build a new society. The new

²⁶ Cf. id., *W światłach Fatimy nowa ewangelizacja Europy*, OR 12(1991), nr 7, s. 23-24; ChL 34.

²⁷ Cf. *List Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II do Braci w biskupstwie na kontynencie europejskim*, OR 12(1991), nr 5, s. 25-26; W. Seremak, *Miłosierdzie Boże a nowa ewangelizacja*, dz. cyt., s. 197.

²⁸ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Odwiedziny Kościoła na „Kontynencie nadziei”*, OR 12(1991), nr 11, s. 3-4.

²⁹ <http://www.deon.pl/religia/kosciol-i-swiat/z-zycia-kosciola/art.,3007,brazylia-potrzebujenowej-ewangelizacji.html>

³⁰ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Przynaglenni miłością Chrystusa*, OR 13(1992), nr 1, s. 45.

³¹ Cf. id., *Dojrzewanie w wolności odzyskanej*, OR 13(1992), nr 1, s.64.

evangelization is to announce to the world the most vital and invariable Christian truth that God loves every man and that Christ came to earth for our salvation;³² it is supposed to bring about peace to our society since the Gospel, if accepted and introduced to life, leads man along the road of justice and is a daily light for him, helping to make the right decisions.³³ It is supposed to help people live in the newness of the Gospel, thus, a new life in Christ, bringing unity between the Gospel and the life of a Christian, and contributing to expansion of the Christian culture and the civilization of love in the world.³⁴

Adoption of the new evangelization should stir up the apostolic enthusiasm in Christians again and encourage them to take new evangelization initiatives worldwide. It should also provide a stimulus which would bring favourable times for evangelization (Santo Domingo 9th to 14th October 1992). The new evangelization is supposed to fortify the Catholic faith in the revealed fundamental truths in such a way that it would result in the renewal of personal, family and social life.³⁵ The goal of the new evangelization is an adequate response to “the signs of the times”, the needs of people and societies living at the end of the 20th century, their endeavours to bring justice and peace to the world and to deepen and promote the Christian culture as well as to form a new man.³⁶

In a speech delivered on 15 January 1993 to the second group of Polish bishops visiting the Holy See *ad limina Apostolorum*, John Paul II said that the goal of the new stage of evangelization of the modern world is to change the face of the earth through preaching the truth about God and man based on the Gospel,³⁷ as well as the realization among believers of the ideal of holiness which is to be manifested in the evidence of faith and love shown in daily life, and in taking specific actions.³⁸ The aim of the new evangelization is also to bring about a moral renewal since it results from the recognition and fulfilment of the teachings of Jesus Christ and following Him (cf. VS 106-108).

During the 8th World Youth Day in Denver (14 August 1993) John Paul II said that the objective of the new evangelization is to build a civilization of justice and love, and to

³² Cf. id., *Kościół patrzy na Maryję z nadzieją*, OR 13(1992), nr 2, s.30-31; A. Silvestrini, *Nowa ewangelizacja w świecie współczesnym*, w: *Nowa ewangelizacja*, kolekcja „Communio”, t. 8, dz. cyt. s. 185-186.

³³ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Upowszechniajcie kulturę życia*, OR (13(1992), nr 7, s. 22-24.

³⁴ Cf. id., *Pięćset lat ewangelizacji Angoli*, OR 13(1992), nr 8-9, s. 31-33.

³⁵ Cf. id., *Nowa ewangelizacja, postęp człowieka, kultura chrześcijańska*, OR 13(1992), nr 12, s. 22-31; O. Degrijse, *Od „Ad gentes” przez „Evangelii nuntiandi” do „Redemptoris Missio”*, w: *Nowa ewangelizacja* kolekcja „Communio”, t. 8, dz. cyt. s. 118-120.

³⁶ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Pielgrzymka dziękczynienia, prześlągania i nowego początku*, OR 13(1992), nr 12, s. 4-5.

³⁷ Cf. id., *Kościół na polskiej ziemi wobec nowych zadań*, OR 14(1993), nr 2, s.19-22.

³⁸ Cf. id., *Nowa ewangelizacja musi owocować świętością*, OR 14(1993), nr 8-9, s. 22-24.

protect human life and respect man's dignity.³⁹ While in the message for the 9th and 10th World Youth Day published on 21st November 1993, John Paul II wrote that the goal of the new evangelization is to proclaim to the world the evangelical message of reconciliation and peace, thus a call for reconciliation with God, which is, above all, a personal destiny of every baptized man as well as all human family. This goal is to build peace in the world.⁴⁰ During a general audience (16 March 1994) John Paul II – referring to the apostolic exhortation *Christifideles laici* – said that the objective of the new evangelization is also to form church communities which are to be composed of Christians who are conscious and persistent in faith. These can revive societies from within, particularly where the Redeemer is unknown or forgotten, or where the Bond between the culture and the Gospel is weak.⁴¹

The new evangelization should be an answer to the perceived need for reconciliation in the world. Proclaiming Christ and bringing His Message to the world aims to encourage everybody to unite and reconcile and to eliminate conflicts prevailing all domains of human reality: personal, family, social, national and international life which alongside unification, bring peace.⁴² The apostolic exhortation *Reconciliatio et paenitentia* is valuable in understanding the connection between reconciliation and peace, this being a goal of the work of the new evangelization. John Paul II emphasized in it that reconciliation is done through penance signifying an internal change of the man's heart. This change occurs because of God's words and in view of God's Kingdom with the change of life taking place along with the change in the heart which is expressed in deeds and acts of penance (cf. RP 4, 8). Proclamation of the Good News is bringing the Embodied Word of God to the people and creating an opportunity to direct oneself into God's Kingdom, which leads to the change of heart. From this truth the church derives the sense of duty to preach the Gospel to all the people.

In order to effectively evangelize, the Church needs to be evangelized itself, to be open to the full and complete message of the Good News, to listen to it and introduce it in life, which Pope Paul VI noted in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi* (cf. EN 13). Reconciliation is ultimately a fruit full of the compassionate love and mercy of God's initiative, which is realized and manifested in the act of redemption done by Jesus Christ. An extension of the redeeming act is the Church in which people have access to the source of

³⁹ Cf. id., *Posłannictwo młodzieży w Kościele i w świecie*, OR 14(1993), nr 11, s. 25-27; tenże, *W waszych rękach znajduje się orędzie Ewangelii Życia*, OR 14(1993), nr 11, s. 31-34.

⁴⁰ Cf. *Orędzie Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II na IX i X Światowy Dzień Młodzieży*, OR 15(1994), nr 2, s. 4-5.

⁴¹ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Dziedziny apostołstwa świeckich: uczestnictwo w misji Kościoła*, OR 15(1994), nr 8, s.32-33.

⁴² Cf. id., *Pojednanie z Bogiem i pojednanie między ludźmi*, OR 4(1983), nr 5-6, s. 3.

mercy worn into the tree of the Cross by the Redeemer man, thus they take the fruit of redemption from it. The Church continues to bring the message of reconciliation delivered by Jesus Christ and keeps on encouraging all the people to become converted and believe in the Good News.

The objective of the new evangelization is also to enable people to learn the secret of Divine Mercy, to experience it and make them aware of the need to show mercy to one's neighbours. To attain God's Mercy oneself, with all consequences of such an attitude for the family, the society and the world has been the main goal of evangelization since the beginning of the Church and in particular, its new stage. This new stage is the act of the new evangelization in which Christians were called for by the Pope John Paul II.⁴³

Summing up the objectives of the new evangelization mentioned by John Paul II, it can be claimed that it should contribute to the fulfilment of the mission in the modern world by the Church and thus to resolving problems people of God face now. The act of the new evangelization may lead to the renewal of the bonds between Christians and God as well as the rebuilding of the Christian community where it is disappearing. In addition, it may lead to an awakening in the baptized person's concern for the salvation of others, thanks to which there will be a new mission epoch resulting in the transformation of the whole present-day order to fit God's idea⁴⁴, therefore, a renewal of the secularized world.

Benedict XVI shares the objectives of the new evangelization formulated by his predecessors. During consideration before the "Angel of the Lord" prayer on 23rd October 2010, on the day of closing the Synod of Middle-East Bishops, he referred to the words of Pope Paul VI claiming that "the Church is meant for evangelization, thus, to proclaim and preach God's word, to bring the gift of mercy to us through it so that sinners can reconcile with God, and finally to perpetuate the presence of Christ's sacrifice in saying Holy Mass which is a remembrance of His death and glorious resurrection (apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, 8th December 1975, 14: AAS 68(1976), p. 13). For this reason the next Ordinary General Meeting of the Synod of Bishops in 2012 will be devoted to the subject:

⁴³ Cf. W. Seremak, *Miłosierdzie Boże a nowa ewangelizacja. Znaki czasu*, dz. cyt., s. 202. Głoszenie i wprowadzanie w życie tajemnicy Miłosierdzia Bożego, która objawiła się nam w Jezusie Chrystusie, jest naczelnym obowiązkiem Kościoła na obecnym etapie dziejów, jak naucza Jan Paweł II w encyklice *Dives in misericordia* (por. DiM 13, 14). To miłosierdzie jest podstawową treścią orędzia mesjańskiego Odkupiciela człowieka i stanowi siłę konstytutywną Jego posłannictwa. Głosząc tę prawdę, Kościół pomaga wszystkim ewangelizowanym ludziom odnaleźć Chrystusa, pojednać się z Bogiem, a w Bogu z bliźnimi, uwolnić się od mocy zła, wejść w trwałą komuniję z Bogiem i z bliźnimi, przyjąć Boży pokój i zaprowadzić go w świecie, wraz z przywróceniem Bożego porządku i ładu (Por. DiM 6; RH 13, 18, 20-21).

⁴⁴ Cf. RMis 92; J. Górski, *Nowa wiosna Ewangelii. Z zagadnień misyjnych*, Kraków 1993, s. 12-13, 22-31.

‘The New evangelization, to pass on the Christian faith’. The Church is active at all times and places in order to receive every man and tell them the fullness of life in Christ”.⁴⁵

In the Apostolic Letter in the form *motu proprio* „*Ubicumque et semper*”⁴⁶ Benedict XVI noticed that in the past the new evangelization took on various forms and ways of realization, adapting to the reality of a place, a situation or a moment in the history. Today it has to handle the issue of distancing from faith, which has become increasingly common in societies and cultures that seem to have been permeated with the Gospel for centuries. The religious dimension of human life has been influenced by the gigantic progress of science and technology, the extension of life opportunities and individual freedom, major economic changes, the migration and intermixing of people and cultures and finally, the increasingly stronger interconnections between nations. On one hand, these changes have brought people undeniable advantages, but on the other we have observed a disturbing loss of the sense of the sacred. This will in turn lead to the questioning of the fundamentals which had previously been unquestionable, such as faith in God the Creator of the world surrounding man with His Providence, the revelation of Jesus Christ as the only Saviour and common understanding of basic human experiences such as birth, death, family life and reference to the natural law.⁴⁷

In such a context, Benedict XVI thinks it appropriate that the whole Church should make a missionary effort capable of promoting the new evangelization. It refers primarily to the Churches established a long time ago which, however, exist in such varied conditions. In some areas, despite increasing laicization, the practice of faith is still alive and is deeply rooted in the souls of whole nations. In other regions, we can observe more clearly the distancing of whole societies from faith, together with a weaker Church fabric, although not deprived of vitality. There are totally laicized regions too, where the light of faith is entrusted with the testimony of small communities. “These lands, which needed another evangelization, seem to be particularly resistant to numerous aspects of the Christian message”.⁴⁸

Conclusion

In such a context, Benedict XVI thinks it appropriate that the whole Church should make a missionary effort capable of promoting the new evangelization. It refers primarily to

⁴⁵ Benedict XVI, *Nowa ewangelizacja, by przekazać wiarę chrześcijańską*, OR, wyd. polskie, nr 12(2010), s. 43.

⁴⁶ Letter signed in Castel Gandolfo, 21 Sept 2010, on the feast day of Saint Matthew the Evangelist, in the sixth year of Benedict XVI's Pontificate. Polish translation of the Apostolic Letter *Ewangelia zawsze i wszędzie* (*Ubicumque et semper*) znalazł się w: OR, wyd. polskie, nr 1(2011), s. 11-13.

⁴⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, s. 12.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, s. 13.

the Churches established a long time ago which, however, exist in such varied conditions. In some areas, despite increasing laicization, the practice of faith is still alive and is deeply rooted in the souls of whole nations. In other regions, we can observe more clearly the distancing of whole societies from faith, together with a weaker Church fabric, although not deprived of vitality. There are totally laicized regions too, where the light of faith is entrusted with the testimony of small communities. “These lands, which needed another evangelization, seem to be particularly resistant to numerous aspects of the Christian message”.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Ibid., s. 13.

Teaching and power in Catholic Church

The problem of power doesn't exist in catholic church, as all the rules of governing ecclesial actions arise from hierarchical structure of ecclesiastical community. But it's just a theory. The problem appears when hierarches carry those rules into effect. All law and obligations within ecclesiastical practice, which result from reinforced hierarchical power, need to be considered, not only with reference to theoretically specified general rules, relating to mission of catholic church but, in the first place, include the specificity of actual salutary functions: tutorial, priestly and shepherd's. The subject of the following article is to define rules connected with relation between power and tutorial function. Teaching of saint Gregory the Great will be the leitmotiv of this study. He describes teaching the following manner: "knowledge of conceited people characterizes, within teaching, they are not capable of committing it with humility and they are not able to transmit the truth, which they perfectly know, in reliable way. While they're speaking, we have a sensation they're feeling highly situated but, at the same time, they're treating their students as if they were considerably lower in the hierarchy, even in precipice".¹ We can establish the main argument of this article by referring the words of saint Gregory to relation between teaching and power: the art of governing is the main ground for art of teaching.

The following rule is particularly important within catholic church. A lack of respect in this issue can cause a real threat, which can appear, if teach people who can't govern or just want to govern without teaching in catholic church. The art *of* teaching doesn't give power, meaning superiority over people: „I'm highly situated". Every man can teach within catholic church on condition he knows the truth, which is the main key to understand the relation between art of teaching and power. If somebody swaggers because of good knowledge of the Truth and express it through the form of its understanding, which imposes upon other people, thus, he stands against the Truth. Who rejects the Truth within catholic Church, can't have the mandate of governing.

¹*From comment of saint Gregory the Great, Pope, to Job's Book (book 23, 23-24), in: Liturgy Hours, v. 3, p. 245.*

The truth should protect itself, the same as the right. The wrong stands against the right, the same real way as the right. Jesus teaches his students in Gospel not to stand against the wrong. Not going into theological details, we can assume simplified interpretation of Jesus words: we can't stand against the wrong neither with the wrong nor with the right because they're time – spatial categories. Hence, it comes their reality. However, the right and the wrong can only be personified when concrete, individually unique human being acts in a good or wrong way. Therefore, if the wrong opposes human being, we can say: he's facing it and still, it's not his wrong. An origin of the wrong, which truly threatens human being, is himself. If human being wants to fight against the wrong, he has to stand against himself, “deny himself”.

The case with the right stands differently. Human being can act in a good way, if accepts help from his outside – God's gift (grace). An origin of the right isn't inside of a man but outside of him – it's God. God is the Right and God is the Truth. Therefore, a man can't protect God. He must protect himself in name of the Right and the Truth. Arguments, which man can use fighting against deceitfulness, should come from God, so as force to conquer the wrong should be accepted from God, as grace. Therefore, what is left for a man? He can't idle his time away because the grace (Truth and Right) builds on nature. A creation of nature, self – work, an informative effort – these are human actions towards the Right and the Truth.

In transmission and acceptance of the Truth we need above all humility, which should not be just the way of behaving. In the first place, a humility is the relation of a man towards the Truth. Only a man who is appointed by the Truth can teach and govern in catholic church. Otherwise, he's an usurper. Why? Canterberian bishop Baldwin wrote “Lord knows thoughts and intentions of our heart. Undoubtedly, he knows them all. We just know those he wants us know sending the grace of recognition. Not everything inside of a man knows his spirit; it creates an opinion about voluntary and non voluntary thoughts, which doesn't always respond to reality”.²

Only a man who acknowledges God as an origin of the Truth can know the Truth. Faith, which makes credible the Truth, describes the relation between God and human being. Can a conceited and proud human being believe? Can a man who swaggers over people really believe? We ask about faith in God, this should be humble. Without humility the faith doesn't exist, so as the power without the humility is just an illusion. The perspective of humble faith

² From Baldwin's treatise, *canterberian bishop*, in: *Liturgy Hours*, v. 3, p. 251.

changes the perception both of teaching and power. As it is worldly reality perception through absoluteness and boundlessness, which is without human limits.

Different ambitions threaten teaching and power, especially supported by consciousness of good knowledge of the Truth. However, “not uncommonly our own imagination, a man or even a tempter, put something under our eyes which has appearances of the good but in God's eyes doesn't deserve price due a real virtue. As appearances of virtues or defects, which deceive the heart and cheat the mind, exist, the form of the good seems to appear in a bad thing and a bad thing seems to have appearance of the good. This is a sign of our defects and lack of knowledge we should deplore and fear”.³ Truth and deceitfulness, right and wrong, virtue and defect, knowledge and lack of knowledge, power and tyranny are truly close to each other and also separated by a thin border line.

Therefore, we can ask a question: what is the origin of sick human elevated ambitions in name of truth, right, virtue, knowledge or power and control of other people? It comes from lack of patience, it means from lack of respect for absolute autonomy of God's rights. A man shouldn't measure his behaviour towards other people by limited worldly time and dimension reality but by absoluteness and boundlessness of God's reality. However, we need recognition. “It is said: *there are paths which seem to be right for a man but eventually lead to death*. John the Apostle warns us against this type of danger saying: *Study spirits, if they come from God*. Who can decide, if they come from God, if you don't receive any grace of recognition, so you can accurately and in detail evaluate thoughts, commotions and intentions. Grace of recognition is a mother of all virtues. Hence, everyone needs it both giving others advices and control, self – improvement”.⁴

Without having grace of spirits recognition, meaning without humble respect for God's Truth, every sign of a human power threatens not only an individual but, as well, others being in direct dependence relation. The power is not given to a single human being, but to the community, which can't be given back, and just delegate chosen candidates to be in control.

However, the first sign of seized power and truth is conceit of those, who should teach and govern. It characterizes not only because of decisions made of egoism but also through teaching without humility and treating others worse than myself. As everyone who seizes the power, and because of this fact, attach no importance to transmitting the truth in reliable way, in this instant departs uprightness of the power. Decisions of people seizing the power both

³ *Ibidem*, p. 251-252.

⁴ *From Baldwin's treatise, canterberian bishop, in: Liturgy Hours*, v. 3, p. 252.

with good and wrong results, do not annex individual, human freedom but they are threatening for social development. Therefore, all falsities of the Truth, which are an origin of leaders' conceit and presumption, lead to severe social divisions and those restrain, as a consequence, social development.

The equality rule is the most important in church community: there is no better or worse, wiser or more stupid, richer or poorer. There shouldn't be any divisions in catholic church because Jesus made the equality of all humans the main rule of his life and activity: *who would like to be better than others, let himself be others' minion*. However, someone can't accept different kind of church authorities decisions. People can have different opinion about settlements of hierarches. The same as ecclesiastic authorities can "be scandalized" by behaviour, actions or decision making process of lay people. As it works both ways. "Lord says properly through prophet's lips: *you seized power over them rigidly and completely*. Indeed, govern rigidly and completely those who doesn't try to improve their charges with calm persuasion but act in rigid way trying to break them".⁵ Every "force" in governing and teaching is a threaten for the community nad church as well.

Within individual relations, determining the main ground of church community functions, we need, in the first place, respect for different human being. Any type of "breaking" another man using force of power is a denial of the Truth, which put both authorities and inferiors under an obligation to respect it. Someone can reach the Truth through teaching others or through learning from others. Good knowledge of the Truth by teachers has the same quality as a humble opening by their students to acknowledge the Truth. Both sides need to respect the same rules. Bishop Baldwin express them clearly: „A thought about, how we should act, is right, if followed by God's will. Intention is suitable and saint, if it faces to God with its all simplicity. All our life and every action will be penetrated by light, if eye is fair and sincere. As it is, when after deep meditations it knows, what should do, by acting with simplicity and meaning well avoid every double – dealing. Rational thinking doesn't admit a mistake, meaning well exclude simulations. This is the right recognition, meaning it is situated on the relation of good thinking and meaning well”.⁶

Therefore, the only way to solve all conflicts within catholic church is to refer to the Truth and Right. Those who make decisions, don't seize the power. Power belongs to everyone who knows the Truth or has a right to its recognition and accepts the Right, coming

⁵ From comment of saint Gregory the Great, Pope, to Job's Book (book 23, 23-24), in: *Liturgy Hours*, v. 3, p. 245.

⁶ From Baldwin's treatise, canterberian bishop, in: *Liturgy Hours*, v. 3, p. 252.

from God. Hence, in catholic church the most important position have poor measures, which serve to achieve great goals. Teaching of the Truth which Jesus made priority in catholic Church and doing good in name of Jesus, who is only Right, is one of those measures.

The enemy of the Truth are lies and double – dealing. The master of cheating is a bad spirit, acting through pride, which makes impossible recognize the Truth. “True knowledge the more beware of pride, even in mind, the keener aims the arrows of words at this, who's a teacher of pride. He tries not to prophesy, with his haughty behaviour, this, who's fighting against, preaching saint words, in heart of his audience. Therefore, he's trying to show with his words humility, teacher and mother of all virtues, so that his students of truth can see it complied in life rather than transmitting through words”.⁷

Every haughtiness in transmitting the Truth works in inefficacy of governing. However, power's pride makes teaching pointless and wrong. In all ecclesial actions, if it's in teaching or governing, it's needed recognition, meaning union between Truth and Right. These are universal virtues obligatory to everyone of church community. Within church, community of Jesus, appears from time to time a real danger, which threaten the success of his mission. Paul VI called our attention to some of them.

Church changes incessantly, therefore, we need to acknowledge teaching of some roman Catholics, considering revival of the church only through antiquity forms, to be wrong. True revival of the church in Truth consists in restoration of its perfect figure and shape (through discovering its sanity), which would respond to its original form but, at the same time, would be contradictory to its progress experienced, fairly and according to law, from original institutions to contemporary state.⁸

Holy Ghost, acting through people, leads the church. However, it's wrong to teach that revival of church structure is possible through restoration of charismatics institution. Church is a universal community and this is why its state (novelty and truth) does not depend on thoughts of a little group of people.⁹ Charismatics under internal force and sometimes full of belief they're led by God's inspiration, could soil authentic form of the church with vain fantasies about absurd revival.¹⁰

⁷ From comment of saint Gregory the Great, Pope, to Job's Book (book 23, 23-24), in: *Liturgy Hours*, v. 3, p. 245.

⁸ Paul VI, Encyclical *Ecclesiam suam*, 47. The analogy to the seed, from which grows a tree, is justified. Original church was like a seed, in contemporary is already a tree.

⁹ Saint Jerome teaches that without union, it would be as many sects in the church as there are priests. Por. *Dialog przeciw Lucyferianom*, 9; PL 23, p. 173. Even more dangerous for the church can be charismatics who create “little churches” within catholic Church.

¹⁰ Paul VI, Encyclical *Ecclesiam suam*, 47.

Many of worshippers erroneously teach that church revival consists, in the first place, in adapting one's opinions and customs to lay customs and inclinations of this world. Attractions of lay life are a big temptation for contemporary confessors of Jesus, this is why, this adaptation seems to be necessary, but wise for many people. In consequence, people of little faith (torn by doubts and searching for the Truth), who don't retain honestly church law, assume that the right time has come and adapt to contemporary way of thinking and acting, which seem to be the only and the best, which can and should accept Christians. This excessive inclination to this type of adaptation enters both philosophy area¹¹ and human behaviour, when even is harder to define what is good and which is the right path of life.¹²

Some of Christians, in their apostolic zeal, teach that to receive easier access to lay community and to gain kind people, particularly among teenagers, we should get rid of Christian living standards and renounce as well serious preoccupations about maintaining evangelical values.¹³ As a result, both some of young clergy and convents, leaded by meaning well to approach people's masses or some particular groups, want rather to become similar than different from them. Such behaviour leads to dispose their work of force and efficiency, through vain imitation. Therefore, we need to acknowledge, as a main rule of apostolic activity, teaching of Jesus that his students should be in the world and not from this world. This truth perfectly fits to contemporary times, even if it's difficult in practise to accomplish the instruction.¹⁴

Those examples show that a zeal in teaching, governing, within catholic church, and in any other activity, should go with serious witness attitude towards the Truth and Right. This is why "saint Paul says to his student Timothy: *Encourage and teach with all seriousness*, he doesn't recommend any orders but seriousness, which comes from a lifestyle. We teach with seriousness only when it's already accomplished, what we teach. However, if someone's behaviour disturbs the words, teaching loses its credibility. So, the Apostle doesn't recommend nobleness in prophesy but credibility going from a good lifestyle. Hence, it's written about our Lord: *He taught them, as one who seizes the power and not as a man of*

¹¹ Customs and habits of this world have influence on contemporary philosophy. Meanwhile, in real philosophy spirit should be free and independent, thirsting of only truth and receiving with pleasure instructions of already known masters.

¹² Paul VI, Encyclical *Ecclesiam suam*, 48.

¹³ Paul VI, Encyclical *Ecclesiam suam*, 49. Evangelical values are foundations of all Christian life. Thanks to them all students of Jesus are capable to establish connection with other people, to whom they can announce the truth the salvation.

¹⁴ Paul VI, Encyclical *Ecclesiam suam*, 49. It will be advantageous for us, if Jesus, who always lives to support us, brings as well to his Father this very present pray for us: „I'm not praying for taking them away from this world but for protecting them against the wrong" (J 17, 15).

learning in Bible and Pharisees. Precisely, it was our Lord, who was teaching with power because he didn't commit any act deserving reprimand. As he had from God's force, what he gave us, through saint intervention of his humanity".¹⁵

Humility and seriousness should be linked together in every action of a Christian. Humility, which opens a man for another man, is a rule of life community in the Church. As humility makes credible the Truth and enables to treat other person as a neighbour (equal in community rights). Seriousness, on the other hand, makes credible the Truth through the good way of life, which should be conformable to thought and professed Truth "We should act always through recognition, so as in only God and near God".¹⁶

¹⁵ *From comment of saint Gregory the Great, Pope, to Job's Book (book 23, 23-24), in: Liturgy Hours v. 3, p. 245.*

¹⁶ *From Baldwin's treatise, canterberian bishop, in: Liturgy Hours, v. 3, p. 252.*

The Church builds herself on the Eucharist

The Eucharist has great importance for the Church and her members. The first Christian community, which St. Luke presented in Acts as an example for all Christians, grew stronger thanks to the Eucharist¹. The Eucharist is the “source and summit of all Christian life”² and was from the beginning the source of the unity of Christ’s disciples. From it flowed a concern for the needy (cf. Acts 2: 45). The Eucharist is the source of joy, simplicity of heart, and mutual kindness. Thanks to the Eucharistic communion, the early Christians could live in unanimity in the temple and worship God (cf. Acts 2: 46-47) with one heart, and all this was a clear testimony to the world³. The “love in unity” that comes from the participation in the Eucharist is the very love of God. This is upon which the Church is built. The Eucharist is also a condition for the effectiveness of the Church’s saving mission⁴.

The unity of the Church based on the Eucharist does not mean uniformity, but is a combination of an organic blending of legitimate diversities. It is the reality of many members joined in one body of Christ (cf. 1Cor 12: 12). That is why Pope John Paul II at the beginning of the Third Millennium called the Church “to encourage all the baptized and confirmed to be aware of their active responsibility in the Church's life. Together with the ordained ministry, other ministries, whether formally instituted or simply recognized, can flourish for the good of the whole community, sustaining it in all its many needs: from catechesis to liturgy, from the education of the young to the widest array of charitable works”⁵.

Building up the Church based on the priesthood of the baptized is not free from the effects of human frailty. Even the Eucharist does not protect from that. In an interesting way it has been revealed by J.L. Marion, who claims that “the baptized can not and should not act

¹ “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2: 42).

² II Vatican Council uses this expression in the constitution on liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 10; repeated in the dogmatic constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* (November 21, 1964), 11. St. Augustine calls the Eucharist “bond of love” (*Evangelium Johannis tractatus*, 26, 6, 13).

³ “...the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2: 47).

⁴ From the homily of John Paul II during the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word in the Cathedral of Warsaw-Praga (June 13, 1999), 3.

⁵ John Paul II, Apostolic letter *Novo millennio ineunte* (January 6, 2001), 46.

otherwise than by virtue of his/her own priesthood, starting the conversion of the world in himself/herself. The words and actions of the baptized become more valuable depending on the level of that conversion, tracing a curve at the same time. This curve may rise or fall, even up to a betrayal. But since no failure is not incurable, never baptized a single error does not affect the truth of Christ. It shows only (temporary) limitations of the process of conversion. The error, the same as sin is inevitably associated with the Christian life. To notice the error means to disclose a piece of the whole reality. People should not blame that person for his/her error, those who - willingly or not - do not have the same view of the reality. Reality-contingency contains the error”⁶. Benedict XVI, who spoke to the priests in the Cathedral of Warsaw, also referred to it: “On the occasion of the Great Jubilee, Pope John Paul II frequently exhorted Christians to do penance for infidelities of the past. We believe that the Church is holy, but that there are sinners among her members. We need to reject the desire to identify only with those who are sinless. How could the Church have excluded sinners from her ranks? It is for their salvation that Jesus took flesh, died and rose again. We must therefore learn to live a Christian penance with sincerity. By practising it, we confess individual sins in union with others, before them and before God”⁷. Repentance is not the most important expression of the Eucharist, but it is the community gathered for the Eucharistic in thanksgiving and therefore enabling every Christian reconciliation with God and man through Christ’s saving love.

The Eucharist and the saving love

The Eucharist is a pastoral point of reference and the principle of the whole salvific mission of the Church. The Council teaches that “No Christian community, however, is built up unless it has its basis and center in the celebration of the most Holy Eucharist; from this, therefore, all education to the spirit of community must take its origin”⁸. The Eucharist is the source of the most perfect expression of unity and unification of all members of the Christian community and in order for this to happen should, first of all, be the work of ordained priests. Unfortunately, it happens sometimes that the celebration of the Eucharist does not appear like an expression of unity. In practice one participates in the Eucharist in isolation from others,

⁶ J.-L. Marion, *Godność człowieka świeckiego*, *Communio* 1(1981)6, 102.

⁷ From the address of Benedict XVI at the meeting with the clergy in Warsaw Cathedral, (May 25, 2006)

⁸ II Vatican Council, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 6.

not paying them any attention. The priests should therefore remind everyone, with great clarity, the words of St. Paul: “Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?” (1Cor 10: 16). The consciousness of this unity in the Body of Christ should be a stimulus to life based on the love of saving and effective solidarity. The Eucharist is thus a vital principle of the Church as a community of disciples of Christ: it inspires pastoral activity, strength and momentum⁹. Just as the Church, “celebrates the Eucharist” so “the Eucharist builds up” the Church¹⁰.

The Eucharist signifies (reminds) love, makes it present and realizes that love. During a conscientious participation in the Eucharist, the soul of Christians opens itself to a real dimension of this unfathomable saving love, which includes everything that God has done for people and continues to do for it: “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working” (John 5: 17). Hand in hand with the unfathomable and undeserved gift, which is the saving love revealed in the end in the Sacrifice of the Son of God (of which the Eucharist is the indelible mark), the disciples of Christ discover also a living response of love. They not only learn about love, but they begin to love. Somehow the disciples enter the path of love and in this way they are making progress. Redemptive love which is born from the Eucharist, also develops deeper and grows stronger in a Christian thanks to the Eucharist¹¹.

Eucharistic worship is therefore an expression of saving love, which is the most important characteristic of the Christian vocation. This worship springs from love and serves the love to which Christians are called in Christ Jesus¹². True reverence for the Eucharist becomes a school of active love of neighbor, because this is the true and full love which

⁹ Cf. John Paul II, General audience catechesis (May 19, 1993), 7.

¹⁰ The expression proposed and elaborated by H. de Lubac in: *Meditation sur l’Eglise*, Paris 1963, 129-137; adopted by the Vatican Council II, Dogmatic constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 11; Paul VI, Talk on September 15, 1965: *Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, III (1965), 1036; John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Redemptor hominis*, 20. The opening prayer of the Holy Thursday’s evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper implores it: “We pray that in this Eucharist we may find the fullness of love and life” (Roman Missal); also the epiclesis of the II Eucharistic Prayer expresses the Church’s desire for unity: “May all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ be brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit”: see also the III Eucharistic Prayer.

¹¹ Cf. John Paul II, Letter on the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist *Dominicae Cena* (February 24, 1980), 5.

¹² See the Prayer after Communion of the XXII Sunday in Ordinary Time: “Lord, you renew us at the table with the bread of life. May this food strengthen us in love and help us to serve you in each other”.

Christ taught¹³. Eucharist educates Christians to charity in a deeper way, because it shows how great the value of every person in the eyes of God, since in the same way Christ gives himself under the appearances of bread and wine. If Christians are practicing an authentic devotion to the Eucharist, they also learn to recognize the dignity of every human being. A sense of that dignity becomes the deepest motive for references to others¹⁴.

Eucharistic worship is the soul of the whole Christian life. For if the Christian life is expressed in the fulfilling of the greatest commandment, which is in the love of God and neighbor, so is this love that finds its source in the Eucharist, which is commonly called the “sacrament of love”¹⁵. The saving love of the Eucharist sensitizes the Christians to every human suffering and misery, to all injustice and discrimination, showing also how to practically respond to these challenges. Christians learn to respectfully explore the inner truth of the human being, because that is what becomes the interior of the dwelling place of God in the sacrament of the Eucharist. Christ comes to haunt the hearts and consciences of all people¹⁶, and his sacrifice covers the whole story, to which flows the grace of redemption¹⁷. This also reveals the immeasurable “capacity” of the Eucharist, which is universal, cosmic. “Because – says John Paul II – even when it [the Eucharist] is celebrated on the humble altar of a country church, the Eucharist is always in some way celebrated on the altar of the world. It unites heaven and earth. It embraces and permeates all creation. The Son of God became man in order to restore all creation, in one supreme act of praise, to the One who made it from nothing. He, the Eternal High Priest who by the blood of his Cross entered the eternal sanctuary, thus gives back to the Creator and Father all creation redeemed. He does so through the priestly ministry of the Church, to the glory of the Most Holy Trinity. Truly this is the *mysterium fidei* which is accomplished in the Eucharist: the world which came forth from the hands of God the Creator now returns to him redeemed by Christ”¹⁸.

¹³ “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (J 13: 35).

¹⁴ Cf. John Paul II, Letter on the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist *Dominicae Cena* (February 24, 1980), 6.

¹⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, 6. The idea often appears in the Roman Missal: Common Mass for Those Who Worked for the Underprivileged (Prayer over the Gifts): “May we (...) follow the example of your saints and grow in love for you and one another”; Common Mass for Teachers (Prayer after Communion): “...may this holy meal help us to follow the example of your saints by showing in our lives the light of truth and love for our brothers”; see also the Prayer after Communion of the XXII Sunday in Ordinary Time.

¹⁷ Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (April 17, 2003), 5.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

John Paul II gives the answers to many questions that arise in the minds of believers. They ask: how can God save the people who have not heard the Gospel of Christ, who did not receive Baptism, and who have no share in the sacraments? Every Mass includes all people, because they were redeemed by the blood of Christ. Anyone who participates in the Mass, is also a witness, participant and shareholder in the redemption of all creation. This means between those who celebrate each Mass and other people make the community of redemption. Those celebrating the Eucharist (the priests and the faithful), “save” those whom the Eucharistic sacrifice includes, those taking part in it and those “absent” (“...for you and for many...”). The Pope calls this the mystery of amazement and gratitude. Such mystery should always fill the Church assembled for the Eucharist¹⁹. This Eucharistic amazement shows that nobody is excluded from the sacrifice of Christ’s blood shed on the cross. It may therefore happen that someone who has never heard the words of the Gospel, not received Baptism, did not feed with the Eucharist may sit at the eternal banquet in the Father’s house. But here a question arises: who will invite that person and introduce into the banquet? The right to enter into the banquet in heaven is offered in every Mass, even the one celebrated in a small country church. Saving fruit of the Eucharist is empowered by the sacrifice of Christ, but it also comes through the community (ecclesiastically). The Eucharist is not only a saving Christ-centered dimension, but also a saving Ecclesial-centered dimension²⁰. This means that the salvation derived from Christ is the same salvation that comes from his Church. The Eucharist does not exist outside the Church, so moreover, as the Church does not exist outside of the Eucharist²¹. From the Eucharist, through every “new man” is born “new earth”. In this sacrament of bread and wine, everything which is human undergoes a special transfiguration and exaltation. Eucharistic worship is not so much a cult of inaccessible transcendence but

¹⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 5.

²⁰ Cf. J. Przybyłowski, «W szkole eucharystycznej Jana Pawła II. Refleksja pastoralna na podstawie Encykliki *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*», in: *Jan Paweł II Apostoł prawdy. Księga Pamiątkowa ku czci i pamięci Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II*, J. Kędzierski (ed.), Włocławek 2005.

²¹ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on some aspects of the Church understood as Communion *Communio notio* (May 28, 1992), in AAS 85 (1993) 838-850: “Unity, or communion, between the particular Churches in the universal Church, is rooted (...) in the Eucharist because the Eucharistic Sacrifice, while always performed in a particular community, is never a celebration of that community alone. In fact, the community, in receiving the Eucharistic presence of the Lord, receives the entire gift of salvation and shows, even in its lasting visible particular form, that it is the image and true presence of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church”. The document refers here to the Dogmatic constitution *Lumen gentium*, n. 26/a; ST. Augustine, *In Ioann. Ev. Tract.*, 26, 13: PL 35, 1612-1613.

rather a worship of God's loving and redemptive transformation of the world in the human heart²².

In the Eucharist thus lies a source of love of neighbor which is the way to God. For this reason an active love depends on the life of a person who is invited to participate in the eternal contemplation of Love. This truth has already been recognized in the ancient Church. St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote to the Ephesians that mercy is the way to God. Faith and love are the beginning and the end of life: faith is the beginning, love is the goal²³. They are accompanied by all the other virtues that have led people to holiness. That is why St. Augustine taught: "If therefore you cannot read all the pages of Scripture one by one, nor unroll the volumes that contain God's Word, nor penetrate all the mysteries of Sacred Scripture, have love, on which everything depends. Thus you will know not only what you would have learned there, but also what you have not yet been able to learn"²⁴. P. Rostworowski described this very aptly in a contemporary language: "Teaching all the truths of the catechism does not equal one act of faith awakening. If this is reached, when people are led to live the life of God, that is in them, then even the catechism programs have been reduced to a minimum, we will have real, authentic Christians. And since the only living being is able to assimilate food, these souls, though very poor will be their religious education, after a short time they will know more about God and Christian faith than pupils who have adapted five times bigger programs, but who have not been incorporated into the trunk of Christ through a living faith and prayer. (...) Twigs tied with string to the trunk must be detached. Only the implanted twigs remain which are Christians who believe and pray. The conclusion is very urgent and radical shift of the entire ministry and catechesis with their goal to reanimate of faith and prayer"²⁵.

Faith is the beginning and love is the goal - it is the most simple definition of the essence of the Eucharist. St. Basil the Great taught that "love of God is not something that can be taught. We did not learn from someone else how to rejoice in light or want to live or to love our parents or guardians. It is the same - perhaps even more so - with our love for God: it does not come by another's teaching. As soon as the living creature (that is, man) comes to be,

²² Cf. John Paul II, Letter on the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist *Dominicae Cenaе* (February 24, 1980), 7.

²³ Cf. PG V, 651.

²⁴ St. Augustine, *Sermo* 350, 2-3: PL 39, 1534; from the message of John Paul II for the World Day of the Sick (8 December 1998), 7.

²⁵ P. Rostworowski, «Wychowanie do życia modlitwy», in: *Sluchaj, módl się, pracuj*, Poznań 1989, 172-173.

a power of reason is implanted in us like a seed, containing within it the ability and the need to love. When the school of God's law admits this power of reason, it cultivates it diligently, skillfully nurtures it, and with God's help brings it to perfection"²⁶.

In the Eucharist, faith and love are mutually dependent upon each other. Their relationship, however, requires consideration of the "beginning" and the "end" of human life. St. Ambrose described it vividly when instructing the Christians of the necessity of reference of earthly life to eternal life. He gave this instruction: "You can do this [taking refuge from the world] in spirit, even if you are kept here in the body. You can at the same time be here and present to the Lord. Your soul must hold fast to him, you must follow after him in your thoughts, you must tread his ways by faith, not in outward show. You must take refuge in him. He is your refuge and your strength. David addresses him in these words: I fled to you for refuge, and I was not disappointed"²⁷. Faith directs human life to eternity, but is the love that will allow to reach the end of terrestrial journey: a participation in the banquet of eternal bliss.

In this context, you can also read John Paul II's call to celebrate Sunday. Modern living conditions don't foster a fully experienced Christian Sunday as a day encounter with the Lord. It is not uncommon that it is treated only as "the end of the week", just a day off. Thus, there is a need for clear pastoral initiatives at the levels of education, spiritual and social help to live it according to its true meaning²⁸.

Sunday – Day of the Eucharist

The Eucharist (Lord's Sacrifice) as well as Sunday (Day of the Lord) appears as the great school of love, justice and peace. The presence of the Risen Lord in the community of his disciples is a program of joint action: it urges the inner renewal, changes the structures of sin, that people, communities and sometimes entire nations may be fallen in. Sunday is for Christians not an escape from reality, but rather a "prophecy" inscribed in history, this prophecy tells believers to follow in the footsteps of Him who came "to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to refer the oppressed free, to

²⁶ St. Basil the Great, *Rules*, (2 reading of Tuesday, First Week in Ordinary Time, Office of Readings, Liturgy of the Hours).

²⁷ St. Ambrose of Milan, *God is Our Refuge* (Used in the Roman Office of Readings for Saturday of the 2nd week of Lent).

²⁸ Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* (June 28, 2003), 81.

proclaim year of the Lord” (Luke 4: 18-19). Learning from Him by celebrating the Sunday memorial of His Passover and remembering His promise: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you” (John 14, 27), Christians themselves become the peacemakers²⁹.

Sunday should be a day in which the faithful may devote themselves to the works of mercy, charity and apostolate³⁰. The Christian Sunday is closely connected with the reality and as a “prophecy” is inscribed into history. Sunday cannot be excluded nor distilled from the “rest” of everyday life. Its extraordinariness may be proved only if every other day is also a Christianly extraordinary. This is possible through “prophecy”, which is part of a reality of every day. Assuming that prophecy a Christian is able to follow the Master³¹. A Christian, being a disciple of Jesus by celebrating the Sunday Eucharist, becomes a creator of peace³².

Sunday is a day of love and faith, but is also the day of Christian hope. Participation in the “Lord's Supper” is the forerunner of the eschatological feast of the “Lamb” (cf. Apoc. 19: 9). Celebrating the memorial of Christ, risen and ascended into heaven, the Christian community “as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ”³³.

Christian hope, from week to week, every time and again, having been lived and fed, becomes the leaven and the light of human hope. That is why the “universal” prayer not only embraces the needs of the Christian community but all of humanity. The Church, gathering at the Eucharistic celebration, gives to the world the witness of such saving love and proves to share “the joys and the hopes, the grieves and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor”³⁴. Celebrating the Sunday Eucharistic Sacrifice as the crowning witness of Christians, the Church shows even more clearly to be the “a sacrament or a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race”³⁵.

²⁹ Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic letter *Dies Domini* (May 31, 1998), 73.

³⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, 69.

³¹ Jesus’ mission was “to proclaim good news to the poor. He (The Spirit of the Lord) has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour” (Luke 4:18-19).

³² Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic letter *Dies Domini* (May 31, 1998), 73.

³³ From the Embolism followed the Lord’s Prayer in the Roman Rite of Mass.

³⁴ II Vatican Council, Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world *Gaudium et spes* (December 7, 1965), 1.

³⁵ II Vatican Council, Dogmatic constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* (November 21, 1964), 1. See also the Encyclical letter of John Paul II *Dominum et Vivificantem* (May 18, 1986), 61-64.

Every Christian must therefore realize that a key to his/her life of faith is Sunday's Eucharistic gathering, during which brothers and sisters celebrate the Passover of Christ in the sacrament of the New Covenant. While the bishops should earnestly strive "to ensure that Sunday is appreciated by all the faithful, kept holy and celebrated as truly «the Lord's Day», on which the Church comes together to renew the remembrance of the Easter mystery in hearing the word of God, in offering the sacrifice of the Lord, in keeping the day holy by means of prayer, works of charity and abstention from work"³⁶.

The celebration of Sunday is related to the inner participation in the joy of the risen Christ, which also means a deep involvement in the pulsing love in his heart; there is no happiness without love. Jesus himself explains this, pointing to the relationship between the "New Commandment" and the gift of joy: "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (J 15: 10-12)³⁷. John Paul II appeals that Christians should not be afraid to oppose any attacks on Sunday as a holy day, and they may strive to show it as a day for people, beneficial for the whole society. If Sunday is deprived of its original meaning and one cannot spend this day in prayer, relaxation, communion and joy, then he/she reduces own cognitive horizon to see "heaven". Even festively dressed such a person no longer is able to "celebrate". And without the celebrating dimension the hope would not have a place to live³⁸.

³⁶ John Paul II, Apostolic letter on keeping the Lord's Day holy *Dies Domini* (May 31, 1998), 48. The Pope cites the Directory for the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops *Ecclesiae Imago* (22 February 1973) of the Congregation for Bishops, 86a: *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 4, 2069.

³⁷ John Paul II cites the passage in *Dies Domini*, 69.

³⁸ Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* (June 28, 2003), 81.

It's tough to be a God -godlike elements in computer games

Did nobody ever wonder how is it like to be a god? A being of supernatural power, which can change the world to his whims? Would we ever be fit for such a role if an occasion for godhood arose? Up until now, thoughts like these were mostly a domain of imagination, intensively used in different forms of artistic works, from myth and legend up to more recent books or films. With the advent of the computer and software which makes use of them, also games started touching upon this subject.

A „*God Game*” or „*Divine Sandbox*” are the most popular names for this computer game genre, where the player has a chance to taste godhood, that is – controlling the action in a far bigger scale, with the use of supernatural powers, in the guise of a god, a supreme leader or a not entirely described entity, with the goal of protecting autonomous beings inhabiting a simulated world¹.

This autonomous behaviour of the virtual world's inhabitants is the most characteristic motif of „*god games*”. Paradoxically, the players do not have full control over their subordinates – a domain of typical strategy games. The inability to give direct orders is compensated with the power to influence the world in a manner far exceeding typical mortals' possibilities. This, in short, defines the main theme of this genre, but how did it evolve over the years?

A symbolical beginning of the genre could be marked with the development of *Utopia* (1981 - Don Daglow / Mattel), a two-player game where each has complete power over an island, which they have to manage. Points are gained with expansion, feeding the inhabitants and keeping social peace. The players could also hinder each other's efforts by sending soldiers over to the other island to incite unrest. Although the players are not strictly referred to as godly beings and they do not control any miraculous powers, *Utopia* is regarded as a „*god game*”, since its characteristic trait is the inability to directly influence the islands' inhabitants, leading their uncomplicated lives.

¹ Compare Wikipedia EN, *God game*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_game, [accessed: 02.09.2011].

The first game to be treated completely as a „god game” is *Populous* (1989 - Bullfrog / Electronic Arts), designed by Peter Molyneux. Its best description would be also its introductory message given to the player: „As a god, you keep followers, whose faith gives you power needed to function. The more followers you have, the more they – and you – can achieve. However, there is another group of followers, who worship another god...”. The player's task is to take care of his followers, to help them grow and expand, to influence the world and to convince unbelievers that it is him who is their rightful god, whom they should worship. The means and methods that can be used to achieve these goals, are dependant entirely on the player. For instance, one could play as a merciful god, who makes it his foremost responsibility to foster his believers' happiness, luring the undecided by the well-being of everyone under his guidance. However, it is also possible to play as a ruthless, vengeful god, who strikes fear into both his believers and unbelievers alike with his powers of destruction. This free choice between divine clemency, ruthlessness or a balance between the two give an extra dimension to a seemingly typical strategy gameplay.² „The main source of joy in *Populous* was yanking the opponents' chain. (...) However, the biggest fun to be had was to use our godly powers to incite fires, create tornadoes or earthquakes inside enemy settlements”³.

Populous had two sequels, those being *Populous II* (1991 – Bullfrog / Electronic Arts) and *Populous: The Beginning* (1998 – Bullfrog Productions / Electronic Arts). The second part was mostly expanding and polishing the ideas built in the first one. Story-wise, we are switched from an unknown god to a demigod descendant of the greek god Zeus. He has promised us to deliver us unto the Olympic Pantheon if we manage to defeat all other demigods. The biggest change is expanding the number of powers and miracles accessible to the player from eight to thirty, divided into different areas of effect: Earth, Water, Wind, Fire, Plantlife and People. Another change was the addition of „heroes – one each for every element in the game. Each possessed different special abilities: for instance, Hellen of Troy lured enemies to the Sea's depths, Heracles was an unmatched strongman, and Ulysses could outrun everyone and everything”⁴.

² Compare *Populous*, <http://games.ign.com/halloffame/populous.html> [accessed 02.09.2011].

³ See Elektryczny, *Populous: The Beginning*, Świat Gier Komputerowych, 1998, issue 12, p. 18.

⁴ As before.

The third installment in the series, *Populous: The Beginning* (1998 – Bullfrog Productions / Electronic Arts) switched both the view and the gameplay to 3D⁵ and made significant changes to the gameplay. „The story of the newest *Populous* begins many decades before the first installment. You are introduced to the game as a female shaman of one of the peoples living on several planets around a certain planetary system. Your people lived long in waiting for the coming of its god, that is – for Your coming. The Shaman, borne of Man, is not, however, a fully godly entity – she has to combat other Shamans for dominance of this region of the cosmos. Their duels will cost many lives, forever change the faces of the planets, unleash terrible elements and, most importantly – will choose the one whose name will forever be uttered in prayers and psalms of all the faithful living on all inhabitable planets”⁶. The *Populous* series can be regarded as the first, where the player could taste godhood.

Another very interesting title, also made by Peter Molyneux is *Black & White* (2001 – Lionhead Studios / EA Games) and its sequel, *Black & White 2* (2005 – Lionhead Studios / Electronic Arts). It is a return to the idea of being a „full-fledged god”. The player enters the role of an impersonal, supernatural being with the power to make miracles and control the surrounding world. The best introduction to this game's reality could be a fragment of this review: „How does it all begin? Look, this is the beautiful island of Eden. Its peoples' fortune, however, is not permanent: a boy, who went to the beach, guided by his non-sapient instinct or possibly the invisible finger of Fate, jumps into waters infested by sharks!... These tragic events, and the endangered child's parents' echoing cries, reach the place where gods lie in wait, awakening you and calling you to this world!... This is how a god... comes to being. Yes. *Black & White* is a tale where you yourself become a god... and it is only your decision what kind of a god you will be and how you will regard your faithful, in the end deciding how the world you're supposed to rule will look like”⁷. As a freshly created god with a handful of faithful, the player must decide upon actions that will bring him more believers, giving him more godly powers. *Black & White* uses a scandinavian model of belief, where there is this conception that a god's power is directly proportional to the number of his believers. When this number drops, the god weakens.

A very interesting design choice in *Black & White* is how the player's presence is shown in the world of Eden: „Your earthly imagining fulfilling also the role of a pointer is a

⁵ 3D – three-dimensional space

⁶ See Elektryczny, *Populous: The Beginning*, Świat Gier Komputerowych, 1998, issue 12, p. 16

⁷ Gem.ini, *Black & White*, CD-Action, 2001, nr 5, s. 77

gigantic hand”⁸. This hand is a means of interaction between the player and the world and its inhabitants. With it we can pick up big, heavy rocks or literally rip trees out of the ground. Our actions can be merciful, like calling upon rain for our believers' fields, but can also be ruthless, like peppering villages with fireballs creating destruction and death, both for our believers – to solidify the faith with fear and an iron hand – and for unbelievers or heretics, who worship other gods. The game dutifully analyzes our actions through different means: a morality system based around the concept of conscience, humorously illustrated by an onscreen „angel” and „devil”, or with how you and your temple are presented in this world. If being an „evil” god, they gain a sinister, dark form with pointy spikes, and your hand starts resembling a red, demonic paw. If, however, you chose to play as a friendly god, our land looks decidedly idyllic and the cursor switches to a beautiful hand, glowing with inner light.

Another interesting element of the game is the Creature. In short, it is a miraculous being, a mix of a companion and helper in the game's world. „In the beginning they are small, scared animals, who, under Your careful, godly guidance, change into giants capable of shaking an entire village with its footsteps”⁹. Caring and tutoring them is a big responsibility, comparable to handling your own, real animal companion. They are curious beings, watching your actions with interest and very often emulating them, making it a priority to watch out what is being done in their presence. To influence the Creature's behaviour, there exists a simple system of rewards and punishments, for instance – a punishment could be a slap, while a reward – some petting behind the ear. This is how we show our pupil what we think of his actions, whether they are good or bad by our standards. Watching the Creature grow is one of the bigger rewards of the game, and his character and skills are based a lot around our didactic talent. Because of that, caring for your Creature is also a very interesting method of trying out the role of a guardian. *Black & White* is definitely one of the more interesting games in this selection. Its innovative and interesting approach to the subject guarantee a lot of fun and make the player more sensitive to questions of morality. The choices between clemency and ruthlessness and tons of freedom are this series' biggest plusses.

Darwinia (2005 – Introversion Software / Introversion Software) – this game has a bit different approach to the subject of godhood in games. *Darwinia* deals with a virtual world, created by a scientist named Dr. Sepulveda. It is inhabited by virtual beings called the Darwinians. They are software-based intelligent beings, with their own intelligence, living

⁸ Bazyl, *Black & White*, Świat Gier Komputerowych, 2001, issue 05, p. 38.

⁹ As above.

and growing with their own means and their own tempo. They are mortal creatures, so they are affected by the processes of getting old and dying. Each one of them is unique, having its own „digital” soul, which comes back to the „Central Repository” in the center of their world, where they are contained, and their experiences are being used for creating new souls.

One day the experiments goes terribly wrong. The world of Darwinia and its inhabitants are attacked by a mysterious virus. The player is introduced to the game as a hacker, who gains access to Darwinia by accident. Dr. Sepulveda, close to panicking, asks him for help with dealing with the virus. By accepting this challenge, we become Darwinia's protector and an „antivirus” of sorts, whose mission is to return Darwinia to normality.

The thread of godhood in this game is presented by the character of Dr. Sepulveda, who is this world's and its inhabitants' creator. Facing danger, with the help of the player, he tries to stop a catastrophe, which can be regarded as a divine intervention, dictated by the doctor's care both for his creation and the time it took to create. Apart from that, Darwinia is almost purely a strategy game, where the player uses „programs” to deal with the infection.

Spore (2008 – Maxis / Electronic Arts) – This game lets the player take on the role of life's creator. He chooses the ways his pet organisms are shaping and evolving, thus connecting creationism with the Theory of Evolution. Through our choices, we perfect our being, guiding it through different stages of its existence – from the stage of a microorganism to a fully realised lifeform. We will be responsible for how the whole species communicates with other lifeforms – whether they will opt to co-exist with others, or whether they will aim for complete, genocidal dominance. By moving past tribal and civilizational stages up to space flight, they are thrust into a galaxy full of other, different lifeforms, where this choice is once again present.

From Dust (2011 – Ubisoft Montpellier / Ubisoft) by Eric Chahi, is the last game in this selection.. „The story presented in *From Dust* tells of the venture of a small tribe, trying to reunite with the Elder Ones – a mysterious people, who disappeared from the surface of the world, leaving behind strange relicts and totems, which are meant to help those following in their path.”¹⁰.

The player takes on the role of The Breath, an impersonal godlike being, who appears from nothingness through a shamanistic ritual of a tribe. Its people ask you for safety and help

¹⁰ Maciej Kowalik, *From Dust*, http://polygamia.pl/Polygamia/1,108240,10008967,Zabawa_w_boskiej_piaskownicy___From_Dust.html, [accessed: 2.09.2011].

with reaching their destination. As a supernatural being, you have the power of manipulating matter. It is based around the ability to pick it up and move it into another place, for example – taking liquid lava from a volcano to make a mountain range protecting your believers from a flood, or to change a rivers flow somewhere around it's spring, creating a new path for the tribesmen. Compared to *Black & White*, *From Dust* focuses more on manipulating the world than taking care of villages and fighting other gods. Though the player really does care for his tribe, this care is based more around help with travel and protection from different elements. However, *From Dust* can deliver tons of fun and lets the player feel almighty for a while.

As you can see, being a god can be an educating experience. Sometimes, being almighty doesn't mean everything is simple. Godhood is a big responsibility for the actions taken upon the world and its inhabitants. It is a test of our leadership skills and a marker of our morality. Whether defusing conflicts in a peaceful way, or using the argument of force – the choice depends entirely on the player. In the previously mentioned game *Black & White* there is also the additional focus on the Creature. This type of games, even though they are not simulations on a gigantic scale, make the player think about how our world functions. They place specific focus on the eternal fight between Good and Evil, ask about the meaning and value of human life, about what it means to be a human and what emotions this evokes. They teach us patience and empathy and they show the effects of our actions, both good and evil. This way, computer games fulfill their educational and didactic role, having a very positive effect on humanity's spiritual growth.

Suffering and religiosity in the life of a man suffering from depression

Depressive disorders by their very nature cause human suffering. This suffering is felt by the sick person not only in the mental sphere but also in the spiritual and physical.

We could say that all these spheres are interconnected and influence each other. In the words addressed to the participants of the International Conference of the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Care, held on 14 November 2003 in the Vatican, Pope John Paul II said that depression reveals the human weakness - mental and spiritual, which in part are due to the impact of society. The concept of depression, according to the Pope, involves severe morbid conditions, more or less permanent, but also transitional forms, associated with difficult experiences, such as marital and family conflicts, serious professional problems or the feeling of loneliness. They lead to a weakening or even braking of social, professional and family ties. Depression is accompanied by existential and spiritual crisis that makes the sick person lose meaning of life.¹

The great physical pain and especially spiritual pain are dumb. Depression in its most arduous form, is no exception to the rule.² Sometimes, however, that a person with depression can verbalize what he or she feel. "I feel abandoned", "the world is evil", "My life has no meaning", "no one understands me", or "God has forsaken me," are the phrases that are often uttered by depressed people. The words spoken by the patient in depression are important because they show his or her inner thoughts, and the level of suffering, which he or she experiencing. Suffering from depression leads to lack of willingness to live, apathy, difficulties in the religious sphere, resulting in turn in difficulties in relationships with God. However, this area has been scarcely studied empirically science, and most sources speaking of the relationship between depression and religiosity are based on the experience of direct contact of priests, therapists and spiritual directors with sick people.

Many times the Bible shows many suffering people whose behavior and words spoken to God may lead the reader to the conclusion that they are experiencing depression or a depression related state. Especially the Old Testament is full of such testimonies. An example of a man whose behavior may indicate the presence of depression is Saul. He has

¹ John Paul II, *Discorso del Santo Padre Giovanni Paolo II*, *Dolentium Hominum Rivista del pontificio consiglio per la pastorale della Salute*, 1 (2004), p. 7.

² J-F. Catalan, *Depresja a życie duchowe*, Kraków 2007, p. 51.

a somber face, depressed mood, sometimes he is aggressive. The cause of his depression, might be, his sense of guilt in relation to God, because he lives contrary to His word. The life of King Saul ends tragically, because he impaled himself on a sword (1 Samuel 31, 4). Prophets also have struggled with melancholy. Elijah, who fled from certain death after killing the pagan prophets came to a desert and laying himself under a juniper wanted to die. He cried out to God, "it's time the Great Lord! Take my life (...)" (1 Kings 19, 4). Also, Jonah cries out to God: "Now, Lord, take, please, my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live" (Jonah 4, 3). The whole Book of Job is a great cry of man mired in the darkness, " I cry to you, O God, but there's no answer; I stand, but you merely look on. You have become cruel to me, you pursue me mercilessly with your strong hand (Jobs 30, 20-21); "And now my soul is poured out because of my days of grief and suffering. At night gnawing pain pierces my bones. My veins have no rest. With power God has caught my garment, binding me about as the collar of my coat; throwing me into the mire, where I am now like dust" (Jobs 30, 16-19), etc. King David in the Book of Psalms describes his sufferings, in the following way: "I'm depressed, as leaning over, all day I go sad. Because fire consumes my loins and my body has nothing healthy. I'm exhausted beyond measure, and broken, whine, because my heart moans (Psalms 38, 7-9); "I am weary with moaning; I weep every night, drenching my bed with tears"(Psalms 6, 7). Also, Jesus in his passion and death-like state is experiencing depression – related state saying these words on the cross "... My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15, 34) Christ, the Son of God shows the fullness of his humanity, sharing the pain and suffering with man.

A person who is afflicted by a depressive disorder experiences difficulties in the religious sphere. This can manifest itself in religious practices, for example in prayer, or in their own image of God. A patient with depression, thinks God is distant, and any attempt to draw God's attention is hopeless and doomed to failure. The prayer of a person in depression is different from the prayer in other periods of human life, because the patient often believes that God has suddenly disappeared. When depression is a consequence of illness, accident, or death of a loved one of the person experiences a total abandonment by God at the beginning. In later phases of depression, when the healing process takes place, God becomes closer to people, often more than ever before. A person experiences a sense that God takes care of him or her and sends consolation.³

The sphere of human religiosity is very complex and multifaceted.

³ Cf. K. J. Hermes, *Modlitwa o przetrwanie depresji*, Warszawa 2008, p. 9-10.

Religiosity has a supernatural aspect apart, from the natural one, which can be, phenomenologically observed. This is the reason why it is becoming increasingly popular in empirical research conducted by psychologists of religion.⁴

In order to interpret religion in psychological terms should distinguish between two synonymous concepts: religion and religiosity. Religion is understood as a set of propositions, dos and don'ts and rules governing the relationship between God and man.⁵ At various points in history there have been different attempts define the concept of religion. For example, Durkheim defined religion as a system of interrelated beliefs and practices relating to sacred things, beliefs and practices of bonding of all believers into one moral community called a Church. For Scheler, religion is the knowledge and thinking, it also involves a special kind of feeling (value), words (in the religious language of prayer and worship), and religious volition and action (in the service of God and religious morality).⁶

He highlights like the aforementioned two-part division namely: "the variable of beliefs", enriched with feeling, and several membered "variable cult". The concept of religion in the psychology of religion contains a large variety of terms and definitions that are created for general cognitive, theoretical-methodological and informative scientific purposes. These terms are ambiguous, especially in terms of scope, accuracy and emphasis put, on the functional or structural aspect of the phenomenon, they describe place and role in the totality of mental life or human society, in the structure of personality. A common feature of psychological expressions of religion is relating religion to human subjectivity, spirituality, inner life, human experiences and behaviors, personality and development traits. Psychology defines religion primarily by focusing on individual, subjective and personal dimension of this phenomenon, which is commonly referred to as an individual religiosity as opposed to collective religiosity.⁷

All people, more or less consciously experience religion. Religious people are those who allow God to affect their lives. Individual religiosity, however, takes different forms and reveals itself in different ways. This also pertains to people affected by depressive disorders.⁸

Owing to the use of macroscopic methods in religious studies, Werner Gruehn came to the conclusion that religion as a whole belongs to a group of similar experiences, which we

⁴ Cf. B. Chwedeńczuk, *Przekonania religijne*, Warszawa 2000, p. 15-20.

⁵ Cf. Z. Golan, *Pojęcie religijności*, in: S. Głaz (ed.), *Podstawowe zagadnienia psychologii religii*, Kraków 2006, p. 71.

⁶ As before.

⁷ Cf. J. Szmyd, *Religijność jako zjawisko psychospołeczne*, in: A. Szostek (red.), *Encyklopedia Katolicka 10*, Lublin 2004, c. 725-726.

⁸ Cf. Cz. Walesa, *Psychologiczna analiza rozwoju religijności człowieka za szczególnym uwzględnieniem jego ontogenezy*, in: Z. Chlewiński (red.), *Psychologia religii*, Lublin 1982, p. 144.

call trust, love and faith. If a person believes in God and trusts him, he or she represents the mental attitude that is very similar to trust which people have for each other. This term, however, is not very precise and accurate. In religious life it is the whole self and a personality that play the decisive role, not just its selected elements such as will, thought or idea. It is the central human ego that is involved in all evaluating processes, and thus also in aesthetic and moral experiences. Religiosity is a personal and at the same time the positive attitude to religion. So it is everything that a person, experiences and experiences, and as everything that happens to him or her, is directly connected to his or her attitude to the Supreme Being.⁹

But trying to define the term religion more precisely we can say that it is a bilayer psychological structure consisting of a given range of positive attitudes towards religion, that is evaluative emotional and intellectual attitudes to the so called religious objects: God, saints, religious events, etc., along with a willingness to behave in a way that is consistent with these attitudes. The other layer is involves reactions, mental processes and mechanisms taking place in people in certain situations due to the influence of the above mentioned religious objects on human personality. This multifactorial definition of religion shows diversity of elements, processes and functions of this phenomenon.¹⁰

When the research dealing with the phenomenon of religion from the perspective of psychology of religion was started, the prevailing tendency was to view religion as one-dimensional phenomenon. Also today, many researchers are trying to find elements common to all forms of religiosity. However, regardless of their professed religion, the vast majority of researches in their studies include types of religiosity.¹¹

In the typology of religion the criteria to distinguishing different types of religiosity play a vital role. The importance of religious experiences depends on the level of religious maturity, which implies taking into account indicators of religious development.¹²

The religiosity is a dynamic phenomenon. It is constantly changing, either towards more mature or distorted forms. Attempts to create a typology of religiosity are also based on specific aspects of religious life such as the level of involvement in religious life, the degree

⁹ As before.

¹⁰ Cf. J. Szmyd, *Religijność jako zjawisko psychospołeczne*, in: A. Szostek (red.), *Encyklopedia Katolicka* 10, Lublin 2004, c. 725-726.

¹¹ Cf. R. Jaworski, *Typologie religijności*, in: S. Gład (red.), *Podstawowe zagadnienia psychologii religii*, Kraków 2006, p. 271-272.

¹² Cf. R. Jaworski, *Typologie religijności*, in: S. Gład (red.), *Podstawowe zagadnienia psychologii religii*, Kraków 2006, p. 271-272.

and centrality of religious attitudes, motivation of religious behavior, the type of reference or the interaction between man and God.¹³

Personality or social context can also serve as a criterion used to define a particular type of religion characteristic of specific groups, such as physicians, members of different religious groups. There is also a specific type of religiosity of people with certain personality traits, character or health and behavior disorders: alcoholics, neurotics, or those with depressive disorders.¹⁴

One of the most widespread conception of the genesis of religiosity is a hypothesis saying that it is caused by: anxiety, experience of human weakness and danger. In the existential anxiety that may arise in connection with the question about the meaning of life, there is fear and concern relevant to human being in situations, such as suffering or death. Religiosity appears here as a response to the question about the meaning of human life, which for many is a satisfactory answer.¹⁵

Feelings of guilt, feelings of some kind of debt to someone cause a special kind of fear or moral concern. These feelings are sometimes regarded as one of the major psychological causes of religiosity. The experience of moral failure is very unpleasant, and mobilizes people to seek some a solution. This solution may be religiosity, where people can experience the forgiveness of God, the consequence of which is the reduction guilt and anxiety. This process can often be seen in case of conversions. The feelings of guilt alone, however, may lead to the legalistic, harsh and tyrannical religiosity, in which God is someone who forbids and gives orders as well as suppresses a unacceptable behavior.¹⁶

Religiosity in the experience of a depressive person depends on the severity of depressive symptoms We could say that the heavier the degree of depression the greater the distortion of religiosity. It is important to note that the above conclusion is based primarily on observation, and to a lesser extent, on empirical research. Religiosity of people with depression may be considered in two aspects. The first extract concerns the influence religiosity on the severity of depression and the process of spiritual and physical healing. The other aspect points to the changes in the profile of religiosity taking place due to the influence of the disease. Both aspects are important because of need of adjusting pastoral and psychotherapy activities, to suffering people. The authors dealing with the issues of religion

¹³ As before.

¹⁴ Cf. R. Jaworski, *Typologie religijności*, in: S. Gład (red.), *Podstawowe zagadnienia psychologii religii*, Kraków 2006, p. 277.

¹⁵ Cf. S. Tokarski, *Psychologiczne źródła religijności*, in: S. Gład (red.), *Podstawowe zagadnienia psychologii religii*, Kraków 2006, p. 97.

¹⁶ As before.

and religiosity indicate the positive and negative effects of religiosity on the human mental health. Analyzing empirical studies one may get the impression that the overwhelming majority of studies, points to the positive role of religiosity in human life and its positive impact on mental well-being. These researchers point to the positive role of religiosity in the following aspects:

- it removes the psychological basis of depression
- it reduce fear and anxiety
- it reduces the feeling of inferiority
- it is a therapeutic agent
- it gives man new types of strength
- it reduces selfishness
- it shows man a new meaning of life
- it is a component of spiritual healing.¹⁷

The first aspect is worth considering people who. People who are completely agree with the will of God, are not disheartened in difficult situations. Injustice, denial, conflict and lack of understanding from of the family, gain due special importance when one considers them as permitted by God as means of one's spiritual development, not as results of personal malice of his or her one's enemies. Experiencing depression, sorrow, disappointment and conflicts are becoming an even greater opportunity to trust with God and unit with him. A person is convinced that God is not wrong in what he wants from him or her and accepts with humility and trust what happened to him or her, even depression. The consent to the will of God while trying to cope with depression using human resources mentioned in chapter one brings a sense of peace, respite and strength in disguise. Authentic and healthy religiosity also eliminates the state of paralyzing objection and raises hope for a better future.¹⁸

Describing the spiritual experience of individual depression Tellenbach Heinrich points out that the Spirit loses its vitality during depression. Hope, which has so far directed human life for the future one's life suddenly loses its encouraging power and any future reference to disappears along with it. All the suffering of people with depressive disorders is unimaginable to a healthy person. Grief-stricken ill often cry out to God for help because, do not accept they their condition. They stand sad next to sadness, which they cannot regard as

¹⁷ Cf. M. Wandrasz, *Choroba i cierpienie a religijność*, in: S. Głaz (red.), *Podstawowe zagadnienie psychologii religii*, Kraków 2006, p. 526-528.

¹⁸ Cf. As before.

its own. In this way, they are as if trapped in despair, the end of which is as depressed people often think - death.¹⁹

Lack of the Christian power of hope, in this case, a healthy religiosity, pick deprive a person with depression a chance of discerning help that God can give them. The consequence of the lack of a healthy and mature religiosity may be inability to ask God for help and consolation. If man did not develop a relationship with the higher world earlier psychologists, in particular depth psychologist, often feel helpless because they cannot refer to religiosity.²⁰

People with depressive disorders almost always suffer from to excessive feeling of guilt. This is particularly visible in the elderly, whose guilt is a distinctive sign of their disease. They feel that they cannot fix whatever they did wrong in their lives. They cannot believe in forgiveness, because they are guided by the internal law, which tells them that they have to pay off their guilt. They repeatedly exasperate tripping errors of youth. A lot of Christians who have received the caricatured image of God are constantly circling around the issue of their guilt. Their depression is as a sufficient reason to feel guilty: they believe that as Christians they should be rejoicing. These reproaches to themselves do not release people from depression, on the contrary they only worsen its course. With time, they can develop pathological and neurotic guilt. They can no longer read the Bible because they constantly come across excerpts which refer to quilt. To overcome this condition they often fall into an excessive asceticism, or destroy themselves. Usually religiosity immunizes man against depression. However, there is one kind of religiosity that continues to revolve around guilt. People characterized by this type of religiosity grow up in religious groups where the guiding principle is: the greater the religiosity, the deeper the depression. The message of Jesus is forgiveness, He preached the merciful and forgiving love of God, so that people can get free from their strict judge in the form of the superego, which accuses them permanently. Sometimes depression draws attention to the repressed guilt. The task of man is then to face this wine, believe in God's forgiveness and try to organize their life.²¹

God's grace for the Christian in depression is a necessary condition to reject the temptation of despair. It also means closeness to God, even in the difficulties of life, and the belief that human problems can be regarded in terms of the sufferings of Christ, who "emptied himself...taking the form of a servant and became like men." (Philippians 2, 7). Silent prayer,

¹⁹ C.f. . H. Tellenbach, *Smutek – przygnębienie – melancholia. Antropologiczne zjawiska w chrześcijańskiej perspektywie*, ComP, nr 5 (1991), p. 78.

²⁰ C.f. . H. Tellenbach, *Smutek – przygnębienie – melancholia. Antropologiczne zjawiska w chrześcijańskiej perspektywie*, ComP, nr 5 (1991), p. 78-79.

²¹ Cf. A. Grün, *Jak przeczłubić smutek życia? Duchowe spojrzenie na depresję*, Kielce 2009, p. 119-121.

trust based on the Passion of Jesus Christ, and faith in His glorious resurrection leads to inner peace and trust in God, they are a kind of antidote to despair, which is the result of depression.²²

Not every grief is depression. In Christian tradition there is of a "night of the soul", whose course may resemble symptoms of depression. While experiencing, "the dark night of the soul" man feels total destruction, the absolute poverty. This condition makes the man think that God left him and cast him into darkness. This moment is the most difficult. The essence of the "dark night of the soul" involves also the feeling of hellish torment, his own's death, the torment of conscience and feeling that one is not worthy of God the feeling of being lost forever. The man is convinced that he cannot do anything by himself. God makes the soul die to everything that is not him. In this way, he transforms its old form in a completely new one, renews it, enlightens it and endows it with supernatural gifts. This is the step leading to a mystical union with God and contemplative prayer.²³

In depression, as in "dark night", people experience a sense of helplessness, vulnerability and bareness, loneliness, abandonment and alienation. They feel worthless, guilty and sinful. This experience is full of fear, hopelessness and meaninglessness. Man lives in a profound darkness. St. John of the Cross often combines melancholy with the "dark night". Some people with depression go through the experience of "dark night". And then it is important to know how they interpret both the depression and the "dark night". St. John of the Cross harshly judge some spiritual leaders who do not have a clue either of depression or the "dark night". Some of them behave like Job's friends. They believe that experience of the dark night is merely a depression or melancholy. They believe these experiences that are caused by the burden of sin. However, such interpretations can only be harm. They drive people in despair or bitterness. The subjective experience of "dark night" can be shaped by fear and inner emptiness, and may acquire the features of depression. But there is a major difference between the "dark night of the soul" and depression: "dark night" is always preceded by a spiritual experience. It is primarily a religious phenomenon, experienced by people when they embark on their way to God. It is a painful experience of emptiness and darkness, but as St. John of the Cross says, it is characterized neither by melancholy nor sadness. It is essential to have the gift of recognizing the state of spirit, to distinguish between sometimes externally very similar experience. It is important to see if someone who speaks of the "dark night", has

²² <http://www.deon.pl/religia/duchowosc-i-wiara/lyk-teologii/art,75,w-drodze-przez-ciemna-noc-duszy.html>, (03.12. 2010 r.).

²³ As before.

true spiritual experience and is facing their everyday life. Depression often dissuades a person from coping with everyday life. The experience of "dark night" might have a negative impact on the job, but firstly we need to consider it from a spiritual perspective. Normally it does not hinder a person from focusing on other people and work.²⁴

Western societies living in developed or developing countries, attach too much importance to well being, making efficiency and health some kind of religious goods. The increase in people suffering from depression can be seen as a protest against this unilateral focus on physical and mental shape. Sometimes depression is also a healthy reaction to of inadequate focus on success. Depression maybe a starting point for those who are suffering because of the standards of the present times to free from pathogenic existing in a society. It is a challenge for society to rethink its measures and see what drives people in the disease.²⁵

Depression poses yet another challenge: it shows the psychological and medical aspects that science already knows today. But it also draws attention to the spiritual aspect. Ultimately, depression - regardless of whether it is a "dark night" of faith, depressive episode or recurring severe depression it always leads to the following fundamental questions: What do I want to draw my life? How do I interpret my life? What is the purpose of my life? We could say that depression presents us with three questions that gnosis formulated as the central questions about human existence: Who are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going? Depression is an invitation to bid farewell to all the measures that are contrary to the essence of human existence, away from all the illusions upon which an impressive self-image is built. It is also a call to get rid himself of blame and focus on the negative interpretations that became more of who I am in nature to come closer to the unique and original image which God has created for the human person.²⁶

Human suffering is a fact. People have experienced pain since Adam and Eve battered God's commandment and ate the fruit of the tree, of knowledge of good and evil; consequently they had to leave the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2: 16 ff). This critical moment deprived man of God's grace which he cannot accept even today. The question about the meaning of suffering, raised, especially by those who suffer it intensely, always leads to the word "mystery". This question is, not based on faith in Jesus Christ, the God who suffered and died may lead to despair, even more pain and a sense absolute powerlessness.

A person suffering from depressive disorders experiences suffering in all

²⁴ <http://www.deon.pl/religia/duchowosc-i-wiara/lyk-teologii/art,75,w-drodze-przez-ciemna-noc-duszy.html>, (03.12. 2010 r.).

²⁵ As before.

²⁶ As before.

possible aspects, including the aspect related to religiosity and faith. What's most difficult for the patient's sense of abandonment by God, which directly follows of their acting dysfunctional thinking. Depression is not an experience "the dark night of the soul", which is a spiritual experience, but it is a severe disease which, with the help of the right treatment and the grace of God can be defeated by a sick man, the consequence of which is a reduction of suffering.