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WE, THE NATION. POLAND AND POLES IN THE MILLENNIUM PROGRAMME OF PRIMATE STEFAN WYSZYŃSKI (1956-1966/1967)

In May 1956, Primate Stefan Wyszyński, interned by the communists in Komańcza, developed a pastoral programme aimed at preparing Poles for the millennium of baptism of the state in 1966¹. Social issues related to Poland and Poles have taken an important position in this project². The Millennium Programme consisted of: Jasna Góra Vows of the Polish Nation (August 1956, repeated in May 1957), the Great Novena of the Nation before the Millennium of the Baptism of Poland (1957-1966) and the jubilee *Te Deum* Year of the Nation (1966 and 1967). The Millennium, understood as the period of the Church's preparations for the anniversary of Poland's baptism and the celebrations themselves, was a peaceful revolution aimed at the system of enslavement. The victory was to bring

¹ J. Michalska, *Śluby Jasnogórskie. Powstanie tekstu i przewiezienie go na Jasną Górę (Vows of Jasna Góra. Creation of the text and transporting it to Jasna Góra)*, Warsaw, 30 V 1993, in: P. Raina, *Kardynał Wyszyński. Losy więzienne (Cardinal Wyszyński. Prison history)*, Warsaw 1999, p. 210; B. Noszczak, *Okolności powstania Jasnogórskich Ślubów Narodu Polskiego (Circumstances of the creation of Jasna Góra Vows of the Polish Nation)*, „Przegląd Powszechny” 2007, no. 7-8, p. 37 et seq.; M. Okońska, *Z misją do Komańczy (With a mission to Komańcza)*, Warsaw 2006, p. 5 et seq.

² J. Lewandowski, *Naród w nauczaniu kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego (The nation in the teaching of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński)*, Warsaw 1989.

to it the spiritual transformation of Poles. In the Millennium Programme Poles were presented as: a nation spiritually wounded (Vows of Jasna Góra), a nation which is being pulled out of spiritual collapse (The Great Novena) and an exalted nation (*Te Deum* Year).

THE NATION WOUNDED

Jasna Góra Vows referred to the vows made in the 17th century by King Jan Kazimierz. The Primate Wyszyński developed them and adapted them to the problems of contemporary times³. According to him, Poland was a fortress besieged by communists, and the aim of pastoral work was to defend it. The Hierarchy emphasised the need to learn about retail sins, as well as to see the wounds and addictions that have grown into the lives of Poles⁴.

The Primate criticised the flaws of his compatriots, which were exacerbated by the experiences of World War II and then Stalinism. In Wyszyński's opinion, Poles did not give up their addictions, which could not be accepted by the attitude of the believing nation⁵. The Jasna Góra promises were supposed to combat these deficiencies⁶. Wyszyński's most serious social shortcomings included laziness, recklessness, squandering, drunkenness and promiscuity. He also mentioned: negligence, lack of perseverance, dispersion, passivity of mind, superficiality, volatility, the easy way, profligacy⁷.

In accordance with the Jasna Góra vows, the faithful undertook to combat the above mentioned deficiencies⁸. The realisation

³ S. Wyszyński, *Wszystko postawiłem na Maryję (I bet everything on Mary)*, Paris 1980, p. 118.

⁴ Ibidem, p. 118–119.

⁵ Ibidem, p. 136.

⁶ Ibidem.

⁷ S. Wyszyński, *Wypełniamy Jasnogórskie Śluby Narodu. Czytania na maj (We fulfill Jasna Góra Vows of the Nation. May Readings)*, Jasna Góra 1957, p. 125.

⁸ Jasnogórskie Śluby Narodu 26 VIII 1956 r. (Jasna Góra Vows of the Nation 26 August 1956). [in:] S. Wyszyński, *Wszystko postawiłem na Maryję (I bet everything on Mary)*, op. cit., pp. 125-129.

of the vows was a „living votive offering of the nation” obliging Poles to prepare with dignity for the jubilee of the millennium of baptism⁹.

A NATION WHICH IS BEING PULLED OUT OF SPIRITUAL COLLAPSE

After the changes of October '56, the Primate returned from internment to perform his duties; at the same time he began to implement the Great Novena programme. His idea was a „great cry” for: life in the Sanctifying Grace, security in families, unity of families and marriages, Catholic upbringing and „new justice” – the same as the social teaching of the Church. The Primate believed that the realisation of the Great Novena would bring Poles „the full peace of God built on the foundations of the Spirit of Christ”¹⁰.

Its programme was based on the realisation of the slogans promised by the faithful in August 1956. The Great Novena consisted of years: of Fidelity to God, Christ and the Church (1957-1958); Sanctifying Grace/Penance (1958-1959); Life/Sacrament of the Eucharist (1959-1960); Catholic Marriage (1960-1961); Holiness of the Family (1961-1962); Christian Education (1962-1963); Love and Justice (1963-1964); Renewal of Christian Culture (1964-1965); Faithfulness to Mary (1965-1966)¹¹.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 129.

¹⁰ S. Wyszynski, *W światłach Tysiąclecia (In the lights of the Millennium)*, Kraków 1981, pp. 15–16.

¹¹ B. Noszczak, „*Sacrum*” czy „*profanum*”? – spór o istotę obchodów Milenium polskiego (1949–1966) („*Sacrum*” or „*profanum*”? – dispute over the essence of the celebration of the Polish Millennium), Warsaw 2002, p. 83 et seq.; E. Suchcicka, *Odnowienie oblicza polskiej ziemi przez naukę zawartą w Ewangelii w nauczaniu Prymasa Tysiąclecia w okresie Wielkiej Nowenny*, „*Studia Prymasowskie*” (*Renewal of the image of Poland through the teaching of the Primate of the Millennium in the period of the Great Novena*, „*Primate Studies*”). 2009, no. 3, p. 208 et seq.

The Great Novena was a „national and Catholic account of conscience”¹². The basic point of reference for it was „contemporary man” and his concerns. For this reason, pastoral work was focused on the present and the future. The Great Novena was a project of alternative to the state mobilisation and organisation of the life of Poles, according to the spirit of the Gospel.

The peregrination of a copy of the painting of Our Lady of Częstochowa (1957-1966) served to unite Poles within the framework of the Millennium Programme and to deepen their religiousness. Apart from the Jasna Góra Vows and the Great Novena, it was the most important action initiated by the Primate as part of preparations for the Millennium Jubilee. The aim of the peregrination was to „renew the image of our land”, to unite the nation, to help in gaining virtues, to free oneself from defects¹³. It lasted without major obstacles until 1966. Nevertheless, it was constantly assessed by the authorities of the People’s Republic of Poland as one of the most dangerous aspects of the Millennium celebrations for them. This conviction, not without reason, led to the fact that the Jasna Góra icon became one

¹² S. Wyszynski, *Na szlaku Tysiąclecia. Wybór kazań (On the Millennium route. Selection of sermons)*, authoring M. Okońska, M. Plaskacz, A. Rastawicka, Warsaw 1996, p. 7.

¹³ A. Jackowski, S. Grzybek, *Teologiczne podstawy peregrynacji Matki Bożej Częstochowskiej (Theological foundations of the peregrination of the Mother of God of Czestochowa)*, in: *Maryja, Matka Narodu Polskiego (Mary, Mother of the Polish Nation)*, ed. S. Grzybek, Częstochowa 1983; *Peregrynacja Wizerunku Matki Bożej Jasnogórskiej w duchowym krajobrazie Polski ku przyszłości (1957–2007) (Peregrination of the image of the Mother of God of Jasna Góra in the spiritual scenery of Poland towards the future (1957-2007))*. *Ogólnopolskie Sympozjum Mariologiczno-Maryjne Jasna Góra 4–5 maja 2007 r. (All-Poland Mariological-Marian Symposium, Jasna Góra 4-5 May 2007.)*, ed. Z. Jabłoński, Jasna Góra–Częstochowa 2007; J. Rogula, *Królowa Polski odwiedza przemyską ziemię. Pierwsze nawiedzenie Obrazu Matki Bożej Częstochowskiej w diecezji przemyskiej w latach 1970–1971 w świetle źródeł kościelnych (The Queen of Poland visits the land of Przemyśl. The first visit to the image of the Mother of God of Czestochowa in the diocese of Przemyśl in the years 1970-1971 in the light of church sources)*, Sandomierz 2010.

of the most important elements of the game between the state and the Church in the year of the anniversary of the baptism of Poland.

Reconciliation with Germany, which in November 1965 took the form of a message from Polish bishops to German bishops, was the crowning achievement on the way of Poles to the Millennium jubilee. This document had religious-moral and political significance. Addressing the complex problem of relations between the People's Republic of Poland and Germany, the Polish bishops sought to reconcile the two nations and, contrary to the geopolitical conditions of the time, they placed Poland within the circle of Western civilisation. In their intentions, the upcoming celebrations of the jubilee year were to become an opportunity for Poles and Germans to examine their conscience and forgive their guilt¹⁴.

AN EXALTED NATION. CHURCH WITH NATION, NATION WITH CHURCH

The year 1966 closed the program of spiritual and religious rebirth of Poles in preparation for the jubilee of baptism, and at the same time began the great feast of Catholicism in Poland¹⁵.

¹⁴ 18 November 1965, Watykan, Orędzie biskupów polskich do ich niemieckich braci w Chrystusowym urzędzie pasterskim (Vatican, The message of Polish bishops to their German brothers in the pastoral office of Christ), in: P. Raina, *Kościół w PRL. Kościół katolicki a państwo w świetle dokumentów 1945–1989 (Catholic church in the People's Republic of Poland. The catholic church and the state in the light of documents 1945-1989)*, vol. 2: years 1960–1974, Poznań 1995, p. 362.

¹⁵ *Milenium czy Tysiąclecie*, ed. B. Noszczak, [Warsaw 2006]; *Milenium kontra Tysiąclecie – 1966*, ed. K. Białecki, S. Jankowiak, J. Miłosz, Poznań 2006; *Millennium polskie. Walka o rząd dusz (Polish Millennium. Fighting for a ruling of souls)*, ed. C. Wilamowski, Warszawa 2002; B. Noszczak, „Sacrum” czy „profanum”?... („Sacrum” or „profanum”?...), p. 179 et seq.; *Pół wieku Milenium. Religijne, polityczne i społeczne aspekty obchodów Tysiąclecia Chrztu Polski (1956–1966/1967) (Half a century of the Millennium. Religious, political and social aspects of the celebration of the Millennium of the Baptism of Poland (1956-1966/1967))*, ed. B. Noszczak, Warsaw 2018; P. Raina, „Te Deum” narodu polskiego. Obchody Tysiąclecia Chrztu Polski w **światle** dokumentów kościelnych („Te Deum” of the Polish nation. Celebration

The Church and the nation were complementary forces. The church worked in the nation, ennobled it, changed and carried it, it was for him „strength and power”¹⁶. Thanks to baptism, Poles became a European nation, rooted in Western culture. A thousand years of Christianity in Poland gave the Church the legitimacy to be present in the history of the nation¹⁷. Bishops had a responsibility towards Poles. They were sent to „teach and baptise”; therefore they had a duty to strengthen the nation and raise its ambitions for eternal life¹⁸. The Primate recognised the need to maintain the unity of the Church with the nation. He judged that he must feel its spiritual states well, understand them, skilfully correct and deepen religiously¹⁹.

In the Millennium years the Church spoke of the right to freedom and civil liberties, and criticised the policy of the apparatus of power. Wyszyński did not hide the fact that the Church has the right to express its position on Poles’ affairs. In accordance with the teachings of Christ, who wanted his disciples to walk and teach all nations, Polish bishops taught the Polish nation and abide in it²⁰.

The Church united the nation with a supernatural bond, which intensified the natural bond, i.e. language, culture and history. He taught Poles to love their neighbours, the spirit of sacrifice and overcoming themselves. He worked out the Christian national culture. He introduced the nation to the family of Christian nations. The church exalts man and defends his dignity, stimulates social life to justice and social love, organises the coexistence of nations in a spirit of peace and teaches those in power to serve.

of the Millennium of the Baptism of Poland in the light of church documents), Olsztyn 1991.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 10.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 98.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 308.

¹⁹ S. Wyszyński, *Zapiski milenijne. Wybór z dziennika „Pro memoria” z lat 1965–1967 (Millennium Records. Selection from the Pro memoria journal from 1965 to 1967)*, choosing and authoring M. Okońska, M. Plaskacz, A. Rastawicka, Warsaw 2001, p. 105.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 71.

From the thought of the primate expressed in the Millennium year, it follows that Poles, as a nation, achieve unity under the leadership of the Church, which gives the spiritually enriched individual to the nation. The Polish nation was to be faithful to the Church, to live its teachings, spirit and sacraments, to want to live and die in the Church²¹.

POLAND ALWAYS FAITHFUL

According to the Primate, Poland „is always faithful”, „still faithful” and „will remain faithful”. Poland is baptised, belongs to Christ and is directed towards the Holy Trinity, dedicated to the Pope²². In Poland, according to Wyszyński, it has become a reality that there is no border between what is Polish and what is Catholic²³.

From the perspective of 1966 it was obvious that Poles are a Catholic nation, which in fact meant that the communists' efforts to create a secular society subordinated to the monopolies had failed.

According to the Primate, Poles are a „baptised, Catholic nation”²⁴ and *Te Deum* Year was a thanksgiving for a thousand years of faithfulness to God, to the Cross, to the Gospel and to the Church. Poland „was, is, and will be Catholic”. This was decided not only by the hierarchs, but also by the laity²⁵. The hierarchs identified Polishness with Catholicism. The theme of Poles as a Catholic, Christian and baptised nation was many times repeated on the „Millennium Route”²⁶.

In the opinion of the primate, through baptism, the life of God began to be implanted into the life of the nation. From that moment on, Christianity and Polishness and the Church and the nation began

²¹ S. Wyszyński, *Wypełniamy (We fulfil)*, op. cit., p. 43.

²² Id., *Na szlaku (On the route)*, op. cit., p. 72-73.

²³ Ibidem, p. 99.

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 7.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 48.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 174.195.311.

to unite. From that moment on, the road of the Church in Poland and the road of the Polish nation was one²⁷.

THEOLOGY OF THE BAPTISM OF THE NATION

The Primate taught that God works among Poles by His grace, wisdom, love and law. The hierarch saw the Polish nation as a transcendent²⁸ and Christian community²⁹. He put the sign of equality between the Polish nation and the baptised, according to the command of Christ: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them”. In this concept he developed a theology of baptism of the nation. From the perspective of 1966, he estimated that although Poles did not fully realise the Christian spirit, they deserve to be called a Catholic nation. He emphasised the Catholic character of the Polish nation.

The supernatural powers of Christianity have merged with the spiritual powers of the Polish nation. They were awakened, raised, refined and carried upwards by the Church. Thanks to baptism, the nation grew, created Christian customs, culture and Christian history. He even showed that God and His Son have embodied themselves in the life of the Polish nation³⁰. This last thought was repeated many times during the millennium celebrations. According to the primate, Christ penetrates deeper and deeper into the history of the Polish nation, transforms it and perfects its spiritual image, using all that influences its development³¹. According to the primate, it is not a nation, but „God has won in our nation”³².

Poland has been in the supernatural trend for thousands of years, „in the lights of the Gospel and the Cross”. After the „national

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 194.

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 234.

²⁹ Ibidem, p. 124.

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 9, 10.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 18.

³² Ibidem, p. 37.

examination of conscience” of the Great Novena, he wanted to secure God’s powers for the nation in the spirit of the Jasna Góra Vows and to be alert to their presence in the life of Catholic Poland of the second millennium³³.

The primate therefore believed in the relationship between *sacrum* and national hopes. The „incarnation of theology” in the everyday life of the nation was for Poles the refuge of perseverance in the most difficult periods of history and hope for victory³⁴. The „Polish Easter” was a manifestation of Poles’ secondary faith in the resurrection in national life. The Poles’ living faith in the „resurrection and life” prompted them to be faithful to God and the Homeland „to the last breath and to the last drop of blood”³⁵.

An important concept in the primate’s thought about the nation was its spiritual unity³⁶. Baptised Poles form a supernatural spiritually, morally, religiously, socially, psychologically, sociologically and historically consistent community. All these elements should be nurtured and lead to the fulfilment of Christ’s desire „to be one”. The strength and cohesion of the nation was determined by its faith, and the nation’s goal is to remain in the „supernatural current of God”³⁷.

THE MARIOUSNESS OF POLAND AND POLES

In the thought of the Primate concerning Poland and Poles, Mary had an important place. The Polish nation was to be united and reborn in her name³⁸. During the sermon on Jasna Góra (May 3, 1966) before the Act of Poland’s surrender to the Motherly Worship of Mary for the Freedom of the Church of Christ in Poland, the hierarchy stated

³³ Ibidem, p. 85.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 24.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 25.

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 70.

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 71.

³⁸ S. Wyszynski, *Wszystko (Everything)*, op. cit., p. 131.

that the faithfulness of Poles to God is in a special way served by Mary, whose faithfulness is preserved by Poles. He judged that, thanks to the example of the Mother of Christ standing under the cross of the Son, Poles owe it „to the perseverance of the nation and the Church in Poland at Kalwaria”; thanks to her, they are still faithful to the Church of her Son³⁹. It was no coincidence that the Great Novena had a Marian colour, and the most important act of the Year of *Te Deum* was the surrender of Poles to Our Lady into slavery for the freedom of the Church. The Primate believed that the „people of the second millennium” would feel most probably in the „motherly, sweet slavery” of Mary⁴⁰.

In an act deposited in May 1966 at Jasna Góra, the bishops stated that Poland is the „kingdom of Mary”, and thanks to her the faith of Poles was saved⁴¹. To the Queen of Poland, Poles were entrusted – as a nation for „total ownership” and „tool” in Her hands for the benefit of the Church. The act stated that Poles want to live as a Catholic nation „by working for the glory of God and for the good of the temporal homeland”. They believed that through Mary they were enslaved to Christ. They trusted that with this act they would gain freedom for the Church and maternal care for their homeland⁴².

The Primate wanted the Poles to enter the new millennium of Christianity without addictions, bad inclinations, hostile language and uncontrollable speech. The model for this idea was Christ and Mary. That is why the Church bravely gave the nation into maternal slavery to Mary for the Church⁴³.

³⁹ Id., *Na szlaku (On the route)*, op. cit., p. 64.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 67.

⁴¹ Ibidem, p. 68.

⁴² Ibidem, p. 69.

⁴³ Ibidem, p. 80.

PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

According to the primate, the nation lives between the past, the present and the future. The baptism of Poland, and with it ten centuries of religious, national and state past, is a common property and heritage into which Poles are rooted and which is the possession of each Pole separately. At the same time, it is the foundation of the past on which the present is based, full of Christian hope – boldly and courageously programming for the future.

Wyszyński believed in the spiritual strength of Poles and the future of Catholic Poland⁴⁴. He emphasised the necessity of historical awareness of Poles⁴⁵. In the millennium year he presented a positive image of the past of Poland and Poles⁴⁶. According to him, the enemies of national unity are contempt for the past, the struggle between the social strata, and especially chauvinism. The „friend” of national unity is, in turn, the historical bond to which Poles should constantly refer⁴⁷. A friend of unity in the nation is also the common destiny and the awareness that Poles are doomed to it. The hierarch emphasised that the „internal national line of conduct” must always go hand in hand with patriotism, free from chauvinism and nationalism⁴⁸.

Poles are a baptised nation that believes in eternal life. In the opinion of the hierarchy, such a nation has a far-reaching, deep perspective on the future. The supernatural faith in the future is given to natural life: personal, family, national, social, public and state life⁴⁹.

⁴⁴ Ibidem, p. 35.

⁴⁵ Ibidem, pp. 358-359.

⁴⁶ Ibidem, p. 181.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 376.

⁴⁸ Ibidem.

⁴⁹ Ibidem, p. 157.

FEATURES AND RIGHTS OF THE MILLENNIUM NATION

A baptised nation is a free and living nation, which has the right to express its feelings and convictions and to show gratitude to God through Mary. It also has the right to vote and express its feelings. The primate considered that Poles as a nation did everything for the sake of exaggeration, which, however, was not a flaw⁵⁰. According to him, the Polish nation protests instinctively against unjust prohibitions. It is aware of its rights to freedom of worship⁵¹. Poles are characterised by innate patriotism⁵². They are a strong nation in faith and blessed in their achievements, which they draw from God⁵³. It is a believing nation that understands the meaning of grace, the importance of faith, the meaning of love and expresses its hopes that Poland will „always be faithful” in the second millennium of Christianity⁵⁴.

Poles are in the cardinal's opinion a young nation. According to him, a nation that wants to live should have – just like Poles – noble ideals. They even have to surpass man and pick him up according to the call of *Sursum corda!*⁵⁵.

The Polish nation has the right to religious, civil and national freedom. This gives rise to the right to resistance and civil opposition when the rulers issue imprudent bans and restrictions⁵⁶. Wyszyński invoked the natural right of the nation, which must be reckoned with. He emphasised the importance of love and unity in the life of the nation⁵⁷.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, p. 131.

⁵¹ Ibidem, p. 139.

⁵² Ibidem, p. 143.

⁵³ Ibidem.

⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 152.

⁵⁵ Ibidem, p. 157.

⁵⁶ Ibidem, p. 141.

⁵⁷ Ibidem, p. 79.

The Primate emphasised the importance of the spiritual values of the nation, which he called the „genius of the nation”⁵⁸. He believed that the future of the nation depended on the work, suffering and sacrifices of its members. The young generation, which is not only the future of the nation, but also is able to look at it with young eyes, played a special role here⁵⁹.

The fact that Poles have to rebuild (themselves and the state as a result of adversity) is paradoxically their „constant youth”⁶⁰. The source of love of the homeland is for Poles the necessity of renunciations and sacrifices. However, it is not only the source of Polish national existence in difficult conditions, but also a condition for the existence of the nation and the Polish state⁶¹.

The primate believed that, like every human being, nations and states have a mission to fulfil. They are groups of specific people and families united by culture, ethnic relations and history. The national ethos is a factor in shaping the history of the nation, which the state must take into account in order to use all social forces for its development. The Polish national ethos depends on the upbringing in the family. In other words, the nation will be what families will be⁶².

In the Millennium Programme, which referred to Poland and Poles, the message arising from the Gospel took a central place. Its addressee was not so much the general as the individual – the baptized Pole who „was, is, and will remain” faithful to God, the Gospel and the Church. In the Millennium Programme, the individual had responsibilities. This idea is expressed by the words of the primate: „Everyone who wants to govern the State, the Nation, the Church or the family must learn to govern themselves. Anyone who wants the nation to be

⁵⁸ J. Koperek, *Naród i państwo w myśli społecznej kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego i Jana Pawła II*, „Studia Elbląskie” (*Nation and state in the social thought of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński and John Paul II*, „Elbląg Studies”) 2010, vol. 11, p. 183 et seq.

⁵⁹ S. Wyszyński, *Wielka Nowenna Tysiąclecia – 966-1966* (*The Great Novena of the Millennium – 966-1966*), Paris 1962, p. 91.

⁶⁰ Ibidem, p. 90–91.

⁶¹ Ibidem, p. 89.

⁶² S. Wyszyński, *Wielka Nowenna* (*The Great Novena*), op. cit., p. 48.

industrious must be industrious. Everyone who wants a nation to be wise must strive for wisdom; for a nation to be strong, must be able to love oneself; for a nation to live in love, must be able to love oneself; for a nation to be in unity and peace, must be one in oneself, collected internally, full of inner peace. A man without peace will not give peace to anyone. Man without love, he will not give love. A man without wisdom will not pass it on to anyone. The impatient man will not bring balance and order around him⁶³. The mentioned quote is the essence of the concept of Poland and Poles contained in the Millennium Programme. More than half a century ago, the appeal to work on oneself, which in consequence contributes to the welfare of the nation, has not become obsolete. For Poles who entered the second millennium of their Christianity, the words of the primate sound like an indication and an important *memento*.

Summary

The aim of the Millennium Programme of Primate Wyszyński was to prepare Poles for the millennium of baptism of their country. Social issues have taken an important place in this project. The primate, referring to the problems connected with the life of Poles, emphasised the importance of the transcendental element. He taught that the future of a nation depends on personal involvement in „working on oneself”. He pointed to the national drawbacks of Poles, and then he taught how to get rid of them. In the 1966 jubilee year he repeatedly referred to what Poland is for him and who Poles are in the second millennium of their Christianity. A characteristic feature of this vision was the conviction of the exceptional significance of the Polish nation, which – devoted to the Motherly slavery of Mary – was to continue to work in order to remain *semper fidelis* regardless of the circumstances.

Keywords: Catholic Church in Poland after 1945, Millennium, Jasna Góra Vows, Great Novena, nation, theology of the Primate Wyszyński's nation

⁶³ S. Wyszyński, *Wszystko (Everything)*, op. cit., p. 146.

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