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**Prof. Dariusz Adamczyk**

## **How does Paul the Apostle demonstrate the need to justify the whole sinful mankind? – Based on Rom 1:18-3:20**

Rom 1:18-3:20 concerns human perfidy and says that God's wrath will smite all injustice and impiety. This wrath is presented as a radical God's hostility towards evil, to which He will not be indifferent (cf. Ex 22:22, 32:9; Deut 29:24-27; Isa 1:15-20, 9:11). His reaction is inevitable. Paul explains the justice behind God's action. No form of evil is able to hide from His attention<sup>1</sup>. In this perspective, the author presents the necessity to vindicate first the Gentiles, then the Jews, according to the then current division of mankind.

### **1. The situation of the Gentiles**

In Rom 1:19 the author writes: „Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them”. The Gentiles have all the necessary information they need to acknowledge God's existence. However, they do not wish to do it (cf. Wis 13-14). This argumentation aims to show the whole extent of the guilt weighting on the Gentiles for their impiety. For in every human there is a natural capacity to believe in God<sup>2</sup>.

God's existence is proven by all His creations. „ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.” (Rom 1:20). The act of realizing the harmony and purposefulness of everything that exists allows to understand that it was all created by the powerful being that is God. The universe is an open book, in

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<sup>1</sup> Por. J.N. Aletti, List do Rzymian, w: Międzynarodowy komentarz do Pisma Świętego, red. W. Chrostowski, Warszawa 2000, s. 1418; S. Romanello, Jakie jest orędzie ewangeliczne w Rz 1,16-3,20?, „Verbum Vitae” 2 (2002), s. 168 nn.

<sup>2</sup> Por. F. Montagnini, La prospettiva stolica della Lettera ai Romani, Brescia 1980, s. 84; A. Paciork, Człowiek bez Chrystusa w soteriologii Listu św. Pawła do Rzymian, Tarnów 1995, s. 99 n.

which God's perfection is all present. Thus there is no justification for human's unawareness. For the invisible God's presence can be observed in His creations, especially those that are proof of His goodness and mercifulness<sup>3</sup>.

In Rom 1:19 the author defines the possibility of experiencing God in the mind by observing His creations. However, it is not a purely intellectual experience. The man created in God's image is obligated to honor God and offer his thanksgiving to God (verse 21), which cannot be limited to only theoretical experiences of God. This experience must be manifested in concrete actions. The evidence of theoretical experience should be shown in the adoration of God and honest gratefulness towards him<sup>4</sup>.

Experiencing God is not only a purely intellectual act, but rather voluntary affirmation. Gentiles have the necessary means to experience God in this way. However, their lives do not confirm the truth of God's existence. Because of this they become lost in their ideas for life. Paul the Apostle writes: „For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.” (Rom 1:21). This way the sinner deprives himself of the ability to distinguish good and evil: „Claiming to be wise, they became fools” (Rom 1:22). They assign themselves wisdom (cf. Isa 5:21), but acting against God's wisdom is foolishness (cf. Jer 10:14). This way the Gentiles in a way deprive themselves of the ability to distinguish what is a sign of wisdom from what only seems wisdom. This is a kind of temporal punishment for not giving God His rightful honors. By lasting in their conviction of their prudence they become more and more close themselves in their own foolishness<sup>5</sup>.

As a consequence of refusing to honor God, man falls into idolatry. This is a fundamental sin of rejecting the true God. Not giving God His rightful honors leads to sexual immorality (Rom 1:24). Paul the Apostle also indicates the existence of the decline of the Gentiles in terms of replacing lies with God's truth (Rom 1:25). As a consequence of this man honors the creation, and not its Creator. The Gentile life becomes a cult of creation. Service to God

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<sup>3</sup> Por. A. Paciorek, *Człowiek bez Chrystusa w soteriologii Listu św. Pawła do Rzymian*, s. 100 nn; F. Montagnini, *La prospettiva stolica della Lettera ai Romani*, s. 84; K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, L. Stachowiak, *Komentarz Praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, t. 2, Poznań-Kraków 1999, s. 13; W. Dabourne, *Purpose and Cause In Pauline Exegesis. Romans 1,16-4,25 and a New Approach to the Letters*, Cambridge-New York 1999, s. 126; J.A. Fitzmyer, *List do Rzymian*, KKB, s. 1265; S. Romanello, *Jakie jest orędzie ewangeliczne w Rz 1,16-3,20?*, s. 171.

<sup>4</sup> Por. K. Romaniuk, *List do Rzymian. Wstęp – Przekład z oryginału – Komentarz*, Poznań-Warszawa 1978, s. 93.

<sup>5</sup> Por. K. Barth, *Breve commentario all'epistola ai Romani*, Brescia 1990, s. 43 nn; G. Rafiński, *Grzech ludzkości i dar usprawiedliwienia (List św. Pawła do Rzymian)*, w: *Wprowadzenie w myśl i wezwanie ksiąg biblijnych*, t. 9: *Dzieje Apostolskie. Listy św. Pawła*, ed. J. Frankowski, Warszawa 1997, p. 319; K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, L. Stachowiak, *Komentarz Praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, t. 2, s. 14; *Komentarz historyczno-kulturowy do Nowego Testamentu*, red. C.S. Keener, K. Bardski, W. Chrostowski, Warszawa 2000, s. 314 n.

becomes instead service to the world. The replacement of truth and lie also results in changing the natural human cohabitation into an intercourse that is „against nature” (Rom 1:26b). This argument by Paul the Apostle discredits the Gentiles<sup>6</sup>.

In Rom 1:28-32 Paul the Apostle again blames the Gentiles, which is not about the real experiencing of God. Without God’s light man does that, which is wicked. Being religiously independent of the true God results in moral independence, which is has no limits. Man becomes overwhelmed by sins, which destroy his orderly life more and more<sup>7</sup>. Gentiles have an awareness of the unavoidable death that will be their punishment for the abovementioned deeds. However, they are satisfied by those deeds and those, who commit evil. The world praises evil, but Paul the Apostle „praises” the Gospel: „For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last,[a] just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’” (Rom 1:16-17).

## **2. The situation of the Jews**

Moral and mental havoc lead to turning away from the Creator. After this general statement about the sin of all mankind (cf. Rom 1:18-32), Paul the Apostle shows the sins of the Jews and points at their origin. The Gentiles rejected God despite the possibilities to experience God and serve Him. However, Jews are not idolators and do not identify themselves with the Gentile life style. They believe in one God, despite the deviations between them, sometimes in cults, that are present in their faith. It could thus seem, that they do not qualify for the judgment described in the first chapter of the letter, because God’s wrath will not concern them (verse 18)<sup>8</sup>.

Due to the above, after showing the faults of the Gentiles, Paul the Apostle describes the offenses of the Jews, while still continuing his general contemplation (2:1-3:20). They also cannot hope for justification for their sins. Jews are aware of their specialness of being God’s

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<sup>6</sup> Por. H. Langkammer, *List do Rzymian. Tłumaczenie, wstęp i komentarz*, Lublin 1999, s. 35 n; idem, *Komentarz teologiczno-pastoralny wszystkich listów św. Pawła Apostoła z okazji Roku Świętego Pawła*, t. 1: *Wielkie listy św. Pawła*, Legnica 2009, s. 33; A. Paciorek, *Człowiek bez Chrystusa w soteriologii Listu św. Pawła do Rzymian*, s. 120.

<sup>7</sup> Por. J. Pilch, *Galati e Romani*, Brescia 1993, s. 57 n; A. Paciorek, *Człowiek bez Chrystusa w soteriologii Listu św. Pawła do Rzymian*, s. 120 n; G. Rafiński, *Grzech ludzkości i dar usprawiedliwienia (List św. Pawła do Rzymian)*, s. 319; K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, L. Stachowiak, *Komentarz Praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, t. 2, s. 15; H. Langkammer, *Komentarz teologiczno-pastoralny wszystkich listów św. Pawła Apostoła z okazji Roku Świętego Pawła*, t. 1, s. 34.

<sup>8</sup> Por. G. Rafiński, *Grzech ludzkości i dar usprawiedliwienia (List św. Pawła do Rzymian)*, s. 320.

chosen people, as well as the conviction of the fact related to it that being God's chosen also gives them special privileges. Thus, they are convinced, that salvation is a given to them just by being the descendants of Abraham and that it is they who have the right to pass judgment on other people's salvation. They consider all non Jews and those Jews who were not circumcised as sinners. However, he who thinks he can justify himself, judge and condemn other people brings God's wrath upon himself. Regardless of whether he is Greek or Jewish, whether he believes in God or not. Self-justification is in fact a denial of the authenticity of faith in God. This is why Paul the Apostle writes that no one is just in God's eyes (cf. Rom 3:10)<sup>9</sup>.

Paul the Apostle writes: „You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.” (Rom 2:1). Paul the Apostle accuses everyone, who passes condemning judgment on other people. The context suggests that he means, first of all, Jews who criticize the wicked doings of the Gentiles. It does not result from judging party's righteous attitude, nor does it serve self-criticism and proper behavior. However, it appears that the Jews are no better than the Gentiles. The sin of the Jews is usurping the Creator and ultimate Judge's rights and contempt for non-Jews and attributing themselves the ability to justify their negligence towards God<sup>10</sup>.

Comparing to the Gentiles, the situation of the Jews is not better. The difference is that Jews have the Right given them by God through Moses. In the long deduction the subject of offenses towards the commandments is discussed (Rom 2:17-24), as well as criticizing the non-sense of circumcision, because it does not protect from sin and becomes a purely external problem (idem 25-29). Paul the Apostle more and more bluntly points the moral imperfections of the Jews, which is presented in the long anacoluthon in Rom 2:17-20. Calling someone a Jew was a distinction not only in terms of nationality, but especially in terms of religion. The Jews were certain in their conviction that they were the only ones who learned God's will (verse 18) and only they could be the leaders in every discipline of life (verse 19 n)<sup>11</sup>. Paul the Apostle stresses that the mission of the teacher obligates one to also look at his own action. The Jews know the Right, but do not keep it. Paul the Apostle presents the Jews' vies and raises concrete objections (Rom 2:21 n). He mentions three sins the

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<sup>9</sup> Por. K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, L. Stachowiak, *Komentarz Praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, t. 2, s. 16; H. Langkammer, *List do Rzymian...*, s. 37; tenże, *Komentarz teologiczno-pastoralny wszystkich listów św. Pawła Apostoła z okazji Roku Świętego Pawła*, t. 1, s. 35 n.

<sup>10</sup> Por. H. Langkammer, *List do Rzymian...*, s. 38; tenże, *Komentarz teologiczno-pastoralny wszystkich listów św. Pawła Apostoła z okazji Roku Świętego Pawła*, t. 1, s. 36.

<sup>11</sup> Por. *Komentarz historyczno-kulturowy do Nowego Testamentu*, s. 317.

Israelitss committed, which they prohibit others from doing. Namely theft, adultery and sacrilege. Each of these sins was committed by the Jews<sup>12</sup>.

Both Gentiles and Jews are guilty of offenses against God. Paul the Apostle shows this in the context of the words that „God does not show favoritism” (Rom 2-11). In the face of the Gospel’s words about God’s eschatological entrance to mankind’s history through his Son, everyone is equal and has the same chance for salvation. Through bad Leeds people have led to a sin becoming common, which is why salvation is necessary. Jews cannot count on God’s indulgence. They can only humbly confess their sins. They must all be true and humble about themselves and accept their faults in front of God from mankind<sup>13</sup> and thus mankind cannot try to justify its guilt. God showed Himself clearly enough to mankind and so not recognizing God as the Creator is mankind’s fault (1:18-21:28).

The situation of the Jews is slightly different, because they also posses the Right. Their privilege is also circumcision as a sign of receiving the Right and the covenant with God (Rom 2:25). The essence of their sin is related to their aspiration to secure themselves a life basing on their privileges. Their mistake is their conviction of being safe, which results from being the chosen nation, and trusting in their privileges, despite not fulfilling God’s will. The sin of the Jews is abusing the Right and ma king themselves the judges of the Gentile when also committing the same sins as they did.

Mankind is presented in a situation without Christ, whether historically or in relations, when Man does not acknowledge and accept Him<sup>14</sup>. This is a situation in which human nature is corrupted by sin. Paul the Apostle stresses that no one deserves to justify himself on his own, without appealing to conscience, or fulfilling the Right. All humans are subjected to sin. In fact the sin of the Jews and the sin of the Gentile is the same sin – the sin of wanting to be independent of God<sup>15</sup>.

So both groups of humanity, the Jews and the Gentile, need justification. For they are burdened with God’s wrath, which will be sent on all those, who are evil, Jew and Gentile alike. This is a sign of God’s justice. God does not give anyone special privileges in this respect, and that is why Paul the Apostle points at the hopelessness of this situation, which is the sin of going against the rules of the Right and those inscribed in human he hearts. For time

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<sup>12</sup> Por. K. Romaniuk, *List do Rzymian. Wstęp...*, s. 107; A. Paciorek, *Człowiek bez Chrystusa w soteriologii Listu św. Pawła do Rzymian*, s. 154; K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, L. Stachowiak, *Komentarz Praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, t. 2, s. 17 n.

<sup>13</sup> Por. A. Paciorek, *Człowiek bez Chrystusa w soteriologii Listu św. Pawła do Rzymian*, s. 155 n.

<sup>14</sup> Por. H. Langkammer, *Komentarz teologiczno-pastoralny wszystkich listów św. Pawła Apostoła z okazji Roku Świętego Pawła*, t. 1, s. 31.

<sup>15</sup> Por. G. Rafiński, *Grzech ludzkości i dar usprawiedliwienia (List św. Pawła do Rzymian)*, s. 314.

has come to put an end to all sin. Jesus Christ merited for the salvation, which is manifests itself in the grace of faith in the Gospel. Rescue from the sinful entanglements, which burden mankind will be given those, who accept the offer of salvation, merited by Jesus Christ.

**A warning to the followers of Christ in the perspective of God's punishment to the  
impious based on the Epistle of Jude**

The Epistle of Jude is a testament of the fight for the purity of religion and morals. The main aim of the Epistle of Jude is to protect the faith of the followers of Christ. Therefore the author reminds their vocation and destiny in order to encourage remaining faithful to the faith they were introduced (verse 3). For a danger emerged in the form of impious, who came to the Christian society: „ For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (verse 4). Due to the words of verse 3, this „denying” is not only immoral (cf. Titus 1-6), but is also related to Christological errors<sup>16</sup>.

The polemic part of the letter (Jude 1:5-23) presents the wrong-doings of the misbelievers (1:5-19) and a warning of the impious, as well as the means to protect oneself from their influence (1:20-23). Their incentives to live a moral life. The author mentions sin, but it is difficult to recognize the condemned mistakes that lead to immorality. It can only be stated that misbelievers wrongly interpret Christian freedom, which Paul the Apostle taught (cf. Rom 7; Gal 3-19). The author wants to reach to the dangerous situation in the Christian community (Jude 1:3-12). He uses examples of the punishments that God used against the impious (Jude 1:5-7;11). He also uses apocryphal literature, whose influence can be seen in the author's five-time use of the contemptuous words describing the evil people (Jude 1:8;10;12;16;19). The final doxology describes God's attributes, which reward goodness

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<sup>16</sup> Por. R. Bartnicki, *Walka z herezjami (List św. Judy)*, in: *Wprowadzenie w myśl i wezwanie ksiąg biblijnych*, t. 10: *Ewangelia świętego Jana. Listy Powszechne. Apokalipsa*, red. J. Frankowski, Warszawa 1992, s. 134.

(Jude 24)<sup>17</sup>. In this perspective it is worth to point towards the still true message of the Epistle of Jude.

### 1. Examples of God's punishment to the impious from the Old Testament

Jude gives examples that are a warning to the misbelievers. In verse 5 he takes an example from the history of Israel. He refers to the liberation of God's people from the Egyptian enslavement. Among the Israelites there were persons, who spoke against God. God freed his people from Egypt, but the misbelievers were destroyed as righteous punishment for their lack of faith (cf. Num 14:26-35). The author reminisces the events of the Old Testament and adapts them to the situation of the recipients of his letter. Heretics derive from the Church, but they face the same punishment. Just as God led to their doom those, whom he had previously taken care of, so will be punished the misbelievers, who had once been freed from the chains of sin by the light of faith, used its graces and then rejected Jesus Christ and again entered the path of wrong teachings<sup>18</sup>.

Next, the author uses the example of the fallen angels, who were created as good spirits and occupied the higher, blue regions. They were punished for their insolence with eternal chains and kept in the darkness until the day of final judgment (Jude 1:6; cf. 2 Pet 2:4; Apoc 6:17; 16:14). The fall of these angels should be a warning to all heretics, because it is a foreshadowing of the punishment that awaits them. Therefore Jude also points out that heretics blaspheme with „Dignities” (Jude 1:8) and explains that the archangel Michael in his fight with the devil did not dare to judge the devilish entities, but instead left it for God to judge: Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. (Jude 1:9). Blasphemy with „Dignities”, which are most probably the fallen angels results from the heretics' ignorance: „But these speak evil of those things which they know not” (Jude 1:10). This is an allusion to the gnostics, who claimed the rights to secret knowledge. Jude accuses them of ignorance and writes: „But what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves” (Jude 1:10; cf. 2 Pet 2:12)<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Por. E. Szymanek, *Wykład Pisma Świętego Nowego Testamentu*, Poznań 1990, s. 471.

<sup>18</sup> Por. F. Gryglewicz, *Listy katolickie. Wstęp – Przekład z oryginału – Komentarz*, Poznań 1959, s. 483 n; R. Bartnicki, *Walka z herezjami (List św. Judy)*, s. 137; K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, L. Stachowiak, *Komentarz Praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, t. 2, Poznań-Kraków 1999, s. 588 n.

<sup>19</sup> Por. F. Gryglewicz, *Listy katolickie. Wstęp...*, s. 487; R. Bartnicki, *Walka z herezjami (List św. Judy)*, s. 135 n; J.H. Neyrey, *List św. Judy*, KKB, s. 1539.

Another example Jude uses is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah: „Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire” (Jude 1:7; cf. Gen 19:4-25; Deut 29,22; Hos 11:8). In the Biblical tradition this is a characteristic example of God’s punishment (Jer 23:14; Ezra 16:48-50; Mt 10:15; 11:24; Rom 9:29)<sup>20</sup>. Jude shows that the enemies of faith commit sins similar to the inhabitants of these cities, because they „defile the flesh” (Jude 1:8). He also accuses them of other crimes, known from the events of the Old Testament: „Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core” (Jude 1:11; cf. 2 Pet 2:15). Cain killed his brother out of envy (Gen 4:1-16), the king of Moab tried to bribe Balaama to plot against Israel (cf. Num 22), Korach rebelled against passing over the priest’s dignities to Aaron and his family (cf. Num 16). Misbelievers commit similar sins. That is why the author calls them “blemishes” (Jude 1:12).

## 2. A warning from misbelievers

Despite the examples of God’s Punishment known from the Old Testament, misbelievers sin in a similar way to those, who turned away from God and brought misfortune upon themselves. Jude writes they „rely on their dreams” (Jude 1:8). This is contemptuous and refers to the false prophets (cf. Deut 13:1-6; Isa 56:10; Jer 23:27). By calling them false teachers, Jude also describes the value of their teachings. These teachings do not come from revelation. Misbelievers teach what seems to them as real. Faith is supported by revelation, which is a historical fact<sup>21</sup>.

By warning the faithful, Jude addresses the heretics a string of a few abrupt and angry sentences, using words that express his contempt: „These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted” (Jud 1:12). He recalls the feasts (Jude 1:12; cf. 2 Pet 2:13; 1 Cor 11:20-23), during which misbelievers presented demoralizing behavior. Jude accuses them of debauchery, which they were not scared to

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<sup>20</sup> Por. *Komentarz historyczno-kulturowy do Nowego Testamentu*, red. C.S. Keener, K. Bardski, W. Chrostowski, Warszawa 2000, p. 574; M. Rosik, *Eschatologia*, w: *Teologia Nowego Testamentu*, t. 3: *Listy Pawłowe, katolickie i List do Hebrajczyków*, red. M. Rosik, Wrocław 2008, s. 296.

<sup>21</sup> Por. F. Gryglewicz, *Listy katolickie. Wstęp...*, s. 485; idem, *Teologia Nowego Testamentu*, t. 3: *Teologia Dziejów Apostolskich, listów katolickich i pism św. Jana ewangelisty*, Lublin 1986, s. 39; R. Bartnicki, *Walka z herezjami (List św. Judy)*, s. 135; K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, L. Stachowiak, *Komentarz Praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, t. 2, s. 589.

present (Jude 1:12). Thus, there were not worthy of sitting at love feasts. Next, the author writes that the impious „follow their own sinful desires” (Jude 1:16). Similar to this are the words that they also: „defile the flesh” (Jude 1:8), and „pervert the grace of our God into sensuality” (Jude 1:4). God’s willingness to forgive their sins becomes an opportunity for the heretics to engage in sexual licentiousness. They probably proclaimed that everything was allowed, because carnal sin is an opportunity for God to show his great graciousness. Meanwhile grace cannot be treated as an acquisition of sinful life, because grace requires one to start a new life, according to its rules (cf. Gen 6:15-23)<sup>22</sup>.

Jude points out that misbelievers are „shepherds feeding themselves” (Jude 1:12). He compares them to bad shepherds, who do not care well for their sheep, but their own profit. He also creates an image of them as „waterless clouds, swept along by winds” (Jude 1:12), which never bring the desired rain. Similar is the case with the misbelievers’ teachings, which do not give any profit. Jude adds, that these clouds are „swept along by winds”, which illustrates the falseness of the teachers and their squabbling (cf. 2 Pet 2,17)<sup>23</sup>.

The author makes a different comparison between the misbelievers and the nature: „fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted” (Jude 1:12). This way he expresses the other aspects of the same truth. The life of misbelievers does not give fruits due to the lack of unity with God (cf. Jude 1:1, 1 Jn 3:14). Misbelievers are like trees that are „twice dead”. The author makes this allusion to the double death. Breaking the unity with God means death. Misbelievers die once by breaking their unity with God. The second death is the eternal death, which is Jude describes as „uprooting” (Jude 1:12; cf. 1 Jn 3:14; 5:16; Jas 1:15; 5,20; 2 Pet 2:18-22). The past tense he uses indicates that this „uprooting” is sure to come. Jude refers here to Christ’s teachings, who mentioned this many times (cf. Mt 3:10; 7:19; 15:13)<sup>24</sup>.

Next, Jude compares misbelievers to „wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame” (Jude 1:13). This is a reference to Isa 57:20: „ But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt”. The prophet points out, that like the sea, which once ruffled, cannot calm down, so do the misbelievers have no quiet conscience. Jude uses the image of the stormy sea, during which the billows crush into foam against the rocky shore. Misbeliever crush into the rocky shore, which is Jesus Christ, only leaving corruption behind themselves. Their actions reveal their moral corruption. They do not harness their desires, which lead them to disgrace and doom. In his last comparison, Jude

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<sup>22</sup> Por. R. Bartnicki, *Walka z herezjami (List św. Judy)*, s. 136; J.H. Neyrey, *List św. Judy*, s. 1540.

<sup>23</sup> Por. F. Gryglewicz, *Listy katolickie. Wstęp...*, s.488.

<sup>24</sup> Por. K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, L. Stachowiak, *Komentarz Praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, t. 2, s. 590.

describes the misbelievers as „wandering stars” (Jude 1:13). This is an allusion to the false teachings of the false teachers. By this they move away from God’s light. It is them „for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever” (Jude 1:13)<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> Por. F. Gryglewicz, *Listy katolickie. Wstęp...*, s. 488; K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, L. Stachowiak, *Komentarz Praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, t. 2, s. 590; *Komentarz historyczno-kulturowy do Nowego Testamentu*, s. 585; P. Reymond, *List św. Judy Apostoła*, w: *Międzynarodowy komentarz do Pisma Świętego*, red. W. Chrostowski, Warszawa 2000, s. 1674.

***THE BOOK OF FAITH AND WISDOM.***  
***THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH***

In the year of announcing the Year of Faith we celebrate two anniversaries, which have been very important to the Catholic Church. One of them is related with the beginning of the second Vatican Council and the other with the proclamation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. In 1992 John Paul II officially announced the world the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

On the 20th anniversary of this exalted act it is worth to remind ourselves the meaning and maybe even the existence of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and answer the question how much of it do we use in our priestly and catechetical service? How much are we aware that it is a book of faith and the rules of life of God's people.

In searching for an answer to this and other questions, I have divided my reflections in four main points: 1) Reinstating our awareness for the meaning of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*; 2) Current state of faith and religious knowledge of the catechized; 3) Catechetical *fides et ratio*; 4) Adaptations of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in the Church in Poland.

***1. Reinstating our awareness for the meaning of the Catechism of the Catholic Church***

In one of his speeches John Paul II said that the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is a *gift for all* people. Proclaiming the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* was not only "one of the most exalted events in the Church's modern history"<sup>26</sup>, but also one of the most important events of his pontificate.

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The official proclamation of the promulgated by the Pope Church common catechism does not occur often. Just imagine that in over two thousand years catechism of this rank have only been proclaimed twice. The first was proclaimed at the Council of Trent in 1566 and the second in 1992, the one whose 20th anniversary we are celebrating. Similarly to the *Roman Catechism* which is often called the Council of Trent Catechism, the present *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is often called the Catechism of the Second Vatican Council<sup>27</sup>.

Therefore John Paul II's statement emphasizing the important of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is justified. However one can get the impression that we have not always been aware of the importance of what the *Catechism* has been and still is for the Church.

Ten years ago, which was on the 10th anniversary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church's* proclamation, during the international congress for catechesis in Rome, Card. J. Ratzinger<sup>28</sup> greatly emphasized the importance of the *Catechism*. He stated that proclaiming the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* was a very exalted event in the post Council Church. Its proclamation was a very mature and well considered answer to the expectations of the local Church in many parts of the world.

The fundamental reason of preparing and issuing the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* was that the pastoral renewal of the Church after the Second Vatican Council, despite many valuable initiatives, lacked a vision of the whole. There were questions as to what, after the the critical event of the Council, still possessed any value. Many priests and faithful expected a new text which would clearly present the synthesis of the Catholic doctrine created by the Second Vatican Council<sup>29</sup>. Indeed, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* was, no doubt, a synthesis of the Christian doctrine, a mine of Biblical, dogmatic, fundamental, moral,

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<sup>26</sup> John Paul II, *Nowy Katechizm darem dla wszystkich* (The New Catechism as a Gift for Everyone). The Holy Father's speech delivered on December 7 in the Royal Hall, "L'Osservatore Romano", Polish edition, 14 (1993) 2, p. 7.

<sup>27</sup> In his speech delivered for the conclusion of the international congress for catechesis in Rome in 2002, John Paul II called it the *Vaticanum Catechesis II*. Cf. R. Murawski, *Międzynarodowy Kongres Katechetyczny w Rzymie* (The International Congress for Catechesis in Rome), "Katecheta" (The Catechist) 47 (2003) 1, p. 57.

<sup>28</sup> Card. J. Ratzinger was the head of a special Board created in 1986 by John Paul II, which consisted of 12 cardinals and bishops, which was responsible for preparing the project of the *Catechism*, and supervised the process of its creation. Abp. Jerzy Stroba was also part of that board.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. J Ratzinger, *Aktualność doktrynalna Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego* (Doctrinal Topicality of the Catechism of the Catholic Church), "L'Osservatore Romano", Polish edition, 24 (2003) 3, p. 48; cf. also R. Murawski, *Międzynarodowy Kongres Katechetyczny w Rzymie* (International Congress for Catechesis in Rome), "Catechesis" 47 (2003) 1, p.51.

liturgic, catechetical, ascetic and historical knowledge. It should be stressed and we should refresh our awareness that this is a synthesis of the official Church Magisterium, which ex cathedra, in a precise form, in an organic synthesis<sup>30</sup> presents, as it was written in the 11th number of the *Catechism*, important and basic "catholic learning content, covering both faith as well as the morality in the light of the Second Vatican Council and the wholeness of the Church Tradition"<sup>31</sup>. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is the official interpretation of the Catholic Church and it should be abided and it should be the source of conversion, deepening one's faith and living according to the rules prescribed in the *Catechism*.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is however designed mostly, as we read in the *Introduction* "for those responsible for catechesis: first and foremost bishops as teachers of faith and Church shepherds. (...) Through the bishops it is addressed to the catechism editors, priests and catechists. It will also be a useful lecture for all those other faithful Christians"<sup>32</sup>.

In the *Fidei depositum* Constitution, the promulgation to the Catechesis, John Paul II said that it is "for all those faithful, who want to know more of the unending richness of salvation" and "every man (...) who wants to get to know the faith of the Catholic Church"<sup>33</sup>. At the same time the Holy Father pointed out three basic functions, which the *Catechism* fulfil in the contemporary Church:

1) it should be considered "a useful and appropriate tool for ecclesial communion", and thus the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* wants the upkeep and revive the bond of unity of the same faith;

2) it should be a "norm of teaching faith", which mean it should be a "safe and authentic point of reference in teaching the catholic religion" both for catechesis as well as other forms of service of the Word;

3) it should be a reference point and a template for local catechisms developed in different countries. "The new *Catechism* is not supposed to replace the catechisms developed in different places (...)/ It should rather be an incentive and help to develop new local catechisms, adapted to various environments and cultures"<sup>34</sup>.

John Paul II emphasized many times that the *Catechism* is a special gift to the Church: the the contemporary Church and the one turned towards the future. It is a gift for all. As the

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. *Dyrektorium ogólne o katechizacji* (Catechization General Directorium), Poznań 1997, nr 122.

<sup>31</sup> *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego* (Catechism of the Catholic Church), Poznań 1992, nr 11 (from now: CCC).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, nr. 12.

<sup>33</sup> *Fidei depositum*, in: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 8-9.

Pope said "In the face of this text no one should feel alienated, excluded, away". It is important to say, he continued, the role this new *Catechism* will play in the Church. "However, thanks to God's grace and the good will of His shepherds and faithful it will surely become an effective tool for further deepening one's knowledge and will be result in a moral and spiritual renewal"<sup>35</sup>.

Did it happen so? 20 years have passed. Has the *Catechism* become an effective tool of deepening one's faith and religious knowledge and resulted in authentic renewal of one's spirit and morality? I think that this is a question that absolutely demands an answer, a question which should be sought to be answered by those who are responsible for priesthood and catechesis. The answer to this question is surely very complex. It is somewhat related to our effectiveness at passing over faith and religious knowledge.

## **2. Current state of faith and religious knowledge of the catechized**

The question about the effectiveness of evangelization, priesthood and catechization is an important one. Obviously, it should be emphasized that not everything is dependant of evangelizers, priests and catechists. The current times and passing over faith, rules of morality and religious knowledge in them are not favourable to those, who take up evangelization, priesthood and catechization of the modern world. Furthermore, as we know, evangelization, priesthood and catechetical activities are afloat between "heaven and earth" and as mere mortals, we often do not comprehend the whole of the salvation. We are only tools in the hands of He who called upon us and sent us out. It should also be added that Christ did not promise his appointed it would be easy. Furthermore, he claimed that they are supposed to be signs of resistance and they will not necessarily be loved by other people and help them in making it easier for them to take up various activities. However, despite various types of difficulties priests, catechists, sisters, lay catechists take up evangelization, priesthood and catechetical work. Except activities in the religious sphere, which results from their profession, much good can be done also in the broadly defined area of education, society and charity.

Stating, that we do much good (maybe not all of us, but definitely a strong majority) for those, whom we evangelize and catechize, we sometimes burn out faster than we should, however we need to ask ourselves a question about the effectiveness of our work. How is it? We ask and should keep asking ourselves, how is it, that with such a great personal and

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<sup>35</sup> John Paul II, *Nowy Katechizm darem dla wszystkich* (The New Catechism as a Gift to All), op. cit., p. 8-9.

organization engagement the effects are often not appropriate to said engagement. The faith and knowledge of our catechized leaves much room for improvement.

Many times, bp. Roman Marcinkowski says, "everyday life gives us many worrisome facts about very weak religious knowledge of many catholics. Confirmation can be found in television game shows. Do we not feel embarrassed when the competitors of such shows very often cannot answer the basic questions regarding Christ, the Holy Bible or the history of the Church? These questions turn out to be too difficult for people, who have an impressive general knowledge. I am certain that a majority of them are catholics who attended catechesis in primary and high school and, sadly, stopped after that"<sup>36</sup>.

When we meet young people who went through the whole education process along with religion at school, which consists of 6 years of primary school, 3 years of junior high school (gimnazjum in Poland) and 3 years of high school and it turns out they have no (or close to) knowledge of the religion to which they were baptized.

It is surely a broad issue, because there are many other subject taught at school, that can have the same results, but should it calm down us, the priests and catechists? This question is important, both in the light of priesthood and catechesis, to which it is time to provide enough thought in many ecclesial circles, starting from the top, because non-ecclesial circles have been dealing with this problem for a longer time. Besides that we see, what processes have taken place in other European countries. If someone thinks that we, the Poles, will avoid these processes, he is very mistaken. Here is one example from France. In 1962 France was still a strongly catholic country – as *La Croix* reminds us. Every third Frenchman went to Church on Sunday. Today churchgoers, in the broad sense of the word, are only 6% of the inhabitants in France. Whereas the group of those, who do not go to Church at all, is not 66%, up from 32%. However statistics become worse with the age. Baptized Catholics below the age of 35 are only 2/3 of the society. What is more, every third Catholic says they have not or will not baptize their children. 50 years ago this was only 4% of the Catholics in France<sup>37</sup>.

Will Poles face the same? It cannot be ruled out.

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. R. Marcinkowski, *Dlaczego katechizm?* (Why the Catechism?), in: *Katechizm Płocki* (The Płock Catechism). *Część I. Wyznanie wiary* (Part I. Declaration of Faith), Płock 2008, p. 17-18.

<sup>37</sup> <http://nowy.ekai.pl/szuflada/protected/183442/>.

I believe, as abp. Stanisław Wielgus writes, "One of the reasons for not believing in God of many modern people is them not knowing Him, never making the effort to getting to know Him, to be closer to Him with their mind. It is not without reason that the Holy Father listed religious ignorance as one of the sources of unbelief, agnosticism and false ideas of God. There are many Christians whose religious knowledge is close to none, undeveloped and full of mistakes. It is a saddening fact that many Christians, also those who attended religion classes, who were prepared for confirmation do not know the basic principles of their faith. There are many Christians, even with higher education, that have great lay knowledge and high humanistic culture, who have almost no religious culture. Some of them, despite their good lay education, they settle with their religious knowledge at the level of scraps of the knowledge, unforgotten from their childhood and only adequate to a child's consciousness, not an adult, educated man's. Developing one's knowledge of the world they never took care of widening and deepening their knowledge of God, which is great and astute. And they could have and, as Christians, should have done that through studying the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, reading religious books and magazines, going to theological and philosophical conferences, systematic participation in retreats and in many other ways. Thus it is not surprising that such people sometimes go through a crisis of faith, a faith they do not know or not know well enough. Thus it is not surprising they cannot defend their religious beliefs; for in the confrontation of the great lay knowledge with their undeveloped, scarce and sometimes childlike knowledge of God seems naive and foolish. Thus it is not surprising that they cannot explain religious problems to their children. Thus it is not surprising they easily accept false religious pluralism, which makes all religions equal, which says that all religions are equally worth, that some truths of faith can be accepted and others rejected, that they can be gone through like goods on a store shelf, picking out the ones one likes best without taking notice that all the truths proclaimed by the Church were given to them by God Himself, and man has no right to correct Him"<sup>38</sup>.

### **3. Catechetical *fides et ratio***

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<sup>38</sup> S. Wielgus, *List pasterski na Wielki Post 2005 r. Chryścijanin wobec odwiecznego kusiciela* (Pastoral Letter for the Lent of 2005. Christians and the eternal temptation), at: [www.duszpasterstwo.plock.opoka.org.pl](http://www.duszpasterstwo.plock.opoka.org.pl)

The above reflections suggest a conclusion that we should often realize that *fides et ratio* goes hand in hand. It is a certain type of an "inseparable marriage". This is a unity conditioning mutual relations. John Paul II reminded us many times, even in this often repeated and well-known sentence, that that faith and mind are two wings and only that way man can fly up, all the way up to heaven. One cannot fly with only one wing. Looking at the last decades, sadly people have tried doing just that - fly with only one wing. The confirmation of this is even the existence of the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the new interpretation, new synthesis of faith and knowledge, which is the necessary tool for achieving the goal, where *fides et ratio* are together, like "inseparable siblings"<sup>39</sup>.

When speaking of the weaknesses of our faithful in the field of their religious knowledge, we should also consider how our own priesthood and catechetical teaching looks. Throughout the ages the Catechism was the compulsory synthetic transfer of religious content and it was a certain religious minimum for man. Today we have yielded to parents, children, trend of upbringing, new scientific approaches, including theological and catechetical that children should not be stressed, their memory should not be burdened with questions and answers, definitions. Today there is no general lectures of faith for adults. There used to be the so called catechetical sermons. Today there are supposed to be homilies. I do not claim that we should go back to catechetical sermons, but one does not rule out the other. Perhaps we could organize meetings for those faithful and willing where we will give them both knowledge and faith.

The above problem was well-known when the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* was promulgated. John Paul II spoke of it, and so did Card. J. Ratzinger. The cardinal's speech in the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on 15th January 1983 echoed greatly. He said that the first and serious mistake was removing the Catechism and declaring the inaccuracy of the Catechism's literary genre<sup>40</sup>.

In a similar spirit were the words of Card. Donald Wuerl, the Metropolitan of Washington, who participated in the new evangelization Synod in Rome in the fall of 2012. During the Synod Wuerl was the relator of the Synod's general gathering. He said that the crisis of the modern Church in the West results from negligence in the fields of catechization and catholic education. In the United States we have lost two generations of Catholics this way

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. R. Czekalski, *Katecheza komunikacją wiary. Studium z katechetyki fundamentalnej* (The Catechesis as the Communication of Faith. A Study of Fundamental Catechesis), Płock 2006, pp. 301-307.

<sup>40</sup> J. Ratzinger, *Przekazywanie i źródła wiary* (Passing Over and Sources of Faith), in: *Powstanie i znaczenie Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego w wypowiedziach papieża Jana Pawła II i kardynała Josepha Ratzingera* (Creation and Meaning of the Catechism of the Catholic Church in the words of Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger's words), Poznań 1997, pp. 68.

– said the Metropolitan. He also emphasized that the Church had already appropriately reacted to this crisis 20 years ago by proclaiming the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Thanks to this catechization managed to be reborn in the United States. The remaining problems are university churches and catholic theologians who do not respect the teachings of the Church or the catholic identity of their institutions. There is still much to work in this field – admitted the Metropolitan of Washington. He has also recently sent a letter to 74 seminarians in his diocese, warning them from theologians, who, claiming they are catholics, bare teachings that contradict the Church's Magisterium. "In case of doubts just consult the *Catechism*" – advised the Washington Cardinal to his seminarians<sup>41</sup>.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, since its promulgation, was supposed to be that important element of catechization in which *fides* and *ratio* play an important role. John Paul II and Benedict XVI have spoken of it many times.

Faith, as John Paul II teaches in his encyclical *Fides et ratio*, demands that "its subject be studied with the mind; the mind, while reaching the top of its pursuit, recognizes the importance of what faith shows it"<sup>42</sup>. John Paul II pointed to the unity and the need for mutual complementing of the faith and mind. It is important because that whenever the mind does not have any support from the revelation it will follow side roads which bring the danger of losing the mind's ultimate goal. Whereas faith, if not based on reason provided by the mind, will focus exclusively on feelings and experiences, which may create a danger of no longer being universal. "It is a false conviction, the Pope continued, that faith can work stronger on a weak mind; quite the opposite, it is exposed to serious danger, for it can be brought down to the level of myth or superstition. Analogically, when the mind does not experience mature faith it does not have a stimulus that would allow it to focus on the specificity and depth of being"<sup>43</sup>.

In a similar spirit were the words of Benedict XVI during his general audience on 21 November 2012. The Holy Father delivered a catechesis in which he pointed out the relations in question. The Pope said, i.a. that "Meeting God is an experience of faith and demands to simultaneously take up the intellectual and moral path, because, when deeply touched by Jesus' Ghost's presence, we can overcome the perspective of our egoism and open ourselves to the real values of life. Speaking of the rationality of faith, the Holy Father remarked that the catholic tradition has rejected fideism (believing in spite of reason) since the start. For God is

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<sup>41</sup> [www.nowy.ekai.pl/szuflada/protected/183442/ln3mazp5ggwvew3y/](http://www.nowy.ekai.pl/szuflada/protected/183442/ln3mazp5ggwvew3y/)

<sup>42</sup> John Paul II, *Encyklika Fides et ratio o relacjach między wiarą a rozumem* (The *Fides et ratio* Encyclical about relations between faith and the mind), in: *Encykliki Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II* (The Holy Father John Paul II's Encyclicals), tome II, Kraków 1996, nr. 42.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, nr. 48

not absurd, but a mystery, full of sense, meaning and truth. Simultaneously, God enlightens the mind with His grace, He opens new immeasurable and infinite horizons. "That is why faith is a stimulus of constant anxiety in the unrelenting pursuit of truth and reality. False is the prejudice of contemporary thinkers, according to which the human mind is blocked by the dogmas of faith" – the Pope concludes<sup>44</sup>.

To summarize the reflections, it should be noted that for many years the highest Church agents have been aware of the problem, since they constantly refer to it and convince us that these two areas do not exist without each other, that they do not rule out the other, and instead support each other. Every deviation from this approach usually does not end well, what is more it also leads to many types of religious crises.

That is why why it was realized that without a new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* it will be difficult to achieve the intended religious goals and show the aforementioned relations between *ratio* and *fides*, especially in the field of evangelization, priesthood and catechization.

Of course, when speaking of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and knowing whom it is meant for we know well that it will probably not be a "sleep time read" for our faithful, neither for evangelizers, priests and catechists. That is why then, as I have already mentioned, churches were particularly encouraged to creating local catechisms basing on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

#### **4. Adaptations of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in the Church in Poland**

In the *Letter to the Polish Bishops on the occasion of receiving the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (22 February 1995) the Polish Episcopate wrote an interchangeable sentence: "The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is a gift given to us by the Church that must not be buried. It should be used to draw God's truth from it." Simultaneously the Bishops also announced that "on its basis (...) there will be developed catechisms for children, maturing teenagers and children in post-primary schools and catechisms for adults, and after that aids for catechists and children".

Almost 20 years have passed since these words were written. So let us ask ourselves a question: Has the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* been "buried" or have we forgotten about

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<sup>44</sup> [www.nowy.ekai.pl/szuflada/protected/183442/ln3mazp5ggwvew3y/#IDA3XBTE](http://www.nowy.ekai.pl/szuflada/protected/183442/ln3mazp5ggwvew3y/#IDA3XBTE)

it? The answer should be that, luckily, probably not. In that time there have been various initiatives, both on a diocesan scale as well as a Poland-wide scale, setting as their goal to adapt this *Catechism* to the needs of priests and catechists in Poland<sup>45</sup>. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* has become, first and foremost, a point of reference while developing catechetical textbooks, both for teaching religion at school as well as in the parish<sup>46</sup>. In these textbooks authors try to accomplish not only the goals and tasks given them by the program of teaching religion, but also relate, either in a lesser or greater extent, to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* or the 2005 *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* as its "faithful and safe synthesis"<sup>47</sup>.

As fr. prof. R. Murawski said, the universal feeling is that these actions seemed insufficient. There was a lack of an overall take and translating the contents of this *Catechism* for the use of the faithful, that is for catechesis for adults. The problem, doubtlessly, is the complicated language of the *Catechism*. There was also no clear conception as to how this lack should be managed. Fr. prof. said that the only attempt to translate the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* known to him into an easier language, and getting to a considerably wide

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. J. Charytański, *Niektóre wskazania wychowawcze Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego* (Some Rearing Indications of the Catechism of the Catholic Church), Warszawa 1997; J. Charytański, *Rzeczywistość miłości w Katechizmie Kościoła Katolickiego* (Reality of Love in the Catechism of the Catholic Church), Kraków 1998; J. Charytański, *Katecheza o Duchu Świętym według Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego* (The Holy Spirit catechesis according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church), Warszawa 1999; J. Charytański, A. Szałowski (ed.), *Katechizm dla dorosłych* (Catechism for adults). *Polska Adaptacja Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego opracowana na zlecenie i zatwierdzona przez Komisję Episkopatu Polski ds. Wychowania Katolickiego* (Polish Adaptation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church Developed for and Approved by the Board of the Polish Episcopate for Catholic Education), Kraków 1999; J. Charytański, Cz. M. Sondej, *Kim jestem jako człowiek i chrześcijanin. Rozważania w oparciu o Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego* (Who I am as a man and Christian. Thoughts based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church), Kraków 2006; Marek Z. (ed.), *Taka jest wiara Kościoła. Katechizm dla dorosłych* (That is the Faith of the Church. A Catechism for Adults), Kraków 2009; Dymkowski Z., *Wzory osobowe Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego w katechezie współczesnej* (Personal Patterns of the Catechism of the Catholic Church in Modern Catechesis), Płock-Lublin 1999; J. Królikowski, *Mały przewodnik po Katechizmie Kościoła Katolickiego* (A Small Guide to the Catechism of the Catholic Church), Poznań 1996; S. Łabendowicz, *Wyznawać wiarę dzisiaj. Katecheza dorosłych na podstawie Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego* (Catechesis for Adults Based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church), Sandomierz 1999; I. Wrzesiński, *Refleksje teologiczne nad Katechizmem Kościoła Katolickiego* (Theological Reflections on the Catechism of the Catholic Church), Ciechanów 1999; T. Panuś (red.), *W co Kościół wierzy i z czego żyje. W 10. rocznicę opublikowania Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego* (What the Church Believes in and What It Makes a Living From on the 10th Anniversary of Publishing the Catechism of the Catholic Church), Kraków 2004.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. up to date programmes and textbooks for teaching religion approved by the Board of Catholic Education of the Conference of the Polish Episcopate, in: R. Czekalski, *Bibliografia katechetyczna 2001-2010* (Catechetical Bibliography 2001-2010), Warszawa 2012, pp. 66-76.

<sup>47</sup> Benedykt XVI, *Motu proprio w celu zatwierdzenia i opublikowania Kompendium Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego* (The Motu Proprio in Approving and Publishing the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church), in: *Kompendium Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego* (Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church), Kielce 2005, p. 6; cf. R. Murawski, *Kompendium Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego* (Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church), in: *Katecheza w Kościele i dla Kościoła* (Catechesis in the Church and for the Church), ed. R. Czekalski, Płock 2006, pp. 15-24.

group of receivers, was made by the Płock diocese with the so called the *Płock Catechism* in 2005<sup>48</sup>.

The aforementioned fr. prof. Roman Murawski evaluated this effort in a few bullet points. He stated that the *Płock Catechism*<sup>49</sup> is an innovatory and unique piece of work that does not have an equivalent in modern catechetical literature. The author pointed out a few of its characteristic traits:

\* *The Płock Catechism* is the first original and fully successful attempt at adapting the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for the use of catechesis for adults. I am not aware of similar attempts in other countries.

\* In the transfer of the catechetical message all modern methods of communication were used: orally passing over information during Sunday Mass, press, radio, the Internet. The culmination of this many dimensional transfer a four tome book was printed. Similarly it is also a precursor for catechetical renditions.

\* Reading catechesis before Sunday Mass relates to the century old catechetical tradition, that had functioned at least since the Middle Ages and been forsaken just recently, namely Sunday catechetical sermons. Then it was a very popular form of catechesis for adults.

\* A serious drawback of Polish catechesis is the lack of a systematic catechesis for adults. Catechesis for children and youth will not bring the expected results if it is not accompanied by a catechesis for adults. The example of the *Płock Catechism* shows how the problem can be successfully solved<sup>50</sup>.

The originators and creators of the Płock Catechism, after a work of their work, on 12 April 2006, received acknowledgements from the Secretariat of the State of the Holy See. The Holy Father Benedict XVI thanked them for the new form of catechization they had implemented in the Diocese of Płock. The initiative of the *Płock Catechism* was called an

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<sup>48</sup> The then Bishop of Płock, Stanisław Wielgus, initiated the rendition of the local catechism. On 14 October a group of eight priests of the Płock diocese was created, whose task was to create a rendition of the method of spreading Catholic faith's truths. The group was composed of: bp. Roman Marcinkowski as the group's leader, fr. Daniel Brzeziński, fr. Ryszard Czekalski, fr. Kazimierz Dziadak, fr. Janusz Kochański, fr. Adam Łach, fr. Tomasz Opaliński, fr. Henryk Seweryniak. In the *Decree* issued on that occasion, the Płock Bishop wrote that this team was created because he is aware of the quickly progressing process of secularization. That is why he wishes to surround the faithful of the Płock Church with shepherdly care for an increasing level of religious knowledge, especially knowledge of basic truths of faith contained in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Cf. R. Czekalski, *Katechizm Płocki – założenia i realizacja* (The Płock Catechism – foundations and realization), „Collectanea Theologica” 3 (2008), pp. 161-167.

<sup>49</sup> The Płock Catechism, pt. I: *Wyznanie wiary* (A Confession of Faith), Płock 2008; *Katechizm Płocki*, pt. II: *Celebracja misterium chrześcijańskiego* (Celebrations of the Christian Misterium), Płock 2009; *Katechizm Płocki*, pt. III: *Życie w Chrystusie* (Life in Christ), Płock 2010; *Katechizm Płocki*, pt. IV: *Modlitwa chrześcijańska* (Christian Prayer), Płock 2011.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. R. Murawski, *Katechizm Płocki*, „Katecheta” (The Catechet) 52 (2008) nr. 5, pp. 48-52; cf. also R. Czekalski, *Katechizm Płocki – założenia i realizacja*, cited article, pp. 161-167.

"ambitious project". The Pope expressed his "words of appreciation and congratulations" towards the ones responsible for working on the project, especially to the authors of the catechesis. The Holy Father also wished that the catechesis "while being faithful to Catholic teachings also took into account the interests and spiritual needs of the faithful"<sup>51</sup>.

In the light of this reflection and works related to spreading the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, i.a. in the form of the *Płock Catechism* a postulate arises, that forces changing the hitherto thinking of the created of local catechisms and priests.

For today it is not enough to write and publish adaptations of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no matter how interesting they are and how beautiful the illustrations on the fine paper it is printed on are. When writing local catechisms it is necessary to think of a way to getting through to the modern faithful and seeking of many social and cultural situations. They should be reached with faith and wisdom, using modern media. If that is not done, that is new good and substantially correct, needed and pretty, the books containing catechisms and priestly aids will only be idly standing books on the bookshelf<sup>52</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. *List gratulacyjny z Sekretariatu Stanu Stolicy Apostolskiej* (Congratulation Letter from the Secretariat of the State of the Holy See), in: *Katechizm Płocki. Część I. Wyznanie wiary*, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. R. Czekalski, *Formy katechezy dorosłych w Polsce – realizacja, możliwości, projekty*, in: *Katecheza w Kościele i dla Kościoła*, ed. R. Czekalski, Płock 2006, p. 140.

## APOCRYPHA AND THE CANON OF THE BIBLE

The process of formation of the canon composed of the divinely inspired letters and rejection of other scriptures, is being presented by Origen in his “Commentary to the Gospel of St. Luke” in this way:

*In the time of the New Testament „many tried to write the Gospels”, but not all of them were considered righteous. Be aware that not only four Gospels have been written, many more have been – among them there were selected and passed to the churches only those ones which we possess: we learn about it from the prologue to St. Luke’s, where it is stated as follows: „Because many were trying to arrange a story”. The statement “were trying to” contains a hidden criticism of those who, without the influence of the Holy Spirit, took to the writing of the Gospels. It must be said that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John did not “try to write” but filled with the Holy Spirit “have written the Gospels”!The Church is in possession of four Gospels, the heretics wrongly claim to have more... 53*

The first extremely important information seems to be the fact that the creation of the New Testament Canon, came into being earlier than its definition, which is dated around the first half of the fourth century after Christ.<sup>54</sup> In response to the territorial development of Christianity, the teaching of Jesus began to be written down between the sixth and the ninth decade of the first century. The text of the first Gospel transcribed by St. Matthew in Hebrew and Aramaic languages has been lost, which led to the customary recognition of the priority of St. Mark’s Gospel written in Greek. After that, the contents of St. Luke’s were beginning to be formed, the Greek translation of St. Matthew’s, and finally the latest, dated at the decline of the first century, the Gospel of St. John.<sup>55</sup>

The Christian communities, already from the time of the second century, adopted the habit of reading the Acts of the Apostles as well as the Letters of St. Paul. Here it must also be mentioned that the most important criteria employed for

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<sup>53</sup> Orygenes, Komentarz do Ewangelii św. Łukasza, Pisma wczesnochrześcijańskich Pisarzy 36, Warszawa 1986, s. 32.

<sup>54</sup> M. Starowieyski, Judasz – Historia. Legenda. Mity, Poznań 2006, s.9.

<sup>55</sup> Tamże, s.8.

the selection of the texts used for liturgical celebrations related, on the one hand, to the principles of authorship – the author should be an eyewitness, or at least his disciple; on the other hand, had to be compatible with the so called ‘regula fidei’. That means, to put it briefly, in union with the adopted complex of liturgical and doctrinal elements.<sup>56</sup> It seems that the worth mentioning here is the statement of Origin who, commenting on the Gospel of St. Matthew, states as follows:

*On the basis of Tradition I came to the knowledge of the four Gospels which are being the only ones approved by God’s Church on earth. Now, the first one of them has been written by Matthew, a former tax collector- turned the apostle of Jesus. Written in Hebrew, he addressed it to the Jewish believers. The second Gospel is according to Mark, who arranged it following the directions of Peter, and that is why in his letter Peter calls him his son when he writes: „The church that is in Babylon, elected together with you, salutes you: and so does my son Mark”<sup>57</sup>. The third is the Gospel according to Luke, approved by Paul, and written to those who come from the heathen origin. The last one being the Gospel according to John.<sup>58</sup>*

The words and the facts from the life of Jesus were initially being transferred at the liturgical meetings and catechumenical teachings. However, along with the geographical expansion of Christianity, they began to be written down and gradually gaining authority identical to that of the Old Testament. Despite of the lack of a kind of the headquarters, as the Vatican plays its role nowadays, it was already in the second half of the second century that the Canon of the four Gospels, as we know them today, had been crystallized. It portrayed the group of divinely inspired writings, eliminating other ones which were distributed among some Christian communities, thereby judging them to be apocrypha.<sup>59</sup>

At the same time, already in the early centuries of Christianity, a strong view had been crystallized that the inspired writings detract nothing, and that firm conviction led to the rejection of the proposition of Martin from Pont who insisted in the year of 135 to ‘cleanse’ the Holy Scriptures from all the Jewish

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<sup>56</sup> Tamże, s.10.

<sup>57</sup> Zob. I P 5, 13.

<sup>58</sup> Historia kościelna VI,25,4—6, za: J. Salij, Ewangelie i apokryfy, [w:] Tegoż, Poszukiwania w wierze, Poznań 1991, s. 212.

<sup>59</sup> S. Mizerski, M. Starowieyski, Wśród apokryfów i Ojców Kościoła, „Polityka” nr 25 / 2006, s. 26.

influence by the rejection of the whole Old Testament as well as those parts of the New Testament that were in reference to the Old one. Tertullian became also involved in taking a critical stand against the mentioned heresiarch describing him in terms of ‘a mouse gnawing the Gospels’. In the time of the early Christianity there was a belief in the supremacy of orthodoxy which meant a view of the original purity of faith <sup>60</sup> which preceded all the following heresies (the original church was to preserve all and intact truth of the apostolic tradition, which means that any heretical views had to be subsequent to the truth of the Gospels:

*If indeed Martin separated the New Testament from the Old, so this is obvious that the New Testament was the latter one, as it is impossible to separate something that did not constitute unity in the first place.*<sup>61</sup>

Church Fathers who defended the mentioned original doctrinal purity, were inclined to consider the rise of main heretical inspirations as the outcome of the sectarian and misunderstood philosophy:

*These teachings are human and demons inventions, directed at tickling the ears of listeners, the fruits of the wisdom of the world which is named as foolishness by the Lord, who chooses to accept this world's folly to have the philosophy ashamed. Philosophy is the mother of the world's wisdom, audacious interpreter of nature and God's plans. Therefore philosophy is judged to be the source of heresies.*<sup>62</sup>

On the other hand, they pointed at the participation of Satan, and the traces of such thinking can be found in the writing of St. Polycarp, the disciple of St. John:

*Once Martin accosted Polycarp who happened to cross his path: "do you not recognize me"? To which the other answered: "of course I do, the first-born son of Satan".*<sup>63</sup>

At the same time one cannot hide the fact that until the fourth century it was possible to notice a certain fluency of ideas, because the process of formation of the New Testament Canon consisted of twenty seven books, covering in practice

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<sup>60</sup> Pełniejszy opis podniesionego tu problemu znaleźć można w: W. Myszor, Między ortodoksją i herezją, „Teologia polityczna” nr 1 / 2003 – 2004, s. 133 – 139.

<sup>61</sup> Tertullian, O proskrypcji przeciw heretykom, Warszawa 1970, s. 30.

<sup>62</sup> Tamże, s. 7.

<sup>63</sup> Euzebiusz, Historia Kościoła IV, 14, 7, Poznań 1924.

the span of the first three centuries of the Church's existence<sup>64</sup>. However, the official publication of the completed assemblage of the divinely inspired writings, becoming at the same time theological datum, did not take place until year 1546, at the Council of Trent. In this way the body of the only writings compatible with the biblical books have been formed.<sup>65</sup>

Regardless of the fact that the major part of the apocryphal literature was initially being written in Syrian, Greek, and Coptic languages and later was being translated into rather ancient tongues<sup>66</sup>, it is essential to state that the relation between apocryphal texts and the canonical ones was very variant. It is noticeable especially in those which are the oldest. They, with few exceptions, did not pretend to challenge the books which already were being taken into the formation of the new Canon, but only tried to accept the forms already existing at those times.<sup>67</sup>

Theoretical attempts to describe and structure the books by introducing the ideas of inspiration and necessity did not manifest themselves immediately in life of the early Church. Beside the works of great importance (Letters of St. Paul, four Gospels), there were other scriptures which the canonical validity had been questioned by the first Christians. The Apocalypse of St. John or the Letters of St. Peter have been included in the New Testament despite their limited knowledge among the first members of the Christian communities, while the Apocalypse of St. Peter found no place in the canon. <sup>68</sup>

Along with the already mentioned writings there were also texts being created with the intention of confirming and propagating notions and ideas contrary to the Christian faith at that time<sup>69</sup>, The scholars can bring forth tens of such titles enjoying the notoriety and popularity.<sup>70</sup> The tradition of apostolic teaching must have been accepted then as „the preferential body” when it came to revealing

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<sup>64</sup> Zob. M. Starowieyski (red.), *Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu – Ewangelie Apokryficzne*, Kraków 2003, s. 32.

<sup>65</sup> R. Kempniak, *Świat apokryfów*, „Don Bosco” nr 3 / 2011, s. 20.

<sup>66</sup> A. Di Berardino, *Apokryfy chrześcijańskie i ich znaczenie*, [w:] B. Studer (red.), *Historia teologii. Epoka patrystyczna*, t. I, Kraków 2003, s. 293.

<sup>67</sup> M. Starowieyski (red.), *Apokryfy Nowego Testamentu – Ewangelie Apokryficzne*, Kraków 2003, s. 29.

<sup>68</sup> Tamże, s. 30.

<sup>69</sup> A. Di Berardino, *Apokryfy chrześcijańskie i ich znaczenie*, [w:] B. Studer (red.), *Historia teologii. Epoka patrystyczna*, t.I, Kraków 2003, s. 297.

<sup>70</sup> Por. M. Starowieyski, *Judasz – Historia. Legenda. Mity*, Poznań 2006, s.11.

God's revelation and judged as the only true „documentation” of the historical mission and teachings of Jesus. Looking from the historical point of view, that was also a kind of the answer to the groups endangering the Church's unity by inventing doctrines and trends often in contradiction to the elementary Christian traditions.

In this sense, the canon will mean a ‘compilation of testimonies’ and is contrary to the common understanding of apocrypha as an unauthentic writing<sup>71</sup>, which cannot assume the role of credible witness.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> W IV wieku Euzebiusz z Cezarei pisma te określa jednoznacznie jako „notha”, a więc „bękarty”.

<sup>72</sup> A. Di Berardino, Apokryfy chrześcijańskie i ich znaczenie, [w:] B. Studer (red.), Historia teologii. Epoka patrystyczna, t. I, Kraków 2003, s. 295.

s. dr Katarzyna Walkowiak

## **NOVELTY IN THE GOSPEL AS A GIFT FROM GOD AND CHALLENGE FOR THE NEW EVANGELIZATION: i.e.: what Christianity can offer the world?**

Modern man is a creature who willingly accepts what is new in the category of material things. If he thinks of its own renewal, it is rather biological, on the outer sphere. Novelty is generally associated with positive experiences and pleasant sensations. But if we take into account the reality of the spiritual, expressed by human or social relationships, the new concepts don't necessarily take on positive connotations. It turns out here they require a new effort, the effort of resignation from the "old" or a difficult coexistence of the "old" and the "new". To see the essence of the novelty, which brings to life the Gospel in different areas, you might want to look at the novelty in the light of biblical interpretation, which for Christians is the determinant of its understanding of the authentic in the perspective of faith and moral imperative. Modern contemporary life shaped by postmodern currents rather doesn't constitute a favorable base for the development of the Christian life of faith, nor does it allow that this belief influences it. Evangelical Christianity, with its new proposal of the novelty seems to be more and more niche or marginal. But this novelty is the content for the new evangelization, and this in turn becomes a carrier of authentic values, without which building modern life can lead to destructive finale. This article will present the novelty with the new interpretation of the Gospels in the Bible. Then, generally diagnosed contemporary world will indicate the answer and antidote which constitute the new evangelization in the pastoral area..

### **NOVELTY IN GOSPEL**

The idea of novelty is deeply rooted in divine revelation. In Greek, it is expressed in two different terms: *neos* - a new, young timeg and *kaino,j* - new in terms of its nature, better quality. Both terms are used in the Bible in relation to the reality of salvation: the first shows the present character in salvation, while the second describes the reality of salvation as

something special, wonderful<sup>73</sup>. It is an expression of excellence and definitive, or eschatology, thus confirming its wholeness through the history. Let's look deeper at this term. To see the overall context of the novelty in the Gospel news, we will analyze specific "novelties" in the Gospel brought by Jesus Christ.

The spiritual perspective of the novelty has already seen Deutero-Isaiah, comforting the people: "Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert" (Is 43,18-19). The miracles that God has already done in the history of the chosen people, will be eclipsed by even bigger, which will in time be accomplished during the new deliverance. Even the prophet Jeremiah announces the novelty as a new attitude to the will of God "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer 31,33). At the heart of a renewed humanity will be written the new covenant, and people living according to it will be inclined towards it instinctively. They will be enabled to do so through the grace of Jesus Christ<sup>74</sup>. It is him who brings absolutely new quality of life.

The adjective *kainos* occurs multiple times in the New Testament in various forms and in different contexts. Always, however, concerns the reality that is started, proposed and brought into life by Jesus Christ.

## NOVELTY IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD - STARTED IN JESUS CHRIST

### The new teaching

The novelty in teachings of Jesus Christ aroused admiration in the audience, because it carried the power of belief, it was for them "new doctrine *is* this? for with authority" (cf. Mk 1,27), therefore, attracted and inspired to change their lives. The new doctrine didn't deny the law. Jesus came to fulfill and perfect the law. This "new powerful doctrine" was the reason that "And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee" (Mk 1,28). The news, story, report (*h' avkoh*) were spread out like a "the odor of knowledge of Jesus" (2 Cor 2,14). The new teaching was taught by Jesus with the authority of his word (he spoke as one having authority: cf. Mk 1,22) and confirmed by way of his life.

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<sup>73</sup> See: X. Léon-Dufour (ed.), *Słownik Teologii Biblijnej*, Poznań 1990, p. 562.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. L. Stachowiak, *Księga Jeremiasza*, Poznań 1967, p. 530.

## The New Commandment

For Jews, the law, implemented through the commandments, constituted their lives. But Jesus tells us about a new commandment. This is another novelty. The new commandment calling for love of God and the neighbor means, in fact, to respect the commandments. The relationship between the concept of love and respecting commandments was drawn by St. John from deuteronomicznej tradition, because for Israel to love God and keep His commandments meant the same. So John gives the same value to “commandments” as to the “word”: “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you *of* heavenly things?” (Jn 3,12). The novelty that Jesus brings lies in the fact that he gives the value of his teachings and his words by raising them to the rank of the commandments, which for the Israelites was the greatest moral requirement. Respecting commandments does not mean that the student is solely the author of his own act, but his act is the result of “interaction”. Student's act of love is the fruit of Jesus' words<sup>75</sup>. The new commandment that Jesus preached, the commandment to love, exceed others with its dimension (cf. Jn 13,34), but also all others included in the “Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning” (1 Jn 2,7; cf. 2 Jn 1,5). Immediately, however, St. John reflects: “Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth” (1 Jn 2,8).

## The new covenant

The New Covenant was not engraved on stone tablets, but in heart, “In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away” (Heb 8,13). “(...) Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” (Heb 8,8). Finally with his own blood, Jesus sealed the New Covenant (cf. Lk 22,20). “After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me” (1 Cor 11,25). The Mediator of the New Covenant is Christ (Heb 9,15), who by his blood cleanses our consciences from dead deeds.

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<sup>75</sup> Cf. X. Léon-Dufour, *Ewangelia – wezwanie do działania i modlitwy*, Salwator, Kraków 2007, p. 86 n.

The Eucharist as the Paschal feast, thus confirming the conclusion of the feast of the New Covenant, is the wedding feast. Marriage is a sign of the covenant. And in this sense, the Eucharist is an anticipation of the final, complete reunification of the believer with the Word. So the Eucharist makes present an essential novelty. It is composed of two, inseparably elements: a feast, during which the Word - Christ feeds us, and the wedding feast at the same time, the sign of the New Covenant, the announcement of the final and indissoluble union with the Word.

#### New Wine

„Verily I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God” (Mk 14,25; Mt 26,29). These words says Jesus during the Eucharist. The Eucharist is focused on the novelty of the Gospel to the utmost. The wine used in the Eucharist is an anticipation of the new wine, which will be given during the eschatological banquet in heaven. This wine is the joy of eternal life, joy in the presence of the Bridegroom (such is the importance of propagated wine at Cana).

#### New bottles - new patch

Jesus used the metaphor expressing the novelty of the Gospel message, which consists of bringing into life a new perspective of human relationship to God. It is a close and intimate relationship, without the strict distance or fear. The consequence of this relationship is a new lifestyle, a new mentality. Jesus invites his students to such a relationship that He has with God Himself, therefore the relationship of the child to Father. It manifests itself in a new form of religion: that is, dependence on God and friendship with God. This novelty calls for a new way of expression, as „the new wine of the Gospel” can not be placed in the “old bottles”: “Rather, new wine poured into new wineskins, and so both are preserved” (Mt 9,17). The young wine is a new economy of salvation..

„No one sews a patch of raw cloth to an old garment. Otherwise, the new patch pulls away even some of the old clothes and tear it gets worse” (Mk 2,21; par. Lk 5,36). So nothing can save the old economy of salvation, the kingdom of God came. Half measures will be like sewing new patches on old clothes. The novelty of the kingdom, which establishes Jesus demands a new approach to religion, a new way of expressing a relationship with God.

#### A new spirit

The New Covenant is a covenant of the spirit, the new commandment is acceptable for a renewed man. The apostle Paul expands and deepens the understanding of novelty that comes from Jesus Christ - he sees it as a fruit of His death, which liberates the human spirit: "It is now lost their power over us right when we died what kept us in the yoke, so that we can serve in new spirit, not by antiquated letter" (Rom 7,6).

#### A new man - creation

The scope of this perspective includes the whole science of St. Paul on the concept of a new man, created by God, who is reborn in Baptism of water and the Spirit (cf. Eph 4,22-24). New life is for St. Paul ontic: „If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature. The old has passed away, behold all things are become new” (2 Cor 5,17; see Gal 6,15)<sup>76</sup>. The gift of novelty, renewal and completion is also involving Christians and identifies in a sense with their prerogative, expressed by the St. Paul, Christians live already in Christ (see Rom 6,11). Through a renewed humanity, the renewal of all creation will happen. A new man is when the whole of humanity is renewed in Christ (Eph 4,24). The beginning of the new creation is the Risen Christ, in accordance with the original kerygma<sup>77</sup>. Peace, which brings the risen Lord is the source of reconciliation, that's why Jesus „created in himself one new man” (Eph 2,15). The old man, living for sin through Christ „takes shape in the new, which is being renewed in knowledge of God” (Col 3,10). In this way the Christian is transformed into the image of Christ and becomes similar to him also in his ways. The whole Christian life is now on a deep and constant configuration to the Son of God. From the fact of union with Christ comes religious dynamism, which embraces the whole of Christian life and provides space for personal effort in the life of faith and in the moral life<sup>78</sup>.

#### New cake

This expression more clearly than others, assumes a decision that may prolong into a process, the rejection of evil, the exclusion of sin. The new man must get rid of the leaven of corruption and perversity. „Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For Christ was sacrificed as our Passover” (1 Cor 5,7). Baptized person is

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<sup>76</sup> Cf. A. Jankowski, *Biblijna teologia przymierza*, Tyniec - Kraków 1997, p. 138. The author develops the wider characteristics of new covenant of Christ.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. id., *Rozwój chrystologii Nowego Testamentu*, Kraków 2005, p. 78.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. E. J. Jezierska, *Żyjemy dla Pana... umieramy dla Pana...(Rz 14,8). Proegzystencja chrystocentryczna chrześcijan w myśli Pawłowej*, WWKA, Wrocław 1993, p. 66-67.

purified from the old acid to become a new cake. After receiving a new spirit, was baptized in a supernatural way predisposed to this, to dissociate from sin (cf. Mt 5,30).

#### A new life

Believers in Jesus Christ the Risen are called to act in newness of life (see Rom 6,4). Therefore, they can perform the service of man and God in the new order of the Spirit and not in the old order of slavery, not by old written<sup>79</sup>. Belonging to Jesus is the guarantor of new human life, a novelty, which is given in Baptism, but which is also realized in the faith. This is an ontic novelty compared to the act of God's creation. Christian enters a new life, as glorious life began Christ after his resurrection. New life is marked not only in the baptized person, but in all of New People, combining two of us (cf. Eph 1,12), where there were pagans, which were so far apart from Christ<sup>80</sup>. Jesus Christ by His death and resurrection renews the human realities. So we can talk about him as an „event“.

#### New Stuff

„Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings from his storeroom new things and old“ (cf. Mt 13,52). Both the Old and New Testament is the source of revelation. Reaching out to the old things from the treasury, may belike preaching Jesus teachings heard earlier. The new stuff is like a new life circumstances causing the need for new preaching. The second interpretation concerns the Old Testament prophecies - as things old and their fulfillment in Jesus - as something new<sup>81</sup>. In this interpretation, the tradition is a necessity for understanding the novelty brought by Jesus Christ.

#### The new grave

„A place where he was crucified there was a garden, the garden a new tomb in which no one has not yet been made“ (Jn 19,41; Mt 27,60). The tomb in which his body was laid belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. Its novelty, however, lies not only in the fact that nobody had ever been buried there. This tomb belonged to a man, Jesus had no grave on earth, because as the

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<sup>79</sup> Cf. W. Misztal, *Odnowienie i udzielenie pełni życia w Świętym Duchu Ojca i Chrystusa*, WN PAT, Kraków 2002, p. 56.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. A. Jankowski, *Biblijna teologia przymierza ...*, p. 139.

<sup>81</sup> See: K. Romaniuk, A. Jankowski, *Komentarz praktyczny do Nowego Testamentu*, vol. 1, Poznań - Kraków 1999, p. 85 n

Giver of Life (Acts 3,15) he could only go through the grave that holds death as the threshold that leads to eternity. From this tomb came the risen Lord, Jesus Christ. Thanks to Him, the grave took an entirely different meaning. It became a sign of victory over death and the bridge between earthly life and the kingdom of the Father.

#### New languages

Accompanying signs proclaiming the Gospel manifested after the resurrection of Christ, who Himself foretold their appearance. "Will speak with new tongues" (Mk 16,17). Those who obey the orders of Jesus, adopted the novelty of his teachings, accepted life in new ways. It can therefore be regarded as the result of the adoption of a new life. The proclamation of the death and resurrection of Jesus is accompanied by the Holy Spirit, who is the giver of gifts for building of the common Church.

## 2. ESCHATOLOGICAL NOVELTY - FILLED IN JESUS CHRIST

St. John in his Revelation describes a new, harmonious creation of God. He shows in symbolic images a clean community, a new humanity is faithful and righteous, ready to enter into perfect communion with God, Christ and Spirit in the covenant of marriage<sup>82</sup>. This community will only be fully revealed.

#### The new name

„The winners will give a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it” (Rev 2,17). The picture of a white stone<sup>83</sup> symbolizes participation in the glory: the sign of entering the royal meeting, a vote of acquittal before the court. The name of the risen Christ is inscribed on it. Christian is given the name of his Lord, and so he is called to share his dignity and destiny<sup>84</sup>. This name is a sign of belonging to God and to Christ. New name: the Lamb and the Father written on their foreheads will be redeemed, who enter the eternal glory (Rev 14,1; 22,3 n).

#### New Jerusalem

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<sup>82</sup> Cf. G. Ravasi, *Apokalipsa*, Jedność, Kielce 2001, p. 33n.

<sup>83</sup> See: *ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> Cf. *La Bible, notes intégrales traduction œcuménique TOB*, Cerf – Bibli’O 2010.

It is a symbol of the renewed reality, the full presence of God (Rev 3,12). Anticipates the great city of heaven, where the faithful will be as pillars of the new sanctuary, will be in communion with God and will be by him and for him consecrated, that is destined for him<sup>85</sup>.

### A New Song

Elected sing a new song to praise already completed work of redemption. (Rev 5,9, Rev 14,3). In the center of the singers of songs is the paschal mystery of Christ. The new song in the language of the Bible means the absolute fullness. Thus, the new song means a perfect and eternal hymn of the liturgy, so it can be done by the elected who have been redeemed through the Lamb, and experience full communion with him<sup>86</sup>.

### New heavens and new earth

The essence of the biblical scene news is symbolic vision of new heavens and new earth (Rev 21,1) depicted in Revelation: "Behold I make all things new" (Rev 21,5). These words spoken by one seated on the throne, God the Father, are to be understood as a synonym for continuous creation. The biblical „Bereshit” (Hebrews) meaning at the beginning, is not distant, one-off event, but a fixed principle in the ongoing process of becoming.

The word „do” can mean in the original Greek, both “create” and “transforming”, hence it is difficult to determine precise meaning. The Orthodox vision of the world is close to the thought that the previous creation will be retained but will be transformed. Many modern biblical scholars claim, however, that it is about the total liquidation of the old creation and the creation of a new one. Alexander Mien concludes that the same principle of being, created in God's plan will not be created again, but will be transformed, because what is most important in the creation does not die<sup>87</sup>.

Jesus himself, the new man is completely new to the world and to all creation. He is a gift from God the Father, to the man and the world. The newness of the Gospel was obvious to the Apostles. The Apostle Peter by waiting for „new heavens and new earth” wanted to see justice, “Nevertheless we, according to the promise of new heavens and new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Pet 3,13). He expresses the eschatological faith of Christians that when Christ returns, He will make the world as God has established it in its intentions - free

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<sup>85</sup> Cf. G. Ravasi, *Apokalipsa ...*, p. 41.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. *ibid*, p. 122.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. A. Mień, *Apokalipsa komentarz*, Wydawnictwo „M”, Kraków 2000, p. 186.

from all corruption and sin. St. Paul was invited to Athens to tell the listeners a new study (Acts 17,19). He found out himself how difficult this novelty was received. Addressees of his letters, and therefore his disciples called to become ministers of the New Covenant (2 Cor 3,6). He invited them to accept the gift of novelties. The disciple of Jesus lives a new dimension of life, he is living the novelty of the Gospel and has a duty to pass it on, promote it and publish it (see 1 Cor 9,16 b).

## II. RESISTANCE OF MODERNITY

The ontic novelty of a man in theological significance brought by Christ must somehow translate into reality, the concrete life, i.e. carry out and stand by the aspirations and changes to the eternal God. That's because the sphere of the spirit is reflected by the visible temporality which is expressed through culture. Does modern culture allow to be penetrated by novelty from the Gospel? Does it allow the inculturation of that novelty? Of course we assume that the cultural circle is under the influence of Christianity.

We want to understand modernity here in socio – cultural terms. Doubt is an integral feature of modern critical thought and it permeates both everyday life and philosophical consciousness. Radical doubt is the quest for the formulation of all knowledge in the form of hypotheses that may be true, but at any time may be rejected. The identity must be created in a reflective manner, but there are processes that try to divert from that<sup>88</sup>. Denying the role of reason and logical thinking in the cognitive process is an essential feature of postmodernism. The task of human reason is no longer to discover the truth, because it allegedly does not exist, but to create it, so here comes a space for ethical and axiological relativism<sup>89</sup>. Many areas of human life is influenced by postmodernism.

One of them is the process of globalization, which is based on the logic of the market where novelty is, in principle, colloquially speaking – careless, as long as it's new, where the only value becomes an ad hoc and non-binding effectiveness. Modernity as well as postmodernity have no metaphysical dimension and promote immersion in the news, in the present and interim situations. These processes do not facilitate the promotion of the Christian vision of the new man, and even hinder it.

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<sup>88</sup> Cf. A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność i tożsamość. „Ja” i społeczeństwo w epoce późnej nowoczesności*, WN PWN, Warszawa 2006, p. 5 n.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. M. Chmielewski, *Postmodernizm*, in: *Leksykon duchowości katolickiej*, ed. M. Chmielewski, Wydawnictwo „M”, Lublin – Karków 2002, p. 685.

O.Z. Kijas notes that, in matters of faith, some sort of inner mistrust can be reported today towards what's in the faith too intellectual and rational. Therefore, people gather around people with deep experience of faith and are seeking for communities giving such an experience<sup>90</sup>. On one hand, this phenomenon is very positive, because it is allowing the community to emanate out the enthusiasm of faith. On the other hand, the depreciation of the intellectual formation preserves the infantilism of the spiritual life and the Church faces today this danger in all forms.

One definition of culture includes personalistic view according to which culture is the humanization and personalization of the human being and the world. Being human is only "started", but unfinished, calls for „being in the future". This task is precisely completed by the culture. „The culture is shifting from being in the alpha state to being in the omega state"<sup>91</sup>. By bringing the gospel to the human life Christianity wants to move towards its realization, towards fullness through culture. It can be concluded that the current postmodern culture complicates the cultural situation of modern man - secular, anti-Catholic, based on the emotional and psychological side of religion, which leads to syncretism and non-authentic religion.

Postmodern world view is based primarily on the denial of the idea of purpose. This is was is bothering postmodernists - the purpose of life of the individual, society, history, and each activity. Therefore, postmodernism denies the values and accomplishments of both traditional conservatism and contemporary modernism. In the area of culture, postmodernism adopted the revolutionary ethos of avant-garde<sup>92</sup>.

Zygmunt Bauman, a Polish sociologist and philosopher, theorist of postmodernism is an advocate of the concept of postmodernity. Postmodernists assume the appearance of a completely new quality of society and a rupture of historical continuity. It is said to replace the culture by the "hiper-reality", by the chaos of impressions and fantasies, by the deconstruction of the traditional social hierarchy, by the dominance of consumer goods over the man. Postmodernity puts a strong emphasis on deregulation, privatization and fragmentation of both social relations and life of individuals. Another project of postmodernity would be an absolute lack of power, which would have universal ambitions.

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<sup>90</sup> Cf. Z. J. Kijas, *Inna strona Kościoła*, Bernardinum, Pelplin 2011, p. 144 n.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. C.S. Bartnik, *Personalizm*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2008, p. 412.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. T. Boruta, *Wobec wszechogarniającej ponowoczesnej rzeczywistości*, in: *Nowoczesność i ponowoczesność fenomen i wyzwanie*, ed. J. Wojciechowski, W UKSW, Warszawa 2009, p. 107 n.

The last, but according to Bauman, the most important, element of postmodernity, would be abandoning the project of a perfect society<sup>93</sup>.

Christianity with its personalistic feature and lasting "capital" is in sharp contrast to the assumptions and ideas of postmodernism. The Pontifical Council for Culture says that the answer to tough times for faith must be from the Church to accept the historical challenges and appropriate recognition of the signs of time<sup>94</sup>. This way it will be possible to solve the complex cultural situation of contemporary man, who remained under the postmodern influence is very lonely and confused, without metaphysical references.

### III. NEW EVANGELIZATION

Outlined above, the socio-cultural processes require effective responses and interventions, not only the Catholic Church, but also to all Christians, who for years have increasingly become aware that the divisions do not serve neither themselves nor the non-Christian world, and even more and more difficult to self-determination of individual communities. The Catholic Church, the voice of the popes made a new evangelization, renewing his missionary. Foundation for the work and development of the new evangelization lay Pope John Paul II. This concept has been the inspiration for the new movement, the reality of the Church. The new evangelization<sup>95</sup> is a particular resonance to the needs of the contemporary world and the contemporary audience of the Gospel. Pope Benedict XVI has taken another step and he released 09/21/2010 Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio „Ubicumque et semper”<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Cf. Z. Bauman, *Ciało i przemoc w obliczu ponowoczesności*, UMK, Toruń 1995, p. 12.

<sup>94</sup> *La Via pulchritudinis, cammino privilegiato di evangelizzazione e di dialogo*. The final document of the General Assembly of the Pontifical Council for Culture of 27-28.03.2006, in: [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/cultr/documents/rc\\_pc\\_cultr\\_doc\\_20060327\\_plenary-assembly\\_final-document\\_it.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/cultr/documents/rc_pc_cultr_doc_20060327_plenary-assembly_final-document_it.html), II.2, (04.11.2011r.).

<sup>95</sup> The word “evangelism” is a Protestant origin. Revivalist movement in the nineteenth century understood as evangelization effort to re-proclaim the Gospel among the Catholic population of Southern Europe in order to convert her to Protestantism. Hence the word came in 1817, the Protestant missiology, and over time became synonymous with the word “missions”. For a long time the Catholic Church did not use this expression [see: K. Müller, *Misjologia: Wprowadzenie*, in: *Kościół misyjny podstawowe studium misjologii*, ed. S. Karotempler, Warszawa 1997, p. 33]. The term comes from the Greek verb gr. euvaggeli, zw called, which means I carry, preach the good news, good news and a noun euvagge, lion - the good news, happy news [see: R. Popowski, *The Great Dictionary of Greek-Polish*, Warsaw 1997, p. 235]. “Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity” puts the word “evangelism” next to “sanctify”, treating them as the goal of apostolic activity [see: DA 2,6]. For general use in the Catholic Church, the term “evangelism” came through the Apostolic Exhortation “Evangelii nuntiandi” of Paul VI (1975r.), containing in the content of what is in the term “missio ecclesiae”.

<sup>96</sup> Apostolic Letter in the form of *motu proprio Ubicumque et Semper* of the supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI establishing the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization 21.09.2010, in: [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/apost\\_letters/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_apl\\_20100921\\_ubicumque-et-semper\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/apost_letters/documents/hf_ben-xvi_apl_20100921_ubicumque-et-semper_en.html)

(Everywhere and always), with whom he founded the new dicastery of the Roman Curia: the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization.

## NEW COMMUNICATION OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

Adaptation of methods and forms of communication of the Gospel to today's man is starting a new evangelization, which sources is in the Bible. The new evangelization from definition is new, but this does not imply a new gospel. The transmission of the same Gospel message for ages but in a new way will be constantly valid for the Church, for the whole of Christendom. This was understood by the Catholic Church, which is preparing for the Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization.

Lineamenta to the XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on "The New Evangelization for the communication of the Christian faith" (the Synod will be held from 7 to 28 October 2012) defines the new evangelization as an activity primarily spiritual, including today's capacity and courage similar to the early Christians, the first missionaries. This action requires above all a process of discernment of the condition of contemporary Christianity, and assesment of the steps already made, and problems encountered<sup>97</sup>.

The missionary activity of the Church updates the implementation of evangelical novelty through preaching the same message that Christ preached. The very need for missionary activity is derived from the radical newness of life, which is a gift from God<sup>98</sup>. However, the changing circumstances of time and circumstances of the society requires a new mentality, a new way to transfer the same content of the Gospel. The novelty of evangelization relates to new methods and means of evangelization, but most of all to a new apostolic zeal. This implies a new program and effort in searching for such ways of proclaiming the Good News, which would reach the contemporary audience.<sup>99</sup>.

The excitement and fervor are born of faith. John Paul II has rightly remarked that Europe should not only refer to its Christian past (what is actually abandoning to do), but

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith – *Lineamenta*, Synod of Bishops XIII Ordinary General Assembly, Vatican 2011, p. 5, in: [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/synod/documents/rc\\_synod\\_doc\\_20110202\\_lineamenta-xiii-assembly\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20110202_lineamenta-xiii-assembly_en.html)

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Jan Paweł II, Encyklika *Redemptoris Missio* [RMis], 7.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. id., *Nowa ewangelizacja, postęp człowieka, kultura chrześcijańska*. Przemówienie wygłoszone na otwarciu obrad IV Konferencji ogólnej Episkopatu Ameryki Łacińskiej, „L'Osservatore Romano” (ed.pol.) 1992, nr 12, p. 24-25.

must also learn again how to shape its future in a meeting with the Person and through the message of Jesus Christ<sup>100</sup>. But to do that it needs faith.

In the studies of contemporary theologians we can find many differences in the definitions of the new evangelization aspects - what it is, what it is not, what is the sense of its novelty, what are its new conditions, new methods, new content, new subjects and recipients?<sup>101</sup> These questions and issues are important and occur particularly in the dimension of pastoral practice. The old pastoral methods can't be called new evangelization, neither can be rejected the old concepts that have worked for years in the name of the new evangelization. The new evangelization can provide a boost of pure and deep faith, can give a fresh dimension to the Christian tradition, and ultimately play "the Christian fabric of human society"<sup>102</sup>. This novelty begins to take shape especially in the Christian community and "raises questions from the public at any time in history, anywhere on earth, and particularly against European society, which for so many centuries, hears the Gospel of the Kingdom inaugurated by Jesus"<sup>103</sup>. So the idea of novelty is to rely on new evangelization of cultures, different spheres of socio- economic and political life, and concern for the poor and needy. All these aspects require a change in the spirit of the Gospel<sup>104</sup>.

The mission of proclaiming the good news was transmitted by the Church of Jesus Christ. The new evangelization is taking on this mission. Its overall goal is to rebuild the church and the whole temporal order according to the evangelical principles, to shape the new man and new society, and to build a civilization of love based on moral and cultural values rooted in Christian tradition. John Paul II called for the construction of a new society through shaping a new life style of the human person and a new kind of social ties, by respecting the principles of love and solidarity<sup>105</sup>. These long-term goals requires the efforts of faith, taken patiently and persistently.

John Paul II believes the new evangelization is one of the forms of mission and aims to use it environments that have already lost faith or are on the way to its loss., The Pope placed the new evangelization between missions *ad gentes* and the evangelization dimension

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<sup>100</sup> See: id., Adhortacja apostolska *Ecclesia in Europa* [EiE], 2.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. A. Lewek, *Nowa ewangelizacja w duchu Soboru Watykańskiego II*, vol. I, Księgarnia Św. Jacka, Katowice 1995, s. 70-112.

<sup>102</sup> Jan Paweł II, Adhortacja apostolska *Christifideles laici*, 34.

<sup>103</sup> EiE 107.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. RMis, 37. See: W. Piwowarski, *Tło społeczno-polityczne i religijno-kościelne punktem wyjścia „Nowej Ewangelizacji”*, in: *Nowa ewangelizacja odpowiedzią na wyzwania obecnego czasu*, ed. K. Goźdz, Lublin 1993, p. 62-72.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Program ewangelicznej odnowy świata, ludzi i struktur*, „L'Osservatore Romano” (ed. pol.) 1983, nr 5-6, p. 6.

of the entire Church. Wider concept of that reality, we find in his teaching. Evangelization is not just a living teaching of the Church, but also the whole broad reflection on the truth revealed, as it was manifested in the writings of the Fathers of the Church and it is also a meeting with the culture of each era<sup>106</sup>. New evangelization can be made to the extent in which not only the Church as a whole, but every Christian is able to live their faith deeply and defend it through his conduct. To evangelize means to preach and to proclaim by all means the whole content of revealed truth. Thus it includes preaching, witnessing, dialogue and service and it is based on a combination of three inseparable elements, such as: preaching, sacramental ministry and leadership of the faithful. Evangelization is to so educate Christians in the faith in order to lead them to the sacraments. Preaching would be pointless, if it had not formed the faithful and led to the practice of the sacraments.

New Evangelization is a call to the Church as principled as important is to preach the novelty in gospel. However, assuming that a Christian is a man constantly evangelizing and evangelized, that is proselytizing, it is important to note that the new evangelization is directed also to the traditional believers, present and active in the Church.

## NEW RECEPTION OF THE WORLD

Waclaw Hryniewicz writes that “Christian without dialogue can no longer exist in today's world”<sup>107</sup>. The perspective of The Book of Revelation speaks of the ultimate reality “of praise and respect of nations” (Rev 21,26) in the heavenly Jerusalem of the new creation. All nations are selected to live in the Kingdom of peace and harmony. Religious pluralism has become a great challenge to Christianity. Multiculturalism and multi-religions are already permanently part of the contemporary world, and thus different forms of Christianity occur. God is not owned by any religion, so Fr. Hryniewicz tells the universal vision of Pentecost, spread over all times and places, because God's Spirit is sent to all people.<sup>108</sup> This awareness allows the formation of the attitude of dialogue among believers.

An absolute obedience to universal ethical norms can be justified only in reference to God, says the Swiss theologian Hans Küng. If this absolute instance is missing, then the

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<sup>106</sup> Cf. *Przekroczyć próg nadziei. Jan Paweł II odpowiada na pytania Vittoria Massoriego*, RW KUL, Lublin 1994, p. 93.

<sup>107</sup> W. Hryniewicz, *Wymagania prawdy a kultura dialogu ekumenicznego*, „Studia Oecumenica”, 2002, vol. 3, p. 5.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. id., p. 6.

person is able to justify everything fashionable and useful with a reason<sup>109</sup>. That's why the role of the new evangelization is so important - to justify the need for a new way of relating to the Absolute, which is the living God in Jesus Christ.

Enzo Bianchi diagnosed the relationship of the Church to the world as follows:

“In fact, there is novelty in the relationship between the Church and the world. This novelty can be summarized in the following formula: "The society needs the Church," or in other words, "This church serves." During the crisis of ideology and authority and in the absence of an ethical foundation, it seems that society needs the church to get some kind of "supplement of soul". The Church is being called for help to give some kind of religious base to the social and political foundation. So a Christianity that accepts being a reserve of moral judgment is being looked for. As well, a Christianity, which gives its values to democracy. If it continues, this process, can lead to killing the Christian faith, which will be diluted in the value of general, in the wisdom and culture of the world. Then how to put into practice following of Jesus? How to love the Lord with all heart, soul and strength? Church must maintain unblemished treasure in earthen vessels the gospel (2 Cor 4:7). It can not reduce the richness of faith only to ethical messages, as expected by the people who may accept it but then it would be without the “odor of the knowledge of Christ” (2 Cor 2:14), unable to communicate the salvation brought by Jesus. The Christian faith can not confine itself to do good, neither to universal anthropological transfer, which would deny that the scandal of the cross and the gratuitousness of the gospel”<sup>110</sup>.

Christianity can only fulfill its role towards postmodern challenges when implementing the new evangelization will contribute to the regeneration of socio - cultural values of the world, and as such spewing the “old leaven” and not renounce radicalism.

The world has the right to find a way of life in the Church in the Christian community, which is consistent with the logic of faith<sup>111</sup>. It is about a communal and personal style, which forces to reflect on the community and everyone who was baptized. If the task of the Church is to worry the world, that is to encourage people to give up what is less perfect and give up the illusory sense of complacency and self-sufficiency, it would mean that the Church must always act as an opponent, or guardian<sup>112</sup>. Although this role may, but doesn't need not be onerous, it requires continuous vigilance.

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<sup>109</sup> Cf. I. Bokwa, *Kryzys Oświecenia i nowoczesności?*, in: *Nowoczesność i ponowoczesność fenomen i wyzwanie ...*, p. 17.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. E. Bianchi, *Chrétien, que dis-tu de toi-même?*, Bayard 2006, p. 49 n.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Sobór Watykański II, Deklaracja o wolności religijnej *Dignitatis humanae*, 6.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Z. J. Kijas, *Inna strona Kościoła ...*, p. 84.

Giuseppe Cristaldi who is reflecting on the relationship between faith and culture comes to the conclusion that the process of evangelization means a return to origins. The innovative nature of evangelization is carried out at the crossroads between becoming a history, or diachrony (sequence of processes or phenomena) and the content recapitulating an event, or synchrony (simultaneity of occurrence of processes or phenomena). Evangelization constantly refers to the content of the synchronous events of salvation. In the variability of the cultural situation, the same salvific event is preached. The initial novelty of the events is contributing to the crisis of conservative cultural elements. The cultural innovations may offer in turn the opportunity to discover the value of initial novelty. A synchronous content of the event requires that cultural reality is not lost in the discontinuity of time, hence it is salutary for cultural tradition. A fresh start, which is the process of evangelization calls for commitments to reading the faith and take into account cultural traditions. "We could even talk about the only obligation of faith, which becomes the criterion of hermeneutical culture and culture, which is subjected to critically kenosis to become - in the opening of a transcendent event - the hermeneutics of faith. In this way, evangelization is restarting faith in culture, and cultural renewal in the faith"<sup>113</sup>.

Christianity does not preclude tradition. It takes into account the order of God flowing from Genesis to subdue the earth, but it does not mean giving up what is old, nor it means a break of continuity. The development does not involve a negation of the old but the transformation, giving a new, deeper expression of what is housed in the space of goodness, beauty and truth.

The Christian meaning of modernity is based on the solid foundations of tradition and the constant interpretation of axiology.

Olivier Clément argues that modernity has made the intellectual system of Christianity in the coating of sentimentality, and in the East - of ritual. But Christianity still provides a living water to all life, is a revelation and transmission of life. Thus the Christianity of tomorrow will not be just the chapter of culture, but the denial and the conception of this base, this paradigm, from which grows the society and the political community<sup>114</sup>. Many thinkers sees the negative effects of the alliance of Christianity with the world and would like it to be separated, isolated from the world. In view of the warped world, the hope manifests itself in the continual saying "no" to what comes out of this world, in the rejection of all human signposts to strive forward. Jurgen Moltmann presents hope as an opposition to any temporal

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<sup>113</sup> Cf. G. Cristaldi, *Ewangelizacja a kultura*, „Communio” 1982, nr 6(12), p. 104.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. O. Clément, *Rzym inaczej Prawosławny wobec papieżstwa*, Warszawa 1999, p. 93.

reality because it doesn't come from the temporal order, but uniquely from God's promises, announcing the Justice, Freedom and wholesome life.

The central point of these promises is of course the resurrection of Christ, which is a model of any transformation in the world. This resurrection is a source of dynamics, through which God manifests itself a living. And it is in connection with human life and activity, introducing both the possibility of sanctification and salvation, as well as corruption and destruction<sup>115</sup>. The purpose of hope is better and new future. Hope allows to see through the eyes of faith a fulfilled future in an apocalyptic vision of "new heavens and new earth".

Relationship between ontological novelty and post-modern contemporary life is seemingly remote, with limited common points of reference. But the new evangelization gives the chance to learn, to show the world the prospects for a new life and a new man. And not just the Christian world, or world of all religions and believers. After all, they also shape the world of unbelievers.

It is worth quoting the conclusion of the Bishops' Conference of America: New evangelization requires the ability to start from scratch, crossing boundaries, broadening horizons. The new evangelization is the opposite of self-sufficiency and relying on self, the mentality of the status quo and a ministry, that believes that it is sufficient to proceed as it has always been. Today, "business as usual" is no longer enough. As some local churches try to point out, it is time that the Church calls its Christian communities to proselytism of pristinhood and directing their activities and structures on a mission<sup>116</sup>.

The new task for the Church defines also *Lineamenta* General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, saying that the Christian communities must be able to respond responsibly and courageously to this need for renewal, which the transformation of the cultural and social context sets in front of Church. Communities must learn to master and implement long-term changes, maintaining as a reference point the order of evangelization<sup>117</sup>.

Social and cultural transformations bring new questions and challenges to institutions, research centers and universities, which are the result of intuition and charisma of individuals and educational concerns of the local Churches. These institutions perform their function in the open for all field of research and development of knowledge for different cultures and societies. At the core of the new evangelization is discerning signs of the times in which

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<sup>115</sup> Cf. G. Sauter, *Żywa nadzieja główne cechy chrześcijańskiego dyskursu o przyszłości*, CHAT, Warszawa 1999, p. 48.

<sup>116</sup> Por. V Konferencja Ogólna Episkopatu Ameryki Łacińskiej i Karaibów, *Dokument końcowy*, (Aparecida, 13-31 maja 2007), n. 365-370, in: [http://www.celam.org/celam.info/download/Documento\\_Conclusivo\\_Aparecida.pdf](http://www.celam.org/celam.info/download/Documento_Conclusivo_Aparecida.pdf), (04.11.2011 r.).

<sup>117</sup> Cf. The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith – *Lineamenta*, n. 9, (04.11.2011 r.).

cultural and educational centers of the Church, need to engage. They must also analyze themselves in the light of this discernment. In this way it will be possible to determine the critical points of these challenges as well as energies and strategies needed to ensure the future of the Church and the whole mankind<sup>118</sup>.

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<sup>118</sup> Cf. *ibid*, n. 21.

## **FR. MIKHAL VORONETSKY CM**

### **Priest, exile, artist**

**(1908 – 1998)**

Personality of Fr. Mikhal Voronetsky has become the object of several publications, but till now there is lack of serious studies concerning him as a prisoner of Soviet camps, spiritual Father of High Seminary or expressing interest in him as in an artist. Let this article serve for the very deep interest of the historians in a very bright and rich personality of Fr. Mikhal and his heritage.

#### I. Life periods

A person is born at certain time and raises in particular surrounding. He possesses certain traits of character which he takes after his parents, but some traits he takes from natural society. Let us have a look at family background where he was born and where grew up Fr. Mikhal Voronetsky.

##### 1. Childhood and family home.

Mikhal Voronetsky, a son of Victor and Helen, maiden name Balinska, was born on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1908 in Novaya Vileyka, not far from Vilnius. Two days later he was baptized in the parish church of St. Kazimer the Prince. When the ceremony was over his mother put him on the altar devoting him to Father God and expressing her wish for her son to become a priest in future<sup>119</sup>.

Fr. Mikhal himself recalls his mother as a person marked by live faith and piety. His mother Helen took an active part in spiritual life of the parish, as a young girl was among those who carried the banners during religious processions. When she was 22, she married Viktor Voronetsky. Being a wife and a mother she took her children to church practically every day. In his reminiscences Fr. Mikhal describes his mother as a very hard-working,

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<sup>119</sup> Archiwum Księży Misjonarzy św. Wincentego á Paulo w Krakowie, dalej AKMK, Teczka personalna I/1-2: *Testimonium nativitatis et baptismi*, nr 447 (1908).

sensible, ambitious and practical woman, who cooked perfectly well. She also liked the order at home, flowers, listening to the radio or singing. She could sow, embroider, make lace and knit. She was always ready to help those in need, visited the sick. She hated lies, and she also suffered greatly when she was hurt <sup>120</sup>.

At the age of 4-5 little Mikhal imagined playing “religious processions” with singing. When he was 7, in 1915 he had to leave his native place together with his parents. Severe winds of the war were felt at that place. The German front was approaching. The tsar ordered the evacuation of all state employees with their families into the further parts of Russia. His father was the head of the state Post, which was located in their house. In 1915 together with his mother, brother and sister they went to the deeper territories of Russia to Samara on the Volga, later they moved to Penza in the north. From 1916 Mikhal and his parents lived in St. Petersburg, where they met October revolution<sup>121</sup>.

Later he would remember those moments of the October revolution: “I remember the agitation, worries, fear and stories about different crimes, which were made on the tsar officers, statesmen, about hunting the bourgeois in the basements and attics. I remember the funeral of those who were killed, they were carried in red coffins by many thousand crowds singing “ Rise, the working people”. I observed that march from very short distance”. At that time as a ten-year-old boy he got to know what it was starvation. In St. Petersburg he went to study in Polish school<sup>122</sup>.

## 2. Youth

After three years of being away from Motherland in the winter of 1918 the Voronetsky family came back to their native Novaya Vileyka, but this time without the father of the family. His father came back from Russia only in the spring of 1919, but very short after this, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September he died from typhus. The years 1919-1920 in Vilnius region were the period of worries and war. Sufferings and starvation came back again.

Mikhal was sent to comprehensive school in Vilnius which was run by the priests-missioners of the congregation of St. Vincent a Paulo. Mikhal was very soon recognized as a very gifted student and a devoted believer. Unfortunately financial difficulties the family was struggling with at that time did not allow him to continue his education. Unexpectedly the help came with the head of the Order of Priests-missioners, to whom during the school

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<sup>120</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Wspomnienia o mojej Mamie Helenie Woronieckiej*.

<sup>121</sup> I. S z k u d e l s k a, *Wędrując do bram nieba*. W: *Głos znad Niemna*, 26: 1998, s. 5.

<sup>122</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Autobiografia. Różana 1989*.

visitation Mikhal was introduced as a talented student, mentioning that maybe in the future he would be a priest.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 1922 in the church of St. Kazimer, Mikhal received the sacrament of Christian maturity which was given to him by the bishop Jerzy Matulewich, the Vilnus diocese head.

As a young boy Mikhal very often served for the Holy Mass as a servant<sup>123</sup>.

### 3. Vocation

The presentiments of the priests-professors came true. After finishing school in Novaya Vileyka in 1924, Mikhal applied for the Minor Seminary of the priests-missioners in Vilnus. As he said: “Those were the best years of my youth. There was enthusiasm for everything, unforgettable period, unforgettable years of life”<sup>124</sup>.

This is how Mikhal recalled those moments of parting with his mother, his brother and sister at the railway station when he was leaving for Krakow to study in the Seminary: “With particular sorrow I was seen off by my Mother, my brother Henrik and my sister Aurelia. She blessed me, parted with tears and gave me the icon God’s Mother of Ostraya Brama as a memory. On the other side of the icon my sister Aurelia wrote in pencil the following words: “ With blessing to dear son from Mother on the day of his leaving to Krakow, the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1927, NovayVileyka. My Mother added with her own hand: “Let this Saint Mother lead you to the position you want to gain”<sup>125</sup>.

After finishing the Minor Seminary in 1927, Mikhal entered the High Seminary of Fathers-Missioners in Krakow. He spent his novitiate in Krzeszowicy and in Krakow. After two years of studies he took the order vows on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 1929 in Krakow<sup>126</sup>.

In 1931 Mikhal passes his mature examinations in Krakow<sup>127</sup>. In 1931-1935 he studies in High Spiritual Seminary of Priests-Missioners in Krakow<sup>128</sup>.

In 1934 at the age of 19 dies his sister Aurelia.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1935 deacon Mikhal Voronetsky, from the hands of the bishop Stanislaw Rozpond, the Krakow suffragan, got his priesthood. This event took place in the church of St. Paul’s Apostle Coming Back in Stradom in Krakow<sup>129</sup>.

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<sup>123</sup> T a m ż e.

<sup>124</sup> T a m ż e.

<sup>125</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Wspomnienia o mojej Mamie Helenie Woronieckiej*.

<sup>126</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Autobiografia. Różana 1989*.

<sup>127</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/3-4: *Świadectwo*, nr 240.

<sup>128</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Autobiografia. Różana 1989*.

Fr. Mikhal celebrated his first Holy mass in Volkovysk on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, in the town where lived his mother and brother Henrik.

## II. Priesthood

When bishop put his hands on the candidate to the priest and pray, he at the same time put him before the certain mission of preaching the Holy Gospel. This time came for the deacon Mikhal when the bishop declared him to be a priest. For him started a wonderful adventure which led him through the period of test and everyday readiness to answer the God's Will, I am ready to go there where You will send me.

### 1. The first parish

After sanctification, Fr. Mikhal had got so-called "God's Will" to go to the parish in Warsaw where in 1935-1936 he works as a vicar in the church of St. Cross, and also he teaches religion in evening vocational school<sup>130</sup>.

In 1936 his brother Henrik died in Lyskov.

In 1936 – 1937 Fr. Mikhal was sent to Krakow. There he taught Mathematics and Geography in Minor Seminary of Priests-Missioners in Novaya Vies. He served as a chaplain in the state common hospital in Glovinsky street<sup>131</sup>. He had a lot of work in the parish with the sick. He had night shifts and ran metrical books. When the Second World War broke out, Fr. Mikhal was in Lvov. Lvov was bombarded in the first day of the war, so it led to a great number of wounded patients in the hospital<sup>132</sup>.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of September the Red army unexpectedly occupied the Eastern territory of Rzeczpospolita and joined it to the Soviet Union. The terror and arrests of the Polish people began.

When the Soviet army entered Lvov in September 1939, very soon the Soviet powers demised from the hospital its head Pohorecky and its administrator Zavadzky. It was ordered to close three chapels, which were situated on the vast territory of that hospital. There were four chaplains who served there: three for the Catholics and one for the Uniates. It was ordered to close the chapels both for the sick and for the staff. It was banned to give the sick

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<sup>129</sup> T. M a d a ł a, *Polscy księża katolicy w więzieniach i łagrach sowieckich od 1918 r.* Lublin 1996, s. 170 - 171.

<sup>130</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Autobiografia. Różana 1989.*

<sup>131</sup> M. W o r o n i e c k i, *Świadectwa lokalne.* Red.: J. M a z u r. W: *Świadectwo Kościoła Katolickiego w systemie totalitarnym Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej. Księga Kongresu Teologicznego Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej 11-15.08.1991,* Lublin 1994, s. 109-118.

<sup>132</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Autobiografia. Różana 1989.*

the necessary sacraments. The admission to the hospital for the chaplains was banned too. But Fr. Mikhal tried to find the proper time to visit the sick secretly and to give them the sacraments. The new director was reported that the chaplain visited the sick. The director strictly banned Fr. Mikhal to enter the hospital. He threatened him with punishment and personal responsibility for “not obeying”. The last time he did it in the presence of the unknown person from the KGB.

The priests who taught religion were demised from schools and they had to look for work somewhere else, some of them were registered as vicars in the parishes.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 1941 the war between Germany and the Soviet Union broke out. The Hitler occupation started: with arrests, persecution of Jews, throwing people into prison. The Bandera crime against the Polish people took place in Galicija. Till the very end of the war in 1945 Fr. Mikhal was a chaplain in the hospital, but that time his work was with the limited freedom of movement.

## 2. Senior Priest of the Parish in Lyskov

The next place for Fr. Mikhal’s parish activity was Lyskov. After Lyskov Senior Priest’s death, at that time it was Volkovysk deanship, its parishers sent their delegate to ask for a chaplain. The delegate was very serious, he paid no attention to the explanations of the dean that all Polish people were leaving Lvov and went to Poland. Finally it was decided to appoint Fr. Voronetsky to be the Senior Priest in Lyskov. He accepted this decision as God’s Will<sup>133</sup>.

When the Second World war was over and the new state borders were determined, the Polish people were leaving Lvov and the territories of the USSR for Poland. In December 1945 Fr. Mikhal left Lvov for Lyskov together with his mother, at that time it was already BSSR. There he worked as an administrator in the parish of priests-missioners<sup>134</sup>.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1945 from the ruined by bombing Lvov railway station with practically the day’s delay, in the carriages mainly without windows, which were crowded with the demobilized soldiers coming back home via Baranovitchy and Volkovysk he reached Lyskov.

Lyskov is a small place in Pinsk diocese, which is situated in the new state administration division in Brest region, Pruzhany district.

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<sup>133</sup> G. R ą k o w s k i, *Ilustrowany przewodnik po zabytkach kultury na Białorusi*, Burchard Edition 1997, s. 130-131.

<sup>134</sup> M. W o r o n i e c k i, *Świadectwa lokalne...*, s. 109-118.

The church and missionary monastery in Lyskov were donated in 1527 by Maciej Kloczko. The church where Fr. Mikhal arrived is a late baroque building to which in 1763-1985 was adjoined a tower. After the elimination of the order in 1866 the church was turned into the Orthodox temple, later it was rebuilt after the fire in 1883-1884. At the church cemetery there is a tomb of the poet and playwright of the Renaissance epoch Franciszek Karpiński (1741 -1825). In the latest years the ruined tomb was reconstructed by the Mechanic Factory PZL in Volay from Warsaw<sup>135</sup>.

The Lyskov parish which suffered from exiles and wars was rather small. Catholic people were scattered in hamlets and villages, where the majority of population were Orthodox. There was no Polish school. Teaching of catechism was banned as it was in the whole Soviet Union. The priests were not allowed to teach children and young people religion and it was often told about. The church was heavily taxed for church land and the presbitery what mainly took all the money of the church and the parish people. In 1947 the head of the department for religion in Brest ordered to sign a declaration about banning priests to teach catechism regularly. Those who didn't sign it wouldn't get the registration "certificate" and would not get the right to administrate the parish. Only parents were allowed to teach their children prayers and catechism.

The parish people in Lyskov were very friendly and devoted: they helped with money to pay very high taxes which were put by the state. They attended the church, got saint sacraments and took part in Holy Masses. Children and young people in great number visited the church, the boys could serve during the Mass, the girls eagerly took part in "white procession". At that time it was not banned.

In 1947 it was necessary to register the church, the parish committee, the revision committee and it was told to sign with the Department for religion in Brest region so-called "agreement", which formally made the priest to be dependent from the parish committee.

Special attempts of the Church in Lyskov in the time of totalitarian system were the efforts to keep the believers in faith, which they supported: taking part in Sunday and holiday Masses, confession, Holy Communion, giving the sick the sacraments and arranging well-prepared Eucharistic processions.

Thanks to relative tolerance of the local authorities, especially positive district militiaman, it was possible to engage young people to attend the choir and even arrange performances like

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<sup>135</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna III/1: M. Woroniecki. *Na izolacji w Dżezkazganie Rudniku 1949-1956. Zapiski wspomnień*, rkp., cz. 1 (2), s. 12-32.

traditional “Herod”. It was possible to organize religious studies every year and prepare the children for the First Holy Communion.

In the autumn of 1948 from Ruzany arrived to Lyskov the region commission and looked through the presbitery library and the books which were kept in the church. In some issues of the magazine “Rycerz Niepokalanej”, “ Poslanca Serca Jezusowego”, “Homo Dei”, edited in 1939 they found anti-communist articles. The magazines were confiscated and the commission wrote a protocol. Some time later the same commission came to Lyskov again and again they looked through the books and magazines, which were kept in boxes in Sacristy, and again something anti-soviet was found and confiscated. It was the signal that they were piling the “evidence” aiming to accuse the priest of anti-soviet activity and proclaiming ideas of subversive content<sup>136</sup>.

### III. The time of faith test

The particular time comes in the life of a Christian or a chaplain, when it is necessary to prove something he believes in by the price of humiliation, slander, ridicularity or spitting on. In the life of Fr. Mikhal there was the rime of faith test, it was the Cross Way and the answer with his life to the evangelical values. Let us see what way has Father God chosen for his servant.

#### 1. The period of persecutions.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1949 Fr. Mikhal was going to Brest through the woods to the road, which was leading from Pruzhany to Brest. On his way he was stopped by the militiamen. Immediately when Fr. Mikhal left his house in Lyskov, the militiamen made a revision there, his neighbors and people surrounding him were interrogated. They were asked where the priest had hidden the radio, weapons and dollars? The soil in the basement was dug, where they thought something was hidden, or the things which were banned. They found nothing: neither in the church basement nor in the basement of the missionary house.

Two days later Fr. Mikhal was brought to Brest, to № 7, Lenin street. The priest was not arrested yet. He was only watched by the soldier at the door. The office workers paid no attention to him. They were busy with immediate piling the “evidence”. Sometimes he was only asked where he had hidden the weapons? Gold? Where and how had he organized people against the Soviet power?

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18 T a m ż e, s. 32-45.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 1949 he was taken to so-called “operative room” and he was ordered to sign the document with the sanction of the prosecutor for his arrest, later he was taken to the cellar. There, in the place for storing private things, he had to give his watch, money that he still had, his coat, handbag with some small private things. Everything was registered in the protocol up to the end of the investigation. They gave him a separate document for the watch.

Fr. Mikhal was in front of cell № 7, the guard opened the door and the iron bolt with great noise, and he let the priest into the open cell. There were unknown prisoners, both young and old.

The interrogations took place mainly during the night. Sometimes they lasted even up to the dawn. After supper, when the prisoners were going to bed, but more often when they were already asleep, the guard opened the door with noise of the keys and the bolts and asked in the formal way.

These are the reminiscences of Fr. Mikhal: “One night the guard opened the door and asked:

- “Whose name starts with “V”?”
- “Voronetsky “, answered the priest.
- “Get out!”

He took me with my hands at the back through the yard to the other building where on the first floor was the study of Matveyev who was responsible for my case. He told me to sit down on the stool. He put down all the information about me – my name, surname, the date of birth, the place of birth and so on.

“So, Voronetsky, speak up. Tell me how you organized people against the Soviet power? Come on, speak!”

At the beginning the priest told that he had not done anything like that. He said that he didn’t come to Lyskov to be engaged in hostile politics. He didn’t found any organization. He admitted that once he said in public in the church that “in their (Soviet) Constitution one thing is said and the other is done”. He didn’t consider it to be a lie or a crime. He didn’t discourage the young people to enter the Komsomol. He also didn’t prevent the farmers from entering the collective farm. He was not a fool to understand what it meant to be against the USSR in the USSR. As a chaplain he was responsible only for religious activities like prayers, service in church, giving sacraments to the believers.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 1949 the sentence was passed on – 25 years in the working camps, 5 years out of citizenship rights and confiscation of all private property<sup>137</sup>. The sentenced priest was taken to prison.

The cells were much bigger, higher and more convenient than the basement of the investigation prison. On certain days it was allowed to bring the prisoners food parcels. Very often the monk Ludwik Dziemianczyk brought food parcels from mother. The days were very long. The prisoners could read books, which were brought in by the authorities of the prison. The days were full of long conversations, different stories from life experience.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 1949 he was taken to the other cell, where were gathered the prisoners pointed out for further transportation to the place of their destination. It was late at night when at last came the officer of convoy, who had to take them to the train. They were convoyed along the standing carriages. The prisoners were counted, the documents were studied and they were put into the carriages with compartments. In the corridors the NKWD guards armed with guns were standing.

The train from Brest started its way, later it had a stop in Orsha. Everybody was taken to prison with their belongings, which had to be a start for further journey. When his co-prisoners got to know that there was a priest among them they asked him to lead a Rosary prayer. It lasted so for several days. One day the Brest group of prisoners was told to get out of the cell. They were searched and brought with their belongings to the train. Fr. Mikhal moved further. It was at the beginning of October 1949.

## 2. Exile

From Orsha the prisoners were taken to Moscow. In Moscow all the prisoners with their belongings were put into prison buses, brought to another railway station, where there was already prepared the train. Again all the prisoners had to take their places. The train which was going by Asian way had a stop in Petropavlovsk, in Kazakhstan. After a short stop the train started into the Asian unknown<sup>138</sup>.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 1949 the prisoners were brought out of the train which had already arrived to its destination point to the miners of Dzeskazgan. In the steppe of that region there were some camps. The convoy moved through the stony field, there were no buildings, no trees. There was a complex of camps, the prisoners were standing in front of the gate with the

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<sup>137</sup> AKMK,teczka personalna III/1: M. Woroniecki. *Na izolacji w Dżezkazganie Rudniku 1949-1956. Zapiski wspomnień*, cz. 1 (2), s. 45-66.

<sup>138</sup> T a m ż e, s. 68-85.

check post, behind the gate there were seen the camp buildings, some other objects and walking people. It was the camp where Fr. Mikhal had to start his stay according to the sentence. The territory of the camp was surrounded by the hedgehog wire with the guard towers, where the soldiers attentively observed the prisoners in the camp.

The authority of the camp appeared to meet the new transport of the prisoners, and they were given the documents and the papers. Some minor officers started to look through the belongings and started the personal check. Fr. Mikhal hid the Rosary and the medallion in his private things, which were not found during the check. After the revision the prisoners were brought to relatively small building where they had to come through the compulsory quarantine and got to know the surroundings, the work and life conditions.

It turned out that in the same building there was Fr. Antony Kujawa, the Senior priest from Zheludok and two Fathers of the Carmel Order from Vilnius – Fr. Gregorz and Fr. Beniamin Kozera. They were also brought from Brest to Dzekkazgan as Fr. Mikhal, but only in the other carriages. The building was overcrowded, it was cramped and cold inside. The doors of the barrack were closed with the key for the night and there was no heating, there was a lack of fresh air, it was rather stuffy.

There were two parts in the camp, the fourth point yet was situated near the district town Dzekkazgan. The very camp where Fr. Michal and the others were kept was situated near the cooper mines. The prisoners were given the right to send two letters to their relatives a year which had to be written in short and only in Russian. The work in the camp started after breakfast.

After the quarantine the prisoners were included to some brigades or were organized into new ones. Fr. Mikhal was included into so-called “urgent” brigade. It was a special brigade for unloading the building materials such as girders, planks, wood or coal from the railway carriages. Depending on the arrival of the train the brigade was called out at any time of the day or night. It happened so that after unloading the train during the night there was no time to sleep, but in the morning, after washing and having breakfast they were called for the next work. When the “urgent” brigade had no special task it was used for other different kinds of work. Sometimes the work took place in the open space, loading the stones, which were used for building the houses, barracks or other objects. Very often the number of prisoners was carefully checked, sometimes even several times. Sometimes revisions were made for the prisoners not to bring anything banned to the camp.

The camp authorities from time to time examined the health state of the prisoners. Periodically there was a special commission for examining their health.

One October day, after work Fr. Mikhal met priest Vladyslav from Latvia. After introducing themselves and changing the information for the possibility of parish activity in the camp, priest Vladyslav promised Fr. Mikhal to organize paraments and the most important things for celebrating the Holy Mass. Priest Vladyslav kept his word, some weeks later he brought Fr. Mikhal a small notebook with the written Holy Mass in honor of the Blessed Mary, the canon of the Holy Mass in Latin, he also supplied the Holy Bread and Wine. Later Fr. Mikhal's mother sent him the Holy Bread and Wine.

The first Holy Mass was celebrated by Fr. Mikhal on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December at Christmas. Some prisoners were on duty to prevent from unexpected unwilling entering. It was not allowed to gather for common prayers. At that case nobody came and nobody prevented from praying. Some people confessed and got the Holy Communion. The altar was arranged on the bedside table standing between the leveled beds, and a plain cup was used as a Holy Cup. After celebrating the first Holy Mass he got encouraged and tried to celebrate the Holy Masses more freely and more often. It happened not regularly and not in the same place, rather often in the morning sitting on the bed or in the evening<sup>139</sup>. Later he managed to make a small cup with patena from aluminium. A great joy for the priest was a book under the title "About following Christ" which he got in one of the parcels<sup>140</sup>.

Some time later Fr. Mikhal was moved from the "urgent" brigade to the "building" one. In the open field they had to build by hand the wooden houses - a small working settlement.

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1951 Fr. Mikhal was transferred to the first "camp division" to the first "camp point" where he stayed up to the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 1956. In the new place Fr. Mikhal was appointed to the building brigade where he worked as a manager assistant. In this new place of work Fr. Mikhal met priest Vaclav Piantkovsky the Senior Priest from Brest, Fr. Kamil Vladyslav Velymansky OFMCon from Vilnius and father Antony Zambek SJ. Together with the priests and the Catholic prisoners they gathered for prayers, conversations, reading books or seeing the film. In such a way, while everyday work on the first camp point, was passing the 1951<sup>141</sup>.

Then the following change of settlement came on the so-called camp point. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 1952 the brigade where Fr. Mikhal worked was transferred to the third "camp point". That part of the camp was called the "upper" point where people worked underground in the copper mine.

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<sup>139</sup> T a m ž e, s. 88-92.

<sup>140</sup> T a m ž e, s. 92-105.

<sup>141</sup> T a m ž e, s. 147-281.

On Sundays and holidays the chaplains tried not only to celebrate the Holy Mass, to read the Gospel, but also express some thoughts and ideas of encouragement, that is to remind about the Christian duties for the rest of the prisoners.

In the mine “Pokro” the priest got to know the perfect masters who helped him to make new liturgical paraments which were necessary for the Holy Mass celebration. One prisoner, coming from Estonia, who worked in the mine workshop, made from metal the miniature Mass cup, and a little patena was masterly made by Henryk Dziurbejko from Grodno. The Crucifix was curved by another prisoner, an amateur from the first detachment of the third “camp point”.

The next transfer of Fr. Mikhal happened on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December 1952, when he was sent to work in copper mine # 3 which was called “Kresto Zapad”. Till that time Fr. Mikhal worked only on the surface of the earth, in different buildings, inside or near the transformer of high voltage. Now the work under the ground in the mine started. Going to his place of work Fr. Mikhal took along the liturgical items into the mine, where during the night shift, 100 meters underground, he celebrated the Holy Mass, asking Father God for grants and mercy<sup>142</sup>.

Officially there was no hope to any attempts concerning religious or educational activity. The Catholic priest however tried to use the free time and place to celebrate the Holy Mass for a small group of believers, read the Gospel and to say a short sermon or to pray together on Rosary. The priests who were in the camps reminded the Truth of God for their friends in need, encouraged them to go on in faith and devotion to the Church, for defending the man’s honor even in the camp conditions. The praying meetings of the prisoners were more or less successful and when there were even sometimes so-called “failures” it was possible to explain and assure that there was nothing dangerous when people were praying. “The attack” of the guard was usually over with the words: “you can’t get together here, it is not a church”.

On Sunday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1955 there was a holiday of Holy Trinity. It was the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fr. Mikhal’s sanctification, which he got at Trinity Holiday on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1935. On that day Fr. Mikhal celebrated the Holy Mass giving thanks to Father God for the gift of chaplain’s vocation.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 1955 Fr. Mikhal for the numberless time was sent to another “camp point” of the same first division. He worked in the building brigade, where were working the early met Fr. Vaclav Piatkovski, Fr. Kamil Velymanski or Greece-Catholic priests – Catholiks

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<sup>142</sup> I. S z k u d e l s k a, *Wędrując do bram nieba*. Głos znad Niemna, 26: 1998, s. 5.

from West Ukraine and from Zakarpatsk Ukraine. On that second “camp point” the Live Rosary, to which 15 men belonged to was organized. The priests tried to celebrate the Holy Masses as often as it was possible.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of February, Fr. Mikhal was brought to the investigation judge of the camp, who once again put down his evidence, concerning his court case. After the investigation, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February Fr. Mikhal and other priests were given so-called easier conditions what meant it was possible to go to work and come back without any convoy, just showing the permit. It was also possible to go down town, shopping or visit the friends.

The amnesty time has come. Beginning from the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 1956 they started to set the prisoners free. The court commissions did not touch the cases of the Polish people. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of July 1956 in the morning Fr. Mikhal celebrated the Holy Mass for the success of the case on the trial commission. In the afternoon the priest was brought to the judge’s study. At the beginning he was asked about his name and personal information and what he considered was his guilt and in what he thought he was innocent. Fr. Mikhal openly told the whole truth and he was asked to leave the study. Later he was asked to come in again and the public prosecutor read out the document that the State Commission of the Supreme Council of the USSR decided that Fr. Mikhal Voronetsky is freed from the camp and cleared out of the court responsibility.

The isolation has come to an end. The nightmare of man’s humiliation was over. The violation and pressing together with the destruction of personal honor has finished. The “truth” which was the complete lie and injustice was concluded. After getting such happy news Fr. Mikhal sent his mother a letter and a telegram.

In the morning, of the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 1956 Fr. Mikhal celebrated the Holy Mass which was the last one in Dzezkazgan camp in intention for the happy homecoming. During the stay in camps Dzezkazgan – Rudnik Fr. Mikhal celebrated about 840 Holy Masses including 148 Masses celebrated underground in copper mine # 3 – “Kresto Zapad” mainly during the night.

Every leaving person has got a passport, the Decision of the State Commission about releasing, railway ticket – in Fr. Mikhal’s case it was to Vilnius. People were supplied with food for several days of railway journey, later they were taken to Dzezkazgan railway station by car on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July 1956. Here is the rout of the train Dzezkazgan – Vilnus:

the 18<sup>th</sup> of July – Dzezkazgan – Karaganda.

The 19<sup>th</sup> of July – Akmola.

The 20<sup>th</sup> of July – Pietropavlovsk.

The 21<sup>st</sup> of July - Chelabinsk.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> of July – Penza.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> of July – Moscow.

The 24<sup>th</sup> of July – Smolensk – a telegram for mother: “I am on my way to Vilnius”

The 24<sup>th</sup> of July – via his native Nowaya Vilejka Fr. Mikhal has arrived in Vilnius.

On the railway station in Vilnius Fr. Mikhal was awaited and looked for by his mother and her nearest: aunt Frania and Mrs. Anna. Cordial hug of his touched and distressing mother was the sign of realization of her and her son chaplain’s wish.

Next day, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July 1956 in the parish church of Sts. Apostols Peter and Paul Fr. Mikhal celebrated the Holy Mass giving thanks to Father God for happy homecoming already at the real altar and in beautiful church in Antokol<sup>143</sup>.

#### IV. AMNESTY AND FREEDOM

After winter usually comes spring, after storm – appears the sun, after night comes day, so after the time of persecution comes freedom. The freedom which was so much desired in prison. One can add the words of the National Poet Adam Mitskevich: “born in bondage, chained in swaddle, I had only one such spring in my life”. A new period of work started for Fr. Mikhal in absolutely different conditions. Let us see what were the ways of God’s Providence for Fr. Mikhal.

##### 1. Ruzhany

After coming back from the forced isolation, on the recommendation of priest Vaclav Piatkovsky, the general vicar of Pinsk diocese, Fr. Mikhal got the parish in Ruzhany in August of 1956<sup>144</sup>.

Ruzhany was situated in Brest region, Pruzhany district, apostolic administration of Pinsk diocese. Ruzhany parish after its priest leaving for Poland in 1945 was left without proper parish care for 10 years. From time to time it was allowed for priest Izudor Borisov from Kosovo to come to the funerals or with the permission of the regional responsible person to celebrate Masses on great Church Holidays.

The Catholic church in Ryzhany was at the name of Holy Trinity, it was a building of Late Renaissance, founded by Leo Sapiuha, built in 1617, rebuilt in 1779 in the style of Early classicism according to the project of architect Jan Becker, renewed in 1850 and 1891, non-stop actual. To the side of the church in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the XVIII century were added two

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<sup>143</sup> G. R a k o w s k i, *Ilustrowany przewodnik po zabytkach kultury na Białorusi*, s. 207-209.

<sup>144</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Autobiografia. Grodno 1994*.

chapels: of St. Cross (in 1768) and of St. Barbara (in 1787). The rich decoration of the interior of the church has the traits of baroque, rococo and early classicism. The main altar is made of dark marble, crowned by the semi-arch fronton with the images of angels and the Sapiehas coat of arms. The basement and the walls of the chapels are decorated with polychromes of the XVIII century with the evangelic themes. The other valuable elements of the decoration are the icons of the XVIII and XIX century, forget baroque bar, separating presbitery from the nave, richly decorated organs and the ambo, early classicism alters in the chapels and carved epitaph of Boleslav Bisping, created by Jozeph Pruckner in 1789.

In Ruzhany, at the cemetery there was a church at the name of St. Kazimier the Prince of early classicism donated by Aleksandr Sapieha, built in 1792 to the project of the architect Jan Samuel Becker.

The whole scenery of the town is decorated by the palace – complex of the former Sapieha residence. At the beginning of the XVII century on the hill raising over the town the Chancellor of the GDL Leo Sapieha erected the palace-castle where he hosted Vladislav IV Vaza in 1617 going with his army to Moscow. His son, the marshal of the court-yard Kazimier Leo Sapieha greeted in Ruzhany palace the same Vladislav, but at that time as the king with his wife Queen Cecilia Renata, gave a huge reception to the honor of the great guests. During the Polish-Moscow war from year 1655 in Ruzhany palace there was kept a coffin with relicts of St. Kazimier brought there from Vilnus cathedral before the awaiting coming of the Moscow troops. The residence was destroyed and abandoned by the inhabitants as a result of Civil war of the Nobilities with the Sapiehas in 1698. It was renewed by Aleksander Sapieha thanks to whom in 1784-1788 the palace was rebuilt and enlarged according to the project of a well-known Sapiehas' architect Jan Samuel Becker. Continuing the old tradition in 1784 the Chancellor Sapieha greeted here the king Stanilsav August Poniatovsky on his way to the Grodno Sejm. Aleksander Sapieha foreordained one of the residence wings to the theatre, founded in Ruzhany and in other little settlements, belonging to him, some wavering factories. Aleksander's son Franciszhek Sapieha while visiting Rozhany in 1793 for the unknown reason moved his residence to Dereczyn, giving part of his marvelous residence in Ryzhany to the storage of crops and weaving of wool. From that time on, started the gradual decay of Ruzhany residence. In 1831 the tsar authorities, for taking part in November revolt, confiscated all Ruzhany and Dereczyn riches from its owner, the son Francieszek Eustachy Sapieha. The main building of the palace was reconstructed into the weaving factory and the rest of the residence was gradually destroying. In 1914 it was burnt to the ground, in 1930 it was partly restored, and again it was destroyed during the war in 1944

and since that time the residence lay in ruins. The walls of the main palace building remained (without the basement ) with strongly protruded ryzalit decorated with pairs of Doric columns on the huge fundament, pilasters and triangle fronton. The whole complex is in the state of gradual ruin<sup>145</sup>. Now the partial restoration of the object is being done.

There was a small number of Catholics in Ruzany parish to the contrary of numerous Orthodox believers. There was not a single Catholic village in the parish. After his arrival to Ruzhany Fr. Mikhal became the object of interest from the side of KGB men. That was the usual thing at that time.

Fr. Mikhal was officially employed in the district town of Ruzhany, where he was informed about his duties and was told what he had no right to do. The strictest demands were concerned the work with the children and young people. Only parents could teach their children religion.

1960 was the year of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fr. Mikhal Voronetsky's sanctification. There was lots of tears and touching moments on that day for it was worth following Christ.

Very sad event in the life of Fr. Mikhal was his mother's death. Helena Voronetska passed away to Father God on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 1963 in Ruzhany. Fr. Mikhal recalled about her: "She worked hard and suffered a lot in her widow's life. Fr. Mikhal celebrated the funeral ceremony himself. The last wish of the dead was to rest in peace on the Antokol cemetery in Vilnius. It happened so that after the funeral ceremony in Ruzhany the funeral procession moved to Vilnius<sup>146</sup>.

At that period of time when Fr. Mikhal was working as a Senior Priest in Ruzhany he serviced 12 parishes in the range from 4 to 65 kilometers. It was allowed for Fr. Mikhal to go only to several parishes, such as Slonim, Kosovo, Porozovo and Shereshevo. In years 1976-1988 he used to go to the parish of Kosovo and during years 1976-1988 to the parish of Porozovo. He also had a church to come to in Slonim at the name of Immaculate Conception of the Saint Virgin Mary. In 1988 he used to come to the church in Shereshevo<sup>147</sup>.

In 1985 Fr. Mikhal celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his chaplain's sanctification. It was a great event: a lot of priests, nuns and crowds of believers from different parishes. Everybody who knew him wanted to congratulate him on his holiday, express their cordial wishes and thank for his service and devoted chaplain life.

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<sup>145</sup> T a m ż e.

<sup>146</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/3-4: *Dekret 20.08.1990.*

<sup>147</sup> AKMK, Teczka personalna I/5-7: M. *Woroniecki. Autobiografia. Grodno 1994.*

## 2. Grodno

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 1990 Fr. Mikhal by the force of the order of the bishop Tadeush Kondrusievich was demised from the post of the Senior Priest in Ruzhany and nominated to the post of spiritual Father of Grodno High Spiritual Seminary<sup>148</sup>. The appointment was proclaimed by the prelate Kazimierz Sviatek, the general vicar of Pinsk, who celebrated the farewell Mass in Ruzhany church. After the Holy Mass there was a solemn passing of the parish. After 34 years of his chaplain service Fr. Mikhal left Ruzhany in 1990 and moved to Grodno<sup>149</sup>.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of January there was created the Church Court and Fr. Mikhal Voronetsky by the order of the bishop Kondrusievich was nominated the official of Bishop Court in Grodno<sup>150</sup>.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 1990 Fr. Mikhal got the Papal document including him into the group of His Holiness Chaplains<sup>151</sup>.

Besides being the Spiritual Father in the High Seminary he also was a professor there teaching the Bible Study, the History of Redeeming, Introduction to spiritual theology and the Greek language<sup>152</sup>.

Fr. Michal became the tutor of the students, their Confessor and their Spiritual leader. He gave his students the true parental love, paying special attention to their spiritual development.

He was noted not only by the young spirit in himself, unusual calmness and vitality, but also by his perfect memory. He was the teacher who by his own example maintained the truthfulness of the subject he was proclaiming<sup>153</sup>.

On the 2-5<sup>th</sup> of January 1991 an International Symposium under the motto "Church as a witness under the power of communism in Europe" took place in Prague. Bishop Tadeush Kondrusievich, the Apostle Catholic Administrator in Belarus sent Fr. Mikhal Voronetsky and priest Jerzy Livinsky there as representatives of Grodno High Spiritual Seminary. On the 11<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> of August 1991 Fr. Mikhal takes part in the Congress of Theology of Middle-Eastern Europe in Lublin and presents there an essay to the theme "Local Witness of the Church" Lvov, Lyskov, Dzekazgan Rudnik, Ruzany.

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<sup>148</sup> Там же.

<sup>149</sup> АКМК, Тeczka personalna I/3-4: *Dokument papieski. Watykan 23.02.1990.*

<sup>150</sup> АКМК, Тeczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Autobiografia. Grodno 1994.*

<sup>151</sup> I. S z k u d e l s k a, *Wędrując do bram nieba*, W: Głos znad Niemna, 26: 1998, s. 5.

<sup>152</sup> АКМК, Тeczka personalna I/5-7: M. Woroniecki. *Autobiografia. Grodno 1994.*

<sup>153</sup> *Энцыклапедыя Літаратуры і Мастацтва Беларусі*, Т. 2, Мінск 1987, s. 446-447.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of August the Congress of Theology had an audience with the Pope John Paul II in Czenstochova. Fr. Mikhal was invited for dinner with the Holy Father. On the requirement of Apostle Nuncio in Moscow Fr. Mikhal took part in the Rome Bishops' Synod of Europe as an auditor. The Synod lasted from the 28<sup>th</sup> of November till the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 1991 in the Vatican. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of December during the work of the Synod Fr. Mikhal introduces an essay in the presence of the Pope John Paul II in Polish to the theme: "Chaplain's vocation and formation in the post – communist countries". On the 19<sup>th</sup>- 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1992, in Krakow Fr. Mikhal takes part in the Congress of the Poles from Polonia and abroad. On the 13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> of September 1993 Fr. Mikhal was a participant of the VIII International Congress of Canonic Law in Lublin Catholic University. The motto of the Congress: "Church and State"

In 1996 by the decree of the bishop Aleksandr Kashkeivich the ordinary of Grodno diocese, Fr. Mikhal got the nomination to be the general vicar of that diocese<sup>154</sup>.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1998 passed away to Father God for the eternal prize His tireless Apostle, the personality and chaplain of faith, the man of undoubted Hope and Love whose life was written in the great Charter of the Earth Church – the late Mikhal Voronetsky CM.

In the solemn procession his coffin was brought first to the Seminary chapel and later to the side nave of St. Bernard church. For three days the believers crowded themselves near his coffin devoting and praying. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of June at 3 p.m. there was a funeral Holy Mass, which was celebrated by cardinal Kazimierz Sviatek and assisted by bishop Aleksandr Kashkievich and the visiting priest from the Community of priests – missionaries from Krakow – Fr. doctor Bronislav Sienczak. In concelebration took part about one hundred chaplains from the whole Belarus and Poland. On that day the church of St. Bernard in Grodno was completely full. There was no lack of believers, who came to Grodno from all corners of Belarus to part with the great chaplain and to pray, thanking God for the gift of his life and priesthood.

After the end of the Mass the coffin of the priest was brought from the church to St. Bernard's cemetery accompanied by singing and praying.

## V. Peculiar gifts and passions

Besides being a passionate chaplain for gaining people's souls for the Haven Kingdom, Fr. Mikhal Voronetsky also possessed artistic talents, which deserve mentioning.

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<sup>154</sup> R. W i e r n a, *Zainteresowania artystyczne ks. Michała Woronieckiego (1909-1998)*. Studia Theologica Grodnensia, 5:2011, s. 207-208.

## 1. Painting

Painting is a branch of art, which depicts proper things or events sensed by the talented imagination of the artist, creating by putting colored materials on some surfaces: paper, cartoon, wood, canvas, glass, metal, wall. With the help of painting one wants to express the reality, esthetics. The image, presented by artist, influences the feelings and thinking of the viewer, is a very important means of ones esthetic upbringing. The artist also wants to show not only the outside image but also the inner world of the personality, his position, movement, dynamics, nature in different states by the rich palette of colors, lights and shades. There are different types of painting: portrait, landscape, historical type, banal type, animalism, still life<sup>155</sup>.

In Ruzany church there is an icon of St. Teresa of Lisieux, which was painted by Fr. Mikhal. Special attention should be paid to the colors of the icon's background which consists of blue and pink shades, that produces the effect of lightness by the falling rose petals. This artistic method makes it possible to imagine that the roses will fall out of the icon just now. The other icon of St. Teresa from Lisieux by Fr. Mikhal's brush finds itself in the presbitery in Ruzhany. There we can see the Saint half figure, as it is usually presented traditionally. In the parish archives in Ruzhany there are images in the form of postal stamps, made in pastel style: "Sleeping Jesus as a Child", "A child's portrait", "Mother's portrait". It is quiet possible that in the Museum of Independence in Wasraw there is a watercolor of Fr. Mikhal - "Silent night". The watercolor was created in 1952. It presents winter landscape with the village cottage<sup>156</sup>.

Fr. Mikhal was fond of such kind of art as cutting out. It can be proved by the cuttings themselves, which are kept in the archives of Priests-Missioners of Saint Vincent a Paulo in Krakow. The name and surname of Fr. Mikhal Voronetsky is mentioned in the books by J. M. Sakhut, "Belarussian National crafts. National art crafts of Belarus".

Cutting out is a piece of material, very often it is paper, created with the help of cutting out by some sharp tool, the pattern is usually colorful, used for architectural decoration of the interior or for shading the things, in Polish people's heritage cuttings out are various in technique and style in different parts of the country and make great material for the history of Polish ornamentation.

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<sup>155</sup> АКМК, Тeczka personalna VIII/1-3: *Wycinanki*.

<sup>156</sup> *Энцыклапедыя Літаратуры і Мастацтва Беларусі*, Т. 5, Мінск 1987, s. 412-414.

Up to the compositional style the cuttings out are divided into closed, rosary, centered in the square, many-sided, in the circle, those which are cut out from multi-folded 4-8 times sheet of paper. The paper was folded in the form of harmonica and symmetrically folded in halves.

Estimating the cuttings out created by Fr. Mikhal it is possible to find out the ones of rosary, symmetrical, colored, geometric or of vegetative ornament<sup>157</sup>.

## 2. Photography

Photo – (Greek, phos, photos) - light. It was invented on the base of certain scientific achievements in Physics, Chemistry and technology. The first and the main aim of the photograph was getting the precise copy of the original. Only later there were created the photos with landscapes, photo-portraits. In one word, the man always wanted to keep for himself, for some longer period of time something that he had seen once and was deeply touched by, including beloved people: parents, families, whose photos could be kept for many generations<sup>158</sup>.

Looking through the photos of Fr. Mikhal it is possible to note that there is he himself with the camera. At that time the most popular camera was “Zenit”.

We can conclude that Fr. Mikhal Voronetsky liked to take pictures very much. His photos can be divided into different categories: nature sights (gardens, flowers, vegetables), animals, architectural sights (churches, historical places, castles, monuments) people (priests, family, religious holidays).

## 3. Garden

Looking through the photos which were made by Fr. Mikhal it is possible to see that he loved flowers and animals very much. As he mentioned in his notes the flowers which decorated the altar in the church were exclusively from the garden near the presbitery. His mother used to decorate the altar and the church. Fr. Mikhal, and his mother worked in the garden together with brother Ludvik Dziemianczyk. They all enjoyed the rich crops very much, for everything was very well looked after. And Father God blessed them with the

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<sup>157</sup> Encyklopedia Powszechna Ultima Thule, *Fotografia*, Red. S. M i c h a l s k i, T. 3, Warszawa 1931, s. 630-631.

<sup>158</sup> T a m ż e.

harvest. It is as well very important to mark that beside parish responsibilities he found time to take pictures in the garden of the presbitery.

#### 4. History

Fr. Mikhal was also very much interested in history. He was keen on the history of his country, his ancestry, outstanding people and the conventional activities of his order. He piled the information about his grandparents, drew genealogical trees of the Voronetsky family. He collected different newspaper and magazine articles, concerning different interesting events in the life of the country and the Church. On the parish territory, where he was destined to work he gathered historical data about the revolt and the events connected with it. He collected very much historical information about the parish of St. Trinity in Ruzhany. It was also thanks to him that there was founded a museum in the parish of Ruzhany. There are very many different interesting antique things such as chasubles sewn with Slutsk waistbands, mostrances, relicts and liturgical tableware, liturgical books from the churches which were deprived and closed by the Soviet power. It is very important to mention here that Fr. Mikhal at communist times ran archive books of his parish.

**PRIEST AS AN EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF THE SACRAMENT OF  
CONFIRMATION BY VIRTUE OF REGULATIONS OF THE HOLY SEE.  
LEGAL SITUATION FROM THE CODE OF CANON LAW OF 1917  
TO THE CODE OF CANON LAW OF 1983**

Between the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law in 1917 and the proclamation of the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*” in 1946, the Holy See issued several documents, either extending the powers of priests as extraordinary ministers of the sacrament of confirmation, or upholding the strict discipline in this regard. Only after the analysis of these documents, one could be able to claim that the issue of the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*” was indeed a crucial event in ecclesiastical legislation with regard to priest as a minister of the sacrament of confirmation.

In the beginning of his pontificate, Pius XI allowed nuncios, internuncios and apostolic delegates to administer confirmation within the entire territory of their jurisdiction and during their sea travel, both when they were going to the place of their mission and on their return way<sup>159</sup>. Moreover, Pius XI allowed them to subdelegate the faculty to confirm to ordinary presbyters standing out with virtue and true doctrine in places with no bishops, but only for a definite time and without prejudice to the provisions included in Canons 78 § 1; 782 § 4, and 784<sup>160</sup>.

In view of many requests by European bishops to the Holy See regarding permission for administering of the sacrament of confirmation by ordinary priests, on 21 January 1924 the Sacred Congregation of Sacraments issued a statement that the previous strict practice in this regard should not be departed from<sup>161</sup>. This statement also explained that, outside Latin America, where ordinary priests were granted the faculty to confirm in view of their peculiar situation, such faculty would not be granted. It also recommended that bishops, instead of requesting the permission for priests, should rather endeavour for an auxiliary bishop or for

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<sup>159</sup> See M. Conte a Coronata, *Institutiones Iuris Canonici*, Index Rerum et Appendices, Taurini 1951, vol. V, p. 236.

<sup>160</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 234.

<sup>161</sup> See “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 27 (1935) p. 14.

assistance of a neighbouring bishop<sup>162</sup>. On 26 January 1924, this statement was approved by Pope Pius XI<sup>163</sup>.

The Holy See made exceptional concessions to the ordinaries of China, in view of their special situation. Article 273 of the documents of the 1924 First Synod of China says: “By virtue of an indult by the Holy See, local ordinaries may delegate all of their priests to validly and licitly administer the sacrament of confirmation to the faithful, adults and children alike, in danger of death, also in a bishop’s place of residence, if the bishop is absent or gravely impeded”<sup>164</sup>.

On 20 May 1934, the Sacred Congregation of Sacraments issued a document titled “*Instructio pro simplici sacerdote sacramentum confirmationis ex Sedis Apostolicae delegatione administrandae*”<sup>165</sup>. This instruction contains a clear comparison of the previously issued statements by the Holy See, as well as detailed instructions on the administration of confirmation by an ordinary presbyter. An analysis of this instruction shows that the Holy See, as if only urged, delegates an extraordinary minister in special conditions of place and time, in view of a grave and urgent reason, which occurs very rarely. According to some authors, this instruction had even more tightened the requirements for priests as extraordinary ministers of the sacrament of confirmation<sup>166</sup>. It recalled the norms included in the instruction of the Holy See of 1924, stating that apart from Latin America, indults authorizing ordinary priests to confirm would not be granted, and if a bishop is not able to confirm all of his faithful, he should endeavour either for an auxiliary bishop or for assistance of a neighbouring bishop. However, if there is any necessity to delegate a priest to confer confirmation, the instruction demands that such presbyter has the privilege of wearing insignia to which a protonotary apostolic is entitled<sup>167</sup>. The legislator intends that the veneration due to the sacrament of confirmation should not be prejudiced<sup>168</sup>.

The documents mentioned above, issued by the Sacred Congregation of Sacraments, evidence the legislator’s opinion that the sacrament of confirmation should be administered by ordinary ministers, i.e. bishops. That is why the issue of the decree “*Spiritus Sancti*

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<sup>162</sup> See T. Szwagrzyk, *Szafarz nadzwyczajny Sakramentu Bierzmowania*, “Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny” 11 (1958) No. 2, p. 146.

<sup>163</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 27 (1935) p. 14.

<sup>164</sup> “Apollinaris”, *Commentarius iuris canonici*, Romae 22 (1949) p. 76.

<sup>165</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 27 (1935) p. 11n.

<sup>166</sup> See R. Dworecki, *Szafarz sakramentu bierzmowania w Kościele Zachodnim*, typescript, Library of the Catholic University of Lublin, Lublin 1960, p. 151.

<sup>167</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 27 (1935) p. 13.

<sup>168</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz sakramentu bierzmowania*, “Prawo Kanoniczne” 25 (1982) no. 3-4, p. 144.

munera”, which granted wide faculties to confirm to priests occupied with pastoral duties, and renounced the condition that they should hold an ecclesiastical office, had been a crucial event in the development of the institution of a priest as a minister of confirmation.

### **1. Decree “Spiritus Sancti munera” by the Sacred Congregation of Sacraments of 14 September 1946**

The main reason for the Holy See to issue this decree on 14 September 1946 was the care for the good of souls. Although the sacrament of confirmation is not necessary for salvation, it nevertheless strengthens a man and brings great gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, very valuable for Christian life on earth and for eternal glory in heaven<sup>169</sup>. The Holy See had seen the tragedy of the Second World War, high death rate of children and the fact that many adults, who for various reasons had not received confirmation in childhood, died without it. In these circumstances, the situation of the faithful of the Western Church was worse than of the faithful of the Eastern Church, where children are administered confirmation immediately after baptism.<sup>170</sup>

Long before the proclamation of this Decree, there had been opinions by lawyers and theologians, expressing suggestions how to remedy this unpleasant phenomenon existing in the Western Church<sup>171</sup>. His Holiness Pius XII, taking into account the importance of this problem and intending to serve the salvation of souls, ordered the Sacred Congregation of Sacraments to examine this matter urgently and thoroughly during its plenary meetings, reserving the final decision on the presented proposals to himself<sup>172</sup>. The Congregation, following the Pope’s instruction, prepared a project of the decree and submitted it for evaluation by cardinals. Having consulted the college of cardinals, on 6 May 1946, Pius XII ordered the publication of the Decree. On 14 September, the decree by the Sacred Congregation of Sacraments “On the administration of confirmation to persons who are in danger of death due to a grave illness” was issued<sup>173</sup>.

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<sup>169</sup> See S. Wójcik, *Bierzmowanie ciężko chorych w niebezpieczeństwie śmierci*, “Homo Dei” 18 (1949) no. 1, p. 96n.

<sup>170</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 38 (1946) p. 350; see M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

<sup>171</sup> See A. Vermeersch, J. Creusen, *Epitome iuris canonici*, Romae 1940, vol. II, no. 66, p. 37; see also R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>172</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 38 (1946) p. 351.

<sup>173</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 38 (1946) p. 353n.

The faculty outlined in this Decree is a privilege. It is a permanent faculty, granted for an indefinite period, and the CCL treats such faculty as a *privilegium praeter ius*<sup>174</sup>. It is a real and perpetual privilege granted by the Pope. It is real because it is assigned to the office of a pastor rather than to his person. Thus, it supplements the powers of a pastor, to which he is entitled by universal law. It is perpetual because it is granted for an indefinite time<sup>175</sup>. Rules of interpretation of such faculties are stated in the Code of Canon Law, Canons 67 and 68. According to these canons, when interpreting a privilege, one cannot extend, restrict, nor limit its content. The decree precisely enumerates the priests who are authorized by its virtue to confirm as extraordinary ministers. This enumeration is taxative rather than exemplary. Therefore, this faculty should not be extended under any circumstances to other persons, not mentioned in the decree, under pain of invalidity of the sacrament<sup>176</sup>.

The decree enumerates the following persons as authorized to administer the sacrament of confirmation:

#### A. Territorial pastor

This term denotes a pastor who has his own territory with a church, to which the faithful are subject by virtue of place (*parochus proprio territorio gaudens*)<sup>177</sup>. The term “pastor” is hereinafter understood as any local pastor, regardless whether he is a secular or religious cleric, removable or non-removable, exempt or not exempt from the jurisdiction of the local ordinary<sup>178</sup>. The pastor has the faculty to confirm since the moment of his assumption of the office (benefice)<sup>179</sup>, unless he has incurred any penalty which would forbid him to administer sacraments. According to Canon 460, each parish should have only one pastor, therefore the Decree grants the faculty to confirm only to him, even if there are other priests occupied with pastoral duties in the parish<sup>180</sup>. Moreover, a pastor cannot delegate his faculty to confirm to another priest, such as a vicar or rector<sup>181</sup>. This faculty is personal and territorial, i.e. only the pastor himself can confirm and only in the territory of his parish,

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<sup>174</sup> See Canon 66 § 1.

<sup>175</sup> See Canon 70.

<sup>176</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *Proboszcz jako minister nadzwyczajny Sakramentu Bierzmowania*, “Kielecki Przegląd Diecezjalny” 38 (1957) p. 112.

<sup>177</sup> See *ibid.*; M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

<sup>178</sup> See T. Szwagrzyk, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>179</sup> See Canon 1444; I. Grabowski, *Bierzmowanie w ustawodawstwie kościelnym*, “Ateneum Kapłańskie” 49 (1948) p. 450.

<sup>180</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 159n.; I. Grabowski, *op. cit.*, p. 450.

<sup>181</sup> See I. Grabowski, *op. cit.*, p. 450.

whereas outside his parish, he is not entitled to confirm even his own parishioners. Grabowski gives such example: A pastor goes with his parishioners for a saint patron's day to another parish. If one of his parishioners falls ill and requests him to administer confirmation, the pastor cannot do it and has to request a local pastor<sup>182</sup>. There is also another category of pastors, to whom the faithful are subject not by virtue of permanent or temporary residence in a given parish but by virtue of their membership in a specific social, ethnic, rite, professional, or family group<sup>183</sup>. Such pastors are known in the Code as personal pastors. They include military, court, family or ethnic chaplains<sup>184</sup>. They can be solely personal (*mere personales*) pastors; in such case, they have no territory which could restrict their faculty. They establish personal parishes in any place where their faithful are. The solely personal pastors do not have the faculty to confirm<sup>185</sup>. The faculty of a personal pastor may be determined with regard to a specific group of persons, e.g. a certain nationality and in a certain territory where his power of pastor towards these persons is only reserved to him. Such personal pastor can confirm<sup>186</sup>. The faculty to confirm is also granted to a personal pastor who exercises the jurisdiction in a specific territory cumulatively (*cumulative*) with a territorial or personal pastor<sup>187</sup>. Such pastor is known as a mixed personal pastor (*parochus personalis mixtus*). If a personal pastor exercises his power within a territory which also has a local pastor, both priests can confirm all of the faithful living there. This means that a territorial pastor may confirm the subjects of a personal pastor, and a personal pastor – the subjects of a local pastor<sup>188</sup>. To avoid misunderstandings, the mentioned priests should communicate. A situation can occur when there are faithful of different nationalities in a given territory, or in case of resettlement of the faithful with their pastor to another parish where the pastoral duties are performed by a local pastors<sup>189</sup>. Therefore, by virtue of the decree "Spiritus Sancti munera", the faculty of confirmation is granted to personal pastors with an exclusive jurisdiction with regard to specific persons in a given territory, as well as mixed personal pastors exercising the power in a specific territory cumulatively with a territorial or another personal pastor<sup>190</sup>. The decree only excludes the solely personal pastors, since according to the Decree, a basic requirement

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<sup>182</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> See Canon 216 § 4.

<sup>184</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

<sup>185</sup> See "Acta Apostolicae Sedis" 38 (1946) p. 352; R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

<sup>186</sup> P. Maroto, *Institutiones Iuris Canonici*, Matriti 1919, vol. II, p. 115.

<sup>187</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

<sup>188</sup> See I. Grabowski, *op. cit.*, p. 450n.

<sup>189</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>190</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

to exercise its faculties is to hold a territory at least cumulatively.<sup>191</sup> Such personal pastors, holding a territory in a cumulative manner, are chaplains of emigrants, who, in accordance with the provision of the Apostolic Constitution “Exsul Familia” of 1952, perform pastoral care for emigrants, expatriates and refugees who were forced to leave their home country due to persecution or material poverty<sup>192</sup>. Famous canonists, such as Zerba, Grossignani, Onclin, Delchard<sup>193</sup>, claim that also quasi-pastors in mission territories<sup>194</sup> have the faculty to confirm under the decree “Spiritus Sancti munera”, although it does not mention them directly; since, according to the Code of Canon Law<sup>195</sup>, in accordance with the general legal norms regarding pastors, the quasi-pastors are equivalent to them. This opinion has been confirmed by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith on 7 July 1947<sup>196</sup>, stating that quasi-pastors in mission territories may administer confirmation by virtue of the decree “Spiritus Sancti munera” on a par with pastors.

## B. Actual vicar

If a pastor is a moral person (*parochus habitualis*), e.g. a monastery or chapter, the pastoral duties in this parish are performed by an actual vicar. Under the decree “Spiritus Sancti munera”, he has the faculty to confirm. An actual vicar exercises his power as a deputy of a moral person and by virtue of his vicarious authority he is called a vicar, despite actually performing duties of a pastor. He is entitled to all rights of a pastor and also has all duties assigned to a pastor by universal law<sup>197</sup> and diocesan statutes<sup>198</sup>. In view of the scope of the performed duties, he can be called a pastor of an order or chapter parish<sup>199</sup>. He is occupied with the total pastoral care (*cura animarum*) in the entrusted parish. An actual vicar can be usually encountered at cathedral and collegiate churches, if there is a legally erected chapter at these churches and the parish is incorporated into this chapter with full authority (*pleno iure*)<sup>200</sup>. Moreover, an actual vicar is established in order parishes, if such parish is

<sup>191</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 38 (1946) p. 352.

<sup>192</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 44 (1952) p. 649n.; R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 162 n.

<sup>193</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

<sup>194</sup> See Canon 216 § 3.

<sup>195</sup> See Canon 451 § 2 no. 1.

<sup>196</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>197</sup> See Canon 471.

<sup>198</sup> See T. Szwagrzyk, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>199</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 147.

<sup>200</sup> See Canon 1425. This means that not only the incomes but also the spiritual office is passed to the moral person; see F. Bączkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

incorporated with the order in the same manner<sup>201</sup>. The reason for which the Decree grants the faculty to confirm to an actual vicar is clear, since it is he who is occupied with the total pastoral care in a parish united with full authority to a moral person such as a chapter, order or congregation; if he did not have the faculty to confirm, the situation of the faithful of this parish would be worse than of the faithful of other parishes where pastors are ministers of this sacrament<sup>202</sup>.

### C. Administrative vicar (oekonomus)

An administrative vicar is a priest appointed by an ordinary to govern a vacant parish. He exercises this power until the moment of appointment of a proper pastor<sup>203</sup>. He has the same rights and duties as a pastor in the matters connected with the care for the spiritual good of the faithful<sup>204</sup>. Therefore, the decree “*Spiritus sancti munera*” grants the faculty to confirm to administrative vicars, corresponding with their pastoral duties. By nature, an administrative vicar is only appointed temporarily, therefore his power ceases on the moment of appointment of the proper pastor.<sup>205</sup> A priest who performs pastoral duties during a predefined time, e.g. during a year or during several months, has no faculty to confirm<sup>206</sup>. However, if one has been appointed as a pastor for an indefinite time, he has the faculty to confirm, although he can be dismissed at any time<sup>207</sup>.

### D. Priests with all rights and duties of pastors, performing permanent and exclusive pastoral duties in a certain territory with a specific church

This group of priests authorized to administer confirmation includes, by virtue of the Decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*”, priests who are not pastors, actual vicars or administrative vicars, but nevertheless have all rights and duties of pastors and perform permanent and exclusive pastoral duties in a certain territory with a specific church.

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<sup>201</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>202</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

<sup>203</sup> See Canon 472.

<sup>204</sup> See Canon 473.

<sup>205</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>206</sup> See J. Pistoni, *De confirmatione a ministro extraordinario conferenda vi decreti S. C. de Sacramentis 14 Septembris 1946*, Città del Vaticano 1947, p. 91.

<sup>207</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

To be included in the group of ministers authorized to confirm by virtue of a decree, a priest, regardless of the name he is called by, should meet the following conditions<sup>208</sup>:

- a) he should exercise total pastoral care,
- b) he should exercise this pastoral care in an exclusive manner,
- c) in a permanent manner,
- d) within a specific territory,
- e) in a specific church,
- f) and with full powers and duties of a pastor.

To meet these requirements, a priest should exercise pastoral care completely and independently<sup>209</sup>, as well as in an exclusive manner. The exclusiveness means that he cannot govern only a part of a separate territory or exercise his power in a cumulative manner<sup>210</sup>.

The next requirement is the permanent manner of the priest's exercise of his power. This means that it is sufficient if he is appointed to this office for an indefinite time, which does not mean he is non-removable, since he may be *ad nutum episcopi*<sup>211</sup>. However, the requirement of permanence is not met by a priest appointed for a definite time, e.g. for three years or several months<sup>212</sup>. Moreover, a priest should exercise his power in a specified territory with a specified church. He can use a given church cumulatively with another parish, but it should be specified<sup>213</sup>.

It is hard to say which criterion should be assumed to evaluate if such a priest has the power with all laws and duties of a pastor. The famous canonist Cappello, following a statement by the Holy See, claims that such priest should be subject to the duty to apply Masses for the faithful<sup>214</sup>. However, sometimes a priest can be legally exempt from this duty, so this criterion would not be sufficient<sup>215</sup>. Therefore, this matter must be examined in every individual case, either on the basis of a document or by custom<sup>216</sup>. If a priest meets all these requirements, then, by virtue of the Decree, he is a minister of the sacrament of confirmation.

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<sup>208</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 114; M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>209</sup> See T. Szwagrzyk, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>210</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>211</sup> See I. Grabowski, *op. cit.*, p. 451.

<sup>212</sup> See J. Pistoni, *op. cit.*, p. 91; I. Grabowski, *op. cit.*, p. 451.

<sup>213</sup> See J.S. Quinn, *The Extraordinary Minister of Confirmation according to the most recent Decrees of the Sacred Congregation*, Romae 1951, p. 91; R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>214</sup> See F. Cappello, *Adnotationes in Decretum de confirmatione administranda in mortis periculo*, "Periodica de re morali, canonica, liturgica" 35 (1946) p. 380; R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>215</sup> See C. Zerba, *Commentarius in decretum „Spiritus Sancti munera” – De confirmatione administranda iis, qui ex gravi morbo in mortis periculo sunt constituti*. Editum a S. C. de Disciplina Sacramentorum. Appendix cum textu decreti et ritu servando, Città del Vaticano 1947, p. 55n.

<sup>216</sup> See J. Pistoni, *op. cit.*, p. 91n.

This group of ministers includes two categories of priests:

1. Perpetual (permanent) vicar, auxiliary pastor<sup>217</sup> and a so-called curate<sup>218</sup>.

These priests are appointed as heads of perpetual vicariates (*vicariae perpetuae*)<sup>219</sup>, i.e. heads of a specified territory with its resident faithful. This territory is not a formally erected parish yet, although is clearly and distinctly separated from the territory of the former parish, and the priest appointed as head of such vicariate exercises the exclusive, permanent and full power of a pastor<sup>220</sup>. In various dioceses, a permanent vicar has different names, such as expositus, local priest, administrator, curate, rector, etc.<sup>221</sup>

2. This group can include chaplains and rectors of pious houses, hospitals, prisons etc., but only if they meet all requirements mentioned in the Decree, i.e. if they are appointed to this office on a permanent basis (*modo stabili*), have their own, specified territory and a specified church, and have rights and duties of pastors, performing pastoral care in an exclusive manner<sup>222</sup>. Fulfillment of the requirements of the Decree by a given priest can be proven on the basis of an document of appointment or by ordinary law<sup>223</sup>.

Beside the mentioned priests occupied with care of souls, no other priest has the faculty to confirm by virtue of the Decree, although some of the persons not mentioned in the Decree are, in view of their occupation, in close association with a pastor or with those priests who are granted with this faculty by the Decree.

On this principle, a seminary rector cannot confirm, although he has the authority of a pastor towards the alumni of the seminary<sup>224</sup>. Similarly, the Decree does not grant the faculties to superiors of religious orders<sup>225</sup>. Moreover, this faculty is not granted to a cooperator vicar nor to a priest who would administer a parish by virtue of any title – even on request of an ordinary<sup>226</sup>. Moreover, the Decree does not authorize a helping vicar (Can. 476), a substitute vicar or a pre-oeconomus; despite having, by law, equivalent authority with pastors, they are not entitled to such faculty<sup>227</sup>. A pre-oeconomus vicar is a priest who assumes the governance

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<sup>217</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>218</sup> Curate, from Latin “curatus” – a priest occupied with care of souls, who governs a parish.

<sup>219</sup> See Canon 1427.

<sup>220</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>221</sup> See F. Bączkiewicz, *op. cit.*, no. 579.

<sup>222</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>223</sup> It should be examined whether this priest meets the regulations of Canons 462-470 and Canon 1344.

<sup>224</sup> See Canon 1368.

<sup>225</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

<sup>226</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>227</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 115n;

of a vacant parish even before an oekonomus is appointed. Therefore, it would be either a local cooperator vicar, or a neighbouring pastor, in lack of such a vicar; and in religious order parishes – superior of the house. A substitute vicar is a priest who substitutes the pastor during his absence<sup>228</sup>.

Military chaplains also do not have the faculty to confirm, even when they perform total pastoral care for soldiers in the territory of barracks, fortresses, hospitals, or military camps. This was an answer of the Holy See to one of the field bishops on 2 January 1947<sup>229</sup>. Of course, this applies to solely personal chaplains who do not have any specified territory, even in a cumulative manner, although they have full rights of pastors.

After a taxative enumeration of priests entitled to the faculty to confirm, the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*” enumerates the necessary conditions of valid and licit administering of the sacrament of confirmation.

The faculty to confirm arising from the Decree is connected with the office held by a priest, and in accordance with Canon 210, it must not be delegated to others, unless it is expressly allowed by law or in an indult. The decree does not mention the possibility to delegate this faculty, so the ministers mentioned in the Decree must confirm in person (*per se ipsi, personaliter*)<sup>230</sup>.

Since the faculty to confirm granted by the Decree is strictly connected with the held office, the mentioned persons receive it at the moment of assumption of a benefice – in case of pastors<sup>231</sup>, or by current assumption of the office – in case of non-beneficial offices<sup>232</sup>. Since this faculty is connected with the held office, it can only be exercised during the hold of this office (*durante munere*). The power to confirm ceases when a priest, in any way, loses his office or benefice, either by lapse of the time for which he has assumed the given office or benefice<sup>233</sup>, as a result of a licit resignation from the office or benefice<sup>234</sup>, transfer<sup>235</sup>, privation of the office or benefice,<sup>236</sup> removal by administrative proceeding<sup>237</sup>, or as a result of his

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<sup>228</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 115 n.; T. Szwaagrzyk, *op. cit.*, p. 148; M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz..., op. cit.*, p. 146n.; R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>229</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>230</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 116; R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 182; M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz..., op. cit.*, p. 148.

<sup>231</sup> See Canon 461 and 1443-1445.

<sup>232</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

<sup>233</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>234</sup> See Canons 184-191.

<sup>235</sup> See Canon 193n.

<sup>236</sup> See Canons 192 and 2299.

<sup>237</sup> See Canons 2147-2161.

death<sup>238</sup>. This faculty also ceases when an authorized priest incurs certain penalties specified in the Code, such as an excommunication after a condemnatory or declaratory sentence<sup>239</sup>, a suspense regarding the faculty to confirm<sup>240</sup>, or an interdict<sup>241</sup>. Moreover, this faculty ceases completely when an excommunicate becomes *vitandus*<sup>242</sup>.

The faculty to confirm may only be validly exercised within the territory subject to the minister's jurisdiction. In his own territory, an authorized minister may confirm all the faithful who are currently present there, both permanent or temporary residents and travellers or transients, even if they have specially arrived to receive confirmation<sup>243</sup>.

An authorized priest may also validly and licitly confirm persons resident in places exempt from the parish jurisdiction, i.e. in places belonging to a congregation or order with a privilege of exemption, including seminaries, hospices, hospitals and all kinds of religious institutions<sup>244</sup>. Outside his own territory, a minister authorized by virtue of the Decree cannot confirm validly, even his own subjects<sup>245</sup>. "Not with regard to validity but only to licitness, the condition should be preserved that a pastor can confirm if a diocesan bishop or any bishop in communion with the Holy See is either absent in this area or legally impeded with regard to the administering of confirmation in a given case. This condition need not be preserved in case of a grave difficulty. A grave difficulty with regard to calling of a bishop may take place both in an Episcopal city and in suburban parishes, as well as in parishes remote from the Episcopal city, and both on the side of the bishop and on the side of the presbyter as an extraordinary minister, or on the side of a person who awaits confirmation, e.g. the state of his health"<sup>246</sup>.

The validity of the sacrament of confirmation requires conditions which must be met by a person receiving it, namely: grave illness, danger of death resulting from this illness, and probability of death.

The decree, limiting the danger of death to the cause of illness – an internal cause, thusly excludes a valid exercise of the faculty to confirm towards persons in danger of death

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<sup>238</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

<sup>239</sup> See Canon 2265.

<sup>240</sup> See Canon 2279.

<sup>241</sup> See Canon 2275.

<sup>242</sup> See Canon 2258 § 2; Canon 2266; R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

<sup>243</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

<sup>244</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 185.

<sup>245</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149n.; see J. Pistoni, *op. cit.*, p. 109; J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 122; T. Szwagrzyk, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

by an external cause. A priest can, in his own discretion, judge the state of infirm and immediately confer the sacrament of confirmation, if he deems it just<sup>247</sup>.

However, a detailed discussion of these conditions is a matter of another topic, namely of the subject of the sacrament of confirmation.

The provisions of the decree are subject to certain sanctions. An exceeding of limits of faculties granted to ministers results in invalidity of the administered sacrament, and the ministers, according to the provision of Canon 2365, are deprived of the faculty to confirm. The minister of confirmation incurs a penalty specified in Canon 2365 and the confirmation he administered is invalid, if he administers it outside his territory, confers it to a non-believer, catechumen, heretic, schismatic, apostate, a member of the faithful who is not in danger of death due to a grave illness or who is in danger of death, but resulting from external causes<sup>248</sup>, or if he confers it to a member of the faithful of non-Latin rite<sup>249</sup>. According to Canon 2365, the Decree states that a priest who administers the sacrament of confirmation without the faculty is subject to the penalty of suspension.

The decree also imposes an obligation on the ministers to instruct the faithful on the sacrament, so they could receive it fruitfully, and to endeavour that the infirm who are about to receive confirmation should obtain the necessary state of grace and appropriate spiritual disposition<sup>250</sup>.

After administering the sacrament of confirmation, the minister should record the names and surnames of those confirmed, the minister, parents of the confirmed and the witness, as well as the date and place of confirmation, in a confirmation register<sup>251</sup>. Apart from the data mentioned above, the record should contain the following notation: “The confirmation has been administered by virtue of an apostolic indult in urgent danger of death, caused by a grave illness”<sup>252</sup>.

If the confirmed person is not a minister’s subject, then the minister should mention his diocese and parish in the register, and notify his pastor as soon as possible on the fact of administering of the sacrament to him<sup>253</sup>. According of the Decree, the minister should

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<sup>247</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-189.

<sup>248</sup> See *ibid.*, s. 203.

<sup>249</sup> See J. Rybczyk, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

<sup>250</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 36 (1946) p. 353.

<sup>251</sup> See Canon 798.

<sup>252</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 36 (1946) p. 353.

<sup>253</sup> See *ibid.*

immediately notify the local ordinary on each case of administering of confirmation, stating the circumstances of the conferring of the sacrament<sup>254</sup>.

These detailed regulations and strict sanctions, foreseen by the Decree, witness the great veneration of the Church towards the holy sacraments. This is simultaneously an admonition for extraordinary ministers who have been granted by the legislator with faculties exceeding the range of their ordinary scope of possibilities, to use them in accordance to the provisions of the Decree, for the sake of the spiritual good of the faithful.

The issue of the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*” was a breakthrough in the approach to the extraordinary minister of the sacrament of confirmation. This decree has created a multitude of extraordinary ministers of confirmation in the form of priests occupied with pastoral care, who are more easily accessible to the faithful than ordinary ministers of this sacrament.

## **2. Extension of faculties in the later documents by the Holy See**

The decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*” bears witness to the great care of the Holy See for the spiritual good of the faithful and to the will to provide aid to those in danger of death, who want to be strengthened with the sacrament of confirmation.

In view of the urgent needs in this regard, caused, among others, by territorial development of the Church, and positively answering the requests by ordinaries, the Holy See issued further documents extending the faculties of presbyters as extraordinary ministers of the sacrament of confirmation.

In the Church, apart from countries with an established organization and territorial division into parishes, vicariates forane, dioceses and metropolises, there are also areas where such organizational structure is only being established and still developing – the mission countries. These territories are subject to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of Faith.

Although the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*” covered the mission territories, there were only quasi-pastors there of all categories of ministers taxatively enumerated in this decree<sup>255</sup>. The ordinaries from these territories requested the Holy See to give them wider faculties to confirm for priests occupied with pastoral duties, working in missions.

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<sup>254</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>255</sup> See A. Gutiérrez, *De confirmatione administrando in Missionibus iis, qui ex gravi morbo in periculo mortis sunt constituti*, “*Commentarium pro Religiosis et Missionariis*” 29 (1948) p. 238.

The Holy See reacted positively to the requests by ordinaries from mission territories, and Pope Pius XII, by a decree of the Congregation for the Propagation of Faith “Post latum” of 18 December 1947, authorized the local ordinaries, subject to this Congregation, to delegate the faculty to confirm to all presbyters occupied with pastoral care under their jurisdiction<sup>256</sup>. The decree does not directly grant the faculty to confirm to presbyters, but authorizes mission ordinaries to delegate this faculty to them. The term “ordinary” is understood here as: vicar and prefect apostolic, superior of the mission, their delegate vicars<sup>257</sup> and those who assume temporary governance of a vicariate or prefecture apostolic<sup>258</sup>. According to this Decree, the ordinaries can grant the faculty to confirm to any number of presbyters who should meet two conditions: be occupied with pastoral work and subject to their jurisdiction<sup>259</sup>. By virtue of pastoral work, the following priests can be included here: quasi-pastors, all parochial vicars<sup>260</sup>, priests delegated to pastoral work at a mission station, college, hospice, orphanage etc., even if they perform pastoral care only once – *per modum actus*. The decree does not restrict the faculty to confirm of those presbyters exclusively to a territory of a quasi-parish or a mission station, but allows them to exercise it within the entire prefecture, vicariate or mission.

A priest who has been granted the faculty to confirm by his ordinary by virtue of the decree “Post latum” may only validly confirm the faithful of Latin rite<sup>261</sup> in danger of death, both children and adults. The danger of death may originate from both internal causes, as illness or old age, and from external ones: waiting for a difficult operation, difficult birth, bombardment by enemy aircraft at war, execution<sup>262</sup>.

The decree “Post latum”, speaking about the administration of confirmation by a priest at a bishop’s place of residence, does not use the clause “*dummodo*”, which means that the presence of the bishop does not deprive the priest of the faculty to confirm validly<sup>263</sup>. Absence of a bishop or his legal impediment are only required for the licitness of the confirmation administered by the priest. M. Pastuszko even suggests that since the decree “Post latum”

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<sup>256</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 40 (1948) p. 41.

<sup>257</sup> According to the CCL, vicars and prefects apostolic and mission superiors do not have the faculty to appoint a vicar general. Therefore, in 1919, Benedict XV granted them with the faculty to appoint a delegate vicar, who is practically equivalent to a vicar general – see “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 12 (1920) p. 120; R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

<sup>258</sup> See Canons 309 and 310 § 2.

<sup>259</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

<sup>260</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

<sup>261</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

<sup>262</sup> See A. Gutiérrez, *op. cit.*, p. 247; R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

<sup>263</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 40 (1948) p. 41.

does not contain a provision that mission pastors must confirm in person, then even a priest substituting the missionary would confirm validly<sup>264</sup>.

The Holy See issued the decree “Post latum” on the basis of observation of changes occurring in mission territories, taking into consideration the spiritual good of the local faithful. Changes also occurred in other territories, where the Church had already had a well-developed organizational structure. Especially the two world wars resulted in many migrations. The previously issued regulations by the Holy See proved insufficient – they did not cover all faithful. This applies mainly to the faithful of Eastern rites, who, in the wake of wars, were displaced into territories occupied by Catholics of Latin rite. Dispersion in which the Eastern-rite Catholics had lived there, as well as their reception of religious ministry from Latin priests, caused that often these Catholics, especially young people and children, did not know what rite they belonged to or were convinced that they belonged to the Latin rite<sup>265</sup>. According to the Canon 782 § 4, a priest of Latin rite, authorized by apostolic indult to confirm the faithful of his rite, could not validly confirm the faithful of Eastern rite, unless it had been expressly stated in the indult. Such legal situation, as well as the factual state, caused that a Latin priest administering confirmation to the faithful of Eastern rite by virtue of apostolic indult, although having no special faculty with regard to the faithful of this rite, could expose the sacrament of confirmation to invalidity. Because, in view of publication of the decrees “Spiritus Sancti munera” and “Post latum”, the number of confirmation-administering priests increased, and consequently, the risk of growth of the number of invalid confirmations was increased as well.

A solution to this situation was the publication by the Sacred Congregation of Eastern Churches in agreement with the Sacred Congregation of Sacraments, on 1 May 1948, of the decree “On the administration of the sacrament of confirmation to the faithful of Eastern rite by priests of Latin rite who have the faculty to confirm their faithful”<sup>266</sup>. This decree is strictly connected with the decree “Spiritus Sancti munera”, which it also expressly references. According to the Decree by the Sacred Congregation of Eastern Churches, if a priest of Latin rite has the faculty to confirm the faithful of his own rite, either by virtue of apostolic indult<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>265</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 40 (1948) p. 422.

<sup>266</sup> “Decretum de Sacramento Confirmationis administrando etiam fidelibus orientalium rituum a presbyteris latini ritus, qui hoc indulto gaudeant pro fidelibus sui ritus”, see “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 40 (1948) p. 422n.

<sup>267</sup> This applies to all priests, regardless if they administer confirmation by particular indult, directly granted by the Holy See, or by virtue of delegation by an ordinary, as is the case in mission territories, where the faculty to confirm is granted to priest indirectly. See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 40 (1948) p. 41.

or of the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*”<sup>268</sup>, he can administer the sacrament of confirmation to the faithful of the Eastern Rite, provided that these faithful have not received this sacrament immediately after baptism and the minister performs spiritual care for them<sup>269</sup> in accordance with the norms of the Apostolic Constitution “*Orientalium dignitas*” by Pope Leo XIII of 30 November 1894<sup>270</sup>. Fulfillment of these conditions is required for the validity of the sacrament.

A priest who is to administer confirmation to a member of the faithful of Eastern rite, should previously ensure if the member of the faithful has not been confirmed immediately after baptism, in accordance with the custom of the Eastern Church. In some Eastern Churches, such as Maronite, Coptic (if baptism is conferred in private)<sup>271</sup>, Greek Cypriot and Italo-Greek<sup>272</sup>, the confirmation is not administered immediately after baptism.

Afterwards, the minister should examine if the member of the faithful of Eastern rite is, with regard to jurisdiction, under spiritual care of the Latin Church, since the fact itself of his residence among the faithful of Latin rite does not mean that he is subject to spiritual care of Latin priests<sup>273</sup>, since there are countries with large concentrations of the faithful of Eastern rites, and the Holy See has established ordinariates<sup>274</sup> and exarchates<sup>275</sup> there. Consequently, Latin priests in these countries cannot exercise the faculties granted by the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Eastern Churches, since the faithful of Eastern rite are already subject to their own ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Both of these documents, the decree of the Congregation for the Propagation of Faith “*Post latum*” and the decree by the Congregation of Eastern Churches, witness how much the Holy See cares for the spiritual good of the faithful, how carefully it watches the changes occurring in the world, and wants to continuously satisfy all arising spiritual needs.

After the issue of the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*”, it seemed that the care of priests occupied with pastoral care, due to the faculties they had been granted, would cover all the faithful in need, regardless of the situation of these faithful. However, in view of the fact that ministers of confirmation had been taxatively enumerated in the Decree mentioned above,

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<sup>268</sup> See “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 40 (1948) p. 423.

<sup>269</sup> See “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 40 (1948) p. 422.

<sup>270</sup> See “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 27 (1895) pp. 257-264. This constitution states that if the faithful of Eastern rite live outside the territory of a patriarchate, they are under administration of the Latin clergy.

<sup>271</sup> See F. Cappello, *Adnotationes in Decretum de confirmatione administranda in mortis periculo*, “*Periodica de re morali, canonica, liturgica*” 35 (1946) p. 380, no. 784.

<sup>272</sup> See J.S. Quinn, *The Extraordinary Minister of Confirmation according to the most recent Decrees of the Sacred Congregation*, Romae 1951, p. 119n.

<sup>273</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

<sup>274</sup> See “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 21 (1929) p. 152; “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 44 (1952) p. 382.

<sup>275</sup> See “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 40 (1948) pp. 287-290.

difficulties arose with its exercise with regard, among others, to chaplains at children's hospitals, obstetrician establishments, various care establishments, among emigrants, as well as to chaplains of sea apostolate<sup>276</sup> and military chaplains<sup>277</sup>.

Shortly after the publication of the decree "Spiritus Sancti munera", the archbishops and bishops of the United States of America requested the Holy See in 1948 to grant the authority to confirm to chaplains of gynaecological hospitals, orphanages<sup>278</sup>, hospices for pregnant women and children's hospitals<sup>279</sup>.

The Sacred Congregation of Sacraments, having previously communicated with Pope Pius XII, answered these requests positively on 18 November 1948<sup>280</sup>, issuing a rescript which determined the conditions on which the chaplains mentioned in the request can administer the sacrament of confirmation to children in danger of death. Granting them with the faculty to confirm, the legislator had simultaneously specified the conditions which they had to meet to exercise the granted faculty.

According to this regulation, such chaplain must be permanently assigned to a given institution, and if there are several permanent chaplains in a single institution, this faculty is granted to the first of them, excluding the others<sup>281</sup>. Such chaplain can only exercise the granted faculty in person. If an authorized chaplain is absent or cannot confer confirmation in person, no one can validly substitute him, apart from the local pastor or any bishop in communion with the Holy See<sup>282</sup>. According to this regulation, a minister chaplain administers confirmation licitly, if the local bishop cannot be called or is legally impeded, and if any bishop in communion with Rome cannot be called, as well as if the local pastor is absent or legally impeded<sup>283</sup>. Authorized priests can only confer confirmation to children in danger of death. This permission was granted for a year<sup>284</sup>. In the jubilee year of 1950, it was prolonged for the next year, and in 1951 – for another three years, with a simultaneous provision that ordinaries should request prolongation of the indult in appropriate time.

Similar faculties were granted on 12 January 1948 to chaplains of obstetrician establishments and clinics as well as hospitals in the French diocese of Nantes<sup>285</sup>. On 10 January 1950, this

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<sup>276</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

<sup>277</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

<sup>278</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 151n.

<sup>279</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

<sup>280</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 221.

<sup>281</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

<sup>282</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>283</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 222; M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

<sup>284</sup> See R. Dworecki, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

<sup>285</sup> See A. Delchard, *De confirmatione iis qui ex gravi morbo in periculo mortis sunt constituti*, "Nouvelle Revue Theologique" 70 (1948) pp. 531-533.

faculty was also granted to chaplains of all hospitals with child patients in all German dioceses<sup>286</sup>.

After the indulgences were obtained for hospital chaplains by bishops of the USA, Germany and the diocese of Nantes in France, a Spanish military ordinary also requested the Holy See to grant an indulgence authorizing military chaplains to administer confirmation. He substantiated his request with the fact that not all places occupied by the military are accessible to a local bishop or pastor.

The Holy See deemed this substantiation sufficient and on 23 June 1952 it authorized the military chaplains to administer confirmation to soldiers subject to their pastoral care and to other persons during their hold of the office of chaplain<sup>287</sup> and without prejudice to provisions of the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*”.

A similar indulgence was granted on 31 August 1953 to chaplains and directors of the Apostleship of the Sea (*Opus Apostolatus Maris*), who, observing the conditions specified in the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*”, could confer confirmation in a port territory, at a Stella Maris house, at a hospital and at a maritime academy – to those in danger of death, and during a sea travel – to everyone present aboard a vessel<sup>288</sup>.

On 7 October 1953, the Consistorial Congregation granted the faculty to confirm to missionaries of emigrants, appointed in accordance with the Apostolic Constitution “*Exsul familia*” of 1952<sup>289</sup>. These missionaries perform pastoral care for emigrants, expatriates and refugees who were forced to leave their home country due to persecution or poor economic situation. That document authorized missionary chaplains to administer the sacrament of confirmation to the faithful under their jurisdiction, in accordance with the norms included in the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*”.

Despite such a large number of documents by the Holy See, extending the array of extraordinary ministers of the sacrament of confirmation, it was not a complex solution of pastoral needs connected with administration of this sacrament. Pastoral postulates in this regard were still being submitted. Granting of indulgences authorizing to confirm does not solve this problem on a general scale, because the faculties included in these indulgences may only be exercised by those who have received them. They were only granted on request, and not all who needed these faculties requested them. Another inconvenience was the fact that the indulgences were granted for a definite time, and after its lapse, an appropriate request had to be

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<sup>286</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

<sup>287</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>288</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 153n.

<sup>289</sup> See “*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*” 45 (1953) p. 758.

submitted to the Holy See again. Indults were usually granted for a short period. It was inconvenient both for local ordinaries and the legislator.

In view of these problems, it was decided to bring the issue of the sacrament of confirmation to the debates of the Second Vatican Council<sup>290</sup>. The Preparatory Commission for the Discipline of Sacraments, having analyzed the pre-Council postulates, prepared a project of the decree on the sacrament of confirmation (*Schema Decreti de Sacramento Confirmationis*), finally adopted at a general session of this Commission, which took place between 24 February and 4 March 1961<sup>291</sup>. However, the Commission for Coordination of Works of the Council (*Commissio de Coordinandis Concilii Laboribus*), established by John XXIII, eliminated this scheme, and the standardization of matters connected with this sacrament was only recommended in the new Code of Canon Law<sup>292</sup>.

Nevertheless, Pope Paul VI, seeking to remedy the difficulties connected with administering of the sacrament of confirmation, issued the *motu proprio* “Pastorale munus” of 30 November 1963<sup>293</sup>. In this document, the Pope authorized residential bishops, vicars and prefects apostolic, permanently established apostolic administrators, as well as territorial abbots and prelates<sup>294</sup>, to delegate chaplains of all medical establishments, nurseries<sup>295</sup>, orphanages and prisons<sup>296</sup>, so they could confirm the faithful in danger of death, without prejudice to the provisions of the decree “Spiritus Sancti munera”. The enumeration of institutions in which chaplains may receive the faculty to confirm is taxative.

Therefore, the “Pastorale munus” *motu proprio* does not grant the faculties directly to presbyters but to residential bishops and other local ordinaries, who can in turn grant the faculty to confirm to chaplains of specific institutions. The *motu proprio* does not state that in case of several chaplains in one institution, the faculty to confirm should not be granted to more than one of them; however, taking into account the decree “Spiritus Sancti munera” and the documents issued later, it should be assumed that also by virtue of this papal regulation, only one chaplain can be delegated to confirm at a single establishment<sup>297</sup>.

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<sup>290</sup> See T. Pawluk, *Bierzmowanie w świetle postanowień Soboru Watykańskiego II i posoborowego prawa kanonicznego*, “Prawo Kanoniczne” 20 (1977) no. 1-2, p. 180.

<sup>291</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>292</sup> See J. Kowalczyk, *De extraordinario confirmationis ministro. Comparatio inter disciplinam Ecclesiae Latinae et Ecclesiarum Orientalium*, Romae 1969, pp. 57-60.

<sup>293</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 56 (1964) pp. 5-12.

<sup>294</sup> See “Acta Apostolicae Sedis” 58 (1964) p. 6. The subject of the faculties of the *motu proprio* “Pastorale munus” had been expanded in a document by the Secretariat of State of 24 November 1964, which limits its binding force exclusively to the Congregation for Propagation of Faith and its subject ordinaries.

<sup>295</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

<sup>296</sup> See T. Pawluk, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>297</sup> See M. Pastuszko, *Prezbiter jako szafarz...*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

A chaplain with the faculty to confirm administers it illicitly, if:

- 1) the pastor is present;
- 2) the pastor is absent but easy to notify, and he wants to administer confirmation;
- 3) the pastor is absent but it is easy to notify the bishop who wants to administer confirmation<sup>298</sup>.

Moreover, when administering confirmation, a chaplain should preserve the final provisions of the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*”, i.e. consider the provisions of the Code of Canon Law, confirm in accordance with the prescribed rite and gratuitously, and after the confirmation, he should seek to prepare the appropriate notations and to notify the local ordinary<sup>299</sup>.

Due to the *motu proprio* “*Pastorale munus*”, the matter of the extraordinary minister of the sacrament of confirmation was slightly advanced, because:

- 1) residential bishops and other local ordinaries were permanently granted with a faculty to delegate chaplains to confirm;
- 2) since that moment, not only chaplains with territorial powers of a pastor, but also chaplains of hospitals and other institutions mentioned in the *motu proprio*, could confirm the faithful in danger of death;
- 3) the cause of the danger of death was not specified; therefore, the mentioned chaplains could confirm in any case when a possibility of death could be judged prudently, whereas the decree “*Spiritus Sancti munera*” authorized priests with territorial authority of pastors to confirm the faithful who were in danger of death due to a grave illness.

Nevertheless, many matters connected with administering of confirmation by a presbyter remained unsolved; for example, it had not been previously taken into consideration that the holy sacraments were usually conferred to infirm in danger of death by cooperator vicars rather than by pastors.

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<sup>298</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 160.

<sup>299</sup> See *ibid.*

### **Pastoral contribution of small communities**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century we can observe that on one the hand there is a growing awareness of one's dignity as a human being and on the other hand there is a decreasing awareness of mutual interdependence between the individual and the society. There is an increase of a certain excessive form of individualism which transforms itself into self-reclusiveness, a kind of egoism. Thus we can characterize the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the one of desocialisation. Matthew Fforde doesn't analyse the problem of post-modernity in a worldwide criterion. Despite his attempt to concentrate especially on Great Britain, there's a strong influence of North-American and European continental culture. To put it simply, none of the cultures is a secluded island but more frequently it is exposed to influences of neighbouring as well as distant cultures. The time, we live in, is the time of great mobility of people, intensive global exchange of information, the time of creating one universal market, global village with many common problems as well as hopes. There's a number of manifesting trends that are ensnaring the Western civilisation into the materialistic matrix, which denies the existence of the spirit, soul and God. We can notice the external characteristics of cultural crisis that weaken the relationships between people. These manifest in growth of vulgarism in politics, the enormous increase in the number of people living alone, low electoral turnouts, boom of small political parties and high levels of crime and violence. Crisis also has some hidden aspects that characterise the expanding lifestyle of selfish individualism. Life's becoming more a quest for personal benefit in various forms and there's a great emphasis put on material wealth, social prestige, attaining of power and deriving of pleasures. Relationships between people are more often motivated by egoism and people observe their egoistic interests when relating to others. The Catholic Church teaching is based on the commandment of love towards God and love towards neighbour, i.e. the relationship with God and neighbours which is the very opposite of egoism. These two characteristics imply that every human being is from its very nature called to life in community. In fact, it is the direct tie between spiritual, supernatural and natural human dimension. From this view Fforde

had introduced the characteristics of materialistic matrix which is the key to understanding the present crisis of desocialisation, on which the Christianity is called to respond.<sup>300</sup>

This change of cultural mentality affects the Catholics and at the same time it is for them a challenge. Church from the very beginning builds on faith, which is not only the personal relationship with God but it draws the faithful into the life of Church. The relationship of man with God leads to creating the communion of people. Saint Paul the Apostle expressed this relation in his theology of The Mysterious Body of Christ. This theology was fruitful in the times of persecution of the Church in Slovakia and it shows the potential of fruitfulness for the future. We can find its application in the spirit of the work of Joseph Cardijn - YCW (Young Christian Workers; *JOC – Jeunesse Ouvriere Chretienne* – in French), the small communities of young people who meet once a week to deepen their faith and live according to it. Thus they've put together the understanding of faith with the evaluation of situation in which they find themselves with the activity, apostolate, which is oriented towards its evangelisation. Such model got to Slovakia thanks to Croatian Jesuit Tomislav Kolakovič-Poglajen and samizdat translation of the work of Belgian Jesuit Émile Mersch: *Le corps mystique du Christ I.-II.*, Louvain 1933, which was translated by Fr. Ján Dieška SJ, who enriched it with long introduction and consequently it has been published under the title *Teológia tajomného tela Kristovho* (Theology of Christ's Mystical Body).

## 1. The Theology of Community

Mersch in his theology of the Christ's Mysterious Body results from the texts of St. Paul the Apostle develops his theology of the Christ's Mysterious Body especially in the First Letter to the Corinthians. "Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ" (1 Cor 12,12) or "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it" (1 Cor 12,27). He also systematically presents it in the Letter to the Romans. "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving,

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<sup>300</sup> Cf. Matthew FFORDE: *Desocializácia. Kríza postmodernity*. Bratislava: Lúč, 2010. p. 81-86.

then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully“ (Rom 12, 4-8). Afterward we can see how he understands the vision of Christ’s mystical body in the completion of the Church in the eternity. In the Letter to the Ephesians he implies the whole dynamism of God’s choice, which leads towards the fullness of life in Christ and in which “he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ“ (Eph 1, 9-10).

To this theological concept responds Teilhard de Chardin who doesn’t understand the world only as the one of human beings but he sees it in its entirety. “According to Teilhard de Chardin is the presence of salvation in the world definitely and dynamically based on the unity of God and the world in the Eucharistic Body of Christ. In the Eucharist is revealed the dynamism of the Incarnate Word in the world.”<sup>301</sup> Here Polish theologian Józef Kulisz implies the key position of *communio* in the Ecclesiology. Eucharist creates the community of Church in Christ. Though the Eucharist is an essential principle in unifying the faithful, there are also emerging some tensions and disputes for the sake of human element amongst the faithful. “To the most beautiful parts of the Gospel belong those from the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gospel of John. They mediate Jesus’ prayer of a high-priest where he asks his Father for the unity of those, who will believe in him, as well as of those, who will be his disciples in the future: »My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.« (Jn 17, 20-22) In Jesus’ words we can see his great care for the work that had begun, i.e. the gathering of people into one family of God’s children of which God alone is the Father: »I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.« (Jn 17, 23) Jesus very realistically, simply and even physically understands this gathering into one community. He speaks about it in the parable of the Vine and the Branches wherein he compares himself to a vine and us to the branches, which are grafted in him (Jn 15, 1-4). Life of God becomes more attainable

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<sup>301</sup> Józef KULISZ: *Eucharystia sakramentem jedności w rozumieniu Teilharda de Chardin*. Studia Theologica Varsaviensia UKSW, roč. 38, 2000, vol 2, p. 137. ISSN-058-5470

thanks to the vine – the humankind of Jesus Christ – which had begun the act of unification of the humanity.<sup>302</sup>

*In this spirit is the theology of St. Paul developed by the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church - Lumen Gentium. „By breaking of Eucharistic Bread and real participation at the body of our Lord, we are uplifting ourselves to the communion with Him and within us as well. »Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.« (1 Cor 12,27). So in Christ we become parts of His body (cf. 1 Cor 12,27) »and each member belongs to all the others« (cf. Rom 12,5). Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with the faithful in Christ (cf. 1 Cor 12,12). When thinking of body of Christ, there is a variety of parts of the body and of their functions. There is only one Spirit who distributes different kinds of gifts for the goodness of the Church according to his generosity and the needs (cf. 1 Cor 12, 1-11). Of these gifts stands out the grace of the apostles, to whose authority Spirit Himself subjects the charismatics (cf. 1 Cor 14). The same Spirit by His presence, activity as well as the coherence of the parts of body unites the body itself and thus He awakens and kindles love amongst the faithful. Therefore, if one part of the body suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it (cf. 1 Cor 12,26).<sup>303</sup>*

Grace is what relates a man to God and at the same time it organizes and creates one living mysterious organism which is oriented towards God's humankind and where God becomes attainable for us. As every life thus the life of grace is full of dynamism. It wants more deeply touch the life of all people and unite them within themselves and through them the whole world.<sup>304</sup> Kulisz reminds us the statements of fathers of the Church about the community of the Church, about communion (koinonia). According to John of Damascus the unity of Christians is shown in the sacrifice of our Lord when he calls his body the Bread, which had been made of many grains, and his blood the Wine, which had been made from many berries. This means that Christian community was created from many human beings and they unite themselves with the body and blood of Christ and thus they form His

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<sup>302</sup> Józef KULISZ: *Eucharystia sakramentem jedności w rozumieniu Teilharda de Chardin*. Studia Theologica Varsaviensia UKSW, roč. 38, 2000, vol. 2, p. 137-138.

<sup>303</sup> *Vieroučná konštitúcia »Lumen gentium« o Cirkvi*. In: Dokumenty Druhého vatikánskeho koncilu. Rím, Slovenský ústav sv. Cyrila a Metoda, 1968, p. 68.

<sup>304</sup> Cf. Józef KULISZ: *Eucharystia sakramentem jedności w rozumieniu Teilharda de Chardin*. Studia Theologica Varsaviensia UKSW, roč. 38, 2000, vol. 2, p. 139.

mysterious body. He implies the thought of St. Cyprian which expresses Christian unity based in the Eucharist.<sup>305</sup>

He supports his argumentation from the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, which concerns with Holy Liturgy and follows in the spirit of *Lumen Gentium*. “At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us“ (SC 47). The present victim of the cross is not only a passive event but it makes present our Saviour Jesus Christ himself, who wants to draw all people into ever more perfection union with the Father (cf. SC 48).<sup>306</sup>

“The mystery of Eucharist creates and broadens out the godlike world – Church, the mysterious Body of Christ. It is the spring of the Church – sign and power, which unites people with God and within themselves.”<sup>307</sup> According to Joseph Ratzinger “faith represents the network of mutual dependence which is also the network of solidarity towards others, where everyone supports the others as well as they support him. This fundamental anthropological structure also appears in our relationship with God and it finds here its initial form, as its integrative midpoint.”<sup>308</sup> Community is not only something that additionally joins the Church but it is its midpoint and constitution. In this thinking continues Jozef Kyselica who deals with development of the Theology of the Mysterious Body into its dynamism, where the life power of Church communion is shown. “Community is mother’s womb, where a new human being is born through the living and enduring word of God (1 Pt 1,23); it is the pool of Siloam, where a man blind from birth is being healed; it is the new family of disciples; a place, where the Gospel news is received; it is the optimal centre from where once received

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<sup>305</sup> Cf. Józef KULISZ: *Eucharystia sakramentem jedności w rozumieniu Teilharda de Chardin*. Studia Theologica Varsaviensia UKSW, roč. 38, 2000, vol. 2, p. 141.

<sup>306</sup> Cf. Józef KULISZ: *Eucharystia sakramentem jedności w rozumieniu Teilharda de Chardin*. Studia Theologica Varsaviensia UKSW, roč. 38, 2000, vol. 2, p. 143.

<sup>307</sup> Cf. Józef KULISZ: *Eucharystia sakramentem jedności w rozumieniu Teilharda de Chardin*. Studia Theologica Varsaviensia UKSW, roč. 38, 2000, vol. 2, p. 145.

<sup>308</sup> Jozef RATZINGER: *Benediktova Európa v kríze kultúr*. Trnava : Spolok svätého Vojtecha – Vojtech, 2008, p. 75-76.

Gospel is spread out. In The Acts of the Apostles we see that the one, who turns to Christ, integrates himself simultaneously into the community.”<sup>309</sup>

The fact, that the parish community is not always what it should be, leads J. Kyselica to challenge the people to put together the sacramental and liturgical living of faith with the everyday life. “It’s about Church’s leaning on a thick fibrosis of relationships, real communities, where the life of faith is lived out in common thinking and where the practice is truly the expression of faith and freedom as well.”<sup>310</sup>

In his conception of community he puts together a profound theological fundament with a concrete living of relationships and he emphasises: “The community, we are interested in, has to stand on one foundation which is Christ alone. In order such community can spring up, each of its members has to receive Jesus Christ into their life. Thus Jesus will unite members of community and he will become the true reason why it will be necessary to meet up.”<sup>311</sup>

## 2. Pastoral contribution of small communities

Conception of the theology of the Christ’s Mysterious Body became fruitful since the start of The Prague Spring in 1968. On one hand it brought the amnesty for imprisoned activists of academic pastoration and on the other hand it brought the hunger of young people for God. In a very short period of time the Catholic laics renewed their activity under the guidance of amnestied Bishop Jan Ch. Korec. They realised the key importance of academic youth for the future of Church in Slovakia. Great interest of young people for the authentic living of the faith was one of the consequences of forced atheisation. Bratislava became the first place where students started gathering at individual faculties of the university. Another pressure on Catholic Church came after the repression of reformatory process in Czechoslovakia by the army of Warsaw Pact. Despite that, the pastoration of academic youth continues under the guidance of Bishop Korec, though in secret this time. Active laics as well as priests, who could not work in public pastoration, participate in secret pastoration. Thus had been gradually created the network of small communities, consisting of university youth,

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<sup>309</sup> Jozef KYSELICA : *Odovzdávať vieru v súčasnej spoločnosti*. Trnava : Dobrá kniha, 2006, p. 91.

<sup>310</sup> Jozef KYSELICA : *Odovzdávať vieru v súčasnej spoločnosti*. Trnava : Dobrá kniha, 2006, p. 90.

<sup>311</sup> Peter MURDZA: Kresťan a malé spoločenstvo. In: *Nová evanjelizácia*. Bratislava: Lúč. 1992, ISBN 80-7114-072-4, p. 171.

almost in each of the high schools in Bratislava. Small community is again the key theological fundament of whole academic pastoration. Each community consisted of 7-12 students and was led by an animator. There was formed the formation plan for all communities. This plan was aimed for five-year study and it was divided into three cycles: biblical, doctrinal and apostolic. Holy Scripture had become the fundament of personal and social prayer. It was the source for deepening of faith in doctrinal cycle, where students learned doctrine and moral philosophy with paying attention to actual issues. The apostolic cycle was aimed especially at the contact with the life of local as well as general Church and with the engagement in parishes or children communities, etc. Their structure copied the structure of individual high schools according to years and faculties. In some cases there were running several communities in the same year. Thus was pastoration coordinated on the faculty level as well as on the university level by regular meetings of animators and representatives of individual faculties. This structure provided the spiritual care for animators and students. Each faculty had its own secret priest who visited it on regular basis and provided animators with spiritual guidance, led retreats and spiritual exercises. Animators weekly attended courses for laic apostolate, where they were trained for their tasks. This network gradually expanded into other academic centres in Slovakia. The samizdat publishing of aperiodic as well as periodic press gradually developed. E.g. periodicals as Religion and present times or Family community reached the printing of 1,000 copies. They were distributed by well organized structures of animators. New contacts in abroad were made, especially with catholic activists in Czech Republic, Poland, German Democratic Republic and Italy. Activity of academic youth led to the establishment of a secret movement of Christian families, family communities and Christian children communities that work openly nowadays. Situation in other university towns in Slovakia was not as pleasant as it had been in Bratislava. Bratislava was by all means the biggest university city. The communities of students in Zilina and Kosice started systematically organising themselves in the 80's. There sporadically existed some groups in other towns. However, they had never reached such success as those in Bratislava.<sup>312</sup> The whole period of time proves the capacity and fruitfulness of fundamental conception of theology of the Christ's Mysterious Body which was applied in the formation of various types of communities on the principle of unity in Jesus Christ.

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<sup>312</sup> Cf. Silvester KRČMÉRY : Naše 40-ročné skúsenosti z apoštolátu laikov na Slovensku. In: *Nová evanjelizácia*. Bratislava: Lúč, 1992, ISBN 80-7114-072-4, p. 149-150.

In the past as well as nowadays we can see the contribution of the theology of community in the activity of many religious movements. We'll mention the Neocatechumenate way, thanks to which the almost dead parishes came to life again. A great hope for the renewal of each parish is particularly a renewal of catechumenate. It is shown in the activity of Neocatechumenate way about which Ján Ďurica writes: "The way, brothers start growing in faith and witnessing through signs, that Jesus Christ talks about: Love each other as I have loved you... Be one as I am and my Father are one. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples. When these two signs – love in a dimension of cross and unity – are present in the parish, they are becoming a question for your neighbourhood: at work, at school, in family, etc. In this way the far removed people are drawn to faith and they want to set off on the way. (Neocatechumenate; note of the author). Thus there are formed more and more communities and suddenly we find a brand new reality of small communities, all on the way to conversion. This is a way when the pastoration of the far removed ones is opened in parish. Such pastoration without spoiling or insisting on something can present the fruit of the Church, which is renewed, and it tells its fathers they have been fruitful because they were born of it. It is already a fact in parishes, where the Way has already existed for several years. After more than 30 years of the Way, one of its delightful fruits is to see renewed families that are open for life. They are becoming the true "local Church", where the fundamental task of a family – passing the faith on children – comes into being. This happens especially through the local Liturgy on Sunday morning. During this Liturgy parents are reading the Scripture to their children asking: What meaning has this Word in your life? It's quite amazing to see how children can apply the Word of God on their own concrete history. Then father and mother express their commentary based on their own experience and invite all to pray for Pope, Church, etc. and finish with Our Father and the sign of peace. Then parents bless each child. Nowadays it is very important to find time for dialogue between two generations. These families, formed by the way of faith, know how to pass the faith onto their children. The result is that almost 100% of these children remain faithful to Church. Thousands of vocations for seminaries or monastic life arise from such families with more children."<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> Ján ĎURICA: *Neokatechumenátna cesta a pastoračia farností*. In : *Communio – missio*. Internetový časopis pre novú evanjelizáciu ČLÁNKY – ČLÁNOK Č.44 Vydanie 03 Téma čísla: Farnosť <http://www.communio.sk/citaj.php?id=44&issue=3> (8.05.2012)

Important moment in the post-conciliar era is a broader introduction of new understanding of parish as a communion of communities. The Neocatechumenate way intensively contributes to such renewal or parish reconstruction. Jozef Kyselica introduces an example of parish of St. Frances Cabrini in Rome. The Neocatechumenate way was introduced to parish in the first catechesis in the beginning of year 1969. Thanks to the first communities, that preached the catechesis, there arose 25 new communities with over than 1,000 adult members. We can see the revival of life in the parish not only on the attendance at Sunday Masses and receiving of Sacraments but also on the increase of vocations to the priesthood and religious life. From parishes there have already been ordained 5 priests, 23 young men are in a priest seminaries, 4 are in Marist Order and 19 in a seminary Redemptoris Mater in Rome. One is the religious sister at cloistered Poor Clares. 25% of members of all communities form those who were completely far removed from Church. Thanks to the community witnessing, they've become part of them. Summing it, we can say that the renewal of parish life made a great progress.<sup>314</sup>

We find similar example of the renewal of parish into communion of communities in Vrutky (northern part of Slovakia). It has 7,300 inhabitants who are mostly from the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession. Father Ján Ďurica SJ permitted the catechesis of Neocatechumenate way in the parish already in times of communistic totalitarianism. Thus the parish was renewed and became one of the centres of Neocatechumenate in Slovakia.<sup>315</sup> Nowadays there are at work many communities, e.g. Spolok Katolícky kultúrny dom, Centrum voľného času, Neokatechumenátne spoločenstvo, Ružencové spoločenstvo, spoločenstvo detí eRko, Redakčná rada Svetla pravdy, Farský spevokol, Mládežnícky spevokol, Pohrebný spevokol, Miništrantský zbor, Komunita Jána Krstiteľa, Ochotnícke divadlo, Katechéti, Lektori, Akolyti, Spoločenstvo mládeže, Farská charita, Rodinný skauting a spoločenstvo Rozprávkový domček.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Cf. Jozef KYSELICA: *Obnova farnosti cez neokatechumenát*. Trnava : Dobrá kniha, 1998, p. 132-139.

<sup>315</sup> Cf. Jozef KYSELICA: *Obnova farnosti cez neokatechumenát*. Trnava : Dobrá kniha, 1998, p. 70-71.

<sup>316</sup> Cf. *Oznamy na dvanástu nedeľu obdobia cez rok 2009 Menovanie novej farskej rady* In : <http://www/fara.sk/vrutky/index.php> (05.05.2012)

### 3. Small community as an answer to desocialisation

Many problems of present Euro-Atlantic civilisation lie right in the expansion of desocialisation. Together with it comes a radical individualism, which deprives people of relationships, that could help them in difficult situations. These are the problems that accompany people in particular stages of their lives – childhood, adolescence, youth, mature age or adulthood, senior age. Certain attempt to answer this is the internet social network, for instance facebook. However, these networks do not have any serious obligation. Practically they're only virtual networks that you can sign in or out at anytime. Technically they are not obligatory but mostly only virtually. Real social network which is made of sacramental marriage, Christian family, structured parish community and communion of communities is obligatory. You can't enter and leave anytime you like. Baptism, by which we enter into Church and its concrete form in local parish community, integrates us forever into the communion in Church and makes each of us a part of mysterious Body of Christ. Similar to this bond is the bond of sacramental marriage, in which loved ones enter into the sacramental communion for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, from this day forward until death do us part. Here is expressed the power of community, social relation which is prepared to back up a human being in joyful as well as difficult situations.

Not only in the past but today as well, the formation of Church communities lacks the formation of acceptance and reliable holding of function. Christians were entrusted with this function in order they became the socio-pastoral leaven in the life of the faithful people. The parish community was formed to evangelize and support the integral development of a human being to such extend that it becomes a "social subject" in its area. As Kyselica says, it is because the true pastoration is not and can't be separated from social activity, to which it is co-essentially linked. Social pastoration is not only one realm of pastoration of catholic community, but it is the live and concrete image of community, that is fully involved in situation, problems, culture, poverty and awaiting of a certain space and history. The whole complexity of social pastoration emphasizes the importance of a community which notices the need of its neighbourhood and adequately reacts on them. The interest of parishioners is not

reduced down only to participation in liturgical and sacramental life, but it affects all their needs.<sup>317</sup>

In this context it is good to remember the duties of a priest as it submits the new Code of Canon Law: „So that he may fulfil his office of pastor diligently, the parish priest is to strive to know the faithful entrusted to his care. He is therefore to visit their families, sharing in their cares and anxieties and, in a special way, their sorrows, comforting them in the Lord. If in certain matters they are found wanting, he is prudently to correct them. He is to help the sick and especially the dying in great charity, solicitously restoring them with the sacraments and commending their souls to God. He is to be especially diligent in seeking out the poor, the suffering, the lonely, those who are exiled from their homeland, and those burdened with special difficulties. He is to strive also to ensure that spouses and parents are sustained in the fulfilment of their proper duties, and to foster the growth of Christian life in the family. The parish priest is to recognise and promote the specific role which the lay members of Christ's faithful have in the mission of the Church, fostering their associations which have religious purposes. He is to cooperate with his proper Bishop and with the presbyterium of the diocese. Moreover, he is to endeavour to ensure that the faithful are concerned for the community of the parish, that they feel themselves to be members both of the diocese and of the universal Church, and that they take part in and sustain works which promote this community.“ (CIC can 529)

Fulfilling priest's duties is a task for the whole parish community. As the II Vatican Council reminds us “young persons should become the first to carry on the apostolate directly to other young persons, concentrating their apostolic efforts within their own circle, according to the needs of the social environment in which they live. ... Children also have their own apostolic work to do. According to their ability they are true living witnesses of Christ among their companions.”<sup>318</sup> Very important is the task of a family, as the same Decree mentions about the apostolate of the laity: “At all times and places but particularly in areas where the first seeds of the Gospel are being sown, or where the Church is just beginning, or is involved in some serious difficulty, Christian families can give effective testimony to Christ before the world by remaining faithful to the Gospel and by providing a model of Christian marriage

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<sup>317</sup> Cf. Jozef KYSELICA: Aký kňaz pre dnešnú farnosť. In : *Nová evanjelizácia*. Bratislava: Teologická fakulta Trnavskej univerzity, 1999, ISBN 80-7141-271-6, p. 134.

<sup>318</sup> DRUHÝ VATIKÁNSKY KONCIL: *Apostolicam actuositatem* o apoštoláte laikov. In: *Dokumenty Druhého vatikánskeho koncilu II : Dekréty*. Rím : SÚSCM, 1970, č. 12.

through their whole way of life. To facilitate the attainment of the goals of their apostolate, it can be useful for families to be brought together into groups.<sup>319</sup> Nowadays comes to the aging of population and as the positive we see the sense for responsibility of the elder generation to pass the faith on. However, seniors need not only the medical assistance, but they need especially the emotional help. This one lies in the empathy which mediates love and compassion. Very important is the fixation on ones own family which can provide senior with the best emotional support and sense of security. Elder person feels often insecure. Thus he constantly needs to assure himself that the other members of family like him. Family is for him an important background. Here he receives respect and appreciation.<sup>320</sup> They can become a contribution in the process of passing the faith within the family and parish community. It seems that the renewal of local Church, in the spirit of the Theology of Christ's Mysterious Body, corresponds to the teaching of II Vatican Council and it can be still fruitful.

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<sup>319</sup> DRUHÝ VATIKÁNSKY KONCIL: *Apostolicam actuositatem* o apoštoláte laikov. In: *Dokumenty Druhého vatikánskeho koncilu II : Dekréty*. Rím : SÚSCM, 1970, č. 11.

<sup>320</sup> Cf. Milada HARINEKOVÁ: *Psychologické úskalía staroby a sociálna opora*. In : *Nová evanjelizácia*. Bratislava: Teologická fakulta Trnavskej univerzity, 2001, ISBN 80-7141-360-7, p. 93.

Ks. Józef Makarczyk

## **THE PARISH OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN IN KOPTIOVKA IN YEARS 1936-1945**

### Introduction

There is no such country in Europe that suffered so great losses in its historical and cultural heritage as Belarus. Especially tragic fate faced the sacral objects. Two World wars and barbaric activities of the communist powers made it so that very many valuable ancient objects were destroyed, devastated and liquidated by the lack of conservation and the wrong usage.

Let us have a stop at a little place named Koptiovka, which is picturesquely laid in Grodno region of Belarus. The village belongs to the Roman-Catholic parish which for a rather short period of time of its existence lived through very interesting events that are worth being described.

### The name of the place and its history

The village Koptsovstchizna laying on the road from Grodno to Indura, about 12 km from Grodno, long ago had a Uniate parish church at the name of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin.

The estate had the name Koptsovstchizna, and the village had the name Koptiovka. The center of the district was Hornitsa, but the administrative building was situated in Koptiovka. The post office was also in Koptiovka. The parish and the estate were under the name of Koptsovstchizna, but very often the name Koptiovka was used instead of Koptsovstchizna<sup>321</sup>.

The same situation took place with the correspondence or state letters. The name Koptsovschizna or Koptiovka was used by the Church building committee as well as Vilnius Metropolis Curia and the dean from Grodno.

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<sup>321</sup> *Kopciowszczyzna*. W: Wiadomości Archidiecezjalne Wileńskie. R. 4 :1930, nr 21-22, s. 261.

The document registration of the parish and the Senior Priest use the name Koptiovka<sup>322</sup>. In the document from the 24th of July 1936, № P776/36 Curia applies with a question to priest Jan Chrabashch, the rector of the established parish about its name and location, where the church would have been built and the parish would have been formed<sup>323</sup>. In the letter to the Metropolis Curia in Vilnius on the 27th of July 1936 № P815/36 the Senior Priest Jan Chrabashch explains: “The locality where I have to organize the parish and built the church has the state name Koptsovstchizna. The land which is given for the church in the state acts and on the plan which was given up by the Regional land Department in Bielostok, and also concerning the state woods bears the name of Koptsovstchizna. There is an estate on that same territory, which in reality is a piece of land surrounded from all the sides given for the church construction, which also in the Land Department, in the head of the village and even on the map of Grodno district has the name of Koptsovstchina. Finally the Church building committee on one of its first meetings, discussing the name of the new-formed parish decided to give it a name Koptsovstchina for keeping the state name of the territory and the land where the church has to be constructed and this meeting has a protocol. Taking into consideration the mentioned above we dare to ask The Holy Curie to change the name of the parish from Koptiovka to the name “Koptsovstchina” as a state name”<sup>324</sup>.

After this letter all the documents as well as coming into and going out of the parish and the parish books and the seals as well as booklets about the church building are using the name: “Vilnius Archdiocese, Roman Catholic church at the name of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin in Koptsovstchizna, region Hornitsa, Grodno region, post-office Koptiovka”. That state lasted till the 30th of July 1945 when the last Senior Priest of Koptsovstchina Vincent Borsuk was arrested and the church was closed<sup>325</sup>.

A very important event for the place and for the inhabitants of Koptiovka which came into the history was the presence there the President of the Second Zechpospolita Polska Ignatsy Mostitsky. That event took place on the 25th of November 1933 on the occasion of the opening the Peoples House after the name of the President Ignatsy Mostitsky<sup>326</sup>.

Koptiovka as a geographical place is known from January 1919 also from the fact of founding there the organization at the name of Self- defence of Grodno Land, which existed

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<sup>322</sup> Biblioteka Litewskiej Akademii Nauk, dalej BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 24 -25.

<sup>323</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 31-32.

<sup>324</sup> T a m ż e, 34-35.

<sup>325</sup> R. D z w o n k o w s k i, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego represjonowanego w ZSRS 1939-1988*, Lublin 2004, s. 136-137.

<sup>326</sup> *Uczucia i myśli wszystkich Polaków podążą do Grodna*. W: Dziennik Białostocki. R. 15: 1933, nr 327, s. 2.

in that place. For two weeks in Koptiovka, in former military barracks located 260 soldiers and 22 officers. With the time that military unit was included into Lithuanian-Belarusian division<sup>327</sup>.

The busting out of the Second World War and particularly after the occupation of that territory by the Red Army on the 17th of September was the period of many months wave of terror and threatening from the side of the local communist formations. The time came for planned actions, this time organized by the new powers and the NKWD. Sharp repressions were directed against the families of the former participants of the Polish-Bolshevik war in 1920, who in the 20ies years of that time got there some land and settled there. On the territory of the parish there were also some military camps: Kolpaki, Novoselki, Lachnuvka, Youzefuvka, Logi and Pilsudy. In February 1940 during the night the camps were surrounded for nobody to run away. There was an order to pack the belongings, those who didn't agree or just were not liked, were killed at the place and during one night the camp stopped to exist any more, by the sledges the inhabitants of the camp were transported to Grodno, and from there by the cattle carriages they were sent to Siberia or to Kazakhstan. So in some days all the inhabitants of the camps, which situated on the territory of the parish was deported. It was at the same time a very brutal action.

On the 22nd of June 1941 the German-Russian war started. The Soviet units situated near the border didn't manage to resist the Hitler troops and moved back to the East in haste. During the first week of the battles the Hitler troops occupied the whole territory of Grodno region<sup>328</sup>.

When in summer 1944 those territories were liberated from German occupation, on the 22nd of July of the same year there was signed an agreement between Poland and the Soviet Union about state borders. According to that agreement the whole pre-war territories of East Rzechpospolita were joined to the Soviet Union. The final decision about the border line between Poland and the Soviet Union took place in Yalta in 1945. Koptsovstchizna found itself 17 km. to the East from the new border between Poland and the Soviet Union. With the moment of the Red Army entering in 1944 the parish stopped to exist, the same happened to the estate in Koptsovstchizna. At the place of gmina Hornitsa and the office in Koptiovka there was created "Village Soviet" and everything was named in Russian – Koptiovka.

## II. The creation of the parish and the church

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<sup>327</sup> W. W e j t k o, *Samoobrona Litwy i Białorusi*. Wilno 1930, s. 82-83.

<sup>328</sup> *Энцыклапедыя гісторыі Беларусі*, Мiнск 1996, т. 3, s. 139.

While organizing parish activities a very important role is played by the church as a building. There mainly carries out the sacrament life of its believers. It is precisely there the by baptism enriches the number of new believers, those who are faithful get the sacraments of penance, taking part in the Eucharist. In November 1930 in the News of Vilnius Archdiocese we can read: “ The village of Koptsovstchzna ( but not Koptiovka), which is situated on the road from Grodno to Indura, about 12 km from Grodno, had some time ago the Unite Church at the name of Assumption of the Holy Virgin. After the bloody ceasing of the Unit the church was turned into the Orthodox Church, and the believers by force were made Orthodox. The Catholics of the Latin order belonged to the parish behind the Neman belonging to the Fathers of St. Franciscan order in Grodno, had about 12 km to the nearest Catholic Church. Long ago it was thought about the building of the new church in Koptsovstchizna. But only in that year (1930) in September there was organized a Committee with Fr. Edmund Dulik as a chairman. The church had to be at the name of “God’s Mother the Queen of Poland”<sup>329</sup>.

But on the 17th of February 1936 in the letter № 1136 “To His Majesty Archbishop Metropolis Romuald Jalbzhikovsky in Vilnius, from the Committee of building the Roman-Catholic church in Koptiovka, gmina Hornitsa, Grodno region at the name of St, Joseph sent the protocol of the general meeting of the members-founders and the protocol of the first organization meeting with a request for legislating the Church building Committee in Koptiovka. The chairman of the General Meeting was elected the dean Ignatsy Olshansky<sup>330</sup>.

On the 19th of August 1936 in document № 40/36 of the Committee priest Jan Chrabashch sent a letter to the Vilnius Metropolis from the parish Church building Committee at the name of the Holy Mary Virgin in Koptsovstchizna, gmina Hornitsa, Grodno region<sup>331</sup>. The letter from the 22nd of December 1936 № 45/36 and the following letters to the Holy Metropolitan Curia in Vilnius are send from “the Senior Priest of the church at the name of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin in Koptsovstchizna “and at the bottom of the letter there is a round seal – The parish church of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin in Koptsovstchizna<sup>332</sup>.

The history of the church was the following. On the 2nd of June 1930 in the hall of the Executive of the gmina Hornitsa in Koptiovka on the 18th meeting of the Council of the Hornitsa, Grodno region which was headed by the bailiff of the gmina Mikhal Lomashevitch, there were 12 members and the head of Grodno region Zigmunt Robakevich. In item №3 of

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<sup>329</sup> *Kopciowszczyzna*. W: Wiadomości Archidiecezjalne Wileńskie. R. 4: 1930, nr 21-22, s. 261.

<sup>330</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 15.

<sup>331</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 47.

<sup>332</sup> Litewskie Państwowe Archiwum Historyczne dalej LPAHW, sygn. F. 694, ap. 5, b. 2219, s. 3.

the Council meeting it was written: building of the Catholic church in Koptiovka we can read: “After the reformation of the case according to the building of Catholic church in Koptiovka by the member of the gmina Council priest O’Brien de Lacy Maurycy, in support of the case spoke: Priest Gwardian Dulik, the Senior Priest of the church of Fathers of St. Franciscan order in Grodno, the bailiff of Grodno region Zygmunt Robakievich, the secretary of gmina Vladislav Pavlovsky and the Committee members Joseph Veshchovski, Jan Poputsevich and Gzhegozh Cerechko, the gmina Council voted unanimously for the following decision № 86”<sup>333</sup>.

“The gmina Council taking into consideration that Catholic people on the territory of gmina Hornitsa states 65% of the whole population of gmina doesn’t have a Catholic church, but wish to pray or to get any other sacraments by the church, must go to their parishes which are situated in some places about 16 km from gmina. The council decides to build a church in the village Koptiovka and in this aim organizes a Committee of the building of the Catholic Church in Koptiovka in the following order:

Priest Gwardian Dulik, Senior Priest of Fathers of St. Franciscan in Grodno

Mauritsy O’Brien de Lacy, the citizen of the territory

Mikhal Lomashevich, gmina bailiff,

4. Vladislav Pavlovski, gmina secretary

5. and 6. Jan Korovchuk and Mikhal Kovalevsky farmers with the right of adding more members, the task of which will be managing with the other activities all the formalities connected with the building of the church and the opening of the parish and later as soon as possible to realize the above mentioned initiative”<sup>334</sup>.

In the letter from the 10th of September 1930 to the Metropolitan Curia in Vilnius we can read: “The Building Committee of the church in Koptiovka, adding the extract from the protocol of the Gmina Council of Hornitsa in Grodno region applies to Metropolitan Curia with a question of when and how should they start the realization of that great act of founding the church by the Council of Gmina in Hornitsa.<sup>335</sup>

The Committee stresses the importance of the directions made by the personal view of His Holiness Archbishop to the member of the Committee Maurytsy O’Brien de Lacy, the Committee has already addressed to the regional Land Council with the request to give the land given to the future parish from the ground belonging to regional Land Council”.

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<sup>333</sup> Archiwum Parafialne w Kopciówce, dalej APK, Teczka nr 3.

<sup>334</sup> Państwowe Archiwum Województwa Grodzieńskiego w Grodnie, dalej PAWG, sygn. F. 89, op. 1, ed. 160, s. 8; BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 4.

<sup>335</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 3.

The gmina sent the extract from the protocol with the assistance of the regional Council to the regional head. The results in this case were also sent to the Metropolitan Curia. In the name of the Committee the document was signed by Fr. Edmund Dulik and Mauritsy O'Brien de Lacy. However in the protocol of the meeting of the Building Committee of the Catholic Church in Koptiovka gmina of Grodno region, which took place on the 25th of October 1930 in the hall of the gmina Hornitsa in Koptiovka there were present the following members of the Committee:

Fr. Guardian Edmund Dulik, the Senior Priest of St. Franciscan parish in Grodno, Mauritsy O'Brien de Lacy, Grodno President Mikhal Lomashevitch, gmina Hornitsa bailiff, Vladislav Pavlovski, gmina Hornitsa secretary, Stanislav Chrzanovski, a teacher from Koptiovka and ten other members.

After proving the legality of the rights of the members, at 17 o'clock the chairman opens the meeting with the following agenda: the election and giving the right for the 2 members of the Committee to speak in the Land Council in Grodno in the case of buying land for the church building in Koptiovka.

It was decided: to buy land for the church building in Koptiovka<sup>336</sup>.

In the letter to Hornitsa gmina bailiff from the 14th of November 1930 the regional Land Council in Grodno asked for informing, who in the name of the church Building Committee would speak before the regional Council in the case of buying the land for building the church in Koptiovka and about sending the decision of the Committee concerning this matter<sup>337</sup>.

The church building Committee in the answer to the above letter gave the authroty to Fr. Guardian Edmund Dulik the Senior Priest of fathers St. Franciscans in Grodno and O'Brian de Lacy Maurytsy, Grodno President to buy land for the church building<sup>338</sup>.

Regional Land Council in Grodno communicate the representatives of the church building Committee in Koptiovka that for the church building it registered area № 22 of the territory 4,50 hectares. The conditions of buying that area are the following: the price of the area together with the growing wood is 2514 polish zloty 96 groszy. While buying it is necessary to pay 25% of the general value that comes to about 634,96, hypothetic value is 60 zloty, stamp tax is 27,72 and the tax to the benefit of the Local Council of the region is 12,60 zloty, all together it comes to 735 zloty and 28 groszy. The rest of the payment may be shared in paying back for 5 years. The right

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<sup>336</sup> PAWG , sygn. F. 89, op. 161, nr 1, s. 99.

<sup>337</sup> PAWG, sygn. F. 89, op. 161, nr 1, s. 98 - 98v.

<sup>338</sup> PAWG, sygn. F. 89, op. 161, nr 1, s. 98.

to buying the real estate with the title of acquiring the area № 22 in the period up to the 2nd of December 1930<sup>339</sup>.

On the 3rd of December 1930 the church building Committee in Koptiovka in the letter to the chairman of the regional Novogrudsky Land Council is writing that gmina Land Council informed on the 27th of November 1930 that for the building of the Roman-Catholic church in Koptiovka, registered the area № 22 in the territory 4, 50 hectares from the state land in Koptiovka.

“ Because of our initiative of church building from voluntary offers, because we were given land in territory of 4,50 hectares, on the basis of concordat is not enough (for the foundation of the parish it is necessary to have 16 hectares) that is why we will have to buy the lacking part from the private person for the cash and because of this we find ourselves in very critical financial situation, we kindly ask Mister Chairman taking into consideration the aim for which we want to have this land, to change the decision of the Poviats Land Council and giving us the needing land free of charge”<sup>340</sup>.

The Church Committee mentioned the unused land of state territory in Koptiovka according to the article 68 and 58 of the Decision from the 28th of December 1925 about fulfillment of agricultural reform (Dz. U.R.P. from 1926, № 1, par. 1) and par.115 of the order of the Minister of Agricultural Reform from the 7th of December 1926 which in the past belonged to the Uniate parish in Koptiovka. State Land Council sends to the Building Committee in Koptiovka on the 12th of January 1931 the communiqué that there is no information in the acts of the Council that the land of the manor house in Koptiovka belonged to the church<sup>341</sup>.

There is no proof in the archive documents whether the Committee paid to the State land Council in Grodno for the place for Church building in the sum of 2514 zloty 96 groszy, but in further documents we can read: “the parish people inform that they have the place for the church, cemetery and the area for benefice”. In 1931 there was brought a great amount of stones and the local engineer designed a plan of the new church. And there was all, everything has got stopped, the whole enthusiasm and desire of the parish were over, and the Committee was also absolutely passive.

The breaking moment came with the letter of complain of Koptiovka inhabitants and the dwellers of the nearby villages which was written by Maria Vojtechovich on the 16th of

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<sup>339</sup> PAWG, sygn. F. 89, op. 161, nr 1, s. 97.

<sup>340</sup> PAWG, sygn. F. 89, op. 164, nr 1, s. 3.

<sup>341</sup> PAWG, sygn. F. 89, op. 164, nr 1, s. 6.

November 1935 to the archbishop Romuald Jalbzhikowski in Vilnius, who was the provincial of fathers of St. Franciscan in Krakow and to the Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw. The complaint concerned the neglecting of pastoral duties by Grodno fathers Franciscans as for the villages laying far from Grodno but belonging to the Franciscan parish<sup>342</sup>. The Nuncio addressed the Metropolis curia in Vilnius to study the complaint<sup>343</sup>. The curia immediately ordered to study the case at the place for Grodno Dean Priest Ignacy Olshanski. The Dean in the letter to curia on the 20th of December 1935, doc №1847 wrote that he went to Koptiovka and there at the place studied the whole matter. He admitted that the letter was sent to the provincial of the Franciscans and it was signed by very many Catholics from the nearby villages to Koptiovka. As for the accusations concerning the Franciscans he admitted that they didn't have any means of transportation, they couldn't come to the faraway schools for the lessons of religion and for serving the Holy Masses in Koptiovka. As for the other claims he admitted that they were just feigned<sup>344</sup>.

In connection with the coming of the Dean from Grodno a lot of people from the nearby villages came to Koptiovka and they all expressed their wish to build a church and found the independent parish in Koptiovka. It was proposed that to the new parish could belong the villages of the Franciscan parish: Koptiovka, Tsviklitchi, Butchki, Gzhivki, Laigobole, Noviki, Polotkovo, Kamionka, Brosty and also from Kvasovka parish: Zhukevitchi village and colony, Zhulitchi, Slavitchi and from Indura parish: Slominka. The total number of Catholic people in those villages was about 3000 believers. The place for the church in the territory of  $\frac{3}{4}$  hectare had already existed and for the cemetery and for the benefice they had 4,5 hectares of land. For several years had been existing, the Committee which had to organize the building of the church, but unfortunately didn't express any activity. The local engineer Stanislaw Grochovski had designed the plan for the new church. On the church place there were a lot of stones. In its budget gmina appointed 500 zloty to the church building, but that sum of money was used for paying back the gmina debts. At that time there was no place for serving the Holy Masses. It was decided for the Gwardian together with the gmina secretary Kviatkovski to "reanimate" the existing Committee or with the cooperation with it to organize the new one, more active and to get the permission from Vilnius Metropolis. Immediately in spring there was built a symbolic chapel where had to come by bus one of the Fathers Franciscans for the Holy Mass and the gmina guaranteed to take him back to Grodno.

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<sup>342</sup> PAWG, sygn. F. 89, op. 164, nr 1, s. 10.

<sup>343</sup> PAWG, sygn. F. 89, op. 164, nr 1, s. 31.

<sup>344</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 12-12v.

After creating the chapel it was planned to start the church building. On the territory of the mentioned villages there were schools where religion lessons were planned: in Kotiovka – 6, Grivki-4, Laigoboly -4, Noviki -2 and in Slavitchi – 2 hours of religious lessons.

In all those schools the Franciscans didn't conduct the lessons of religion because of the lack of transport. The general of the convent had to talk to the children's parents from those schools concerning the means of transport for their coming there. After building the chapel it was necessary for the good of the believers to have a good pastoral priest who would organize the church building, take care of schools and for sure he would have the material support from the people,

In further account the Grodno dean priest Ignatsy Olshanski wrote: "today's situation is not good and the Catholic people feel themselves neglected, for it is very difficult every Sunday and Holiday for everybody to go to the Mass to Indura or 12 km. to Grodno. The priest in Koptiovka is essential as soon as possible, for the local Orthodox Church and the owner of the local Orthodox possession in many cases negatively influences the Catholics. So the local children without the Church and the priest would not get the proper religious education and have no good hope for the future"<sup>345</sup>.

During his visit it was stated that in January there would be organized the meeting concerning the church building. The first organizational meeting of the Church Building Committee members in Koptiovka took place on the 30th of January 1936 in the hall of the Gmina Hornitsa Council. On the 17th of February 1936 the Roman-Catholic Church Building Committee at the name of St. Joseph in Koptiovka lengthened the protocol of the General Meeting of the members-founders and the protocol of the first organizational meeting with the request of legalizing the Church Building Committee in Koptiovka<sup>346</sup>.

However in the Committee leaflet and the brick for the church building up till now there are documents which are kept in many parishes and we can read: on the 26th of April 1936 the archbishop Romuald Jalbzhikovsky sanctified the place for the church building giving his blessing to the labor of the building. The dwellers state that the church had to be built behind the Gmina Council behind the modern school at the place where there is now is a house for the teachers. There in 1939 they had already started to pile the stones, but when to Koptiovka arrived the vicar from Fara parish in Grodno priest Jan Chrabashch, not yet being the Senior

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<sup>345</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 10-10v.

<sup>346</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 15.

Priest, commissioned to build the church some 1km from the gmina, on the hill, to the south. And there at last the place for the church and the cemetery had been sanctified<sup>347</sup>.

Grodno dean in the letter to the Archbishop of Vilnius Metropolis from the 10th of June 1936, № 1116 sent the description of the territory which by the Committee mind had to be included into the planned Roman-Catholic parish in Koptiovka<sup>348</sup>. In the further part of the dean's letter we can read: " At the same time I kindly ask about organizing the parish in Koptiovka and the official confirmation of the nomination of priest Yan Chrabashch, because the Committee without a priest can't cope with the task quickly"<sup>349</sup>.

On the 4th of July 1936 the Vilnius Metropolis sends a letter to priest Yan Chrabashch to Grodno of the following contents: " By this document I allow you to organize the parish in Koptiovka, Grodno deanship and at the same time I give you all rights of the Senior Priest concerning the dwellers of the following places: village Butchki, village Tswiklich, Villages Mala, Village Polotkovo, settlement Logi, village Koptiovka, manor place Koptiovshchizna, village Gibilitchi, village Kornevitche, village Kolpaki, village Grivki, village Gornitsa, colony Zhukevitchi, village Zhilitchi, village Slomianka, village Putno, manor house and settlement Novoselki, manor house Dzmitrovo – Male, village Doilidki, village Laigobole, village Kamionka. If the dwellers of the other places would like to be included into the parish in Koptiovka they had to write an application about including them into the new parish"<sup>350</sup>. Beside priest Yan Chrabashch the letter of the same contents got the dean in Grodno, the Senior Priest of the Franciscan parish in Grodno, the Senior Priest in Kvasovka, the Senior Priest in Indura and a Senior Priest in Kuznitsa.

On the 5th of July 1936 a new Roman- Catholic parish in Koptiovka was announced. On the 10th of July 1936 the fundament digging was started, on the 16th of August it was started the building of presbytery. For the temporary chapel and the flat for the Senior Priest together with the office was adopted the House of People named after Ignatsy Mostitsky in Koptiovka which was built in 1933.<sup>351</sup>

In the letter of priest Ignatsy Olshansky, Grodno dean to Vilnius Curia from the 2nd of October 1936 we read: The religious life in Koptiovstchizna is getting more and more powerful. The chapel is arranged in the hall of the House of people which is rather big, behind the altar there is a sacristy. In that house the Senior Priest has got a flat, consisting of a large

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<sup>347</sup> APK, Teczka nr 1.

<sup>348</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 22.

<sup>349</sup> T a m ż e.

<sup>350</sup> Archiwum OO. Franciszkanów w Krakowie, dalej AFK, *Grodno 1919-1939*, sygn. D-II-20, nr 0-437136.

<sup>351</sup> APK, Teczka nr 1.

room divided into two parts, where in one part there is a study and in the other one there is a bedroom. Close to it there is a little room which serves as a kitchen. For the Masses on holidays and Sundays come about 1 thousand people”<sup>352</sup>.

On the building site there was a “real factory”. There was laid 1 meter fundament for the church and fundament for the presbytery, ground floor is finished it was started to build the walls. The basement and the well have already been done. The presbytery had to be roofed before winter and the church was to be roofed next spring. In the village Tswiklitchi, a kilometer and a half from Koptiovkovstchizna on the road to Kamionka, there was built a brick factory where the third stove of brick. As we can see, both the Committee and the Senior Priest eagerly started to work. A strong center of Catholic life among 60% of Orthodox believers was there extremely essential<sup>353</sup>.

In the letter from the 20th of December 1937 №189/37 to the Archbishop Vilnius Metropolis priest Yan Chrabastch is written :” on the 5th of July 1936 I was given a task to organize a new parish in Koptciovtchzna, not far from Grodno. Practically immediately I started to work and with the help of the devoted parish people and the people of good will now the parish Koptiovstchizna has already got stone-built inhabited and practically absolutely finished presbytery of the size 21m x 12 m with two rooms upstairs. As for the church, there has already been created the fundament for the whole temple, out of bricks is made the presbytery, both sacristies are covered with symbolic roof and the center of the future temple is 10 meters prolonged creating in such a way chapel-church of the size 19,5 x 7,5 plus sacristy for people. On the 7th of November 1937 the cornerstone, the fundament and the beginning of the church were sanctified, in this way transforming the Masses to its own, more proper church than it used to be before. It is important to mention that on the church square there was made a well, supplied with a pump, for winter was prepared 15 ton reservoir of oil, piled wood for the roof and the church tower, also it was bought and piled on the building site the brick which was necessary for the completing the church in general number about 300 thousand. Resuming everything and the time when everything had been done, it is possible to state that the main tribute which was put into the creation of church in Koptciovtchzna were its people”<sup>354</sup>.

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<sup>352</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, nr 1716, s. 58.

<sup>353</sup> T a m ż e.

<sup>354</sup> Litewskie Państwowe Archiwum Historyczne w Wilnie, dalej LPAHW, F. 694, ap. 5, b. 2219, s. 1.

In the letter from the 24th of November 1938 which was written by Curia chancellor to the Senior Priest in Koptciovstchzna he informs that Vilnius ordinary allowed the Senior Priest to become a member of the General Council and gmina Council during the elections for self-government<sup>355</sup>.

In the letter from the 4th of February 1939 № 105 to the Archbishop Vilnius Metropolis Priest Yan Chrabashch we read: “While forming the new parish in Koptciovstchzna last year apart from uniting parish people together much had been done in the case of church building and the following works had been done: very quickly was completed the stone presbytery, the cemetery was surrounded by the fence. The church walls had been built up to the roof and building material for the completion of the church had been piled, such as brick for the basement, lime, wood for the roof building and tiles for the roof cover. Also two extra church buildings are finished and there were erected iron-cement inner church columns”<sup>356</sup>.

As the Senior Priest Yan Chrabasch was appointed the military chaplain of the Polish Army and the World War II started, the building of the church had been stopped. The other followers of priest Yan carried out only pastoral activities in the parish as far as it was possible.

On the 20th of September 1944 Grodno region had been formed. Koptiovka parish found itself 10 km to the east from the border line<sup>357</sup>.

#### Equipment of the Parish

For the new parish could function it was necessary to have its own interior. On the 7th of July 1936 priest Yan got for the parish church in Koptiovstchizna from Metropolitan Curia the following items: little cup with patena, amug for offerings, a set of saint oils, two old carpets, two sticks, three corporals, four purificators, alba, mug decoration, bursh for the sick, corporal, purificator, two tablecloths for the altar, a towel, four purple chasubles, white, green, red and black ones, and a green bed-cloth<sup>358</sup>.

The Fara parish in Grodno offered the Cross Way on tin from the 18th century, which were hung there, but they were in the shade of the statues and they were granted to the parish. The church, while still being under construction was said by the parish people to be supplied with everything necessary: three alters, three confessionals, banners, there was a choir place

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<sup>355</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-19059, nr 0-654/38, s. 26.

<sup>356</sup> LPAHW, sygn. F. 694 ap. 5b 2218, s. 1.

<sup>357</sup> *Энцыклапедыя гісторыі Беларусі*, т. 3, s. 139.

<sup>358</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 28.

with 10-voices physharmonia, a beautiful figure of God's Mother, a bell and everything, that was needed for the priest, was in sacristy. When priest Borsuk was arrested the church was standing unfinished and closed.

In 1939 besides the building church the parish had a newly built presbytery and some new farm buildings. In 1930 it was given 4,5 hectares of land. Now it is difficult to say whether it was paid back or hired. Further in that letter the building Committee writes that according to the Agreement it is not enough, it was necessary to have 16 hectares for founding the parish<sup>359</sup>.

In the letter from the 4th of February 1939 № 105 to the archbishop Vilnius Metropolis Senior Priest it is written that the new-forming parish does not have any possession but 4,3 hectares of the hills ( the church is standing on the hill) and there is a possibility of getting the one for the parish because in the manor house Koptiovtshizna the settlement Eliz-Pole has to be parceled. And the parish is going to buy about 20 hectares and asks for the support of the archbishop in that case<sup>360</sup>. But the situation of the World War II must have crossed those plans and the parish hadn't bought the land and there are no documents about it.

#### Localities belonging to the parish

On the map made by Yan Yakubowsky "Grodno powiat in the 16th century" we can already find the majority of villages which today belong to Koptiovtshizna parish. It is important to note that some villages later got other names, in particular: Bereh –later Slavitchi, Bobynichi became Kolpaki, Sienklichi – Tswiklichi, Hancevitchi – Laygebole, Korenevitchi – Karanevitchi, Sustchevo – Zhulichi, Suchminevitchi – Suchmieni<sup>361</sup>.

On the basis of the survived baptizing documents of Franciscan church from the break of the 17th and 18th centuries it is possible to state that in years 1697-1715 people were baptized from the following villages: Tsviklitchi, Hornitsa, Kamionka, Kolpaki, Novosiolki, Olshanka, Polotkovo. To the parish of Fathers Franciscans in Grodno in 1744 belonged the following localities: Galowichi, Pushki, Adamovitchi, Mitskevitchi, Soltowy, Koniukchi, Bohatyry, Lubno, Trychi, Baranovitchi, Tarusowstchizna, Lososna, Puskazhi, Naumovitchi, Chehovstchizna, Kielbusin, Skomoroshki, Korobtchisy, Gnievinschizna, Bokuny, Nitmiekshi, Laygobole, Kamionka, Olshanka, Tswiklitchi, Koptiovtstchizna, Gibulich, Lopotkovo,

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<sup>359</sup> PAWG, sygn.F. 89, op. 1, ed. 164, s. 3.

<sup>360</sup> LPAHW, sygn. F. 694, ap 5, b. 2218, s. 1.

<sup>361</sup> Polska Akademia Umiejętności, Prace Komisji Atlasu Historycznego Polski, Zeszyt 3. Kraków 1935, s. 110.

Suchmeni, Hornitsa, Malachovitchi, Gnoynitsa, Koshevnik<sup>362</sup>. At the same time in the book of baptizing documents from 1705 we can come across some new localities, such as the village of Butchki and Olshanka, divided into Small and Great<sup>363</sup>.

Table 1. A list of localities which are going to be included into the planned Roman-Catholic parish in Koptiovka on the 10th of June 1936.

№	The name of the locality and gmina	The number of believers	Distance to Koptiovka in Km.	The actual parish and the distance in km	
				The parish name	Distance
1	Village Butchki-gm.Hornitsa	154	2	Franciscan	14
2	Village Bzhosty	63	5,5	-//-	9
3	Village Tswiklitchi	252	1,5	-//-	15
4	Village Olshanka Small	131	5	-//-	7
5	Village Polotkovo	146	3	-//-	10
6	Settlement Logy	26	6,5	-//-	8
7	Village Koptiovka	186	0,2	-//-	13
8	Manor Koptiovstchizna	17	0,2	-//-	12,6
9	Settlement Lozy	10	0,5	-//-	12
10	Village Gibulitchi	262	5,5	-//-	7,5
11	Village Kozhenevitchi	5	4	Kvasovka	8,5
12	Village Kolpaki	37	5	-//-	6,5

<sup>362</sup> Synodus Dioeciesana Vilnensis ab Illustrissimo, Excellentissimo ac Reverendissimo Domino D. Michaelae Joanne Zienkowicz Dei & Apostolicae Sedis Gratia Episcopo Vilnensi in Ecclesia Cathedrali Sua, Anno Dnii MDCCXLIV. Diebus 10. 11. 12. M. Febr: celebrata. Typis Mandata Vilnae Sacr: Reg: Majestatis Academ: Soc: Jesu. Wilno 1744.

<sup>363</sup> Archiwum OO. Franciszkanów w Grodnie, dalej AFG, Księga chrztów parafii ZaniemskiejOO. Franciszkanów 1705-1715, b. sygn.

13	Village Grivki	54	4	Franciscan	8
14	Village Hornitsa	39	5	-//-	10
15	Manor Hornitsa	5	4,5	-//-	10
16	Village Zhukevitchi	316	8	Kvasovka	9
17	Colony Zhukevitchi	61	7	-//-	10
18	Village Ponemun	101	8	-//-	9
19	Settlement Ponemun	39	9	-//-	8
20	Village Kovaltse	71	10	-//-	11
21	Village Slavitchi	143	10	-//-	11,5
22	Village Zhulitchi	177	11	-//-	13
23	Village Slomianka	263	5	Indura	9,5
24	Village Putne	222	6,5	-//-	8
25	Manor and settlement Novosiulki, gm. Indura	105	4,5	-//-	7
26	Manor Dzimitkovo Small Gm. Kuznitsa	20	7,5	Kuznitsa	9
27	Village Doylidki	180	6	-//-	9.5
28	Village Laygobole	120	3,5	Franciscan	12
29	Village Noviki	80	4	-//-	13
30	Village Kamionka	503	4,75	-//-	12,5

Source: BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 24.

The new parish represented in the above topographical project all together would have united 3788 believers. On the basis of the above mentioned table we can see that the distance

to the parish church has shorted practically everywhere greatly. The formation of the new parish in Koptiovstchizna was motivated by the great distance from the parish church.

In the letter from the 10th of June 1936 to Vilnius Metropolis, Grodno dean writes: “in the added description of the locality which is, according to the wish of the Church Building committee, to enter Koptiovka parish, from its side expresses the opinion that for the escaping of possible agitation among those who are not willing, which is something that is banned, not to join into the future Koptiovka parish the localities which now belong to Kvasovka parish, in particular the village Zhukevitchi, the village and settlement Ponemun, the village Kovaltsy and Slavitchi. At the same time I ask for the registration of the parish in Koptiovka and to confirm officially the nomination of the Senior Priest Yan Chrabastch”<sup>364</sup>.

In the letter from the 4th of July 1936 the archbishop of Vilnius writes to the priest Yan Chrabastch: “ By the letter I order the priest to organize the parish in Koptiovka, Grodno Deanship and at the same time I give you the pastoral right concerning the following localities: the village Butchki, the village Bzhosty, the village Tswiklitchi, the village Olshanka Small, the village Polotkovo, the settlement Logy, the village Koptiovka, manor Koptiovstchizna, settlement Lozy, the village Gibulitchi, the village Kozhenevitchi, the village Kolpaki, the village Gzhivki, the village Hornitsa, the manor Hornitsa, colony Zhukevitchi, the village Zhulitchi, the village Smolianka, the village Putno, the manor and settlement Novoselki, the village Kamionka, the manor Dzimitkovo Small, the village Doilidki, the village Laygebole, the village Noviki. The inhabitants of other localities, if they wanted to belong to the forming parish in Koptiovka must apply for including them to the parish. The letter of the same content (copies) also got: the Dean Priest in Grodno, the Senior Priest of Franciscan parish in Grodno, the Senior Priest in Kvasovka, the Senior Priest in Indura, the Senior Priest in Kuznitsa”<sup>365</sup>.

Priest Yan Chrabastch in the letter to the Metropolis writes that: “in the sent description of the localities planning to enter the Roman- Catholic parish in Koptiovstzhizna, there are some mistakes from the side of the Committee, in particular: the military settlement Lachnovka, which was formed on the basis of the village Small Olshanka and makes an administrative unit, was not mentioned in the information. The military settlement Lachnuvka till now belonged to the Franciscan parish in Grodno. Near the village Kolpaki was missed the colony and the settlement Kolpaki, which also make one administrative unit. These localities must belong to the Roman Catholic parish in Kvasovka. Near the manor Dzimitkovo Small it was

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<sup>364</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 22, 59.

<sup>365</sup> T a m ż e.

missed the following localities: the colony Todorkovtsy and the colony Murovstchizna, which were created from one manor Dzimitkovo Small and makes one administrative unit. These localities till now belonged to: Todorkovtsy and Dzimitkovo Small to the Roman- Catholic parish in Kuznitsa and the colony Murovstchizna partly to the parish in Indura and partly to Kuznitsa. Informing about these shortcomings the Church Building Committee asks for legislation of their belonging to the parish Koptiovstzhizna”<sup>366</sup>.

The Dean also sends the detailed drawn plan of the parish Koptiovstzhizna, and on the plan are pointed all the villages and settlements and also the part of the new formed parish which belonged to different parishes.

From Kuznitsa parish – 461 people, from Indura parish -644 people, from Franciscan parish - 875 people and from Kvasovka parish - 934 people. Near the plan there was a list of villages, localities and Catholic people from the parish in Koptiovstchizna:

Koptiovka – 186 people;	Putno – 222 people;
Settlement Lozy – 10 people;	Todorkovtsy – 28 people;
Colony Koptiovka – 17 people;	Moravstchizna – 33 people;
Zulitchi – 177 people;	Dzimitkovo – 20 people;
Slavitchi – 143 people;	Dailidki – 180 people;
Settlement Ponemun – 39 people;	Noviki – 80 people;
Zukevitchi – 316 people;	Laygobole – 120 people;
Poniemun – 101 people;	Kamionka – 502 people;
Settlement Poniemun – 39 people;	Bzhosty – 63 people;
Logi – 26 people;	Gibilitchi – 262 people;
Colony Zukevitchi – 61 people;	Lachnuvka – 3 people;
Sikovstchizna – 3 people;	Hornitsa – 45 people;
Kozhenevitchi – 5 people;	Small Olshanka – 131 people;
Kolpaki – 37 people;	Polotkovo – 146 people;
Colony Kolpaki – 30 people;	Tsviklitchi – 252 people;
Butchki – 154 people;	Cherayki - 2 people;
Gzhivki – 54 people;	Slomianka – 263 people;
Novoselki – 105 people;	

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<sup>366</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 47.

The total number of the parish people was 3910 people<sup>367</sup>.

While everybody was speaking about foundation of the parish, how much it is needed, but everything looked great up to the time when it was necessary to take from the certain parishes the mentioned localities. And so the Senior Priest from Kvasovka protested against joining the new parish, the villages situated on the bank of the river Neman, but the people asked to be united with Koptiovka because it was nearer for them and the gmina they belonged to was in Koptiovka. From the parish of Indura the village Putno wanted to belong to Indura but not to Koptiovka as the Senior Priest from Indura stated that it was nearer from them to Koptiovka. There were also some problems with Kuznitsa parish because part of the village Dailidki wanted to belong to Koptiovka and the other part wanted to belong to Kuznitsa and there were some misunderstandings in the village. The Senior Priest of Kuznitsa and the organ-player also expressed their wish to stay in Kuznitsa parish, but after the conversation of the dean with the villagers of Dailidki and the Senior Priest from Kuznitsa the whole village wanted already to belong to Koptiovka<sup>368</sup>.

In 1944, when there was stated the new border line, the church in Kuznitsa remained in Poland and the village Dailidki found itself in Belarus. But the greatest number of misunderstandings and even to say “war” burst out between the newly formed parish Koptiovstchizna and the St. Franciscan one. In the Franciscan achieves in Krakow as well as in Vilnius survived numerous documents describing the situation. The villages Kamionka, Gibulitchi, and Small Olshanka didn’t want to belong to the parish Koptiovka, as for the inhabitants of the village Small Olshanka they later agreed and eagerly joined to the church building and the pastoral life of the parish. But Kamionka and Gibulitchi created a lot of problems up till 1939 and the parishes accused each other<sup>369</sup>.

The dean Ignatsy Olshansky in the letter from the 2nd of October 1939 to the Curia in Vilnius writes: “as for the villages which would like to belong to Koptiovstchizna, in particular:

Kamionka, Putno, Small Olshamka and Gibulitchi. The complaints of Kamionca about the bad state of the road to Koptiovstchizna are not true, because the wheel way is in a good state,

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<sup>367</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 58 - 59.

<sup>368</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 58.

<sup>369</sup> LPAHW, sygn. F. 694, ap 5, b. 2219, s. 1-1a.

and the village itself belongs to the nearest village from Koptiovstchizna. All state cases should be decided in gmina in Koptiovka but not in Grodno”<sup>370</sup>.

But yet we can see that some “complaints-motivations are connected with the communication shortcomings were enlarged. The locality of Small Olshanka is nearer to Koptiovka than to Grodno and belongs to gmina Hornitsa. The village Gibulitchi has got 3-year primary school. The Senior Priest from Koptiovka, having not far from school had an opportunity to work there. It is a very positive fact, because Franciscans don’t have any means of communication and couldn’t get to schools. As for the distance for the church in Grodno they have 8 km., and for the church in Koptiovstchizna – 5 km<sup>371</sup>. The development of the parish and the building of the church, the presbytery, different problems, connected with it much more united the parish.

## Cemeteries

The cemetery is a place devoted to the burial of the dead. If it is sanctified according to the liturgical law it becomes saint. According to the items of the Canonic Law there are saint places devoted to the God’s cult and to the burial of the dead<sup>372</sup>.

The inhabitants of the newly -formed parish of Koptiovka were till now buried on the parish cemetery in Indura, Kuznitsa, Kvasovka, Grodno - Franciscans, as well as at the cemeteries, which found themselves on the territory of every village.

In 1975 the archeologists on the territory of the parish, in the region of the village Kolpaki discovered the cemetery, consisting of one long and twelve round hills, dated back to the 11th-13th century<sup>373</sup>.

In Novoselki at the beginning of the modern village there was a cemetery. In Dailidki, at the end of the village there is a place which is surrounded by the field stones. In the middle there are two stone crosses, there were some inscriptions, but time swept away the traces and it is difficult now to read them out. In the localities Pogorany, Zulitchi, Slavitchi, Kovaltsy, Zhukevitchi, Kolpaki, Karanevitche, Buchiki, Suchmeni, Polotkovo, Olshanka, Kamionka, Laigebole, Noviki, Lailidki, Slomianka, Tsviklitchi were also the places of the old burial. The inhabitants of Pogorany, Zhulitchi or Slivichi on the bank of the river Neman found the place for the burial. In Zhuckevitchi and particularly in the neighborhood of the village Poniemun

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<sup>370</sup> APK, Teczka nr 1.

<sup>371</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 22, 58.

<sup>372</sup> KPK kan. 1205.

<sup>373</sup> Археология и Нумизматика Беларуси, Минск 1993, s. 315.

(now it is part of the village Zhukevitichi) in the field there was a cemetery surrounded by the field stone. It is rather an old cemetery and it is quite possible that it was used by the inhabitants at the time when in the manor Ponemun there was a chapel, which was donated in 1717 by that time Cherniakovsky Joseph Grodetsky.

The majority of the localities which entered the parish in Koptiovka belonged to the parish of the God's Mother of Angels in Grodno (over the Neman). The burial place of those parish people was also the Unit cemetery in Koptiovstzhizna. There were buried "the Latinists" from Koptioctschizna and from the nearest localities such as: Polotkovo, Kamionka, Laygobole, Tsviklitchi. The burial ceremonies were served by the Unit clergyman, who sent the extracts from the metrical death certificates to the Franciscan Gvardian in Grodno<sup>374</sup>.

To the west from Koptiovka starts the wood and at the edge of that wood there is a hill which is surrounded by the field stones and the trees are growing there, it was the Unit cemetery.

Before the Second World War there was a Unit cemetery, which belonged to the parish of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Koptioctschizna. When in 1936 the Unit was ceased and the parish was turned into the Orthodox, the Orthodox people were still buried there. That situation lasted till 1930 when a new cemetery was founded near the Orthodox Church (the Unit cemetery itself was situated about 1 km from the Orthodox Church), there started to bury the Orthodox people on the new cemetery. It is surrounded by the wall of the field stones<sup>375</sup>.

In 1936 when the Roman-Catholic parish was formed in Koptiovstschizna at the back of the church from the west side there was founded the Catholic cemetery of the territory of 95 x 140 meters, which was surrounded by the field stone.

One of the traces of the parish faith is the road crosses, figures and chapels placed in different localities: near the roads, gardens and in the farm fields.

Some of them are very old and nobody remembers now, who or when they were erected. There are places in the parish where there were crosses but they were destroyed and only memories remained about them. The oldest stone cross dates back to 1863 and finds itself in Dailidki, some others are Laygoboly from 1892 and from the same year are the crosses in Kamionka. The other crosses date back to the beginning of the 20th century.

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<sup>374</sup> BHAG, *Księga metryk pogrzebowych kościoła parafialnego zaniemeńsko – grodzieńskiego (1780 – 1805)*, sygn. F. 257-1-3.

<sup>375</sup> LPAHW, sygn. F. 694, ap 5, b. 2218, s. 3.

### III. PASTORAL ACTIVITY

The parish church, which is built of stone, gets the believers together for the Holy Liturgy. Everything that leads to the growth of faith and piety among the believers takes place more often in the church and influences greatly their family and social life. The pastoral activity lies mainly on the great range of sacramental life and using different sacraments.

#### God's service at the parish church

The church of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary in Koptiovka was the parish church. The territory of the parish was rather vast, covering even the localities being away for about 20 km. from the church. At the beginning of the 20th century new settlements were formed. In such a way on the territory of the modern parish in 1936 there the following localities: Bzhosty, Butchki, Tsviklitchi, Dailidki, Dzimitkovo, Gibulitch, Grivki, Hornitsa, Kamionka, the colony Koptiovka, Kozhenevitchi, Kovaltsi, Lachnuvka, Laigabole, Logy, settlement Lozy, Small Olshanka, Moravtschizn, Noviki, Novoselki, Pogorany, Poniemun, settlement Poniemun, Putno, Sikorovstchizna, Slavitchi, Slomianka, Suchmeni, Todorkovtsy, Zhukevitchi, the colony Zhukevitchi, Zvonovka, Zhulitchi<sup>376</sup>.

In the parish church in Koptiovka the God's service consisted first of all of the Holy Liturgy which was united with the Holy Gospel and the sacrament of Communion. The Holy Masses were primarily served in the chapel arranged in the People House and from the 7th of November 1937 in the Church<sup>377</sup>. The same state of things lasted up till July 1945. About 1000 people took part in Holy Masses on Sundays and holidays<sup>378</sup>.

In the parish of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary the sacraments of Baptizing were given in church during the Holy Eucharist. At that rather short time of parish existence we have the information concerning giving the sacrament of Baptizing from the following years: in 1936 – 46 Baptizing, in 1937 – 86, and in year 1938 there were 98 Baptizing<sup>379</sup>.

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<sup>376</sup> LPAHW, sygn. F. 694, ap. 5, b. 2218, s. 24.

<sup>377</sup> LPAHW, sygn. F. 694, ap 5, b. 2219, s. 1.

<sup>378</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 58.

<sup>379</sup> Archiwum Archidiecezjalne w Białymstoku dalej AAB, *Księga duplikat metryk chrzestnych kościoła parafialnego w Kopciowszczyźnie za rok 1936-1938*, sygn. Dek. Grodno 1936-1938.

Nevertheless that in 1939-1945 there was Baptizing in the church, but there is no remained documentation of those religious acts.

The sacrament of marriage is the union by which a man and a woman make the community of the whole life, leading by its nature to the birth and upbringing the children and to the benefit of the couple itself<sup>380</sup>. For the period 1936-1945 we have the data concerning the blessed marriage unions. The intensity shows the above table.

Table 2. Statistics of the marriages from years 1939-1945

Year	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
Number	6	34	30	18	13	35	30	15	8	9

Source: AAK, the book of the church services of Koptiovstchizna parish in years 1936-1938, sign, Grodno deanship; the book of premarital protocols of the parish church in Koptiovstchizna, Grodno deanship, Vilnius archdiocese, the 10th of July 1936 –the 24th of July 1945, Sign.

The first marriage sacrament took place on the 2nd of August 1936, and the last was given on the 24th of July 1945. During that period were blessed 198 marriage couples.

Sacraments are “the sacred signs, which with the certain similarity to the sacraments denoting the results, first of all spiritual, and they get them by the church prayer. They prepare people for getting the main result of the sacrament and sanctify different life situations”<sup>381</sup>. By getting the sacraments practically every event from the life of the believers is becoming sacred.

The last service which the church offers to the faithful person is the burial Holy Mass. We have the data concerning the burials in the parish of Koptiovka for the period 1936 – 1938. In 1936 there were 28, in 1937 – 43, and in 1938 there were 53 funerals<sup>382</sup>.

The expression of the pastoral thoughtfulness about the conditions and state of life of the believers was the visitation of the parish people after Christmas, so called carol visits. In 1937 the Senior Priest of that period Yan Chrabashch for the first time ordered the introduction of such a pastoral visit. It started after the holiday of Three Kings and lasted about three weeks.

<sup>380</sup>Codex Juris Canonici Pii X Pontificius Maximi iussu digestus Benedicti Papae XV auctoritate promulgatus, can. 1013 § 1.

<sup>381</sup> Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucja o Liturgii świętej Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 1963, nr 60.

<sup>382</sup> AAB, *Duplikaty księga pogrzebów kościoła parafialnego w Kopciowszczyźnie za rok 1936-1938*, sygn. Dek. Grodno 1936-1938.

The ceremony of such visit in the village was the following: the church-warden of the village together with the inhabitants was waiting near the cross or the chapel and there greeted the priest on behalf of the inhabitants of the village. Then the priest started to visit every house.

## 2. Catechism and the Preacher activity

A very important pastoral duty is the catechism. During the stay in Grodno St. Maximilian Kolbe in years 1922 – 1927 systematic catechism was lead practically in all points of catechization. There remained a photo from Koptiovstchizna of the period when St. Maximilian led catechization there.

To the bishop curia in Vilnius, provincial Franciscan curia in Krakow and to the Apostolic Nuncio in Warsaw there was sent a complaint concerning the negligence of catechization duties by Grodno Franciscans. The number of reaching points connected with catechization on the vast territory of Franciscan parish in Grodno and irregular catechization was one of the reasons which quickened the formation of the new parish in Koptiovstchizna.

On the territory of the parish in Koptiovstchizna there were schools in the following localities, where from 1936 till September 1939 catechesis was taught by the local Senior Priest: in Koptiovka – 6 hours of religion, in Gzhivkach – 4 hours of religion, in Laygoboly – 4 hours of religion, in Noviki – 2 hours of religion and in Slavitchi – 2 hours of religion<sup>383</sup>.

Apart from military activity on the territory of the parish there was also the activity of catechization. On the basis of the achieve photos from 1943 and 1944 we can state that catechization at that time was led by the local Senior Priest Vincent Borsuk. The lessons in catechesis were conducted on the territory of the parish till 1945 up to the moment when the Senior Priest was arrested.

## 3. Religious societies and communities

In the period of foundation of the parish in Koptiovka there was legislated the Tertiary Congregation in the parish. The members who belonged to the Franciscan parish automatically were included to the parish in Koptiovka. They were the people who were religious and spiritually formed. By the reason of moving of some members of the Tertiarska

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<sup>383</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, s. 12-12v.

Congregation from Franciscan to Koptiovka parish there appeared some misunderstandings which were connected with Franciscan provinciality in Krakow and the Metropolis Curia in Vilnius. But the short period before the Second World II didn't produce any tension or misunderstanding in this matter.

In the parish of Koptiovstchizna there also existed the Live Rosary and the Knighthood of the Immaculate. Those communities founded in the Franciscan parish were also added to the newly formed pastoral center in Koptiovstchizna.

## Chaplains

The particular assistants of the bishop are the Senior Priests, whom he, like to the other equal partners entrusts the care for the souls in the certain part of the diocese which he is responsible for. The Senior Priests (administrators) in the parish of Koptiovstchizna were; the parish organizers and the church, presbytery and other farm objects builders – priest Yan Chrabashch, priest Izydor Shushko and priest Vincent Borsuk. For better getting to know the particular chaplains - Senior Priests, there would be added their biographies and life accounts.

Priest Yan Chrabashch was born on the 20th of October 1906 in Jakubuv in Imielno parish in powiat Jendzhiovsky in the family of Ignatsy and Karolina, maiden name Faryno. In 1927 he finished gymnasia in Jendzhejov, then entered Spiritual Seminary in Vilnius, studying at the same time at the Theological Department of Stephan Batory University. He was sanctified on the 4th of July 1933 in Vilnius Cathedral from the hands of the bishop Romuald Jalbzhukovsky. The primicium Mass was served on the 18th of July 1933 in the parish church in Imieln. After the chaplain sanctification he was appointed vicar in the parish of Porozovo in Volkovysk deanship and from the 30th of March 1935 he was a vicar in Fara Cathedral in Grodno. On the 4th of July 1936 he was appointed the administrator and organizer of the newly-formed parish in Koptiovstchizna.

He also led pastoral activity on the territory of the parish. On the 28th of April 1939 he was appointed the chaplain of the Polish Army reserve as a captain, served in the 2nd Regiment of Grochovsky cavalry named after General Joseph Dvernitsky, and later in the cavalry Brigade in Suvalki. After the busting of the war as a chaplain he took part in war military activities, was awarded with the Battle Cross and nominated among 29 rewarded chaplains for taking part in September military campaign. He finished the campaign in the battle near Kotskie, where he escaped the imprisonment. He came back to the parish in Koptiovstchizna. He was accused by the secret NKWD members that he was the chaplain of

the Polish Army and he was threatened with the arrest. He hid himself in Lapy. There in April 1940 he was arrested and imprisoned in Bialystok. In December of that same year he was transferred to the camp in Archangelsk region. From there his two letters came to the parish house in Koptiovka. After the bursting of Soviet-German war in June 1941 he reached the Polish Army which was forming under the leadership of General Vladislav Anders in Buzuluk. He was appointed to Lvov Infantry Division and nominated the chaplain of the 17th Infantry regiment. At the beginning of 1942 the formed Polish Army was transformed to Uzbekistan, where there were very difficult climate conditions, among people who were weakened by the camp regime and the exile, they were attacked by severe diseases: typhus, jaundice, malaria and dysentery. He got ill with typhus, died on the 26th of March 1942 in Szachrizabs, at the foot of the Pamir in Uzbekistan. His family knew nothing about his destiny up till the year 1988, his parents had been waiting for their son's return up till their death.

In the church of Koptiovka there is a memorial plate devoted to priest Yan of the following content: "Priest Yan Chrabasch was born in 1906 in Jakubuv, Imielno parish. He was ordained to priesthood in 1933 in Vilnius, the Senior Priest of Koptiovka parish near Grodno, the chaplain of the 4th cavalry Regiment. He was arrested in 1940, exiled to Archangelsk, died in 1942 in Uzbekistan at the age of 36, on the 9th year of priesthood. The parish people of Koptiovka"<sup>384</sup>.

The second following Senior Priest in Koptiovka was priest Izydor Slychko. Priest Izydor Slychko, a son of Yan was born in 1871, got private education, taught independently. In 1889 applied for the exam in the Seminary in Orlov.

In 1891 he entered Vilnius Spiritual Seminary. After graduating from the Seminary in 1895 he was sanctified as a chaplain by the bishop Ludvik Zdanovitch, Vilnius safragan. In that same year he was appointed the vicar in the parish Kzhemienitsa in Volkovysk district in Grodno region by the administrator of Vilnius diocese. On the 29th of April 1897 he was appointed the Senior Priest in Vyshki, Belsky deanship by the bishop Antony Andzhievitch, and on the 25th of August 1899 he was appointed the Senior Priest in Krynky, Grodno deanship. It is known that at the end of the 30ties he was a resident in the Franciscan convent in Grodno. Grodno dean Albin Jarosevitch in agreement with Curia appoint priest Izydor the Senior Priest of the parish of Koptiovstchizna because that parish was without a chaplain.

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<sup>384</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-19059, s. 3-27; APK, Teczka nr 2. *Akta personalne kaplanów pracujących w parafii Koptiovka*, s. 1- 27; R. D z w o n k o w s k i, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego represjonowanego w ZSRS 1939 – 1988*, Lublin 2004, s. 165-166.

According to the protocol book of the premarriage, the event took place somewhere in December or at the beginning of January of 1940, he had been living in the parish house.

At the end of May 1942 the Germans wanted to arrest priest Izydor, but he saved himself by escape. Later priest Izydor Slychko in 1948 was a resident at the church of St. Stanislav the bishop and martyr in Bialystok<sup>385</sup>.

Priest Vincent Borsuk a son of Michal and Michalina, maiden name Ivastchuk was born on the 7th of July 1898 in the village Olishki, Bialystok district. He was the third Senior Priest of Koptiovka parish.

He was baptized in the parish church in Chorosiny. He attended primary school in Barshchev, he finished secondary school in Bialystok. In 1921 he entered the Spiritual Seminary in Vilnius where in June 1925 got the sacrament of priesthood from the hands of Archbishop Jezhy Matulevitch. He was sent to the parish of Vidzy where he worked up till 1927, then for a year he was a vicar in one of the parishes in Vilnius. In December 1928 he got an appointment as a Senior Priest in the parish Krulevstchizna, where after two years he changed his place of work for the similar position in the parish of Benitsa. He worked there up till 1935. In May of that year he was sent to the parish Dokshitsy and in October 1936 to the parish Turgiele. In April of the following year he was appointed the Senior Priest of the parish Small Bzostovitsa. In November 1940 he came to the parish Bzostovitsa Great and fulfilled there the responsibilities of the Senior Priest up till November 1941 and later from the 29th of June 1942 he worked in Koptiovstchizna. On the 30th of July 1945 priest Vincent was arrested by the agents of NKWD. On the 29th of 1946 he was sentenced to 8 years of camps, he was deprived of the right to the citizenship for 3 years and his possession was confiscated. He was freed in April 1948 and deported to Poland.

After coming back to Poland – Bialystok, he addressed he ordinary Archbishop Romuald Jalbzykovsky, The ordinary sent him to the work in Warminsk Diocese. On the 29th of April he was appointed the Senior Priest in the parish of St. Yan the Apostle in Zhegoty and the administrator in the parish of St. Mihal in Branky in the parish of Assumption of the Holy Virgin in Prosioty. From the 20th of August 1948 he was the administrator of the parish of St. Stanislav the bishop and martyr in Franknov. From October priest Vincent settled in Frankov for good, reaching with the pastoral service to the parish Prosioty, Blanki and Zhegoty. From

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<sup>385</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-18728, s. 5, 8; BLAN, sygn. F. 318-26112, s. 3-4; APK, Teczka nr 2. *Akta personalne kapłanów pracujących w parafii Kopciówka*, s. 28-32.

the 20th of January 1950 priest Vincent was dismissed from the duties of the administrator in Zhegoty and Blanki.

From the 25th of May 1951 priest Vincent was appointed the Senior Priest of the parish of St. Stanislav in Franknov. That duty he fulfilled for many years up till the moment when on the 15th of January 1965 he got the decree, releasing him from the duty of the Senior Priest of the parish and he stayed there on the condition of the resident.

On the 30th of April 1967 he was appointed the administrator in the parish of St. Jacob and the chaplain of Sisters Katazhinky in Bartolty.

On the 31st of 1975 he was dismissed from the duties of administrator in Bartolty and for two years lived in Ignalino Runovo. From the 30th of May 1977 he goes to the House of Retied Priests in Orneta. From there he goes to become the chaplain of Sharitki sisters in the locality Stogy near Malbork and there he works up till the end of his days. Priest Vincent passed away on the 31st of January 1980.

He was buried on the cemetery near Malbork. In spring 1982 sisters Sharitki realizing the wish of their late chaplain and also the desire of the parish people in Franknov made the exhumation of the remains of the late priest Vincent and moved it to the cemetery in the parish Franknovo, where the late priest worked longer than anywhere. On the tomb of the dead priest there is the following note:

“Priest Vincent Borsuk, the chaplain of Vilnus Diocese, long-year Senior Priest in Franknovo, died on the 1st of February 1980 in Malbork”<sup>386</sup>.

## 5. Office

The majority of cases connected with the functioning of the pastoral life were arranged in the office. There came the parish people to arrange the date of the Baptizing, Marriage or Funeral. On the 20th of July 1936 priest Chrabasch, the Senior Priest of the parish addressed the Metropolis curia in Vilnius with a request about sending him the office books, in particular: “The Book of Baptizing registrations, the Book of the death registration, the Book of the Marriages, the Book of premarital protocols and the Book of the new believers”. After that date there were founded the parish books<sup>387</sup>. From August 1936 up till 1938 there were sent the duplicates to the Curia in Vilnius. After getting away the Senior Priest from the

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<sup>386</sup> Warmińskie Archiwum Archidiecezjalne w Olsztynie, Teczka personalna. *Ks. Wincenty Borsuk*; APK, Teczka nr 2. *Akta personalne kapłanów pracujących w parafii Kopciówka*, s. 33-42; R. D z w o n k o w s k i, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego represjonowanego w ZSRS 1939 – 1988*, s. 136-137.

<sup>387</sup> BLAN, sygn. F. 318-21358, lp. 32.

parish house and occupying the place for the duty-post by the Germans, he had to stay at the places of the parish people, running away of priest Slutchko, in the last moment escaping the arrest by Gestapo and the arresting of priest Borsuk on the 30th of July 1945 by the NKWD and organizing in the parish house the hospital lead to the situation that the parish books and the library of priest Chrabastch were completely destroyed.

On the documents coming from the parish and found in different archives we can come across the parish seals: a round seal with a figure of God's Mother in the middle and the note around it in Latin: "Eccl.Par.Assumptionis, B. Mariae V. in Koptiovstchizna", a round seal with a cross in the middle and the note around it in Polish: "Parafia Rz.-Kat.W Kopciowszczyznie". There were also used oval seals, so-call top seals with the note in Polish of the following content: "Archidiecezja Wilenska Proboszcz Kosciola Wniebowzieceia N. M. Panny w Kopciowszczyznie, Dn ...19... Kopciowszczyzna pow. Grodzienski"<sup>388</sup>.

## Conclusion

The period is very short, the years 1936 – 1945, and it is covering only one of the stages in the history of the Roman – Catholic in Koptiovka. It covers the period of foundation of the new parish and the period of the Second World War. Careful analyses of that stormy history of the local Church, shows us the dynamics of the pastoral activity which was carried out there.

But still the presented research gives us the picture of the life and pastoral activity of Koptiovka parish from the moment of its foundation up till the end of the Second World War.

Into the parish were included the villages which earlier belonged to Kvasovka, Indura, parishes and Franciscan Grodno parish. The choice of that location was decided by the central placement of Koptiovstchizna in comparison with the other places.

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<sup>388</sup> AFG, Teczka. *Korespondencja zwiqzana ze ślubami, chrztami i pogrzebami za lata 1944-1951.*

## Mystery Crown. Community on the way to the Kingdom of Heaven

### Building of the church as microcosm

Life of every Christian community centres around one most important place being the church; it is here that the Gospel is preached and the Eucharist and other sacraments are celebrated and it is here that Jesus forms His disciples and sends them. The final destination which one is formed for and sent to is the Kingdom of Heaven<sup>389</sup>. Thus there is a theological connection between the building of the church and the Kingdom of Heaven. Already in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite claimed that the building of the church should be understood as an image of the heavenly Church<sup>390</sup>. As the House of God, the church is also the most appropriate place to keep the images of saints, i.e. icons which are a sign of the eschatological reality, the communion of saints<sup>391</sup>. An Eastern Orthodox Christian feels disappointed on entering empty and cold places of worship (e.g. Protestant churches) which lack any sacred representations. There is no beauty around him and no saints, he cannot see heaven and is deprived of spiritual space...<sup>392</sup>

In the tradition of Eastern Christianity, the church building is of mystical significance as it reflects the order of the universe: the nave represents the Earth and the vault represents heaven, with the apse joining the two realities. The design of the seminary chapel of Our Lady Queen of Poland in the Archdiocesan Missionary Seminary 'Redemptoris Mater' in Młociny, Warsaw, attempts to reflect the Divine order and the experience of God while following a 'new aesthetics' proposed by a well-known Spanish painter and the initiator of the

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<sup>389</sup> Por. KKK, nr 1198; J. A. Jungmann, *Sprawowanie liturgii*, Kraków 1992, s. 79; R. Walczak, *Symbolika i wystrój świątyni chrześcijańskiej*, Poznań 2005, s. 16.

<sup>390</sup> Architektury sakralnej już we wczesnym chrześcijaństwie nie pojmowano jedynie w aspekcie funkcjonalnym, to znaczy jako miejsca sprawowania liturgii, lecz w sensie teologiczno-kosmologicznym: bryła kościoła obrazowała świat (gr. *kosmos*). Taką symboliczną interpretację budowli dawali liczni autorzy wczesnochrześcijańscy. Zob. Pseudo Dionizy Areopagita, *Hierarchia niebiańska*, przeł. M. Dzielska, w: Tegoż, *Pisma teologiczne*, t. 2, Kraków 1999; R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, Harmondsworth 1975; M. Bielawski, *Mikro teologie*, Kraków 2008, s. 133; A. Różycka Bryzek, *Malarstwo bizantyńskie jako wykładnia prawd wiary*, „Summarius”, Sprawozdania Towarzystwa Naukowego KUL, 22-23 (42-43), 1997, s. 121 – 140.

<sup>391</sup> V. Gatti, *Liturgia e arte*, Bologna 2002, s. 53.

<sup>392</sup> P. Evdokimov, *Sztuka ikony. Teologia piękna*, Warszawa 2003, s. 125.

Neocatechumenal Way, Kiko Argüello<sup>393</sup>. The seminary chapel was built on an octagonal plan and thus reminds of ancient Christian central-plan buildings and especially of *Anastasis* and baptisteries<sup>394</sup>. The inner chancel area was symbolically separated with concentrically installed panels in the upper part, underneath the vault. Paintings on these panels, each with a surface area of approximately 9 square metres (135 square metres in total), surround the main area in the chapel, which is around the altar, and are a distant echo of an iconostasis<sup>395</sup>.

The chapel creates a perfect atmosphere for contemplation. On this point, questions should be asked about how from the perspective of new evangelisation to perceive the phenomenon of contemporary religious art and the pastoral phenomenon of praying in front of icons in an increasingly commercialised and secularised world. In order to answer these questions one needs to take a wider perspective on phenomena dominating contemporary visual culture.

### **Universal meaning of the image in culture**

In today's culture, where the aim is to 'see' and 'have', the image plays a key role. What many a time reappears in the most important texts of culture is the term *pictorial turn*<sup>396</sup>, being a response to the previous *linguistic turn* of the 1960s and 1970s (based on the linguistic philosophy of Wittgenstein, structuralism of Levi-Strauss and Foucault, hermeneutics of Ricoeur and Gadamer and grammatology of Derrida). The essence of *pictorial turn* is that images in today's culture create a point of reference not only in philosophical investigations but above all in numerous important culture phenomena. Forms and visual media are copied on an unprecedented scale today. This is not only about photographs, advertisements or TV programmes but about almost everything physical and visible; very different objects (e.g. clothes, body or interior design) convey specific meanings

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<sup>393</sup> [http://ekai.pl/wydarzenia/temat\\_dnia/x21751/freski-kiko-w-seminarium/](http://ekai.pl/wydarzenia/temat_dnia/x21751/freski-kiko-w-seminarium/).

<sup>394</sup> Wczesne chrześcijaństwo przyjęło antyczną i biblijną tradycję symboliki liczb. Budownictwo sakralne aż do czasów współczesnych znajduje się pod silnym wpływem tej symboliki. Zob. M. Gout, *Il simbolismo nelle cattedrali medievali*, Roma 2004, s. 31.

<sup>395</sup> Malowidła te są odzwierciedleniem świętecznego rzędu ikonostasu – tzw. *prazdników*; tworzą zespół, złożony z kilkunastu, najczęściej dwunastu, scen ilustrujących historię życia Jezusa i Maryi. Obejmują najważniejsze wydarzenia ewangeliczne wzbogacone o fakty przekazane przez tradycję apokryficzną, od Narodzin Maryi począwszy, a na Jej Zaśnięciu skończywszy. Stanowią w ten sposób skrótową prezentację historii ewangelicznej, rozumianej jako *historia sacra*, nieustannie wspomnianej i urzeczywistnianej w cyklu roku liturgicznego.

<sup>396</sup> Twórcą terminu jest W. J. T. Mitchell. Zob. *The Pictorial Turn*, w: tegoż *Picture Theory. Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*, Chicago 1994; Historię tworzenia się kultury wizualnej przedstawia M. Drabek w artykule: *Kultura wizualna, czyli jaka? Nowy paradygmat wizualności*, w: „Kultura popularna” 1 (2009), s. 31-38.

and as is the case with traditional images, they reflect various cultural codes<sup>397</sup>. Visuality cannot be reduced to art. On the contrary, one is free to and should see it in every aspect of social life<sup>398</sup>. That is why images, seeing, visuality or scopic regime are becoming a central topic in the humanities and creating a modern branch of reflection being *Visual Culture Studies*.

Today, images and other elements of visual culture are treated by the Church more and more as 'gifts of God' which serve to propagate the Gospel, raise the faithful and promote Christian values. Since images to a great extent create reality, the Church uses them (sometimes as a last resort) much more knowingly to reach people with the message of the Gospel<sup>399</sup>.

The outlined phenomenon of 'imagecentrism', as it is culture-wide, should not be missing in pastoral theological reflections and especially in actions aimed at bringing the Gospel's content closer to the increasingly secularised world, the world which is more and more focusing its attention on various screens and visualisations. After all, it is the proclaiming of the Kingdom that has been at the core of the preaching of the Gospel since the dawn of Christianity<sup>400</sup>.

### **New aesthetics. Mystery Crown**

Goals and tasks in the liturgy and art of Eastern Christianity have always been understood in a solemn and mystical manner. In byzantine churches all arts combined together: monumental architecture, mosaics and paintings on walls and vaults, pictures, smell of incense, liturgical vessels and vestments as well as rites and songs with their lyrics and melodies – all that was to bring aesthetic pleasure, thereby raising souls to God. This art has always been thoroughly theological<sup>401</sup>.

The discussed aesthetics, which combines new and old content and new and old forms, is followed by the paintings in the chapel of the Archdiocesan Missionary Seminary

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<sup>397</sup> W tym przedmiocie pojawił się szereg prac autorstwa m.in. Victora Turnera: *Las symboli. Aspekty rytuałów u ludu Ndembu*, Kraków 2007, (*The Forest of symbols. Aspects of Ndembu ritual*, 1967); *Proces rytualny. Struktura i antystruktura*, Warszawa 2010, (*The Ritual Process. Structure and Anti-structure* 1969); *Obraz i pielgrzymka w kulturze chrześcijańskiej*, Kraków 2009, (*Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* 1978); *Gry społeczne, pola i metafory. Symboliczne działanie w społeczeństwie*, Kraków 2005, (*Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society*, 1974); *Od rytuału do teatru. Powaga zabawy*, Warszawa 2005, (*From Ritual to Theatre. The Human Seriousness of Play*, 1982); *Antropologia widowiskowa*, Warszawa 2008 (*The Anthropology of Performance* 1986); *Antropologia doświadczenia*, Kraków 2009.

<sup>398</sup> Por. N. Elias, *Przemiany obyczajów w cywilizacji Zachodu*, przeł. T. Zabłodowski, Warszawa 1980.

<sup>399</sup> Papieska Rada ds. Środków Społecznego Przekazu. Instrukcja duszpasterska *Communio et progressio* (nr 2, 48). Zob. <http://www.kns.gower.pl/stolica/communio.htm>.

<sup>400</sup> W. Kawecki, *Ewangelia w obrazach. Teologia w obrazach Caravaggia*, Sandomierz 2012, s. 3 n.

<sup>401</sup> P. Evdokimov, dz. cyt., s. 153.

‘Redemptoris Mater’ in Młociny, Warsaw (created between 2009 and 2010)<sup>402</sup>. They are a contemporary realisation in paint which directly refers to canonical icon forms. In the centre of the chapel a ‘Mystery Crown’ is placed. It is composed of the icon of Christ Pantocrator and 14 other icons depicting scenes from life of Jesus and Mary, from the Annunciation to Jesus’ Ascension and the Dormition of the Theotokos. The image of Christ Pantocrator is accompanied by quotations written on a page of an open Gospel book: ‘Love your enemies’ (Mt 5, 44) and ‘I am coming soon’ (Ap 22, 20)<sup>403</sup>.

The Mystery Crown in Kiko’s conception follows the iconographic canon of the Eastern Christianity and aspires to be a bridge between the art of the East and the West (the artist also refers in his works to the paintings of Picasso, Braque and Matisse). The paintings are by Italians, Spaniards and Chileans who are icon painters, renowned artists or sometimes even academic teachers of fine arts. On 4 August 2009, the painters received a special sending, i.e. a blessing from the ordinary of Warsaw, Archbishop Kazimierz Nycz. During the ceremony of blessing the metropolitan bishop of Warsaw, having read out a special prayer, imposed hands on each of the painters kneeling in front of him and asked for the gift of the Holy Spirit for them<sup>404</sup>.

The art by Kiko carries a deep evangelical message; on a soteriological level, Kiko treats this art as a ‘holy action’, thereby evoking the traditions of Orthodox iconographers, who start each day together with Lauds and Eucharist, end the day with Vespers and fast on Fridays on bread and water. That is because before starting to paint on a wooden board, the monk brings the icon into existence in himself through prayer, silence and asceticism. With a cleaned look and heart he can create an image of a transfigured world. *Hermeneia* (a book on the art of icon painting) from Mount Athos advises the monk to pray in tears, so that God permeates his soul, and to ask the priest to pray for him and recite the hymn of Transfiguration<sup>405</sup>. In Kiko’s opinion, the painting of icons according to the canons is the preaching of the Gospel with one’s own life and the contemplating of the Saviour’s icon is the way of salvation<sup>406</sup>.

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<sup>402</sup> Czas powstania młocińskich malowideł wyznaczają ramy: 4 sierpnia 2009 (uroczyste liturgiczne posłanie – błogosławieństwo udzielone przez abpa K. Nycza artystom w katedrze św. Jana w Warszawie) - 3 maja 2010 roku (poświęcenie kaplicy przez abpa K. Nycza z udziałem założycieli Drogi: Kiko Argüello, Carmen Hernandez oraz o. Mario Pezzi).

<sup>403</sup> Słowa te stanowią jądro Nowego Testamentu oraz zachętę do wytrwałości. Zob. *San Bartolomeo in Tuto. Parafia na trzecie tysiąclecie. Kościół i korona tajemnic*, b.a., Roma – Lublin 2006, s. 52.

<sup>404</sup> <http://www.liturgia.pl/node/8863>.

<sup>405</sup> Dionizjusz z Furny, *Hermeneja czyli objaśnienie sztuki malarzkiej*, przeł. I. Kania, red. M. Smorąg Różycka, Kraków 2003, s. 9.

<sup>406</sup> <http://www.liturgia.pl/node/8863>.

### **Pastoral theological dimension**

In the Introduction to his book *Kościółowi w Polsce powiedz... Refleksja teologiczno pastoralna*, ks. prof. Edmund Robek rightly notices that the Church: 'Is a living organism of both Divine and human character which not only acts but also thinks and feels. And so the Church requires a constant control over what is human. What helps the Church here is also the pastoral theology. Pastoral theologians study the Church, try to make a correct diagnosis of its current condition and ceaselessly search for ways and means which are the best for the community of the Church to fulfil its salvific mission'<sup>407</sup>. I believe that the above outlined studies and attempts by the pastoral theology as well as the need for a 'good pastoral job' being done<sup>408</sup> – as mentioned elsewhere by ks. Robek – is where the 'new aesthetics' comes in. It is based on the tradition of icon painting imbued with the spirit of new evangelisation, whose soteriological character is defined by Kiko Argüello.

The icons of the Mystery Crown evoke spiritual space and become part of the visual space: pictures, seeing, visuality and scopic regime. It is now the time to give some thought to their place in the pastoral theological reflection. Generally speaking, pictures, paintings, sculptures, photographs and films do not simply reflect reality but they touch on life to the extent in which they are composed of elements taken from the human nature. Moreover, the said works are a point of reference to build man's relation to God; they reach the sources of human dynamism in such a way that man senses and interprets the direction, in which the mankind should develop. The space of visual culture should be perceived from the point of view of theology, as *locus theologicus*, and from other than theological point of view, as a form of aesthetisation, advice and warning<sup>409</sup>. In such a case, the objects of visual culture should be considered as particularly useful means of spiritual and moral progress; of course the differentiation between the artistic value of a work and the nobleness of moral good is rough but both these values do not contradict but supplement and strengthen each other<sup>410</sup>. Images acquire spiritual significance in their anthropological and theological dimension, as they aim at generating direct religious experience. Works of visual culture should be judged by their significance and human values, since beauty attracts the mind spontaneously. This

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<sup>407</sup> E. Robek, *Kościółowi w Polsce powiedz... Refleksja teologiczno pastoralna*, Warszawa 2009, s. 19.

<sup>408</sup> E. Robek, *Wprowadzenie*, „Warszawskie Studia Pastoralne” 12/2010, s. 6.

<sup>409</sup> Pius XII, *Przemówienie do uczestników Międzynarodowego Zjazdu w Rzymie poświęconego sprawom filmu*, 28 X 1955.

<sup>410</sup> Papieska Rada ds. Środków Społecznego Przekazu. Instrukcja duszpasterska *Communio et progressio* (nr 4, 57). Zob. <http://www.kns.gower.pl/stolica/communio.htm>.

allows man to get to know himself better, which is of a great importance not only in the field of art but also in the field of morals and religion<sup>411</sup>.

Therefore a question should be raised about how in today's world to formulate (present, illustrate etc.) kerygma, which is strictly connected with the institution of the Church, and how to preach the Gospel so that the Church, which proclaims the Kingdom, could to the greatest possible extent become the Church which represents and gives vision of the Kingdom of God<sup>412</sup>. In order to effectively proclaim the Kingdom – as rightly noted by Boris Bobrinskoy – one should have the Church in his heart first<sup>413</sup>. In the New Covenant, the Church ought to be a community on the way to the Kingdom of Heaven. The problem of culture studies implemented in the pastoral reflection can be thus also deemed as a kind of action with a view to preventing the disturbing clash outlined by Alfred Loisy: 'Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom and what came is the Church'<sup>414</sup>. The problem is therefore that the Church should represent the Kingdom of God to the greatest possible extent. If so, then the Christian visual culture has a concrete offer, because the image and art acquire spiritual significance in their anthropological and theological dimension, as they aim at generating direct religious experience. The image and art, which serves the image, perfectly fit into the logic of God's presence in the Church and at the same time are a kind of an 'anamnesis', reminiscing about Jesus Christ proclaiming the Kingdom which has already come.

### **Recapitulation**

Who dares deny that television and the Internet have changed customs of most modern societies which use their services or even changed the perception of the world around us? We have to be aware of that the control over the flow and reception of images today comes down to exerting influence on religious and spiritual life of viewers in a more or less obvious way and may in certain cases be poisonous for this life. Confronted with modern art we are seldom left indifferent. However, old art – and especially its western variety – also carries many dangers as it conveys images which do not correspond with the truths of faith because of earthly naturalism or sentimentalism, infantilism, sensuality etc. Fortunately, Christian art may give an alternative to the consumerist visual culture which prevails nowadays. That,

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<sup>411</sup> Por. Paweł VI, *Przemówienie do ludzi teatru, kina, radia i telewizji oraz wszystkich innych pracujących w dziedzinie społecznego przekazu*, 6 V 1967.

<sup>412</sup> Por. J 14, 8-9: „Rzekł do Niego Filip: Panie pokaż nam Ojca, a to nam wystarczy. Odpowiedział mu Jezus: Filipie, tak długo jestem z wami, a jeszcze Mnie nie poznałeś? Kto Mnie zobaczył, zobaczył także i Ojca”

<sup>413</sup> B. Bobrinskoy, *Życie liturgiczne*, przeł. J. Dembska, Warszawa 2004, s. 14.

<sup>414</sup> *Jésus annonçait le royaume, et c'est L'Église qui est venue*. Cyt. za: M. Czajkowski, *Wprowadzenie*, w: *Spotkania z Bogiem w Kościele*, t. 2, J. Charytański i in., Warszawa 1991, s. 54.

however, depends on the vision proposed by the artist and on the viewer, who recreates the image according to his inner perception of the world.

Authentic religious art is said to convey the truths of faith. A famous Catholic monk, Thomas Merton, wrote that ‘in the sacred image, material elements find spiritual harmony which has been lost since the whole world fell with Adam; images become as it were the vehicle of the Holy Spirit, and furnish Him with an occasion to reach souls with His hidden, spiritual power (...). A piece of art should be authentically spiritual, truly traditional and artistically living (...). Without these fundamental characteristics a piece of religious art remains spiritually dead. Contemplation and love of such pieces of art have devastating results on the spirit. It is exactly the same as if someone ate spoiled food’<sup>415</sup>. The ‘new aesthetics’ proposed by Kiko and realised in the Mystery Crown in the chapel of ‘Redemptoris Mater’ seminary in Warsaw bears a clear soteriological hallmark and seems to follow all Merton’s instructions. Thus it is in line with the postulate of new evangelisation and at the same time satisfies the postulates of contemporary visual culture<sup>416</sup>.

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<sup>415</sup> Cyt. za: M. Quenot, *Zmartwychwstanie i ikona*, przeł. H. Paprocki, Białystok 2001, s. 13.

<sup>416</sup> KKK nr 1192: „Święte obrazy obecne w naszych kościołach i domach mają budzić i umacniać wiarę w misterium Chrystusa. Przez ikonę Chrystusa i Jego zbawczych dzieł wielbimy Jego samego”.

## GOD'S AND HUMAN'S SECRET OF CONFESSION

In the sacrament of penance „there are two rights only God possesses: the glory of accepting the faith and the power expressed in forgiving. Therefore it is He whom we should confess our transgressions, and from Him we should await forgiveness. Only God may forgive our sins and only to Him we should confess them.”<sup>417</sup> These words of the blessed Isaac allow to look at penance through the prism of the direct relationship between man and God. First, however, the matter of sin needs to be resolved.

### Sin

The definition of sins says, that it is a voluntary and conscious action of man that is against God's laws.<sup>418</sup> Therefore, sin is a transgression against God himself, but not a complete rejection of Him. Through sin man evades God's laws, set by his own interest, but still retains his personal link with God. This is the condition of confessing one's sins to God. The ability to confess sins, regret for having done evil, accepting forgiveness and penance are possible thanks to keeping the basic personal link between man and God. And this is the proper definition (term) of the nature of sin. Sin is a violation of God's laws, however the sinner still remains in a personal link with God.

However the definition of sin must not lack the element of the human persona – sin is human's action against himself, but is not self-destructive.<sup>419</sup> Through sin man limits his potential of that, which is divine in him, but also limits his natural abilities and slow the development of his human nature. However, sin does not destroy one's identity of being a human being and does not deprive him of his personal dignity and that is why man is able to confess his sin, regret them, accept God's forgiveness and make penance.

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<sup>417</sup> Bl. Isaac, *Kazanie 11*, in: *Liturgia Godzin*, t. 4, pp. 182-184 (*Chrystus nie odpuszcza grzechów poza Kościołem*). Benedict XVI taught, that „confession of sin – *confessio peccati*, to use St Augustine's words, should always be accompanied by *confessio laudis* – confession of glory. By asking for forgiveness for the evils committed in the past, we should remember about the good that was done by God's grace, which gave blessed fruit although being in put clay containers”. Benedict XVI, *Przemówienie podczas spotkania z duchowieństwem*, Warszawa 25 V 2006.

<sup>418</sup> Actions are understood as thought, word, deed and negligence (common confession). However, these are only general indicators, because action must be defined by everyone individually. For actions are an emotional state, feeling, lust and feeling of being lost. It can thus be said, that every verb and most adjectives can be used to describe man's action.

<sup>419</sup> Sin is „the love of self, advanced so much that it becomes contempt towards God”, but is not a complete rejection of God and does not break the link between man and God. St Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 14, 28.

The normal order of spirituals life assumes the development of nature, on which grace is built. Human nature is subject to the laws of creation. Through the results of sin human nature in the earthly world changes because of passage of time. Man ages and this is an irreversible process. Failure of the body because of aging is burdensome, but does not deprive man of his sense of self – identity. This is a gift (grace) which is inalienable: to be the same person I was created as. The wonder (uncommonness) of being human means: always (for eternity) keep one's identity.

However, one questions arises: in the aspect of human nature, what can man do for himself out of his own will? The first that comes to mind is being conscientious about his life. This requires caring for his health, good wellbeing, but also means taking care of his basic needs. However the Gospel hints that man should change his perspective of caring of himself. Jesus stressed in his teachings that man is the health (worth) not for what he possesses, but for what he is. This is the source of the blessing of the poor. Here also is the call to take care of them.<sup>420</sup> However, poverty is not a starting point, but the finishing point.<sup>421</sup> Being poor does not mean relinquishing everything one possesses ( this is one of the basic conditions of accepting the special appeal to live a consecrated life), but is a goal to which man naturally tries to achieve. Just as holiness achieved in heroic martyrdom, so is complete poverty linked with full submission to the Creator's will something very special. Usually holiness (the heroism of virtues) is gained laboriously throughout one's whole life, and

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<sup>420</sup> „We should not judge the poor based on their clothing or looks, nor their spiritual attributes they seem to possess, as they often are uneducated and simple people. However, when you look at them in the light of faith, you will then see that they substitute for the Son of God who also wanted to be poor. In the times of his suffering he barely had the looks of a man. He seemed crazy to the Gentile, an insult to the Jews, but nonetheless He still called himself the apostle of the Gospel to the poor: «He sent Me, so that I could tell the Good News to the poor ». So should we share the same feeling and do the same as Christ did: take care of the poor, comfort them and offer them support. Christ wanted to be born poor, he took the poor as his students, He himself became a servant of the poor and wanted to share their situation so much, that he said, that He will experience good or evil when someone poor experiences them. Thus God, because He loves the poor, also loves those, who are merciful to the poor. For if one loves another human being, he also loves those, who are friendly and helpful toward him. Therefore we also have trust, that by being merciful to the poor we also are loved by God. Therefore, visiting them we should try to «understand the poor and the needing» and feel such great compassion for them, that we also feel the same the Apostle felt when He proclaimed he: «became everything for everyone». Full of compassion because of the misfortunes and nuisances, we ask God to give us the feeling of mercy and gentleness, full our hearts and keep them full”. From st Vincent a Paulo's works, *Epist. 2546, Correspondance, entretiens, documents*, Paris 1922-1925, s. 7.

<sup>421</sup> „«The blessed – he says – the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven». One could contemplate what type of poor Jesus spoke of by saying «the blessed poor», He did not explain how poverty should be understood. For it could seem, that to enter the kingdom of Heaven one only needs the lack, which many people experience as a result of a lasting and harsh necessity. However, by saying: «the blessed poor in spirit», the Lord showed that the kingdom of Heaven will be offered to those, who stand out as inner humility and not their lack of external goods.”. St Leon the Great, *Kazanie 95, 1-2*, w: *Liturgia Godzin*, t. 4, ss. 154-155 (*O błogosławieństwach*).

poverty, not always deserved, is a state of not possessing goods, which does not endanger in a big extent one's every day functioning.<sup>422</sup>

During the earthly life, in a normal situation, man tries to satisfy all his needs, including material needs. In unusual situations, when man is not able to satisfy his needs, he is endangered by poverty, material poverty as well. Striving to change this difficult situation does not only mean increasing one's material possession, for the priority should be to keep one's dignity of a human being, which is linked with respecting basic human values. Ignoring unusual situations, everyday existence requires man to make constant efforts to protect his possession and striving to obtain greater self-awareness of being a human. And it is sin that is a serious obstacle in achieving these goals. First of all, man constantly feels the temptation to obtain more material goods than he needs, which leads to greed. Possessing material goods is not a sin, but excessive enrichment may lead to sin. Sin also brings man fear from knowing himself deeper. This results in the changes in priority of everyday existence – more attention is paid to protecting one's possession than reaching personal self-awareness. Man may keep a proper hierarchy by himself: first personal development, and protecting his material goods after. This way man develops his nature, on which grace is built. It is possible under the condition that man preserves his basic link with God and protects his own identity. To achieve this he needs the confession of sin, regret, accepting forgiveness and restitution. This is a natural aspect of human life, in which the *spiritus movens* is grace.

Another aspect of sin is grace. St Augustine, explaining what grace is, first points towards man's imperfection. Man, despite his efforts, does not live a holy life, so that God can love it and say: Let us come down and bring help to other people, for they are worthy. In reality God did not like our lives. He did not like what we did. He only liked His own doing in us. That is why everything we do, He will reject, but save that, which is His creation.<sup>423</sup>

Grace is a gift of new life from God to man. This gift has a basic trait – it is unpredictable, which for man can only mean: useless, inadequate, burdensome. This is the negative side of this unpredictability. There is also a positive side of the unpredictability of God's grace: undeserved riches (treasure), satisfying all needs and deepest expectations, happiness of being gifted.

Grace, like any gift, is aimed at a specific person. However, it does not mean that grace tries to fit into human nature, or fill in the gaps in it. Grace brings into man's life love towards

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<sup>422</sup> Care, out of Gospel motives, for the poor only concerns those, who have found themselves in a situation with no way out. Reaching them requires sacrifice, and the help given to them has the nature of service.

<sup>423</sup> Św. Augustyn, *Kazanie 23 A, 1-4*, w: *Liturgia Godzin*, s. 392 (tom dodatkowy).

God, who is everything for man: life, light, salvation, food, drink. Grace does not add anything to human nature, but „hurts” it with love towards God, so that every can say with all honesty: „Show me the one, whom my soul loves”, because it is hurt with love.<sup>424</sup>

A man gifted with grace, because of his corruption of his nature by the original sin, is not able to see the greatness of the gift. However, just by accepting the gift of grace, he already shows respect to the donor. And the donor is God. Only He knows the true value of grace, and man receives grace as an incentive and Real help in his spirituals growth. Grace is aimed at man an accepted by him, becomes a new reality in his life, because it is a source of wisdom, life and light. God the Truth is the source of wisdom, the Donor of life is the source of life, the creator of light is the source of light. That is why man, accepting grace, should seek the world beyond the visible sources of truth, light and eternal life.<sup>425</sup> The only obstacle on this way, which must be constantly moped out of the way to these goals, is sin and its consequences.

Grace, having the trait of being an „excessive gift”, is always fruitful, but introduces a new value in man’s life – the gifted man becomes indebted to God without obligation. The lack of gratitude cannot be the fault of man alone. However, there is a non obliging way to repay the Donor – give himself to God as a gift. A man belonging to God still remains responsible for his life and his development. Affiliation with God guarantees the knowledge of His will. Here lies also one of the most important rules in human life: all human needs satisfied only in accordance with God’s will. This truth can be accepted with faith and man’s vocation can be realized with full subjection to God. Despite appearances it is an extraordinary path (constitutive holiness). This holiness changes man through the richness of grace, but also through the heroism in his actions.

On the other hand, in a normal situation man „tests” God’s will, often risking, making mistakes, by the way doing evil, simply sins. This is related to the concrete losses man suffers because of his sins. However, this situation does not block man’s path to holiness. The road to holiness is marked with predispositions for sin, that is why it can be called the road to subordinate holiness (accidental holiness). This holiness transforms man through the richness of grace, but does not directly influence his life. For earthly reality can exceed the aspect of moral interpretation and then opens itself for experimental acquisition of earthly wisdom by

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<sup>424</sup> Św. Kolumbian, *Nauka 13*, w: *Liturgia Godzin*, t. 4, s. 128 (*O Chrystusie, źródle życia*, 2-3).

<sup>425</sup> Tamże.

secular people, which also is an aspect of fulfilling God's unchangeable will.<sup>426</sup> In the experimental aspect of earthly wisdom every mistake brings with it new experiences and becomes a lesson for man. As a consequence it means that on the road to occidental holiness „failed” experiments are as equally important to the process as the ones that were successful. The faithful seculars, living in the world, even if they cannot positively answer to the grace of the Holy Spirit and subject himself to the „leadership of the spirit of the Gospel”,<sup>427</sup> they still verify God's truth in their everyday life, by receiving their often hard every day lessons in the school of life. Their life activities (thoughts, words, actions) can be morally judged, meaning separating good from evil, but everyday life brings with it painful existential experiences, in which they not only go against God's commandments (sin) not only unaware, but also willingly, but also human weakness, which can lead man to being lost (astray) on the road of life.<sup>428</sup> In such situations Christianity has the right to pray using the words of the breviary: „Lean over, Lord, over human misery, our sin and our weakness, which is not always a rebellion against You, but also human destitution. For we all most sincerely wish to follow the calling of News of Your grace; so have mercy, God, for us and have mercy for those, who have strayed away” (Friday Vespers hymn of the Week II).<sup>429</sup> It should thus be stressed, that on the first and second road to holiness man is exposed to committing sins and needs the sacramental grace of reconciliation and penance.

This way a question arises: in what way can man bring sin into the sphere of grace? Before an answer is given another aspect of sin needs to be considered, tied to the temptation of making grace a „due gift”. In such a situation man accepts grace and tries to make it his own possession. The gift, however, placed in the frames of human capabilities does not give spirituals fruits – grace becomes useless to the aim it is supposed to serve. In order to remain a gift, graces cannot be used only to satisfy man's needs or help him achieve his goals. Thanks

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<sup>426</sup> „Thus special is their task to put light on all earthly matters, with which they are strictly related and so direct them so that they constantly do and develop the teachings of Christ and serve the glory of the Creator and Savior” (II Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 31).

<sup>427</sup> Tamże.

<sup>428</sup> Zob. Na ten temat J. Przybyłowski, *Mądrość, wolność i łaska w formacji wiernych świeckich*, „Studia Włocławskie” 8(2005), s. 139-155.

<sup>429</sup> J.-L. Marion arguments this in an interesting way, by claiming that „the baptized cannot and should not act different only by the might of his priesthood, meaning taking into account the conversion of the world in himself. His words and actions gain value through the course of the conversion, drawing out its curve at the same. This curve can increase its value, but also fall down all the way to unfaithfulness. However, since none of the failures are incurable, never should a single mistake of a baptized man does not violate Christ's truth. It only shows the (temporary) limitations of the process of conversion. The mistake is bound to Christian life as unavoidably as sin, however no more than the latter. The baptized is subjected to mistake, since he converts a part of reality in himself. He should not be criticized for it by those who – willingly or not – do not have the same sense of reality. For reality has in itself adventure. J.-L. Marion, *Godność człowieka świeckiego*, „Communio” 1(1981) 6, p. 102.

to grace, man can, in every situation, learn God's will and make free and conscious decisions of its fulfillment in man's life. Learning one's own sins thus requires a deep look into his conscience, to discover the thoughts, words, action and negligence, which are against God's will. In this is also manifested the individual character of God's law towards every man. God's Law is the same for everyone. However, it is God's will that individualizes the requirements of God's Law towards every man.<sup>430</sup> Thus, if sin is treated as a result of not fulfilling God's will in everyday life, the sphere of grace, in which the sacramental confession of sins and penance are made, first defines man himself. It can be said, that the sacrament of penance, having the power of God's merciful love, is a calling of a particular man to continue the individual relationship with God. In every man there is something that only belongs to God and it cannot be destroyed. That is why sin does not deprive Man of his link with God. Sin does not break the link with God also because the sacrament of penance would not be able to repair that relation. Another truth should also be assumed that human freedom, however not fully autonomous, allows for a complete rejection of God. It is not about a one-time act, but also a conscious destruction of human nature, created in the image of God.<sup>431</sup> Rejecting God brings with it the devastation of nature, which will not be rebuilt by grace. In this situation only God's intervention can change everything and God cannot be limited in this intervention.

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<sup>430</sup> Sin as „disobedience” means crossing the mentioned barrier, which for will and human freedom of man as a created being becomes uncrossable. For God-Creator is the only and final source of moral order in a world created by Him. Man cannot out of himself determine what is good and what is evil – he cannot: „know good and evil as God does”. In the created world *God* remains the first and sovereign *source of deciding of good and evil* through the inner power of existence, being the reflection of *The Word*, which is the consubstantial and eternal Son of God. The created in God's image human becomes gifted by the Spirit of Truth with *conscience*, so that can faithfully reflect his Original, which is both eternal Wisdom and Law, the source of order in man and the world. „Disobedience” as a matter of the original sin of man means the *rejection of this source*, so that man alone can become the only and autonomous source of deciding what is good and what is bad. The Spirit, which „penetrates God's deepness”, He – who is at the same time light for human conscience and the source of his moral order – knows the deepest the dimension of sin which is inscribed in the secret of human beginnings. John Paul II, encyclical *Dominum et Vivificantem* 13 V 2011, 36.

<sup>431</sup> „According to the testimony of the beginning, which we read in all of the Bible, the first (and fullest) mention is in the *Book of Genesis*, sin in its original form is understood as «disobedience», which means an increase and direct *transgression of God's prohibitions* (cf. *Gen 2:16*). At the same time, however, in the light of the full context it is evident, that the roots of this disobedience are deep in the whole ontic situation of man. The appointed to life human – man and woman – is a creature. «God's Image», relies on rationality and freedom, speaks of the greatness and dignity of the human subject, which is a person. At the same this *Personal subject* is always only *creature*; in his existence and essence is dependant of the Creator. According to the *Book of Genesis* „«the tree of the knowledge of good and evil» was supposed to express and constantly remind man of the «borders» impassable to God's creations. In this meaning God's prohibition should be understood: the Creator prohibits man and woman from consuming the fruits of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Words of persuasion, meaning temptation, formulated in the Bible's text coax to go against this prohibition — to *cross the lines* of this «border»: „ For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil » (*Gen 3:5*)”. John Paul II, encyclical *Dominum et Vivificantem* 13 V 2011, 36.

### **The sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation**

In a normal situation sin introduces very dangerous limitations to man's life. The road to liberation from sin leads through the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. If man is to make penance for his sins he cannot act basing on human rights, because penance requires entering a direct relationship between the sinner and God. Thus if there are opinions that man could make penance for his sins without this relation they undermine the meaning of sin as well as the meaning of penance and reconciliation. In this context it cannot be agreed that it is more appropriate for man to confess his sins in his heart, in the deepness of his conscience, without the sacramental help of the priest. God must experience the glory that comes from the act of confessing sin, and that is only possible through the sacramental confession.

Glorifying God, however, cannot be done at the cost of man's dignity. The confession of sin does not humiliate man if he does it in front of God whose glory he finds in others. By glorifying God through the confession of sins thus means leaning over man, in which God show his glory. However, the priest, the confessor, must be aware, that he is touching the wounded heart of man and at the same time witnesses the secret of the meeting between man and God. The sinner comes to God to grieve his losses caused by sinning and its results, but the priest, in a noticeable way, show him God's will – your sins are forgiven. That, which is the essence of the sacrament is done in the sinner-God relation and the source of the grace of forgiving sins is a sacrifice for Christ. His Blood washes the sinner in the sacrament of penance and reconciliation. The sinner, after being forgiven, is enriched with the grace of God's legacy.

In the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation it is important to make a distinction between revelation and representation of God. The only Human, who was a representation of God, was Jesus Christ. However, every human may only reflect God's glory. Man is a temple in which God's glory is realized, a place of God's glory, an altar on which His glory is manifested. Only when man enters his interpersonal relation with another man they create a community, in which God can be present. This community, uniting people, creates a supernatural space, in which God is present. If man prays in his heart, God will show Himself to him through his Glory. However, if man prays in the community, God becomes present amidst the community's members. Jeśli jednak człowiek modli się we wspólnocie, Bóg staje się obecny między jej członkami.

Thus the distinction between the manifestation of God's glory and the realization of His Person. Pointing and naming the sins before himself, in one's conscience, does not allow man to experience God's presence and isolates the sinner from the community. The accusations of

sin before one's own self makes man a victim, but does not allow him to meet with God, who forgives all sins. Meanwhile it is not man who forgives sins, only God can forgive sins. It is not man's sacrifice that forgives sins, but it is Christ's Sacrifice that brings forgiveness of sins. Blessed Isaac taught that everything Jesus „found alien in the Bride he removed upon being crucified. He suffered evil on the cross and through its wood he destroyed it. That, which was in the Bride's nature and was her property, he accepted and took upon himself. That, which was God's and belonged to him, he gifted. What was Satan's, he destroyed, what was human nature, he accepted, and what was God's, he sacrificed so that everything belonged to the Groom also belonged to the Bride. That is why He, who did not sin, whose lips were never full of contempt, can say: «Have mercy upon me, Lord, for I am weak», to share the Bride's weakness, also share her prayers, so that everything would be shared by the Bride and the Groom. That is where the honor of accepting confession and the Power to forgive comes from; that is why it should be said to: «Go, and show yourself to the priests»”.<sup>432</sup>

Therefore the Church without Christ cannot forgive anything, and Christ without the Church does not want to forgive anything. The Church can only forgive someone, who is converted, which means he was touched by Christ with his grace. „What God has joined together, let not man separate. The secret is great, and I speak in reference to Christ and the Church”. Therefore, do not want to separate the Head from the Body. Christ would then not be complete. Christ is not complete without the Church, not is the Church complete without Christ. Christ in his fullness is the Head and Body, that is why he says: „No one has entered heaven besides the Son of Man, who is in heaven”. Only this Man can forgive sins.<sup>433</sup>

The sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is the meeting with Christ – the Friend. According to saint Teresa man should open himself to the great graces, which God gives him through the Most Saint Humanity of Christ. „What more could we desire, than to have our faithful friend alongside us, who will not leave us in our problems and worries, as earthly friends do. Happy is he, who loves truly and sincerely and who is with Him forever. (...) If He wants to include us in the group of His closest friends, we shall gladly accept this act of grace. Whenever we think of Christ, we remember His love, thanks to which He gave us so many graces and goodness, and He love that our Father showed us when He offered special warranty of His love towards us. For love demands love. So we should try to always have this

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<sup>432</sup> Bł. Izaak, *Kazanie 11*, w: *Liturgia Godzin*, t. 4, s. 182-184 (*Chrystus nie odpuszcza grzechów poza Kościołem*).

<sup>433</sup> Tamże.

truth before us and that way try to encourage ourselves to love. For if the Lord gives us this grace and inspire in our hearts such love, everything will become easy and, in a short time, without effort, we shall be able to achieve much".<sup>434</sup>

Only in such a perspective the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation can be seen as one of the privileged roads of personal pedagogy. In the Sacrament of confession „A good Shepherd, through the form and voice of the priest, brings everyone closer so they can start a dialogue with him that is about listening out, giving advice, spiritual support and forgiveness. God's can focus His love on every human, without no loss to others. Who acts in accordance with the sacramental forgiveness must feel the warmth of this personal care. He must experience the intensity of the Father's embrace, with which He accepts the prodigal son: «Ran to him, hugged him, and kissed him.» (Lk 15:20). He must hear the warm, friendly voice that the superintendent Zacchaeus heard, being called by his name to start a new life (cf. Lk 19:5)".<sup>435</sup>

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<sup>434</sup>Św. Teresa, *Opusc. De libro vitae*, cap. 22, 6-7. 14.

<sup>435</sup> Jan Paweł II, List do Kapłanów na Wielki Czwartek 17 III 2002, 9.

## **THE CHURCH'S CONTRIBUTION TO POLITICS**

In his apostolic exhortation *Christifideles laici* John Paul II postulated, that the Church should use the Christian spirit to revitalize our contemporary reality, in service to the people and society. First of all „the secular must not resign from politics, which consists of activities in the fields of economy, social life and legislation, and which helps the growth of the common good in an organic manner. Their urgent and responsible task is to provide a testimony to human and evangelic values”.<sup>436</sup> These words indicate an importance of the Catholic Church's contribution to politics.

In the context of the Polish situation, every involvement of the Catholics in politics is considered as an attempt of usurpation of the country by religion and an effort to undermine the neutral views of democracy. However, politics is nothing more than being engaged in the economy, social and legislative issues of the citizens, all citizens, including Catholics.<sup>437</sup>

So it is worth to analyze some of the aspects in which the Church is politically engaged in the context of the broadly defined social science of the Church.

The political engagement sets the contemporary human towards values such as „productivity”, „competence”, „effectiveness”, „professional and economical success”. The economical, social and legislative activity, which changes man's priorities every day, can indirectly hinder his access to the transcendent world. This was noticed by the council Fathers: „Likewise, today's civilization, not out of its own volition, but rather because of being too much engaged with earthly matters, may often find it difficult to gain access to God”.<sup>438</sup> God begins to seem invisible and intangible.<sup>439</sup> The result of this is religion and everyday life becoming separate from each other. This leads to an uncertainty on the levels

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<sup>436</sup> Jan Paweł II, adhortacja apostolska *Christifideles laici* 30 XII 1988, 42 (further referred as ChL).

<sup>437</sup> „Despite appearances, the laws of our conscience need to be defended also in contemporary times. Public life and mass media use the slogan of tolerance to propagate of ten times an even greater, and even still increasingly greater, intolerance. It is painful to the ones who believe in God. We can observe a tendency to push those people aside, to the margins of social life, ridicule them, and mock that, which is the greatest sanctity for them. These forms of returning discrimination are disquieting and are thought-provoking”. John Paul II, homily during the Mass on the hill „Kaplicówka”, Skoczów 22 V 1995.

<sup>438</sup> Sobór Watykański II, Konstytucja o Kościele w świecie współczesnym *Gaudium et spes*, 19 (further referred as KDK).

<sup>439</sup> Even if God exists, there is still nothing that can be said about him that would be true. (so called *infidelitas negativa*).

of culture, anthropology, ethics and spirituality.<sup>440</sup> Many people, who distance themselves from Christianity, seem to be confused, unsure, that they have lost their hope. The most worrying matter, however, is that the spiritual state of many Christians is similar to this.<sup>441</sup> The symptoms are loss of memory and Christian legacy, which is often accompanied by a peculiar practical agnosticism and indifference towards religion, which in many people evoke the feeling of living in a world without a spiritual background, like inheritors, who wasted the inheritance left to them by history.<sup>442</sup>

The contemporary Poles' thinking is also infected by the global, mostly European, influences of political correctness. In practice this means that in everyday life Man is oriented on economical categories, focusing on that, which is within reach and natural, and making achieving success the primary goal. The effects of such an attitude is the undermining of truths proclaimed by the Church, in economic-social-legislative fields as well.

Contemporary Poles are witnesses to a serious economical crisis, which begins to affect more and more countries, despite the creation of economical organizations, forming of powerful trade corporations, industrial groups (globalization). In the process of globalization many countries saw a guaranteed success in many fields – economy, trade, manufacturing or military. However, it turned out that economy is leading everyone to a crisis, without respect towards basic ethics, and can even cause a global problem.<sup>443</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> Jan Paweł II, Adhortacja apostolska *Ecclesia in Europa* 28 VI 2003, 3 (further referred as EE).

<sup>441</sup> EE 7. The spot of conviction in great truths of religion in some people has been taken by an unclear and Little requiring religious feeling; many forms of agnosticism and practical atheism are becoming widespread, which contributes to furthering the distance between life and religion; many people subjected themselves to the immanentism of humanism, which weakened their faith, often leading them to completely abandoning their religion; we are witnessing a peculiar secular interpretation of Christian faith, which causes its erosion, and which is also tied the deep crisis of conscience and the moral practice of Christianity. Great values, which to a great extent were the inspiration of European culture, have been separated from the Gospel, which made them lose their deepest soul, leaving place for corruption (EE 47). Next to the many examples of authentic faith in Europe there also exist a religiousness that is unclear and often wrong. This is often manifested in a general and facile manner, sometimes being self contradictory. Issues such as escape into spiritualism, religious syncretism and esoterism, an aspiration to experience the supernatural at all costs can be observed and they of ten lead to making choices that lead to pathless tracts, such as joining dangerous sects or searching pseudoreligious experiences (EE 68).

<sup>442</sup> EE 7. Throughout ages the Church made a really strong relation with our continent, and the spiritual aspekt of Europe was formed thanks to the efforts of missionaries, testaments of saints and martyrs and the perserving efforts of monks, friars and priests (EE 25).

<sup>443</sup> „(...) true freedom requires order. But what kind of order? First of all, moral order, order in the sphere of values, order of truth and good. In the situation of emptiness in the field of values, the moral sphere is ruled by chaos and disarray – freedom dies, man loses his freedom and becomes a slave – a slave of instincts, passion and false values”. Jan Paweł II, Homilia podczas Międzynarodowego Kongresu Eucharystycznego, Wrocław 1 VI 1997.

These changes are essential also for Poland, which after entering the European Union fully participates in its operations. Te przemiany stają się kluczowe i dla Polski, która po wejściu do Unii Europejskiej uczestniczy w pełni we wszystkich działaniach Unii. There is a lively discussion is present, in the face of the crisis, about the politics of the Polish government that are dictated by international companies. In this dispute arguments both for and against are made, and answers are sought to the often difficult questions: Does Poland joining the European Union pose a threat to the country's sovereignty? Is there a danger that Poles will lose their cultural identity (renunciation of culture, tradition and customs)? Does this not create limitations for Poland's foreign politics, economical and socio-cultural development, and most of all, legislature?

In the attitudes of some contemporary Polish politics cosmopolitan tendencies can be observed, which result in the fading of their national identity. Erich Fromm's definition of mercantile personality can be helpful in understanding these tendencies. A person with a mercantile personality treats himself as merchandise, which Leads to be sold for a good price. Thus such a person, most of all, tries to follow the current „fashion”, closely observes the opinions of the „opinion market”, to always know what type of personality is currently in demand. Knowledge of this is taken from the information provided by the media and the most widely acknowledge public opinion. In this situation a person does not measure their worth by using objective criteria, but bases on the opinions of the surrounding, which leads to losing one's identity and, in a way, stopping to be one's self. In this situation it should not be surprising, that there exist two personalities, or a blurred one, because a need has emerged for modern people who say about themselves: „We are Europeans”, being ashamed of the inconvenient sentence „I am Polish, I am a patriot; I am a catholic, I am a Man of my conscience.

A chance for a positive evaluation of the attitude of people involved in public life is differentiating people and external behavior, which allows to evaluate the actions, not the person. For it is possible that a public person has a double identity: one inner – the true one and one external – declared. This means that, e.g.: someone thinks, feels, makes internal choices like an honest person, who is dictated by conscience, but externally is a declared cosmopolitan or European. Of course, this attitude is reprehensible, because it creates a threat of denial or even losing one's religious, moral or even national identity. However such an attitude of the public figures still gives hope that they can be expected to make decisions in accordance with their conscience.

A far worse occurrence in public life is such an attitude when the lack of identity can be treated as a virtue and such an approach to the lack of identity that the less it is specified the better for the person. This unspecified identity is to serve the life success of the unit, which success is propeller by character traits like: being able to quickly change one's interests and their flexibility, the ability to easily adapt to new situations, the ability to quickly learn new ideas and forget that, which is obsolete. This attitude does not serve the common good, does not provide stability of social and political, or even economical system. The lack of stability in social attitude means a shaking worldview, moral situationism, cultural populism, tendency to corrupt social, political and economic life.

The evaluation of the action taken by the members of the Church in their service to the public life demands to differentiate between two concepts: national identity and patriotic love. These concepts, although close to each other, are not the same. Patriotic love is a broader concept. It covers not just national identity with the consequences it brings (concern for the good of the nation, readiness to work for the homeland, respect for tradition and history and willingness to learn it), but also being positive towards other nationalities (being open to others, acceptance, being ready to cooperate). In the context of patriotic love an important question arises: Have the contemporary politicians, who make decisions on various grades of responsibility for socio-economic and legislative life, been well prepared – by their family, school, local Church? Do they indicate an increasing knowledge of the Catholic Social Science, manifested in concrete decisions in everyday life? Hypothetically it should be assumed that neither the Church, as an institution, nor the Catholic family do not prepare their members to serving the public, to an extent that even those, who forego it, do it in an unprofessional manner. The question of the Christian politician vision is meaningful, because the answer to it should prove the honesty of the self-evaluation and showing the direction in which changes need to be made in their formation and preparations for serving the political mission. In this context people who are guided by Evangelical values<sup>444</sup> have a special role to fulfill in the mission of creating solid foundations, on which a more humane and peaceful social life can be built upon, characterized by respect towards all and each and every one.<sup>445</sup>

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<sup>444</sup> Jan Paweł II uses the term „Evangelical values” clearly referring to the Gospel as their source. Christian values have become part of the names and slogans used by some political parties. Very often Christian values are referred to by European politicians (Polish ones as well), differently understanding their meaning. Evangelical values have only one sense and they cannot be freely interpreted or used to „moralize”. They serve the spiritual development of man, at the same time being the index of basic human rights.

<sup>445</sup> EE 21.

## The light of hope

John Paul II thought, that Europe needs a new momentum of its own history, and that is why it needs to „acknowledge and, with creative fidelity, restore the basic values, in whose acquisition Christianity took a major part in, and which can be briefed as proclaiming transcendent dignity of the human person, the values of the mind, freedom, democracy, a country of the law and division between politics and religion”.<sup>446</sup>

In this spirit Paul M. Zulehner, in his article: *Pastoral theology in the face of the situation of the Church in Europe*, devotes one of the points to *searching for broader horizons*. He cites a German researcher of social trends, Matthias Horx that since the half of the nineties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in secularized culture, present especially in large European cities, a trend of a second spiritualization emerged.<sup>447</sup> To put it briefly: spiritualization results from secularization. This upcoming spirituality is understood by some as a crisis of contemporariness. Others, however, think it is emerging from its longtime presence deep within humans. After decades of lent from God a new hunger for Him develops. Interdisciplinary researches of religion allow to identify the extent of contemporary spiritual search.<sup>448</sup> The signs of this extent are: journeys to the deep inner „I”, journeys to new, wider spaces, cure, community, inflexibility, fascination, longing for a different world.<sup>449</sup>

The Church notices the positive symptoms of the changes in the world, but at the same time is aware of the hard situation, in which contemporary Christians are and the dangers of it. In his apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* John Paul II turns attention towards the fears related with the currently ongoing process of globalization, should it follow the logic, which pushes the weakest to the margins and increases the amount of poor people on the planet.<sup>450</sup> In this context Europe is facing challenges. The word „Europe” should mean „openness”. Its history demands this, although it is full of contrary experiences and signs, which have always been many. In this context the Pope wrote to cardinal Miloslav Vlk: „Europe is really not a closed or isolated territory, because it was formed via contacts with oversea peoples, cultures and civilizations”.<sup>451</sup> From these historical experiences results the mission for Europe, which should be an open and hospitable continent, creating forms of

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<sup>446</sup> EE 109.

<sup>447</sup> M. Horx, *Megatrends der späten neunziger Jahre*, Düsseldorf 1995.

<sup>448</sup> Por. A. Martin, *Sehnsucht - der Anfang vor allem. Dimensionen zeit- genössischer Spiritualität*, Ostfildern 2005.

<sup>449</sup> P. M. Zulehner, *Teologia pastoralna wobec sytuacji Kościoła w Europie*, w: *Sytuacja Kościoła w Zjednoczonej Europie*, red. E. Robek, Warszawa 2005, s. 86-87.

<sup>450</sup> EE 8.

<sup>451</sup> Jan Paweł II, list do kardynała Miloslava Vlka, przewodniczącego Rady Konferencji Episkopatów Europy (16 X 2000), „L'Osservatore Romano”1(2001), s. 46.

cooperation, not only economical, but also social and cultural, while still considering the issue of globalization. „Furthermore Europe needs to be an active party in the promotion and realizing globalization in solidarity. The latter one, as its condition, has to accompany a specific type of globalization solidarity along with the values related with it: equality, justice and freedom, and a strong conviction that the market demands that, by the proper control from the social side and country, that will ensure the basic needs of the whole society are met”.<sup>452</sup>

Openness, hospitality, solidarity, equality, justice, freedom – these are only some of the common points the Church and the world share. Generally, it can be said that the Church, by fulfilling its salutary mission in the world, is in multiple relationships with the world. And that is why the Church’s awareness needs to be connected with a versatile openness, so that everyone can find „the unfathomable richness of Christ” in it (Eph 3:8). This openness, organically linked with the awareness of the self-being, with all sureness confirms the truth of the apostolic, which is the message-conveying dynamism of the Church. It is in the name of this dynamism the Church, by following proclaiming without any damage to the truth given to the world by Christ, remains in a „dialogue”, which Paul VI in his encyclical *Ecclesiam suam* called „the dialogue of salvation”, precisely differentiating the particular circles, in which it should be done.<sup>453</sup>

### **The Church in a dialogical relationship with the world**

By creating relationships with the human society, but not discriminating anyone in the dialogue between different cultures, the Church brings them closer and helps them acknowledge the authentic values of others.<sup>454</sup> With this is related the salvational mission of the Church, fulfilled in the world, and members of the Church, fulfilling their vocation, must use the goods created, that are required to the personal development of every man.<sup>455</sup> However, it is a very delicate problem. Jesus did not disallow his Apostles to accept good necessary for their earthly existence.<sup>456</sup> It is thus appropriate that hierarchs possess material goods and use them „in the ways, which were taught by Christ the Lord and the Church as fit”.<sup>457</sup> The Vatican Council’s guidelines in this area are very concrete.<sup>458</sup>

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<sup>452</sup> Jan Paweł III, encyklika *Centesimus annus* 1 V 1991, 4.

<sup>453</sup> Jan Paweł II, encyklika *Redemptor hominis* 4 III 1979, 4.

<sup>454</sup> Jan Paweł II, adhortacja apostolska *Ecclesia in Africa* 14 IX 1995, 139.

<sup>455</sup> Sobór Watykański II, **Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church *Christus Dominus***, 17.

<sup>456</sup> What is more, He confirmed the right in this field, the king of the mission they started: „Eat and drink, what they offer: because every worker deserves their payment” (cf. Lk 10:7; Mt 10:10). St Paul reminds the Corinthians that „The Lord decided, that those who proclaim the Gospel live according to it” (1 Cor 9:14). He also strongly recommends: „He, who learns the faith should lend his goods to his mentor” (Gal 6:6).

<sup>457</sup> Sobór Watykański II, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests *Presbyterorum ordinis*, 17.

<sup>458</sup> Jan Paweł II, katecheza *Presbyter a dobra doczesne* 21 VII 1993, 3.

This delicate problem was addressed far back by Paul VI. After concisely describing the sublimity and the necessity of poverty, which is a characteristic trait of the Gospel of Christ, the Pope also noted that this does not release Christians of their obligations of properly appreciating the important of economical issues and a fair use of them. The economical factor greatly developed in contemporary times and is the main pillar of civilization's progress, especially in people and social issues. The Pope continues his teachings that thanks to this inner freedom born out of aspiring to live in poverty Christians became sensitive and acquired a better understanding of human events related with economical issues. There are various situations in which Christians manifest their relationship with the earthly reality: whether they are to pass a right and often hard judgment about health and comfortable life, whether they are to immediately and generously help the ones who need help, or finally whether they need to strive for wealth to not be the reason for disagreement between people, greed and conceit, but for it to be in accordance with the rules of justice and equality and serve the common good and that is why it was distributed with great caution. The followers of the Gospel are able to pass a wise judgment about everything, including external goods, which are essential to the earthly existence, but which should be valued less than spiritual and eternal goods, and nobly bring help with this in mind. For first there is education, technique, and especially hard work that evoke the most humane of all interests, and the fruit of these, which is bread, both the plain bread on the table and the sacrificial one should be considered holy. The Church's social science is of that kind, and does not leave any doubt in this aspect.<sup>459</sup>

When appreciating the meaning of earthly goods, it is necessary to differentiate between the competence of the servants of the Church from the goals of society. The Church is first the salutary community and that means that it cannot be treated as merely a human community. All its actions, whose aim is to bring non-material help to the ones who need help should be taken according to the Christian way: first of all they should be done not by the religious seculars, who fulfill their vocation the same way, but not subjecting themselves to the temptation of bringing the Christian community to the role of a social institution. These relations with the secular community should especially be formed in a way that respects its autonomy and competence, according to the recommendations of the Church's social science.<sup>460</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> Paweł VI, encyclicka *Ecclesiam suam* 6 VIII 1964, 55.

<sup>460</sup> Jan Paweł II, list apostolski *Novo millennio ineunte* 6 I 2001, 52. The Church's social science's role is to inspire the building of a social order. „Thanks to the proposed set of rules this science contributes to creating solid foundations of social life fitting man, truth, freedom and solidarity. Being oriented towards defending and promoting the dignity of man, being the base not only for economical and political life, but also social justice

The Church's solidarity with the human community means, that „earthly Progress and Christ's Kingdom's growth should be carefully distinguished”, but „it is not indifferent to the Kingdom of God how much it can contribute to a better human community”.<sup>461</sup> That is why the Church is convinced that awaiting Christ's return „can never be a justification for human's indifferent attitude towards some personal, social life, national and international situations”,<sup>462</sup> because earthly reality shapes the conditions of human's pilgrimage to eternity.<sup>463</sup>

On Earth the Church is present as the family of God's children, established and organized as a society.<sup>464</sup> Because of this we participate in human problems in the spirit of solidarity with all mankind. As the Vatican Council reminds, the Church „walks along with all mankind and experiences the same earthly fate as the whole world”.<sup>465</sup> This means, that Christ's community in its body feels the trials and pains of other nations, families and units in particular, taking part in the burdensome journey of humanity on the path of history. Discussing the relations of the Church with the world the 2nd Vatican Council sets out from the Church's co-participation in „the joys and hopes, sadness and fears of humans”.<sup>466</sup> A new, common knowledge of the real situation of the world causes that today in particular this co-participation has become especially deep and intensive.<sup>467</sup>

In the center of the Church's salutary mission is the human figure, not only Christian, but every human, who was called by Christ to co-participate in the salvation with other people. With concern for the effectiveness of the Christian testament, especially in delicate and controversial areas, a great effort must be done to properly justify the Church's position, stressing that the Church does not try to impose its religious-resulting views on people seeking faith, lost on the moral path and especially those who declared themselves irreligious. For the Church in its relation to the world interprets and defends the values rooted in human nature. This dimension of the Church's existence in the world manifests itself in a delicate manner in the practice of compassion, which in consequence can naturally become a service

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and peace, it appears as able to support the load-bearing pillars of the future of the continent. In this science there are references allowing to defend the structure of moral freedom in a way that allows to keep the European society and culture both in a totalitarian utopia «justice without freedom», as well as free from it «freedom without truth», which is accompanied by a false concept of «tolerance», and both are an omen of mistake and atrocity for human, of which sad testament is provided by Europe's modern history” (EE 98).

<sup>461</sup> KDK 39.

<sup>462</sup> Jan Paweł II, encyklika *Sollicitudo rei socialis* 30 XII 1987, 38.

<sup>463</sup> Jan Paweł II, adhortacja apostolska *Ecclesia in Africa* 14 IX 1995, 139.

<sup>464</sup> Sobór Watykański II, Konstytucja Dogmatyczna o Kościele *Lumen Gentium*, 8

<sup>465</sup> KDK 40.

<sup>466</sup> KDK 1.

<sup>467</sup> Jan Paweł II II, katecheza *Zadanie misyjne Kościoła w jego relacjach ze światem* 21 VI 1995, 2.

to culture, politics, economy and family, so that the basic rules, which decide of man's fate and the future of mankind, would be abided everywhere.<sup>468</sup>

The Church gives orientation and incites all human activity<sup>469</sup> and induces Christians to not limit the efforts they make to form a better society in all disciplines. Copying Christ is not only spirituals development on the road to sanctity, but most of all abiding the commandment to love one's neighbors and concrete actions taken in accordance to Christ's guidelines to make the best possible use of one's talents (cf. Mt 25:14-30). By fulfilling its salutary mission, the Church encourages all members of the community of Christ to participate in projects undertaken by the human society in the fields of science and technology and by fulfilling their tasks in earthly activities,<sup>470</sup> contributing to the development of culture, realizing justices and achieving true peace.<sup>471</sup>

The dialogue between the Church and the world is connected with a mutual exchange of good. In practice this means that in its contacts with the world the Church not only offers, but also accepts help and support from people, groups and societies. The Vatican Council is openly states: „Similarly as it is in the world's interest to acknowledge the Church as a social reality in history and its seed, so does the Church know how much it has received from history and the evolution of mankind”.<sup>472</sup> In this way the „the Church's live commune with the cultures” of other nations is undertaken” (KDK 44).<sup>473</sup> Deeply aware how much it receives from the world, the Church is grateful for it and does not forget its mission and that it is only able to offer humanity the greatest and most precious gift that can be given: God's life in Christ, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, leading humanity to the Father. The salutary mission, fulfilled in the world, must therefore have a missionary spirit. Jego istota polega na ty, że Kościół idzie do świata i pragnie mu towarzyszyć w komunii życia.<sup>474</sup>

Undertaking political activities in the spirit of the Church's social science is a task for every Christian, whose source is royal service: the more obedient he is to the Holy Spirit's

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<sup>468</sup> Jan Paweł II, list apostolski *Novo millennio ineunte* 6 I 2001, 51.

<sup>469</sup> KDK 43.

<sup>470</sup> KDK 43.

<sup>471</sup> Jan Paweł II, katecheza *Zadanie misyjne Kościoła w jego relacjach ze światem* 21 VI 1995, 4. The Church, through its activities helps people in the appropriate forming of the earthly order and direct it to God through Christ (II Vatican Council, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 7). By this the Church becomes a service to man, and secular people „participate in the mission of serving man an society” (ChL 36).

<sup>472</sup> KDK 44.

<sup>473</sup> Jan Paweł II, katecheza *Zadanie misyjne Kościoła w jego relacjach ze światem* 21 VI 1995, 5. „Especially the missional Church, fulfilling its task to proclaim the Gospel, always rewers to languages, terms and cultures of various nations and since the first ages has always fund the *semina Verbi* in philosophical thoughts, which are the true preparation to directly proclaim the Gospel”. Tamże

<sup>474</sup> Jan Paweł II, katecheza *Zadanie misyjne Kościoła w jego relacjach ze światem* 21 VI 1995, 5.

laws, the more freedom he has, to which he is appointed by service to truth, love and justice.<sup>475</sup> Every Christian is a testament that one cannot only be interested in material needs. Progress cannot be measured only with economical values. The spiritual aspect of the human being must be at its right place. Man is himself through his spirit, conscience, attitude towards God and other people. A world that does not prioritize these values of the human spirit will not be a better world and neither will be a social order working the same way. Christians, especially young ones, who want changes that lead to a better and more just society should loudly express their protest against harm, discrimination, rape and executions on people. In the act of creating a moral order priority must be given to the values that constitute for the human spirit's strength: justice, love and friendship.<sup>476</sup>

John Paul II encourages Europeans, revitalized by the sureness of their faith, to join the building of a city worthy of man. Although it is not possible to build in history a perfect social order, but we know that every honest effort taken to make the world a better place is accompanied by God's blessing and all seeds of justice and love sown in this time will bloom in eternity.<sup>477</sup>

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<sup>475</sup> Jan Paweł II, encyklika *Veritatis splendor* 6 VIII 1993, 107.

<sup>476</sup> Jan Paweł II, Przemówienie do młodzieży (nie wygłoszone), Kraków 8 VI 1979.

<sup>477</sup> EE 97.

## **PARISH CARITAS WORKGROUPS – ESTABLISHMENT IDEA AND FORMS OF ACTION**

### **Introduction**

In 1986 Polish Episcopate delivered a document, on the basis of which charitable parish workgroups have been established. At first they received and shared the gifts from abroad. In the course of time they started to undertake different kinds of support and help actions. Charitable workgroups developed in the increasing number of parish communities, although it formed differently in particular regions of Poland<sup>478</sup>.

The year 1989 was groundbreaking in social activity revival of the Church. The act of 17 th May 1989 allowed Polish and diocesan Caritas to be called up into existence. Since then reactivation of the past church charitable organization structures began. They consecutively revived in all the dioceses. On 10th October 1990 Polish Caritas was called up as the body coordinating charitable actions around the entire country or the support granted beyond its borders. The confusion triggered after 1950 by the communist jurisdiction caused that Caritas have never regained the form of the one before its disposal. Other workgroups have never come back in its organizational frames, which have continuously been occupied with eleemosynary, in communist jurisdiction as well. It does not include also catholic associations. The revived Caritas only residually regained its identity from the past time. In reality diocesan Caritas were created from the basis, which had strongly been made slimy. Nevertheless they successively broaden range of actions and enrich th forms of support<sup>479</sup>.

### **1. What is Diocesan Caritas Workgroup (DCW)?**

Diocesan Caritas Workgroup is the group of people, who under the leadership of a rector carry on the planned and systematic work of mercy in a parish. They include active and support members (in some dioceses also sympathizers).

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478. Bp J. Jezierski - Przewodniczący Komisji Charytatywnej KEP, Wskazania Komisji Charytatywnej Episkopatu Polski dla Parafialnych Zespołów Caritas, [w:] [www.szczecin.caritas.pl](http://www.szczecin.caritas.pl)

479. Kartka z historii Caritas, [w:] [www.sandomierz.caritas.pl](http://www.sandomierz.caritas.pl)

The members of diocesan Caritas centers are first of all volunteers, who selflessly spend their free time to help others. There are also people, who do not have the possibility to give their time, but systematically support the work of DCW by financial support. Now then we can divide the members of on: active members, in some dioceses called „ordinary” (they permanently wage into charitable work, participate in organizational and formative meetings, care about the functioning of the workgroup and constitute the „core” of DCW) and the support (who, for example, systematically give a financial or logistic hand to DCW)<sup>480</sup>. There are also the so called sympathizers – people who occasionally, within the bounds of possibility and needs, serve what they have; it can be the owner of a van, who serves his or her time and a car, when there is food to ferry. It should be indicated that the roles of an active and support members can complement and it is not needed to make rigid divisions. There are no obstacles for a person who wages into DCW works to become a support member (if he or she commits oneself to this). And vice versa, in every moment a person who supports DCW can wage into work. The members of a workgroup act free of charge, as an impulse of christian fellow love. Though it is not anathematised to employ and give full time job to people who have to spend the whole time to do one's charitable task given by the rector (e.g. a house nurse for the sick, a nursery-school worker and etc.). Then honorable salary is ensured from charitable funds. People who commit oneself into DCW work are mostly the mature catholics, who want to help others. Among the members of DCW are people, who finished professional careers – the retired – people, who have great experience, time and the will to sacrifice to others; professionally active people and teens – very often past members of School Caritas.

## **2. The calling, work range and goals of DCW**

Parish Caritas Workgroup calls up a church legal person, it is usually a parish, in which name rector or diocesan Caritas occurs, in which name a parish workgroup calls up its director.

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480. Statut PZC Archidiecezji Wrocławskiej , § 11, pkt 1,

Parish Caritas centre patronizes in its work from the legal person, by which he or she was called up. The area of a parish Caritas centre work is the area of a parish, and with the approval of diocesan Caritas director a parish centre can act outside a parish<sup>481</sup>.

The range of parish Caritas centre activity is stated by the statute or a different principal document, which is elaborated by diocesan Caritas. In the document the structure, way of calling up to existence, authority and jobs to do in parish community are recounted

The principal aim of parish Caritas centers is their own, parish community and all the flock formation to sensitivity towards the needy, awakening the mercy spirit towards a fellowman, and also providing direct material and spiritual support to people especially living in the area of a parish. Besides, parish Caritas centers are excellent area for pastoral activity of local Church members. It is the way to commit the secular into the life of the Church. We can not forget that all actions result from the Church community. And they are not the expression of our own activity but Church activity. Thanks to this we achieve the additional community-making aspect of ministry. Parish Caritas centers working first of all in parish community do not constitute group of people closed to other communities. They act in the unity with local Church, in which the responsibility for the aggregate of ministry rests on a diocesan bishop. A bishop calls up organisms, which on behalf of him will accomplish charitable objectives. He has also the right to assign the range of action, competences, promote charitable initiatives and supervise their work.

A workgroup is redicated in parish community. In this community the responsibility for management of the work of mersy rests on a rector. That is why it is advisable for a charitable workgroup to have a rector as a supervisor, but when it would not be possible because of objective reasons, priest or an authorised by him person<sup>482</sup>.

### **3. The need of cooperation**

Firstly, start of cooporation with other flock groups should be the concern of leaders of parish Caritas centers. The goal of this cooperation is completing one of most important tasks of parish Caritas centers, that is vivification with christian merciful spirit of all, who

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481. Bp J. Jezierski, Wskazania Komisji Charytatywnej KEP ..., dz. cyt.

482. Tamże.

constitute a parish. It is true that parish Caritas centre takes over the objective of systematic charitable work in behalf of parish community. Nevertheless, it never stands in for particular parishioners, or a parish as local Church in minister of fellowman love. Hence, besides particular support actions, parish Caritas centre should care about establishing live kinship with others, organized groups of worshippers to promote the idea of christian mercy and vitalize them with christian diaconia spirit. The members of other communities, foundations, fraternities, in-crowds, who work in parish are natural allies and participants in charitable acts. Although sometimes the goal of their activity clearly diverge from goals for which parish Caritas centre was appointed (e.g. It can be spreading worship of some saint patron, spreading some sport activity among youth and preventing addiction), no church organization working in parish should be omitted in the attempts of committing in common actions. Cooperation with other parish groups may have permanent or occasional character. It is worth to wonder, what actions of a parish can be enriched with Caritas matters. In the pastoral year there are lots of chances to reminiscent christian mercy<sup>483</sup>.

Parish Caritas centre should also care about establishing cooperation with local charitable, protecting and educative organizations.

#### **4. Other objectives**

Other objectives of parish Carital centers are particularly spreading and reviving of merciful love and systematic and methodical charitable formation; carrying on charitable and protecting activity, digesting its forms and undertaking the actions in aid of broad range of the needy, particularly: families, children, youth, unmarried mothers, disabled, sick, seniors, addicted, homeless, unemployed, violence victims, prisoners, migrants and refugees, calamity, epidemic and armed conflict victims; social support.

The goals of parish Caritas centers activity is cultivating national tradition, nursing Polish and developing national, civil and cultural consciousness; the actions in aid of ethnic minority as well as health protection and promotion<sup>484</sup>.

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483. Tamże.

484. Statut PZC..., dz. cyt., § 4, pkt 1.

Parish Caritas workgroups are also occupied with the actions in aid of disabled people; employment promotion and professional activation of unemployed people and endangered by redundancy, popularising and protection of women rights and the activity in aid of equal rights of women and men<sup>485</sup>.

There is activity supporting local communities development within the interest of people working in aid of parish Caritas centers; activity in aid of development of science, education, breeding development; sightseeing and leisure of children and youth; culture, art, protection of cultural and traditional goods; popularizing sport and physical culture; activities in aid of ecology and protection of animals and natural heritage; counteraction of social pathologies; popularising and protecting civil liberty and human rights, as well as activities supporting development of democracy<sup>486</sup>. Parish Caritas centers also help the victims of disasters, armed conflicts and wars in the country and abroad; they undertake activities in aid of european integration based on christian values and development of contacts and cooperation between societies; they help and organize promotion and organization of voluntary services<sup>487</sup>.

All the above parish objectives Caritas centers implement particularly by systematic formation and education of volunteers, meetings and formative seminars, Mercy Weeks and other forms of popularizing merciful love, organizing and carrying on charitable, protecting, educational, medical, publishing establishments, advisory services and other proper for the implementation of DCW objectives. On approval of the director of Caritas, they organize volunteer groups, carry on actions promoting and funding charitable work, different forms of leisure for children and adults, especially for disabled children and youth, for children and youth of the poor families, dysfunctional and polonia children and youth, elderly people<sup>488</sup>.

## **5. In concern over unemployed**

Government transformations over the 80s and 90s last century caused the increase of unemployment in our country. Up till now, we have not solve this problem. Hasty support of Caritas, especially such organized by parish Caritas workgroups, has been destined to

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485. Tamże.

486. Tamże.

487. Tamże.

488. Tamże, pkt 2.

unemployed families, particularly those with a lot of children<sup>489</sup>. Although this kind of activity is important and necessary, it stays hasty. Polish Caritas organized a project, thanks to which it can activate unemployed. They looked up to similar program accomplished by Secours Catholique in France. A lot of unemployed activating offices have been founded, whcihc task is professional and social activation, professional advisory, legal aid as well as economical counselling. Professional and social activation runs through accompanying an unemployed person. Individual character of meetings allows to conduct discussions connected with job in the atmosphere of kindness and trust. Thanks to activation carried on by Caritas offices, more and more unemployed people find job. Parish Caritas workgroups actively take part in the work of existing offices of the unemployed activation (OUA), whose chain develops around Poland.

Caritas wants to accommodate its offer to increasing needs as far as the social and professional activation of the unemployed and looking for a job is concerned. Offices function in the way complementary to public employment services<sup>490</sup>.

## **6. „Wings” program**

Since September 2005 parish Carita centers in Poland carry on a new program of support for the poorest children - „Wings”. Its goal is permanent support for primary, college and secondary students, who because of bad material situation need support in the form of additional nourition, school objects, winter and summer clothes, partial funding of school trips. Program is addressed to companies and individual people, who by their declaration commit themselves to support a student financially for at least one term. „Wings” program gives the possibility to conform the support to individual needs of a student and financial limits of a grantor. In last years of the program functioning lots of grantors offering regular and permanent help for particular children stepped out. Thanks to it the poorest students received warm meals at schools, they have been equipped in educational materials, winter clothes and all the things necessary to aquire knowledge. The number of declarations is still increasing<sup>491</sup>.

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489. Parafialne Zespoły Caritas, [w:] Archiwum Caritas Archidiecezji Wrocławskiej

490. Caritas: Dobra marka, [w:] Adonai.pl

491. Program Skrzydła, [w:] Archiwum Caritas Archidiecezji Wrocławskiej

## **7. Help in treatment and nutrition**

Within their activity, parish Caritas centers realize „Children treatment” project, in which they fund expensive operations and surgeries rescuing lives for children who suffer from chronic diseases and disabilities. Monetary means received from grantors are contributed to diocesan Caritas after previous presentation of the list of children in financial need, whose parents apply in Caritas around Poland. Children receiving support from Caritas usually suffer from cancer like leukemia, brain, liver tumour, and diseases bearing long-lasting and difficult treatment, like in case of progressive muscles atrophy and congenital harm of shoulder nerve<sup>492</sup>.

Social campaign called „The Slice of Bread” carried on every winter by Caritas in Poland is the answer of the worker and volunteer of parish caritas ceters to deepening pauperization of our society. Beside the increase of social consciousness and change of the attitude towards homeless, poor and marginalized people, its goal is to gain goods and monetary means for particular support for the most needy. Gifts and money, which come during the campaign are successively destined for additional nutrition of children, help for children and women who were affected by domestic violence, help for the homeless, which means increasing the number of vacancies in dosshouses and ensuring board. They are also destined for activation of unemployed people and funding sociotherapeutic dayrooms and aquisition of medicines. Every day parish Caritas workgroups participate in additional nutrition of over 100 thousand of children<sup>493</sup>.

## **8. Part in holiday action**

Parish Caritas centers also join in Caritas holiday action. It is estimated that about 65% of Polish children can not go for a camp due to the lack of material means. Caritas carries on a holiday action, which major goal is to organize camps for over 100 thousand of the poorest wards. These camps are for them the only chance for spending summer outside the house and to release difficult family and social situation. The action goes ahead under the keyword: „Each child dreams about holidays... Help those, who can not efford dreams!”. Apart from leisure for children the action also aims to aquire monetary means for its organization<sup>494</sup>.

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492. Leczenie i rehabilitacja dzieci i dorosłych, [w:] [www.caritas.pl](http://www.caritas.pl)

493. [www.kromkachleba.caritas.pl](http://www.kromkachleba.caritas.pl)

Parish Caritas centers also actively participate in all-Poland action of distributing Caritas Christmas candle. Work starts on the first Advent Sunday. Candles are distributed via all the parishes in Poland. As part of Christmas Work Caritas also cooperates with Polish Scout Association: on Caritas Christmas Candle there is Bethlehem Peace Light passed<sup>495</sup>.

Within its charitable and protective work, parish Caritas centers in Poland guide the rules and values preached by catholic Church, which drain from Gospel, social learning of Church and christian personalism. Charitable work, which they carry on, is the gift and mutual enrichment. Helping others, a grantor enriches his or her won life with this, what the needy receives with gratitude. The activity of parish Caritas centers does not aim to benefit, but it has a servient character. It guides the example of Christ, who did not come to be served, but to serve with evangelic commandment of love, which has universal character. Help is provided to all in need. Help provided by parish Caritas centers in Poland is the testimony of love to God and another human<sup>496</sup>.

## **9. „Code” of Parish Caritas Workgroup**

The chairman of parish Caritas centers is a rector or an authorised by him proxy, who can be a clergyman working in a parish. A rector informs the director of Caritas about establishment of a proxy. The chairman is responsible for the whole activity of a parish Caritas center in front of Diocezan Bishop and Caritas Director. The job of a chairman is particularly popularising the mission and tasks of PCW, approving activity programs, members of the board of directors and ordinary members of PCW, supervising the work of PCW, making decisions in financial matters and disposing of finances at the request of the board of directors, petitioning on General Meeting about countermanding the Board of Directors<sup>497</sup>.

Parish Caritas Centers are obliged to inform Caritas director about cooperation undertaken with church institutions on the area of a parish and diocese. After the approval,

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494. Pomóżmy tym, których nie stać na marzenia, Z o. Zdzisławem Świniarskim – zastępcą dyrektora Caritas Polska – rozmawia Agnieszka Raczyńska – Lorek[w:] [www.niedziela.pl](http://www.niedziela.pl) (2006/19)

495. Wigilijne Dzieło Pomocy Dzieciom, [w:] [www.caritas.pl](http://www.caritas.pl)

496. Bp J. Jeziernski, Wskazania Komisji Charytatywnej KEP ..., dz. cyt.

497. Statut PZC, dz. cyt. § 6, pkt 1-3.

they can undertake cooperation with public administration and with charitable organizations of other creeds and religions and with secular organizations, preserving their own catholic identity<sup>498</sup>. Parish Caritas Centers draw the monetary means as renders and cash from different sources needed to carry on the activity, and particularly from the incomes of events (festivals, lotteries, auctions, entertainments), render and cash offerings, grants of church and public institutions, donations, estates and bequests, enterprise and other sources according to parish and diocesan practice<sup>499</sup>.

The members of parish Caritas centers are obliged to care about deepening their own religious life and training in charitable work. At least once a month the meetings of PCW involving organizational matters, religious, methodical and educational formation should be held. Ordinary members are obliged to participate in formative meetings and trainings organized by Archidiecezan Caritas in order to improve the undertaken merciful service<sup>500</sup>. Respect for natural and psychic dignity of each person and care about integral welfare of those, who are financially and spiritually supported, is the priority in the activity of Caritas. Each person was created in the image of God and in God's similiarity in Christ he or she became God's child. Workers and volunteers of Caritas in Poland want their work to be marked with respect for human dignity of the poor and needy<sup>501</sup>.

Parish Caritas centers want to connect with building „civilization of love” in Poland, whose propagators were Paul VI, John Paul II and Benedykt XVI. The future vision of Parish Caritas Centers is based on christian hope and faith in the power of love, which was taught by Christ. They want all the people, especially the poor ones, to find their place in society and Church; where their dignity and rights will be respected. The ideal which Caritas is striving to is to assure each person a deserving life, and that the pooverty was not reason of shame nd social isolation. Parish Caritas centers are charitable organizations of catholic Church, whose mission is helping the needy and poor in systematic, emergency, spiritual and material way. They want to receive spiritual and material needs of the poor and needy to help effectively. On behalf of the needy they call for respecting their dignity and due rights. They realize practically rooted in Church option for the poor.

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498. Tamże, § 4, pkt 3-4.

499. Tamże, § 12.

500. Tamże, § 18.

501. Tamże, § 3, pkt 1.

## Conclusion

Parish community is the place of educating the attitude of openness and sensitivity for the needs of fellowmen and the courage and dynamism in realizing different works of christian mercy. The constant charitable formation of parishioners serves to trigger those attitudes. It is achieved by preaching God's word, performing sacraments and testimony of evangelic life. The participation in Mercy Week, Sunday of God's Mercy and holidays or liturgical memories of fellowmen service patrons become meaningful in this formation. The effective form of education in active love is involving adult, youth and children in particular charitable works. The members of Parish Caritas Workgroups should support a rector and his associates in this formative work<sup>502</sup>. Parish Caritas Centers in Poland not only hand over the cumulated financial means and possibilities of involved workers and volunteers to face the situation of the poor and needy. Workers and volunteers of parish Caritas centers desire to offer their time, forces, intellectual abilities and heart to the supported people. The service of parish Caritas centres in Poland to the poor and needy, especially the sick and suffering people is professional. And so the knowledge and professional knowledge of workers and volunteers are constantly deepened and expanded, without neglecting the spiritual formation.

In their work parish Caritas centers consider also the autonomy of other charitable institutions and predicate their cooperation with them on the principle of support and partnership. They share their experience with other partners and draw from their literary output for the good of different groups of the needy. Parish Caritas centers explicitly reject the spirit of competition and fight, division and disagreement<sup>503</sup>, they also undertake the charitable and protective cooperation with charitable organizations of other christian Churches, according to ecumenism and solidarity. Their activity is characterised by openness and lucidity, which allow to preserve and consolidate the achieved trust of grantors, associates and beneficiaries through making available to all the interested information about their activity, among other things, through publishing annual report<sup>504</sup>. Parish Caritas Centers in Poland make also the self-assessment, and care about appropriate quality of their work and eliminate everything, which could weaken its reliability. Workers and volunteers of these

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502. Bp J. Jezierski, Wskazania Komisji Charytatywnej KEP..., dz. cyt.

503. Tamże.

504. Statut PZC..., § 15, pkt 1 – 3.

centers have to be characterised by honesty and in accomplishing entrusted work and duty and they have to respect values.

## **THE BL JOHN PAUL II UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE SERVING SENIORS**

Many elderly people are still people who are fit and active, who do not like idle sitting in their homes, who need a pretext to get out home. One of the forms of their elicitation are, undoubtedly, Universities of the Third Age, which create a possibility for them to constantly increase their knowledge, incite social elicitation for the good of the unit and society, they help making new friends and provide them with the tools to maintain their physical fitness.

### **1. The creation of Universities of the Third Age.**

The beginning of this movement of Universities of the Third Age dates to 1972. Then a professor of the University of Toulouse, Pierre Vellas, organized a meeting for 40 seniors in order to learn what were their expectations of the university. A year later the first ever university aimed at the elderly, created by Vellas, inaugurated its first activity. After the first one, there came more<sup>505</sup>.

Universities of the Third Age in France were characterized by:

- strict co-operation with academic centers,
- high level of didactic activity,
- variety in organizational forms – from full integration with a university, through co-operation all the way to independence.

Currently the idea of educating in French Universities of the Third Age, formerly called segregational, has changed into a concept of a university for all group ages (Universite Tous Âges). This idea has contributed to the broadly defined intergeneration exchange in France and is implemented on all French universities<sup>506</sup>. From France the idea of Universities of the Third Age carried over to Great Britain, which offered favourable conditions. There, a group of enthusiasts from Cambridge created a slightly different model than the French one. The British model, also called the Cambridge model, was based on self and mutual help of its students. The main characteristics of this model are:

- no support from universities,

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<sup>505</sup> J. Halicki, PFT's UTA informer, Warsaw 2001, p. 4.

<sup>506</sup> *ibid.*, p. 5.

- self-help is the main method of education, there is no division between students and lecturers. The seniors organize their own activities using their own knowledge and experience<sup>507</sup>.

Anyone can form a University of the Third Age in Britain. There are Universities that have hundreds of students, as well as small ones – with the number of students ranging from few to dozens of students. The latter ones mostly function in small localities. The educational offer of the Universities varies: there are academic lectures, as well as practical lessons. The curriculum is mostly dependant of what the students are interested in and their skills. Some Universities co-operate with universities, however, most of them remain completely independent study centers for the elderly that, besides their educational function, also provide integrational and therapeutic functions<sup>508</sup>.

## **2. Universities of the Third Age in Poland**

The first University of the Third Age was created in Warsaw in 1975 under the name of Studium III Wieku (III Age College). Its creator was prof. Halina Szwarc. 12 November 1975 was inauguration of the first academic year on that University. An intensive development of the movement occurred between 1975 and 1979. During that time Universities were created in Wroclaw, Opole, Szczecin, Poznan, Gdansk and Lodz. After 1989, as a result of the changes in the system and the growing population of elderly people in Poland, the need for such places does not weaken. It can also be observed contemporarily.

Poland was the third country in the world in which the movement of Universities of the Third Age developed, and the Warsaw III Age College is, historically, the oldest university for seniors. All Universities of the Third Age in Poland are affiliated in the Section of Polish Universities of the Third Age (Sekcja Polskich Uniwersytetów Trzeciego Wieku), which in turns is affiliated in the AIUTA (Association internationale des Universités du troisième âge - International Association of Universities of the Third Age). This section considers that the Universities' goals are improving the quality of life of its students, create conditions for "good aging", belie false stereotypes and ideas that old people are physically and mentally handicapped. To achieve this the seniors are introduced to a system of constant education based on their intellectual and academic potential and the material resources offered by the university.

The requirements for establishing a University of the Third Age are the following:

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<sup>507</sup>ibid., p. 6.

<sup>508</sup>E. Wesołowska, *Edukacja dorosłych*, Toruń 1994, p. 95.

- it must be located near a normal university (preferably a humanistic university),
- the lecturers of the University must only be lecturers from the normal university,
- an extra requirement is that it has to be located in a place that is easily accessible to both the students and the lecturers in all forms of transport.

Such a model (French) of the University of the Third Age is to ensure an academic level of education and put focus on didactic activities<sup>509</sup>.

### **3. A church university meant for elderly students**

Recently Universities of the Third Age have also been created at church universities. An example of this is the Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age created in 2009 at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław. Just the joint Wrocławian archdiocese and Pontifical Faculty's initiative of creating the University was met with great interest. Currently there are almost three hundred sixty students in their first, second and third years of study that attend lectures every second and fourth Saturday of the month. The subjects of the lectures are in the fields of theology and philosophy, as well as psychology, pedagogy and law<sup>510</sup>. In the future the amount of students will surely increase, because the students who have finished their full, three-year cycle of study at the University are going to continue studying on the so called "second degree UTA studies". The Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław<sup>511</sup> set as the main goal of its activity to give religious information in an easy-understandable manner to the elderly. It turned out that the need for such knowledge is very high. Catechesis for the adults, presented in an academic manner, is a good proposition addressed at the eldest of students, who often admit that their faith is okay, but their knowledge of religion is not. The mentioned University was created with the initiative of the metropolitan of Wrocław, prof. archbishop father Marian Gołębiowski. He, in agreement with the then rector of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław, prof. father Waldemar Irek, with the decision of 26 May 2009, created this new organizational unit within the pontifical university in the capital of Lower Silesia. By the Ordinary's will I was tasked with its organization<sup>512</sup>. In 2009 there were only three Universities of the Third Age at Wrocławian universities. Today there are nine. The biggest and oldest (36 years) is the University of the Third Age that functions at the University of

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<sup>509</sup>H. Szeloch, Uniwersytety trzeciego wieku szansą dla seniorów (Universities of the Third Age a Great Chance for Seniors) Lecture given on 01.02.21012 during the inauguration of the Year of the UTA in Poland (2012) at a conference of people responsible for managing UTA studies in Wrocław.

<sup>510</sup> [www.pwt.wroc.pl/utw](http://www.pwt.wroc.pl/utw)

<sup>511</sup> At the time of its creation, the University did not have a patron name yet. It received it on the inauguration of the academic year of 2011/2012, on 22.10.2011. – on the first liturgical mention of the Pope.

<sup>512</sup> The mentioned decision of Archbishop Fr. Marian Gołębiowski concerned both the creation of the University of the Third Age at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław as well as appointing its first director.

Wroclaw. it has over 700 students<sup>513</sup>. The Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age is the second biggest University of the Third Age in Wroclaw, which shows that the eldest of students also value religious knowledge. Although the Pontifical Faculty of Theology is the smallest University for seniors in Wroclaw and that it offers mostly (but not only) lectures it does not discourage its candidates towards studying there. It is not only because of the personnel who teach and organize the activities. It is proof given by the elderly, who see their great inner need for increasing their knowledge and faith in this manner – through participation in catechesis for adults carried out at the theological university of the City of Wroclaw. Theological faculties complain they have a small amount of students (this is mostly the case for theological studies for the laymen). The youth, which after graduating from high school studies at various universities and on various majors, treats studying in a purely practical matter ("what will my major give me, except my bachelor/master title?"). The elderly think of it differently. They study for "the knowledge itself", which they could not do in their youth, because they did not have the same access to higher education as today's nineteen and twenty year olds have. The University of the Third Age is the means to fulfil their youth hood dreams, which were unavailable to them for various reasons. That is why I believe, that offering elderly people catechesis for adults at catholic universities within a University of the Third Age is an idea that is worth consideration by every catholic university. The potential hidden in the older generation is worth being used by the Church in Poland, but also requires some investments. Graduates of the Universities of the Third Age are very often well prepared "material" for working in parish councils, groups and associations. They are people on which parish priests will be able to count in their pastoral activities in the parish. Of course lessons and university activities for these people must be designed accordingly, so that these laymen are properly prepared to their roles of "leaders" in many of the parish activities.

Universities of the Third Age at theological universities (from the Church's point of view) are also a form of paying the debt towards the people who supported the Church's educational quest in the times when it was only financed with donations from the believers, without any support from the government. Today's elderly students of the Universities that function at Church universities are people, who have had a significant role in supporting the Church, and even today, despite their small financial capabilities, do not stop to financially support spiritual seminars, theological faculties and universities. The humble gift from the

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<sup>513</sup> [www.utw.wroclaw.pl](http://www.utw.wroclaw.pl)

university to these people, which is the subject now is an investment, which will not be regretted.

#### **4. The activity of the university for seniors at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław,**

the Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age, is aimed at increasing the intellectual and spiritual efficiency of the elderly, educating them and conducting lectures in theological education and providing the elderly students with a greater understanding of Polish culture, especially the culture of Lower Silesia. Lessons and lectures are given by academic teachers and they start with a Mass in the archsee of Wrocław and praying together. They are a chance for the elderly to obtain knowledge, develop their interests, meet interesting people and make friends. During the three years of its activity there was a pilgrimage of the elderly students to the Jasna Góra Monastery, and another pilgrimage to Assisi, Rome and the Vatican, during which they participated in the Vatican's celebration of Pope Benedict XVI's 85th birthday. There were also fields trips and meetings with, i.a. the Metropolitan of Wrocław. "The students of the University of the Third Age of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław are exceptional", said dr. fr. Marian Biskup, vicar for priestly matters of the Wrocławian Archdiocese, in his speech given at the inauguration of the academic year of 2011/12. The recently deceased rector of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław, prof. fr. Waldemar Irek, during the ending of the last academic year in his life said: "To study at the PFT one needs not just skills, but also special inner qualifications. Willingful seniors, who apply to the Pontifical Faculty of Theology, often talk of their problems in the area of faith, their doubts, their need for a broader and greater catechesis for adults. Such is the offer of our University of the Third Age. It is not only a place of obtaining new knowledge, but also resolving problems related to faith and broadening one's spirituality. In this regard this is what makes it different from all other universities"<sup>514</sup>.

University activities allow the students to maintain their self-worth, increasing their self-esteem, teach many practical skills, how to make new contacts and meeting people who have similar values<sup>515</sup>.

#### **5. The University's structure and its regulations**

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<sup>514</sup> Academic celebration, [in:] Archives of the Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław.

<sup>515</sup> These are the positive aspects of the activities offered by the University the students most often mentioned in a conducted survey.

The University of the Third Age at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw is a university-wide organizational unit of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw. Anyone who is at least fifty years old is eligible to apply. Supervision of the Universities activities is done by the rector of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw, and on his behalf the university's activities are operatively managed by the rector's representative, who is also the director of the University. He is appointed by the rector for the term as long as the Pontifical Faculty of Theology's authorities'. The scope of his duties are the entirety of all matters connected with the University for seniors" activity, especially:

- organizing and supervising the University's work,
- representing the University in front of the authorities and organizational units of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw and – as the rector's representative – external authorities and institutions,
- making plans and reports of the University's activities,
- responsibility for realizing the rulings of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw's Scientific Council concerning the University of the Third Age.

The activities of the University for the elderly at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw are financed from the budget of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw, payments from its students and other sources. Financial supervision over the University's activities is done by the administrative director of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw. Students of the Universities may participate in lectures at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology as auditing students. They may also use the Pontifical Faculty of Theology' Reading room and Library free of charge. The Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age in Wroclaw has a university council composed of few members, which represents the students of the University in front of the authorities of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw<sup>516</sup>.

## **6. The criteria of participating in the University of the Third Age at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw. The rights and duties of the students.**

Every society has its own laws. So does the Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw have its own set of regulations, created in co-operation with the university council. It was then approved by the Grand Chancellor of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw, as well as the University's rector. The

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<sup>516</sup> The regulations of the University of the Third Age at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw, [in:] Archives of the Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age in Wroclaw.

regulations clearly state the rights and duties and the criteria of studying at our University<sup>517</sup>. Some of them were already mentioned, that is why I shall only mention those regulations that have not been mentioned yet.

### **Criteria of studying**

1. A student of the University of the Third Age can be someone who:
  - a) accepts the University's goals and wants to participate in achieving them,
  - b) has submitted the required documents within the given time limit,
2. The status of student of the University of the Third Age is lost upon:
  - a) freely resigning from membership,
  - b) being expelled from the list of students for being behind with payments without clarifying for a period of time longer than 3 months,
  - c) being expelled from the list of students as a result of prolonged absence,
  - d) being expelled from the list of students due to breaking the rules,
  - e) death of the student.
3. The student may (once a semester) suspend his or her participation in university activities due to personal or health problems.

### **The rights of the University's student**

1. The student has the right to i.a.:
  - a) participate in all (payable and free of charge) of the university's activities,
  - b) voicing his or her opinion, postulates and proposals regarding the University's activities,

### **The duties of the University's student**

1. The student is obliged to i.a.:
  - a) abide the decisions of the rector and vice rectors of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wroclaw and the University's director,
  - b) abide the valid regulations,
  - c) actively participate in achieving the University's goals,
  - d) care for the dignity of the student, the University's good name and respect its traditions,
  - e) respect the teachings of the Catholic Church,
  - f) abide the rules of friendly co-existence and academic customs and the effective regulations of the University,
  - g) participate in lectures and other didactic activities,

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<sup>517</sup> The Students' Regulations of the University of the Third Age at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology, in [in:] Archives of the Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age in Wroclaw.

- h) absence from didactic activities must be excused on an ongoing basis,
- i) not bring outsiders (friends, acquaintances, relatives) to lectures. This applies to all activities, with the exception of lectures, which are open to everyone.

The authorities of the Wrocławian Archdiocese and the Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław pay a lot of attention to the development of the Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age in Wrocław. Every inauguration and ending of an academic year is richly decorated externally, with splendour due to the most important academic celebrations celebrated at other universities. Also, the Metropolitan and the rector of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology are invited to all these celebrations. An especially festive form is intended for the University's celebration of Christmas, to which next to the Grand Chancellor and rector of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology are invited all of the current lecturers<sup>518</sup>. This spirit of community, that can be experienced during Christmas at the Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age in Wrocław proves to be fruitful for the whole upcoming academic year, and the presence of the unusual guests, the chance to meet with them in person, talk and exchange wishes is surely a grand personal experience to many of the students.

Soon an agreement will be signed between all Universities of the Third Age that work at universities in Wrocław, according to which the bond of co-operation between them will be tightened. Up until now a student could be affiliated with only one University of the Third Age. Soon this situation will change. Every student will be able to use the "good" that are offered by other Universities.<sup>519</sup> For each of them has its own unique richness. The Bl. John Paul II University of the Third Age has a richness of spirit, religious knowledge, faith and prayer in its "treasury". These are the values that will soon be available to all elderly students in Wrocław. I believe that many people in the primeval, Piast capital of Lower Silesia will reach out for this richness.

## 7. Summary

The goal I set for this article was to show the Reader one of the new forms of evangelism aimed at the elderly in the University of the Third Age. As my example I have used the University that is closest to me. I know that such Universities are also being created (or already exist) at catholic universities outside of Wrocław. My dream is that this article become an inspiration towards this development and "boasted" about their activity and fruits

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<sup>518</sup> Cf. The Chronicle of the University of the Third Age at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology, p. 5, 17, 31.

<sup>519</sup> Project of an agreement of the representatives of higher education school in Wrocław for UTA concerning co-operation in the service of the seniors" good, [in:] [www.wroclaw.pl/files/](http://www.wroclaw.pl/files/)

in many forms. Maybe my article will convince the authorities of catholic universities in Poland to create Universities of the Third Age in places where there none yet. Believe me, they are worth it.

**MINISTRY FOR THE SICK IN POLAND  
BETWEEN PERFECTION AND REALITY**

- 1. The Biblical and theological bases of the Church's pastoral care for the sick**
- 2. The methods and forms used**
- 3. Into the future**

Jesus Christ had a special way to relating to the sick, by healing their sickness and weaknesses (Mt 4:23). In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus showed his students an example of good behaviour towards the sick and needy (Lk 10:30-37). The Church, loyal to its Creator's will, is always engaged in helping the sick and suffering, regarding taking care of the sick and suffering as an intergral part of its ministry<sup>520</sup>. This type of service is supposed to be one of the priorities in conducted actions (EiE 88).

Socio-political and religious changes that took place in Poland post 1989 present the Church with many new challenges. This also concerns spiritually tending to the sick. There has arisen a possibility of a broad, unhindered priestly activity in hospitals, social care facilities and sanatoriums. A chance for reaching out to every sick person is introduced by the development of catholic social media. An increasing number of stationary and home hospices has been noticed. The Church's changing self-awareness extends the subject of ministry for the sick, for whose co-creating laymen feel more and more responsible. Taking up actions leading to preparing both clerics and laymen to better work with the sick.

In this context it is worth to ask the question of how the theological model of priesthood of the sick described in the Church Magisterium is realized. The author tries to compare some select instruction of the Magisterium regarding this subject with the results of sociological studies from many sources in order to present, in a perspective, the need to undertake concrete actions. This method of scientific approach will be the practical realization

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<sup>520</sup> Bl. John Paul II, *Motu proprio "Dolentium Hominum" ustanawiające Papieską Komisję Duszpasterstwa Pracowników Służby Zdrowia* (11 II 1985) (The Motu Proprio "Dolentium Hominum which established the Papal Board of Priesthood of Health Care Workers), OR 6:1985 nr. 2, p. 24.

of one of the paradigms of pastoral theology called the *three stages paradigm*. This paradigm is put in the form of a practical syllogism in which the bigger premise is the discovered rule resulting from theological studies. The smaller premise are the data taken from sociological, psychological, pedagogical and other studies, and the conclusion, which is the rule of the Church's realization, is of theological nature. What is first visible is a section of the Church's pastoral activity in a normative approach, next in a realization approach in order to reach pastoral conclusions (the postulated approach)<sup>521</sup>.

### **The fundamentals of the biblical-theological pastoral care for the sick by the Church**

Illnesses and the suffering related to it are one of man's most bothering problem. Experiencing suffering leads to turning to God and asking questions for their supernatural meaning, sometimes rebelling against the Creator and even rejecting Him. Help in finding the answer to the many questions of sick people is in the Bible which not only shows the meaning and value of the sickness to personal and communitarian salvation, but also inspires to bring help to suffering people.

The Old Testament does not focus on sickness itself, but presents it in a broad context of the problem of evil and its part in God's plan of salvation<sup>522</sup>. God created man for happiness (Gen 2:8-25), but through sin man turned himself away from the Creator and shattered His order (Gen 3:16-19). In the Israelite's mind sickness is associated with guilt and is an external image of the destruction of the relation between God and man and between other people<sup>523</sup>. Without giving any prior judgement of natural and direct causes of sickness, its relation with the original sin, which is the direct cause (Gen 5:12), is obvious.<sup>524</sup>

In the Old Testament we can find texts speaking of visiting the sick, entrusting them to God during prayer and undertaken methods of therapy. On hearing of Job's suffering his friends come to offer him their compassion and to comfort him (Jb 2:11). The Wisdom of Sirach contains a call not to linger with visiting a sick person (Sir 7:35). The prophet Ezekiel reproaches the Israeli shepherds that they do not care for the health of the "sick sheep" (Ez 34:4). The wounds of sick people are washed with olive oil or balm and wrapped (Is 1:6; Hos

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<sup>521</sup> R. Kamiński. *Metody teologii pastoralnej* (Methods of Pastoral Theology), in: *Teologia pastoralna* (Pastoral Theology), R. Kamiński (ed.), Lublin 2000, pp. 24-26.

<sup>522</sup> J. Stefański, *Sakrament chorych w dziejach i życiu Kościoła* (The Sacrament of the Sick in the History and Life of the Church), Gniezno 2000, p. 27.

<sup>523</sup> A. Skowronek, *Chorzy i ich sakrament* (The Sick and Their Sacrament), Włocławek 1997, p. 25.

<sup>524</sup> W. Kacz, *Teologiczne spojrzenie na chorobę w praktyce duszpasterstwa chorych* (A Theological Look on Sickness in the Practice of Ministry for the Sick), in: *W trosce o niepełnosprawnych* (Caring for the Disabled), J. Kulik (ed.), Łódź-Warszawa 1981, p. 35.

6:1). This gesture does not only have healing properties, but also protects from death, providing life and happiness of messianic times (Is 61:3). God is considered the only one and only effective doctor (Ex 15:26; Dt 32:39) who shares His wisdom with earthly doctors and heartens the sick in their sickbed (Sir 38:1-15; Ps 41:4). The inspired authors' relations lead to a conclusion that the goal of healing is to bring back the widely understood good self-being towards God, one's self and close relatives<sup>525</sup>.

In heralding the messianic times, the prophets of the Old Testament present the people with an image of an era of happiness, prosperity, liberation of all evil, suffering, sickness and death. This liberation is to be done by the Messiah (Is 61:1-3) whose coming will be accompanied by healing of the sick (Is 35:5-6). The heralded Messiah is Jesus, who answers to John the Baptist's envoys by referring to the signs of the messianic era, one of which was curing the sick: *The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy[a] are cleansed, the deaf hear* (Mt 11:5).

Christ is always touched by the presence of the sick, he is never indifferent to human pain and suffering (Mt 9:35-36; 14:35-36; Mk 5:54-56). Jesus is never happy with curing the body, he cures the whole person, forgiving their sins (Lk 5:17-25). The curing done by Jesus is only religious. He first prays to God (Jn 9:41 nn.), inciting hope for being cured in the sick person (Jn 5:60) and then grants the earnest and humble wishes of health (Mt 8:2; Lk 9:12). In the descriptions of Jesus' healing there is an obvious demand of faith from the sick (Mt 8:18-31; 14:21-28). Jesus' acts of miraculous healing are an external sign of his messianic ministry<sup>526</sup> and the coming of times in which there is no more pain and suffering (Is 25:8) and God wipes of all tears from His worshippers' eyes (Rv 21:4).

Jesus suggests His students to care for the sick and suffering by presenting them the sensitivity for other people the Samaritan showed (Lk 10:30-37). Jesus tells His Apostles to proclaim the Gospel and curing the sick (Mt 16:15-18). The healing the Apostles conducted were a sign of the coming of the messianic era and belong to the proclaimed salvation ministry in which God frees human from the situation caused by sin (Mk 6:12-13). The conducted healing is also an implementation of the power given them by Jesus (Acts 3:5-8). Fulfilling the mission given to His students by Jesus is also described in the texts of curing Aeneas from Lod (Acts 19:32 nn.) and many sick in Jerusalem (Acts 5:15-16). The Church in Jerusalem, praying during persecution, asks for messianic signs including curing the sick

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<sup>525</sup> A. Ołów, *Choroba, uzdrowienie, odpuszczenie grzechów* (Sickness, cure, absolution), "Communio", op. cit., pp. 23-24.

<sup>526</sup> J. Stefański, *Sakrament chorych w dziejach i życiu Kościoła*, op. cit., p. 30.

(Acts 4:29-30). St. Paul, by proclaiming the Word of God to the Gentiles, conducts healing thanks to the Lord's power (Acts 14:8-10; 28:7-9). St. Jacob, in turn, calls the sick to summon priests who will pray for them and anoint them with oils (Jas 5:14-16).

The instructions contained in the Bible make us realize that a sick man is close to Jesus, from whom he receives comfort (2 Cor 1:5) and which whom he identifies: *I was sick and you visited me. As you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.* (Mt 25:36. 40).

A calling to care for the sick and suffering is found in many documents in the Magisterium. By showing the role of the sick in the Church they also inspire spiritual and sacral sensitivity for the world of human suffering, as well as encouraging to co-operate in bringing medical and spiritual help. Emphasizing the role of the permanent formation of all people who help the poor, they propose various forms of pastoral work *with the sick for the sick*. It is worth to quote some ideas from this teaching to realise their richness, find inspiration to take action and at the same ask ourselves, which of the Magisterium's instructions should still have a reflection in every day pastoral work.

A call to care for the sick and suffering is found in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, which the *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* emphasizes that the Church should show Christian love toward the sick, search for them and find them, caringly comforting them and supporting (Acts 8). In turn, the *Decree on the Life and Ministry of Priests* says that visiting and heartening the sick is one of the most basic duties of priests (DP 6) who, in turn, the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* says, through anointing of the sick and prayer are to entrust them to the suffering and beloved Lord (DCC 11). Again, in turn, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* says that the anointment of the sick is not a sacrament of only for those who are in danger of dying (CSL 73), but for all sick people in different states of sickness (CSL 73). The *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* says that the sick have a special relation with Jesus (DCC 11), whereas, what is said in the *Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church*, they can offer their prayers and penitential acts in the intention of evangelizing the world (DMAC 38).

Special attention is given to the Magisterium's instructions contained in the liturgic ritual of the *Sacraments of the Sick. Rites and Ministry* (from now SSRM)<sup>527</sup>. It was created in 1972 as an answer to the Second Vatican Council's call to renew the liturgy of specific sacraments and adapting them to the mentality of modern people (CSL 21). It should also be

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<sup>527</sup> *Sakramenty chorych. Obrzędy i duszpasterstwo* (Sacraments of the Sick. Rites and Ministry), Katowice 1998.

emphasized that the modern ritual has become equal in its title with the ritual structure of the sacraments and their ministerial implications. The mentioned procedure was used to overcome prejudice and thinking stereotypes of some of the believers and priests who only focused on the sacramental ministry but did not completely realize the fact that it is only a part of the Church's pastoral care for sick people.

The *Rites of Sacraments of the Sick* remind us that the greatest reasoning for the Church's caring for the sick is the conviction of the presence of Jesus suffering in them (SSRM 32). Visiting the sick to support them with natural resources and hearten their spirit is the fulfilment of Jesus' order (SSRM 4). It refers to all baptised (SSRM 33), especially to rectors and superior clerics of order communities who are supposed to personally visit the sick and support them with sacrificial love (SSRM 16, 38, 34, 42). The goal of the mentioned visits is not only to comforting them with words of faith and teaching them of the meaning of sickness in the mystery of salvation, but leading them to receiving the sacrament of penance and Eucharist more often, especially to receive anointments of the sick and Viaticum in an appropriate time (SSRM 43). When visiting the sick, we can comfort them with words of faith based on the Holy Bible to show the value of the sacrificial suffering and gradually lead to use the sacraments. Visiting the sick is also an occasion for praying together, which can end in blessing (SSRM 42-45).

The most that can be done in priestly work for the sick is visiting homes, hospitals and other places in order to sacramentally anoint the sick<sup>528</sup>. Through the sacramental anointing the sick is their trust in God strengthened, warded from Satan's temptations and their recovery fastened if it is useful in the salvation of their soul (SSRM 6). Because many believers treat the sacrament of anointing the sick as the "last rites" there is a need for a general and family catechesis that shows its meaning and warns from lingering from receiving it (SSRM 13, 36). The sacrament of anointing the sick can be given during Masses in Church, the sick person's home or in hospitals (SSRM 104), especially during pilgrimages, days of the sick and meetings of associations of the sick (SSRM 107). The sick need to be able to often, even daily, receive the Holy Communion (SSRM 52) and those who receive it in immediate threat of death, should be heartened by the Viaticum (SSRM 26, 117-118).

Speaking of the sacramental service for the sick, special attention should be paid to Pope Benedict XVI's missive delivered for the XX World Day of the Sick. The Pope also

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<sup>528</sup> Bl. Jan Paweł II, Homilia wygłoszona podczas mszy św. z udziałem chorych i niepełnosprawnych (Homily during Mass for the sick and disabled) (Wellington, 23 XI 1986), in: *Ewangelia cierpienia* (Gospel of Suffering), J. Poniewierski (red.), Kraków 1997, p. 127.

noted the importance of the sacrament of healing in ministry for the sick: penance and reconciliation, anointing of the sick, Eucharist. According to the Pope, the sacrament of penance brings back God's grace, helping them in opposing discouragement and despair and often receiving it by the sick in hospitals and home Communion strengthens their bond with Jesus crucified and risen. The Pope also appeals for paying more attention to the sacrament of anointing the sick both in the field of theological reflection as well as priesthood. He stresses that this sacrament should be given not just on the deathbed, but also in other sickness-related situations<sup>529</sup>. According to Benedict XVI: providing the sick with attention and priestly care is, on the one hand a sign of God's vigilance towards the suffering, and on the other hand it brings spiritual profit to both the priest and the whole Christian community that serves the suffering Jesus (Mt 25:40)<sup>530</sup>. The Pope also stressed that sacraments along with listening to God's word and personal prayer should be a safe anchor of faith to the sick and suffering<sup>531</sup>.

Speaking of theological bases of ministry for the sick one should quote the teachings and activities of the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers, created in 1985, transformed into the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Health Care Workers in 1988. It is worth to stress its role in inspiring, developing and coordinating actions related to ministry for the sick and health care. While speaking of the many initiatives of this Council, one should refer to, among other things, the preparations and publishing special essays devoted to multiple problems in ministering for the sick: *Świeccy w świecie cierpienia i zdrowia* (Secular People in the World of Suffering and Health) (1987); *Formacja kapłańska a duszpasterstwo służby zdrowia* (The Priesthood Formation and Ministry for Health Care) (1990); *Światowy Dzień Chorego. Dlaczego i jak obchodzić?* (The World Day of the Sick. Why and How to Celebrate?) (1992); *Karta Pracowników Służby Zdrowia* (The Card of Health Care Workers) (1995). Another thing that should be mentioned is regular publishing, in five languages, of "Dolentium Hominum" which constitutes for an important part of the development and promotion of ministry for the sick and health care and organising many periodical conferences and meetings<sup>532</sup>.

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<sup>529</sup> Benedykt XVI, Orędzie na XX Światowy Dzień Chorego (XX World Day of the Sick Missive) (11.09.2012), 3, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/messages/sick/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_mes\\_20111120\\_world-day-of-the-sick-2012\\_pl.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/sick/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20111120_world-day-of-the-sick-2012_pl.html) (access date 19.09.2012).

<sup>530</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>531</sup> Ibidem, 5.

<sup>532</sup> Conferences can be grouped according to the following thematic blocks: sick and disabled people (elderly, mentally ill, small children, with infectious diseases, blind); departments of medicine (genomics, pediatrics, geriatrics, palliative medicine, psychiatry); diseases (infectious, psychiatric, AIDS); addictions

In the document entitled *Secular People in the World of Suffering and Health*, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Health Care Workers stresses that caring for the sick, which is an integral part of the Church's ministry, is every Christian's duty. Engaging secular people in social and health care service is supposed to be voiced in the *sphere of social studies, shaping attitudes and concrete caring for the sick*. We all take up various forms of care for the sick, both individually as well as in a group effort, serving them, treating them in a subject way. A specific tasks is given to secular health care workers, who performs diacony, mercy service, through his work. Similarly to priests, they are friends of the sick and fulfill the apostle mission among them<sup>533</sup>.

In the document entitled *Priesthood Formation and Ministry for the Health Care*, The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Health Care Workers turns attention to the need for a special formation of clerics and priests engaged in working with the sick. The document also stresses that the formation must work both in the theoretic and practical dimension. The theoretic dimension is related to learning the Church's teachings and the instructions of medical studies in the field of caring for the sick, whereas the practical dimension is constant contact with sick people in hospitals and their homes. The practical service for the sick cannot be limited to only offering them sacraments, but must also extend to other forms, including visiting them and providing pastoral care<sup>534</sup>. The document also asks for priests to care for the moral and spiritual formation of the health care workers, who are *the first and main intermediaries of the Church's pastoral actions*<sup>535</sup>. They should also be treated as partners in bringing care to the sick, and their organizational and executional autonomy ought to be respected<sup>536</sup>.

The authors of the The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Health Care Workers' document *Card of Health Care Workers*, stresses that the interdependence of the physical, mental and spiritual dimensions of man are linked with the necessity to provide him with spiritual and religious care. The pastoral care of priests, monks and sacral people for the sick is supposed to be expressed through catechesis, liturgy and acts of love. The sick need

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(alcohol, narcotics); health care catholic institutions (identity, tasks, hospitals); health care systems (life service, humanization, equality of benefits, economic problems, challenges and hopes); volunteering for health care and others.

<sup>533</sup> Papińska Komisja Duszpasterstwa Pracowników Służby Zdrowia (Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Health Care Workers), *Świeccy w świecie cierpienia i zdrowia* (Secular People in the World of Suffering and Health), Vatican 1987, pp. 21, 25-28, 34-37.

<sup>534</sup> Papińska Rada ds. Duszpasterstwa Służby Zdrowia, *Formacja kapłańska a duszpasterstwo służby zdrowia*, Watykan 1991, pp. 27-31.

<sup>535</sup> Ibidem, p. 26

<sup>536</sup> Ibidem, p. 43.

help in discovering the redemptive meaning of suffering experienced in connection to Jesus and they should be allowed to use the sacraments, which are effective signs of the reviving and revitalizing grace of God. The sick expect from the healthy a proof of faith, as strong as "therapeutic love"<sup>537</sup>. Service for the sick, which is a fulfilment of appointing both sacral and spiritual people, is an expression of their part-taking in priestly and evangelical activity of the Church. With its help God's love is being spread to the suffering man, as well as acts of love towards God who "went around doing good and healing all" (Acts 10:38). Health care workers, the servants of life, become God's co-operators in curing the sick soul and body<sup>538</sup>. The *Card of Health Care Workers* shows the therapeutic role of full-of-love human contact. It plays a special role in healing disorders and natural mental sicknesses, made through psychotherapy<sup>539</sup>.

The document *The World Day of the Sick. Why and How to Celebrate?*, which emphasizes the role of the diocese's Bishop in the Church's service for the sick and points out he should use the help of the diocese council for care of health care workers. One of its tasks is to prepare a detailed list of places where the sick are given care, places for elderly people and communities that help toxically addicted people and other places of care that exist within the diocese. The task of the mentioned council is also to encourage rectors to celebrate the Day of the Sick in each parish's territory in co-operation with hospital chaplains, consecrated people, spiritual seminar clerics and health care workers. The rectors should also inspire sensitivity for the needs of sick people by means of special meetings connected with reflexion and prayer. They should also make contact with parishioners placed in social care institutions and ones who live alone at home and pay them visits, as well as making a list of all people like that. Rectors of urban parishes should also consider taking up various kinds of pastoral initiatives on a higher than parish level.

The document postulates that initiatives take up for the celebrations of the Day of the Sick on a national, diocese and parish level constitute for a concrete whole. During the celebration of the Day of the Sick on a national level a mass should be held in a Shrine of the Virgin Mary, or any other known church, attended by many sick people, broadcast by the radio or on television. In the celebrations of the Day of the Sick on a parish level two moments should be distinguished. First and foremost should be prayer and reflexion of the community of the local church with the presence of the sick in the temple, and initiatives

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<sup>537</sup> Papiaska Rada ds. Duszpasterstwa Służby Zdrowia, *Karta Pracowników Służby Zdrowia*, Watykan 1995, pp. 87-88.

<sup>538</sup> Ibidem, pp. 12-15.

<sup>539</sup> Ibidem, p. 85.

taken up among the sick who are placed in different social care institutions. Celebration of the Eucharist, along with giving the sacrament of anointing the sick, is supposed to be key to these celebrations. The sick, along with the health care workers and their closest should be close to the altar. They can be active in the mass by reading the Holy Word, saying prayer intentions of the believers, contemplations on the meaning of suffering and bringing procession sacrificial gifts. Performing the sacrament of anointing the sick should be preceded by a catechesis explaining its meaning, which is both physical and spiritual therapy<sup>540</sup>.

Care for the development of ministry for the sick and suffering can be observed in the Polish Church as well. For example the II Plenary Council in the book *Sainthood. Gift and Duty* postulates to: *provide loving care to the sick. Jesus' students constantly have to be made to realize that if sickness is experienced in unity with the Lord, it can be a time of special renewal and enriching the whole Body of Christ with great gifts of sainthood. Priests should care for the exchange of these spiritual gifts by visiting the sick in hospitals entrusted to the community of their parish. However, special care should be provided to the sick who lay in their home. This service should take the form of at least weekly celebrations of the holy Communion, meditating the Holy Word together and conversation. They should be celebrated by priests as well as sacral members of the apostolate of the sick, especially extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist*<sup>541</sup>. In turn, the book *Liturgy of the Church After the Second Vatican Council* stresses that giving regular and often Eucharist to the sick as well as performing it in their houses is a sign of the shepherd and the community's normal care for the suffering members of the Body of Christ<sup>542</sup>.

The issues of ministry for the sick and suffering was also discussed in the documents of the Charity Conference Board of the Polish Episcopate: *Instructions for Charity Work in Parishes* from 1986 and *Instructions for Ministry of Parish Charity Units* from 2000. They oblige all rectors to create Parish Charity Units (Parafialny Zespół Charytatywny)<sup>543</sup>, whose members, after dividing the parish into charity regions, should

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<sup>540</sup> Papieska Rada ds. Duszpasterstwa Służby Zdrowia, *Światowy Dzień Chorego. Dlaczego i jak obchodzić?*, Watykan 1992, pp. 45-48.

<sup>541</sup> *Świętość. Dar i zadanie*, in: *II Polski Synod Plenarny* (Second Polish Plenary Council) (1991-1999), Poznań 2001, pp. 247, 54.

<sup>542</sup> *Liturgia Kościoła po II Soborze Watykańskim*, in: *II Polski Synod Plenarny*, op. cit., pp. 207, 99.

<sup>543</sup> Cf. *Instrukcja Konferencji Episkopatu Polski o pracy charytatywnej w parafiach* (*The Polish Episcopate Conferences's Instructions for Charity Work in Parishes*) (19 XI 1986) nr. 4, 9, in: W. Przygoda, *Funkcja charytatywna Kościoła po Soborze Watykańskim II* (Charity Function of the Church after the Second Vatican Council), Lublin 1998, pp. 257-265; Komisja Charytatywna KEP, *Wskazania duszpasterskie dla parafialnych zespołów Caritas* (Charity Conference Board of the Polish Episcopate, *Instructions for Ministry of Parish Charity Units*) (18 V 2000) nr. 5, in: L. Achremowicz, *Wierzę...Zeszyt formacyjny dla parafialnych grup charytatywnych*, (I Believe... Formation Textbook for Parish Charity Groups) Warszawa 2000, pp. 1-12.

turn their attention to people in difficult material, health or spiritual situations, among which are elderly, sick and disabled people<sup>544</sup>.

The teachings of the Church's Magisterium makes all believers more sensitive towards the problems of the sick. According to these teachings no one should be indifferent to their suffering and needs and take actions adequate to their means. Priestly service for the sick, in which engaged are the sick people's families, health care workers, volunteers, priests, nuns and monks and candidates aspiring for priesthood, can become a practical test of answering the call to build a civilization of love.

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<sup>544</sup> Komisja Charytatywna KEP, *Wskazania duszpasterskie dla parafialnych zespołów Caritas* (Charity Conference Board of the Polish Episcopate, *Instructions for Ministry of Parish Caritas Units*) (18 V 2000), op. cit., p. 12.

## The methods and forms used

The author wants to now show, basing on the available sociological studies, a partial image of ministry for the sick in Poland. It should be noted that there is a lack of overall and systematic studies on this topic. Due to this the image of the methods of implementing the Magisterium's instructions is incomplete and fragmentary. Reaching for the results at hand will, however, allow to show a concrete, although incomplete, image and propose some actions for the future.

A special meaning in ministry for the sick should be given to the sacrament of anointing the sick. It is worth to ask the question about its place in the awareness of the Poles and the frequency of its receiving. The Poland-widely religious study conducted by ISCC SAC in 2002 show that respondents assigned an important meaning to the sacrament of anointing the sick. As much as 83.4% respondents stated that this sacrament plays an important role in Christian life<sup>545</sup>. Despite the declarations expressed by the respondents in the study it should be noted that the awareness of its meaning and importance is small. This conclusion results from another study conducted among inhabitants of various dioceses. When asked to name the sacraments they knew, the sacrament of anointing the sick was mentioned either at the end of the list or it was not mentioned at all<sup>546</sup>. It can be assumed that the respondents' bad knowledge of the sacrament of anointing the sick is related to identifying it with the last rites. For example, another Poland-wide study showed that 30% respondents claims that receiving this sacrament will prepare the one receiving it for death<sup>547</sup>. In turn in ISCC's studies in the diocese of one of Warsaw's districts - Praga, 24.1% of the studied said that the sacrament of anointing the sick can only be received when one's life is endangered<sup>548</sup>.

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<sup>545</sup>J. Mariański, *Wiedza i wierzenia religijne Polaków* (Religious Knowledge and Beliefs of Poles), in: *Kościół katolicki na początku trzeciego tysiąclecia w opinii Polaków* (The Catholic Church at the Beginning of the Third Millennium in the Poles' Opinion), W. Zdaniewicz, S. Zaręba (ed.), Warszawa 2004, pp. 38-39.

<sup>546</sup> W. Zdaniewicz, T. Zembrzuski (ed.), *Postawy społeczno-religijne diecezjan tarnowskich* (Socio-religious Attitudes of the Diocesans in Tarnów), Warszawa 2001, pp. 80-81; W. Zdaniewicz, S. Zaręba, T. Zembrzuski (ed.), *Postawy religijno-społeczne mieszkańców Archidiecezji Łódzkiej* (Socio-religious Attitudes of the Diocesans of the Archdiocese of Łódź), Warszawa 2002, p. 30; W. Zdaniewicz, S. Zaręba (ed.), *Postawy społeczno-religijne archidiecezjan poznańskich* (Socio-religious Attitudes of the Diocesans of the Archdiocese of Poznań), Poznań 2005, p. 24; W. Zdaniewicz, S. Zaręba (ed.), *Postawy społeczno-religijne mieszkańców Archidiecezji Szczecińsko-Kamieńskiej* (Socio-religious Attitudes of the Diocesans of the Archdiocese of Szczecin and Kamieńsko), Warszawa 2006, p. 39; W. Zdaniewicz, S. Zaręba, T. Zembrzuski (ed.), *Religijność mieszkańców Warszawy* (The Religiousness of the Inhabitants of Warsaw), Warszawa 2007, p. 50; Adamczuk L., Sadłoń W., (ed.), *Postawy religijno-społeczne mieszkańców Diecezji Warszawsko-Praskiej* (Socio-religious Attitudes of the Diocesans of Warsaw-Praga), Warszawa 2011, p. 31.

<sup>547</sup> T. Wielebski, *Duszpasterstwo chorych w Polsce. Kierunki rozwoju* (Ministry for the Sick in Poland. Direction of development), "Ateneum Kapłańskie" (Priest's Athenaeum) 2007, nr. 588, p. 334.

<sup>548</sup> L. Adamczuk, W. Sadłoń, (ed.), *Postawy religijno-społeczne mieszkańców Diecezji Warszawsko-Praskiej*, op. cit., p. 32.

It is a pity that there have been no studies conducted on a wider scale to study the knowledge about the frequency of receiving the sacrament and understanding its meaning<sup>549</sup>.

An important role in ministry for the sick is assigned to the parish. In its territory there are many sick, who need many forms of help. Do parishes in Poland do anything to help them? The 2010 studies conducted by the Institute of Statistics of the Catholic Church in cooperation with the Central Statistical Office show that over 92% of parishes in Poland do. By categorizing based on the one used by the CSO in studying the social economy it can be said that almost all parishes provide *spiritual help*. A fourth of parishes organizes free time for the sick. Only one in ten parishes provides caring services and only a small percentile of parishes offers other forms of help: feeding (2.1%), retreat (1.6%), material help (1.4%), financial aid (1.1%), healing (0.3%)<sup>550</sup>. In turn, the study conducted by CBOS (Centrum Badań Opinii Społecznej - Centre for Public Opinion Research) only 5% of respondents declared receiving material help from the parish (medicine, food, clothes), whereas 1% of the various offered forms of caring for the elderly, infirm and sick<sup>551</sup>. Comparing the results from the quoted sources, a big range of difference between them can be observed. They can be explained by different methodologies of conducting the studies. In CBOS's study, respondents were asked not only about the forms of helping the sick, but, placing them among many various forms of parish social initiatives, they were also asked to say which they receive most often. From the data retrieved from various study sources it can be deduced that parishes do not do enough to help the sick and suffering in the nursing and medical, material and financial fields.

It is hard to say, in light of the ISCC and CSO 2010 studies what is the *spiritual help* offered by parishes. The question in the study form did not focus on that detail. Wanting to learn the forms of working with the sick undertaken by parishes in Poland in more detail, one can refer to the studies conducted by other authors. W. Przygoda's studies show that the most common form of priestly care for the sick who lay at home is the sacramental service (confession and the holy Communion) given by the priests on the first Friday of the month, which was mentioned by 88.7% of participating rectors. Sometimes priests also perform mass

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<sup>549</sup> Referring to the studies conducted by the author, it can be said that as many as 60% of the respondents never received the sacrament. However it is hard to generalize basing on just one study. Cf. T. Wielebski, *Duszpasterstwo chorych w Polsce. Kierunki rozwoju*, op. cit., p. 334.

<sup>550</sup> W. Sadłoń, *Determinanty funkcjonowania opiekuńczej wspólnoty lokalnej: aktywność parafii w Polsce na rzecz chorych* (The Determinants of Functioning of Caring of the Local Community: the Activity of Parishes in Poland for the Sick), *Polityka Społeczna* (Social Politics) 2012 nr. 5-6, pp. 25-26.

<sup>551</sup> CBOS, *O religijnym i społecznym zaangażowaniu Polaków w lokalnych parafiach. Komunikat z badań CBOS* (On the Religious and Social Engagement of Poles in local Parishes. CBOS Study Report), BS/141/2011, Warszawa 2011, p. 5-7; [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2011/K\\_141\\_11.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2011/K_141_11.PDF) (access date 22.11.2012).

in the sick person's house, confirmed by 18.9% of responding priests<sup>552</sup>. In turn 39.3% of the priests say the sick are visited by members of charity groups. The sick are visited by members of movements, associations and apostolic groups according to 23.6% of the studied clerics<sup>553</sup>. In turn, the author's studies show that nearly 60% of studied sick who are hospitalized know of systematic visits to the sick by priests and 14.6% know of visits made by members of Parish Charity Units<sup>554</sup>. The quoted studies say that priestly service for the sick covers, in a greater degree, giving sacraments rather than visits to the suffering in their homes by volunteers. It also seems that still a far too small percentage of priests performs mass in the sick person's home.

In its documents, the Magisterium stresses that sacral people should also join in on accomplishing ministry for the sick, especially those who are focused around Parish Caritas units. Working under the rector's leadership they are to initiate acts of charity within the parish, spread the idea of Christian mercy and take actions to aid the poor and needy. Caritas Poland's data indicates that there are 4790 Parish Caritas Units in Poland in whose charity and caring actions are engaged 43761 volunteers<sup>555</sup>. Taking into account the fact that the number of parishes in Poland is now 10150<sup>556</sup>, it turns out that PCUs are present in every other parish. It is hard to establish what percentage of the members of the PCUs visits the sick at their homes but it can be assumed, referring to the studies quoted earlier, that it is at a low or medium level.

A special meaning in ministry for the sick should be assigned to celebrating the Day of the Sick on many, as the Magisterium mentions, levels whose central point is the Eucharist combined with a communal sacrament anointing the sick. Do celebrations of the Day of the Sick in Poland have their proper place in the Polish ministry for the sick? There are not enough detailed sociological data that regard celebrating this day on the diocese level, however there are some data that present the topic on the parish level. W. Przygoda's studies indicate that a high percentage of 97.1% rectors claimed they have organized special worship ceremonies for the sick in their parishes<sup>557</sup>. Although W. Przygoda did not directly ask for the frequency of celebrating the Day of the Sick, but it can be assumed that the mentioned

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<sup>552</sup> W. Przygoda, *Posługa charytatywna Kościoła w Polsce* (The Church's Charity Service in Poland), op. cit., p. 340.

<sup>553</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>554</sup> T. Wielebski, *Duszpasterstwo chorych w Polsce. Kierunki rozwoju*, op. cit., p. 325.

<sup>555</sup> *O Caritas* (about Caritas), [http://www.caritas.pl/images/stories/publikacje/caritas\\_folder\\_2012.pdf](http://www.caritas.pl/images/stories/publikacje/caritas_folder_2012.pdf) (access date 6.09.2012).

<sup>556</sup> *Wierni i parafie* (Believers and Parishes) 2010, <http://www.iskk.pl/kosciolnaswiecie/159-wierni-i-parafie-2010.html> (access date 6.09.2012).

<sup>557</sup> W. Przygoda, *Posługa charytatywna Kościoła w Polsce*, op. cit., p. 341.

ceremonies are a part of celebrating the Day of the Sick within the parish. However, it is unknown exactly whether these ceremonies are occasional, for example in relation to retreats in the parish, or part of the celebrations of the Day of the Sick, as the Magisterium instructs. In turn the studies conducted by the author indicate that 43.7% of respondents have met with organizing the Day of the Sick in their parishes, 11.7% claimed that nothing was organized and 42.6% answered that they knew nothing about it<sup>558</sup>. In many parishes the celebrations of the Day of the Dead are not restricted to just the liturgical field, but are also used for integration and reflexion, of which a certain form are meetings in the parish house with treats. W. Przygoda's studies say that 37.8% of the studied rectors claimed there were no such meetings<sup>559</sup>. It can be deducted from the above studies that the celebrations of the Day of the Sick on the parish level, together with a special mass and meeting in the parish house, are not yet commonly practised.

Hospitals, hospices and social care institutions are special places of the priestly care for the sick. The ministerial actions performed in them (sacraments, praying together, individual conversation with the sick, apostolate by means of books and press) renew and intensify the religious lives of the sick and become a part of the therapy process. Priesthood conducted among the sick is supposed to also lead to overcoming the feeling of uselessness among them and instead encourage them to sacrifice their suffering in many intentions of the Church and world. All institutions need well prepared chaplains who take not just the sick but also their families and medical personnel under their service. Is their amount enough? The 2011 *Clergy Census* says that there are 408 chaplains in Poland, including 197 diocesan priests and 211 monks<sup>560</sup>. It seems that, accounting for the occurring needs, that there are too few priests delegated to work with the sick<sup>561</sup>. Of course, it should be noted that a great number of priests who are chaplains only sporadically, but that is unacceptable in the long run. There are not enough studies on this subject. A study conducted by the author in 1988 showed that 55,5% chaplains worked only in hospitals, whereas 45.5% also have other priestly duties<sup>562</sup>. The studies conducted by P. Krakowiak 12 years later showed that the above proportions remained unchanged. Priests working in health care, hospices and social

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<sup>558</sup> T. Wielebski, *Duszpasterstwo chorych w Polsce. Kierunki rozwoju*, op. cit., p. 325.

<sup>559</sup> W. Przygoda, *Posługa charytatywnej Kościoła w Polsce*, op. cit., p. 342.

<sup>560</sup> W. Zdaniewicz, W. Sadłoń (ed.), *Duchowieństwo Diecezjalne oraz Członkowie Męskich Instytutów Życia Konsekwowanego i Stowarzyszeń Życia Apostolskiego*, (Diocesan Priesthood and Members of Male Institutes of Consecrated Life and Associations of Apostolic Life) Warszawa 2011.

<sup>561</sup> The CSO's 2011 record shows that in 2010 there were 795 hospitals in Poland, including 509 public hospitals and 286 non public hospitals and 1421 social service institutions. Cf. GUS, *Rocznik Statystyczny Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (CSO Annual Statistical Report for Poland), Warszawa 2011, pp. 366, 377.

<sup>562</sup> T. Wielebski, *Duszpasterstwo chorych w Polsce. Kierunki rozwoju*, op. cit., p. 326.

service constituted for 42.5% of total respondents, whereas 58.5% chaplains were involved in other duties as well<sup>563</sup>. The overload resulting from too many duties results in chaplains not being able to fully realize their duties, provide enough care not just for the sick, but their families and health care workers as well. The studies conducted by the author show that 27.3% of studied chaplains only provides care to the sick, 49.1% to the sick and medical personnel, 23.6% the sick, their families and medical personnel<sup>564</sup>. It seems necessary to change the state of things.

Competently performing the service in the world of the sick and health care requires a special interdisciplinary preparation, which should be done, on a basic level, during spiritual seminars. A 1999 study conducted among the rectors of Higher Spiritual Seminars in Poland showed that generally in all of these institutions there exist elements of theoretical-practical formations that prepare for working in health care. However, they are not systematic, often optional choices for the clerics as one of the forms of preparing for future priestly service. For example, the study showed that the yearly, obligatory practice for graduates in health care services are only done in 20% of seminars in Poland in one in ten they are only one of the options for graduates. It is also disturbing that a third of seminar rectors did not answer questions regarding this subject<sup>565</sup>. The existing state of things translates, in perspective, into a small interest in ministry in health care service among young priests. Fr. Pawlina's studies show that there are only 1.4% Neopresbyterians are ready to engage in charity work, which also includes chaplainship in health care and social service<sup>566</sup>. The obtained results show that steps should be taken already at the level of spiritual seminars to take actions concerning both systematic preparations for working in health care service as well as showing the beauty of this service.

Ministry in health care service requires constant specialistic education of the chaplains. P. Krakowiak's studies show that 99% chaplains see this need, suggesting that this education should be in the form of extramural studies (87%)<sup>567</sup>. There is also a need for

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<sup>563</sup> J. Binnebesel, P. Krakowiak, M. Krobicki, A. Muszala, *Ku Szkole Opieki Duszpasterskiej św. Jana Bożego* (Toward Saint John of God's School of Priestly Care), in: *Dolenntium Hominum. Duchowni i świeccy wobec ludzkiego cierpienia* (Dolenntium Hominum. Priests and Sacral in the Face of Humn Suffering), J. Binnebesel, P. Krakowiak, M. Krobicki, A. Muszala (ed.), Kraków 2011, p. 43.

<sup>564</sup> T. Wielebski, *Duszpasterstwo chorych w Polsce* (Ministry for the Sick in Poland), Lublin 2001, drs ts., pp. 265-266.

<sup>565</sup> J. Binnebesel, P. Krakowiak, M. Krobicki, A. Muszala, *Ku Szkole Opieki Duszpasterskiej św. Jana Bożego*, op. cit, p. 45-46.

<sup>566</sup> K. Pawlina, *Formacja do kapłaństwa w polskich seminariach* (Priesthood Preparations in Polish Semianars), Warszawa 2008, pp. 67-69.

<sup>567</sup> J. Binnebesel, P. Krakowiak, M. Krobicki, A. Muszala, *Ku Szkole Opieki Duszpasterskiej św. Jana Bożego*, op. cit, p. 40.

special formation meetings organized by bishop curias and authorities of orders, which is mentioned in the author's studies by 90.9% studied<sup>568</sup>. The apparent big percentage of answers speaks good about the awareness of chaplains who want to be competent, successful and engaged in their ministry.

Specialistic education of chaplains in Poland is done during cyclical nationwide meetings organized annually in November in Częstochowa, as well as meetings organized in every diocese by diocesan health care service priests. Another form of education are post graduate studies organized by the Bl. John Paul II University of Educating for Health Care Ministry of St. John of God in Cracow<sup>569</sup>. Despite the ability to take up specialistic studies, many chaplains do not use that form of education, explaining that by different, often interlinked reasons. Almost 80% respondents claim that they do not know anything about such studies, 62% of them are not sure about long-term engagements in health care service, 60% indicate a lack of ability to have a substitute for the times they are away and 59% answered they do not have motivation from their Church superiors and directors of institutions.<sup>570</sup>

The presented partial image of ministry for the sick in Poland emerging from various studies is not full, but basing on these studies a draft can be made to present the current state of things. Confronting the analyses with the Magisterium's teachings allows to figure out actions that will well suit accomplishing the Church's charity function in which serving the sick and suffering should play a major role (DCE 25; 31).

### **Into the future**

After presenting some selected of the Church Magisterium's instructions about pastoral care for the sick and presenting results of sociological studies that show the state of this form of ministry in Poland, some directions of action for its development should be pointed.

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<sup>568</sup> T. Wielebski, *Duszpasterstwo chorych w Polsce*, op. cit., p. 282.

<sup>569</sup> In 2011, from the initiative of the Fatebenefratelli, postgraduate studies were launched in the Pontifical University of John Paul II's Social Studies Institute under the frame of the University of Education for Health Care Ministry of st. John of God. Almost 50 students took up the studies: diocesan priests and monks, lay brothers and sisters and sacral people. The program of the studies consists of lectures in theology and humanistic sciences, working in groups and workshops in communication with patients as well as pastoral-clinical practice in Fatebenefratelli institutions. These type of studies are supposed to prepare the students to bring pastoral care into health care institutions in Europe and the world, with the help of priests and sacral volunteers. It is currently performed in 10 Fatebenefratelli hospitals, rest-homes and palliative-hospice institutions. Pastoral groups support the chaplains in those places in caring for the spiritual and religious needs of the patients and their families. Cf. Zespołowa opieka duszpasterska dla ochrony zdrowia i pomocy społecznej (Team Priestly Care for Health and Social Care), [http://www.bonifratrzy.pl/index.php?option=18&action=news\\_show&art\\_id=1530](http://www.bonifratrzy.pl/index.php?option=18&action=news_show&art_id=1530) (access date 19.10.2012).

<sup>570</sup> J. Binnebesel, P. Krakowiak, M. Krobicki, A. Muszala, *Ku Szkole Opieki Duszpasterskiej Św. Jana Bożego*, op. cit, pp. 50-51.

The basic thing seems to be inspiring and deepening the awareness of the sick person regarding the role and meaning of the sacraments in religious life, putting emphasis on the role of the sacrament of anointing the sick<sup>571</sup>. In a situation in which many Catholics treat sacraments as magic and turns their attention only because of the external ceremonial form, priests should emphasize the role of sacramental life in man's sanctification in their teachings. It can be done as comments and homilies given during their celebration. Social media can also be used to deepen sick people's religious awareness. A valuable initiative would also be to give properly redacted leaflets to the sick visited by priests in their homes and hospitals. An important formation role is also assigned to the communal giving of the sacrament of anointing the sick during the Day of the Sick. Explaining its meaning should also be addressed at health care workers.

It seems to be necessary to intensify the actions towards the sick who live in parishes by at least using the parish charity unit structures for this. First it should be made sure that such units exist in each parish. Its members should visit the sick in their homes. But how to reach them? Priests can make it available for parish charity units to have a list of sick visited on every first Friday of the month, update it during pastoral visits. Members of the parish charity units should help the sick with their presence in not only overcoming the feeling of loneliness but also in cleaning up their homes, making meals, shopping, doing their laundry, taking care of their administrative and legal problems as well as getting a doctor or nurse if there is a need. They can also help the sick in preparing them to receive sacraments and tell the priests of their willingness to accept them. Members of charity units should also enable the sick that are able to leave their home to take part in celebrating the Day of the Sick in the local parish temple as well as special vacation-retreats and pilgrimages. Effective and overall helping the sick requires co-operating of members of the parish charity units with social care as well as other charity institutions workers.

Not only members of the parish charity units should be engaged in visiting the sick and providing spiritual and material help, but it should also be important to people affiliated with religious movements operating within the parish. Their members can sometimes be endangered by sects and focusing on emotional experiencing faith. The task of the priests that take care of particular groups and movements is caring for showing the harmony between the

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<sup>571</sup> In recent years there has been a positive change from referring to the sacrament of anointing the sick only when in a situation of being close to death, but on the other hand the sacrament is has been "simplified" and abused by encouraging people over 65 years of age or who "feel not so well" to receive it. In the light of the theology of the sacrament of anointing the sick and Church law it should be stressed that this sacrament is only for the seriously sick and old. Cf. Cz. Krakowiak, *Namaszczenie Chorych. Sakrament uzdrowienia* (Anointing of the Sick. The Healing Sacrament), Sandomierz 2005, pp. 50-51.

horizontal and vertical aspect of faith, worshipping which must always be connected with providing a testament of love towards God and other people.

An important aspect of mutual co-operation between priests and the sacral is the service of the extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist. Thus, it should be a goal for every diocese in Poland that there be an appropriate number of such people. An extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, who brings the holy Communion on a daily basis to hospital rooms will allow chaplains to devote more time to visits and individual conversations with the sick. Extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist can also help parish priests in bringing the holy Communion to the sick people's homes, which is a characteristic catechesis that shows all people the right image of the Church communion in which also sacral people can take their place by the power of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. It will also allow to satisfy the desire to often receive the Eucharist of some sick.

The effectiveness of the priests' actions in serving the sick and suffering is greatly dependant of the mutual co-operation between the priests themselves and their sacral co-operators. It is connected with the necessity to change the mindset of all people who are responsible for ministry of the sick and break some thinking stereotypes. It seems that in the awareness of too many priests often languishes a wrong, from the theological side, image of the Church according to which too little meaning is assigned to the apostolic activity of sacral people. On the other hand there is a passivity among many sacral Catholic who do not feel the responsibility to actively build the Church communion because of the overbearing attitude of the clergy. Although breaking thinking stereotypes and overcoming some prejudices is a long-term process requiring good will, its fruit can be the deepening of traditional and development of new, adequate to the modern times, form of ministry for the sick. In this perspective a look should at least be given into the co-operation between clergymen and sacral workers of hospitals, hospices and rest-homes who are to serve the sick and suffering.

Priests, especially hospital chaplains should extend their care to not only the sick, but also their families and medical personnel. The task of hospital chaplains is to care for all of the hospital personnel, which can result in not only developing and deepening their religious lives, but also treating and relating to the sick better. The consciously experienced and finding its expression in concrete behavior of the hospital personnel faith increases the level of care given in hospitals.

In order for the hospital chaplain to be able to extend his care for the people creating the hospital community, he must be relieved of all other priestly duties. A proper choice of priests, who will want to work in hospitals, is also needed. Often this work is assigned to

completely randomly chosen priests. Some of them experience situations of crisis related to a lack of inner identity, unable to find their place in the parish reality. Some of the Church decision-makers appoint these people to hospital work claiming that the service they do in these places is less important than the one in the parish itself. It seems that such thinking is wrong. It can even be risked to say that almost every priest will manage well in service done in the parish, however working in hospitals requires special personality predispositions and specialistic preparation.

Choosing the people who would completely devote themselves to work with the sick should begin already during the seminar phase of their education when some of the aspiring priests show fondness of working with the sick and being hospital chaplains. The task of the seminar teachers is to pay attention to such students and create them the conditions that will allow them to develop their charisma. They should also be given the ability to visit the sick in their homes and hospitals and also should be provided contact with experienced hospital chaplains. The information of their fondness for working with the sick should also be provided in the suggestions addressed at the people responsible for personnel politics in dioceses and orders.

The effectiveness of priestly service for the sick depends not only on the mutual cooperation between clergymen and sacral people but also on the priests being properly prepared. This kind of preparation should be realized on a broader scale as part of special pastoral practice for priests in hospitals, hospices and rest-homes

There is a need arising to organize specialistic training for chaplains who will work in hospitals on a broader scale. The model that should be propagated for priestly service in the world of human suffering is the team one. It is rejoicing that the idea of organizing special studies in academic centres in Poland is developing, according to the model of the studies at the Pontifical University of John Paul II's Social Studies Institute under the frame of the University of Education for Health Care Ministry of st. John of God. Extending this type of education to an increasing number of people who want to serve the sick and their families will allow, in perspective, to increase the quality of their service.

It is also necessary to also continue and develop cyclical formation meetings for hospital chaplains in their dioceses. These types of meetings can serve not only to exchange experiences but also help vent the tension and stress related to priestly service. The places of meetings of hospital chaplains and the sick's priests can also be places like retreat centres or religious houses. The programme of such courses should meet the needs and encapsulate lectures given by sacral teachers that discuss the rules of working with the sick as well as

exchanging experiences in groups. Speeches given during such meetings and the conclusions coming from the discussions that were taken up should then be saved in the form of a book. An extremely important matter seems to also be creating a proper magazine which would be a platform for exchanging experiences of priests and sacral believers that dedicate themselves to serving the sick. These types of magazines would also constitute for a source of professional knowledge of the rules of working with the sick. It seems that it is also suggested to organize trips abroad for priests who work with the sick. During such trips they could acquaint themselves with the manner of the organization of ministry for the sick in other countries and then implement the obtained experience on Polish soil.

Another worthy recommendation seems to be the necessity to conduct overall studies concerning the used methods and forms of working with the sick in Poland, the evaluation of the service and the sick's expectations towards the Church. Sociological studies, to which the Second Vatican Council encourages in the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church* (PCC 62; DB 17), allow to make a good evaluation of the state of ministry for the sick, which in confrontation with the Magisterium's teachings will allow to create a working model of actions in accordance with the Church's instructions as well as meeting the various needs of the suffering.

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Bl. John Paul II in his Exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* stresses that ministry for the sick is one of the priorities of priesthood, *especially in a society of prosperity and productivity, in a culture characterized by a idolatrous culture of the flesh, rejecting pain and suffering from our consciousness and the myth of eternal happiness* (EiE 88). In the same document the Pope also appealed for properly ministering in many places where people suffer and supporting the families of the sick people. He paid special attention to the necessity of supporting medical and paramedical personnel in their vocational service of the sick (ibidem). We should also refer these words to the priestly duties of the Church in Poland. In the many actions we cannot forget about the most important thing – see a suffering Jesus in the sick people we help. Let us also remember that our attitude towards sick people will be one of the criteria that will decide about human salvation in the Final Judgement (Mt 25:31-46).

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