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INTRODUCTION

This is the 50th issue of „Warsaw Pastoral Studies” now available to our Readers. It is since 2005 that we have been with you, consistently endeavouring to reflect on pastoral theology in its broadest sense, and to provide inspiration for the evangelizing mission of the Church. Our articles are published by both independent academics and doctoral students who strive for their scientific degrees. In this way, we wish to implement effectively the teaching of John Paul II, who, when defining pastoral theology, writes in the exhortation *Pastores dabо vobis* that *it is a scientific reflection on the Church as she is built up daily, by the power of the Spirit, in history; on the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation, as a living sign and instrument of the salvation wrought by Christ through the word, the sacraments and the service of charity* (PVD 57). He points out that *pastoral theology is not just an art. Nor is it a set of exhortations, experiences and methods. It is theological in its own right, because it receives from the faith the principles and criteria for the pastoral action of the Church in history (...)*. He also notes that *among these principles and criteria, one that is specially important is that of the evangelical discernment of the socio-cultural and ecclesial situation in which the particular pastoral action has to be carried out* (ibid).

On the one hand, on our pages one can find issues which have a universal, general, and timeless dimension, on the other hand, we would like to provide tools which help to make evangelical discernment here and now. Since we are present on the UKSW Open Journal Platform, we would like to share our theological and pastoral reflection with a wider audience and celebrate our jubilee by publishing an English-language issue, which contains selected articles published in previous issues of our scientific journal.

The issue opens with an article by Prof. Kamiński, a doyen of Polish pastoral theologians, on the place of pastoral theology in the system of sciences. An unquestionable scientific authority, who has educated many Polish pastoral theologians, is a solid guarantee for a good understanding of the essence, object, and tasks of pastoral theology,

indicating, among others, the search for an answer to the question concerning the faithfulness to the mission of the Church founded by Christ. Fr. Kamiński, emphasizing that the Church undertakes scientific reflection on the actualization of her essence in specific conditions of place and time, needs to refer to Divine Revelation and theological sciences on the one hand, and ecclesiology, and on the other hand to a particular situation, examining it with sociological, psychological methods, etc. The author states that effective ecclesial activity presupposes knowledge of the complex, changing social, psychological, religious-pastoral, and historical realities, which, when confronted with the indications of Revelation and the teachings of the Magisterium, will make it possible to formulate conclusions and pastoral guidelines.

Prof. Przybyłowski discusses the issue of planning the pastoral activity of the Church. He underlines the importance of pastoral planning and notes that it should take into account the evangelical realism, connected with the awareness, that the manifestations of the ecclesial mission are an „investment for the future.” He notes that although pastoral activity is planned for „today and tomorrow,” the effects of actions remain a matter of a closer or longer time perspective of the Church’s existence and the life of each of its members. The author believes that the basic principle of planned pastoral activity should be the distribution of responsibility among the entities involved in the implementation of specific tasks and the inclusion of as many people as possible to carry it out, as well as the appreciation of diagnostic studies, created with the participation of specialists in the humanities (especially sociologists and psychologists) and pastoral theologians.

Tutak, PhD, addresses the question of the identity of the laity, referring to both the post-synodal exhortation *Christifideles laici* and the social sciences. Noting that the exhortation is dedicated to the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church and the world, he emphasizes the difference of their vocation from that of clergy and religious, calling them to sacralise the world they live in. He also refers to the indications of social theory stressing that the awareness of their own identity will allow them to perceive their difference

from other states, leading them to get involved in the pastoral mission of the Church, which is particularly important in the context of pastoral conversion.

The question of the role of the laity in missionary pastoral ministry, which is to result from pastoral conversion, is raised by Fr. Wielebski. With reference to Pope Francis' teaching, especially that contained in the exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, he shows the essence of missionary pastoral ministry, which *seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says: We have always done it this way* (EG 33). As part of the Church's primary purpose of existence, which is evangelisation, it must also be exercised by properly formed lay people. As both Christ's disciples and his missionaries, they are called to give daily witness to their faith, at the same time undertaking many evangelising activities.

The issue closes with scientific reflections of Fr. Sadlak on the crisis of marriage and family in the context of challenges for adult pastoral ministry. On the one hand, he presents the theological foundations of marriage and family and an outline of a diagnosis of crisis phenomena affecting them, and on the other hand, he presents proposals of pastoral actions. The author postulates, among other things, paying more attention to the pastoral care of engaged couples and more effective pre-marriage courses in parishes, as well as, referring to the American pastoral solutions, preparing videos on marriage, its theology and meaning, while informing about formal and organisational issues of a wedding ceremony or a Catholic wedding. He also underlines, following Pope Francis, the need for pastoral accompaniment of couples and families, especially in the context of strengthening bonds and obtaining educational competence, as well as of divorced persons and those whose spouse passes away (AL 296).

I hope that the contents of this issue of „Warsaw Pastoral Studies” will *serve as a leaven* for undertaking various pastoral activities. And I would like to encourage other authors to publish their articles on our pages.

On behalf of the Editorial Board
Rev. Tomasz Wielebski

WSTĘP

Do rąk Czytelników dociera już 50. wydanie „Warszawskich Studiów Pastoralnych”. Jesteśmy z Państwem od 2005 roku, konsekwentnie starając się podejmować refleksję w ramach szeroko rozumianej teologii pastoralnej, dostarczając inspirację do realizacji misji ewangelizacyjnej Kościoła. Na naszych łamach publikują swoje artykuły zarówno samodzielni pracownicy naukowcy, jak też, zdobywający naukowe szlify, doktoranci. W ten sposób chcemy dobrze realizować nauczanie Jana Pawła II, który definiując teologię pastoralną, pisał w adhortacji *Pastores dabo vobis*, że jest ona *nauką refleksją o codziennym wzrastaniu Kościoła, w mocy Ducha Świętego, w kontekście historii; a więc o Kościele jako powszechnym sakramencie zbawienia, jako znaku i żywym narzędziu zbawienia Jezusa Chrystusa, działającym przez słowo, sakramenty i posługę miłości* (PVD 57). Zwracając także uwagę na to, że teologia pastoralna *nie jest tylko umiejętnością, zespołem wskazań, doświadczeń i metod*, podkreślał, że ma ona *status pełnoprawnej dyscypliny teologicznej, ponieważ czerpie z wiary zasady i kryteria działalności duszpasterskiej Kościoła w historii (...)*. Zauważył także, że *wśród tych zasad i kryteriów szczególnie ważne miejsce zajmuje ewangeliczne rozeznanie sytuacji społeczno-kulturalnej i kościelnej, w której prowadzona jest działalność duszpasterska* (tamże).

Na naszych łamach można, z jednej strony, znaleźć zagadnienia mające wymiar uniwersalny, ogólny i ponadczasowy, z drugiej pragniemy dostarczać narzędzi pomagających dokonywać *tu i teraz* rozeznania ewangelicznego. Z racji obecności na Platformie Czasopism UKSW pragniemy podzielić się naszą refleksją teologiczno-pastoralną z szerszym gronem odbiorców, czcząc nasz skromny jubileusz wydaniem numeru angielskojęzycznego, w którym zamieściliśmy wybrane artykuły wydane w poprzednich numerach naszego naukowego czasopisma.

Numer otwiera artykuł ks. prof. R. Kamińskiego, nestora polskich teologów pastoralistów, podejmujący kwestie miejsca teologii pastoralnej w systemie nauk. Niekwestionowany autorytet

naukowy Autora, spod ręki którego wyszło wielu polskich teologów pastoralistów, jest solidną gwarancją pomagającą dobrze zrozumieć istotę, przedmiot i zadania teologii pastoralnej, wskazując między innymi na poszukiwanie odpowiedzi na pytanie dotyczące wierności misji Kościoła założonego przez Chrystusa. Ks. Kamiński podkreślając, że Kościół podejmuje naukową refleksję na temat aktualizacji swojej istoty w określonych warunkach miejsca i czasu, ma z jednej strony odwoływać się do Objawienia Bożego i nauk teologicznych, zwłaszcza eklezjologii, a z drugiej strony do konkretnej sytuacji, badając ją metodami socjologicznymi, psychologicznymi itd. Według Autora skuteczna działalność eklezjalna zakłada znajomość złożonej, zmieniającej się rzeczywistości społecznej, psychologicznej, religijno-duszpasterskiej, historycznej, która zestawiona ze wskazaniami Objawienia i nauczania Magisterium pozwoli na sformułowanie wniosków i wskazań pastoralnych.

Ks. prof. J. Przybyłowski porusza problematykę planowania działalności pastoralnej Kościoła. Podkreślając znaczenie planowania duszpasterskiego, zwraca uwagę na fakt, iż powinno ono uwzględniać realizm ewangeliczny związany ze świadomością dotyczącą tego, że przejawy misji eklezjalnej są „inwestycją na przyszłość”. Zauważając, że chociaż działalność pastoralną planuje się „dziś i jutro”, to jednak efekty działań pozostają kwestią bliższej lub dalszej perspektywy czasowej istnienia Kościoła i życia każdego jego członka. Według Autora podstawową zasadą zaplanowanego działania duszpasterskiego powinno być rozdzielenie odpowiedzialności na podmioty zaangażowane w realizację konkretnych zadań i uwzględnienie możliwie największej liczby osób do jej prowadzenia oraz dowartościowanie opracowań diagnostycznych, stworzonych z udziałem specjalistów z dziedziny nauk humanistycznych (zwłaszcza socjologów i psychologów) i teologów pastoralistów.

Dr M. Tutak podejmuje kwestię tożsamości świeckich, odnosząc się zarówno do posynodalnej adhortacji *Christifideles laici*, jak też nauk społecznych. Zauważając, że adhortacja poświęcona powołaniu i misji świeckich w Kościele i świecie, podkreśla odmiennność ich powołania od powołania duchownych i zakonników, wzywając ich do

sakralizacji świata, w którym żyją. Przywołuje też wskazania teorii społecznej podkreślającej, że świadomość ich własnej tożsamości pozwoli im dostrzec odrębność od innych stanów, prowadząc do zaangażowania się w misję duszpasterską Kościoła, co jest szczególnie ważne w kontekście nawrócenia pastoralnego.

Kwestię roli świeckich w mającym być skutkiem nawrócenia pastoralnego duszpasterstwie misyjnym porusza ks. T. Wielebski. Odwołując się do nauczania Franciszka, szczególnie zawartego w adhortacji *Evangelii gaudium*, ukazuje on istotę duszpasterstwa misyjnego, które wymaga rezygnacji z wygodnego kryterium duszpasterskiego, że „zawsze się tak robiło” (EG 33). Będąc wpisane w realizację głównego celu istnienia Kościoła, którym jest ewangelizacja, ma ono być też realizowane przez właściwie uformowanych świeckich. Będąc zarówno uczniami Chrystusa, jak i jego misjonarzami, są oni wezwani do codziennego składania świadectwa swojej wiary, podejmując zarazem wielorakie działania ewangelizacyjne.

Numer zamykają naukowe refleksje ks. dra R. Sadlaka podejmującego zagadnienie kryzysu małżeństwa i rodziny w kontekście wyzwania dla duszpasterstwa dorosłych. Z jednej strony przedstawia on teologiczne podstawy małżeństwa i rodziny i zarys diagnozy zjawisk kryzysowych je dotyczących, a z drugiej ukazuje propozycje działań duszpasterskich. Postuluje on, między innymi, przywiązywanie większej wagi do duszpasterstwa narzeczonych i prowadzenia efektywniejszych kursów przedmażeńskich w parafiach, jak też, przywołując amerykańskie rozwiązania pastoralne, przygotowanie filmików poświęconych małżeństwu, jego teologii, znaczeniu, informujących zarazem o kwestiach formalnych i organizacyjnych ceremonii ślubnej czy wesela na sposób katolicki. Podkreśla też, za Franciszkiem, konieczność duszpasterskiego towarzyszenia małżeństwom i rodzinom, szczególnie w kontekście umacniania więzi i uzyskiwania kompetencji wychowawczych, a także osobom rozwiedzionym oraz tym, które przez śmierć utraciły swojego współmałżonka (AL 296).

Życzę, aby treści zawarte w bieżącym numerze „Warszawskich Studiów Pastoralnych” były *dobrym zaczynem* przed podjęciem wielorakich działań duszpasterskich. Jednocześnie zapraszam kolejnych Autorów do publikowania swoich artykułów na naszych łamach.

W imieniu Redakcji
ks. Tomasz Wielebski

FR. RYSZARD KAMIŃSKI
WSP ROK II 2006 Nr 1 (3) pp. 152-163

PLACE OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY IN THE SYSTEM OF SCIENCE

Science cannot only be a reproduction of facts, but it must also include creative elements that may derive therefrom. Its content is the accumulation of knowledge and learning about the processes of its creation and the laws that govern it. Science understood in such a way allows man to see the reality more clearly, develops criticism, teaches ordering, leads to cognition and realization of the truth in life¹.

Science should enrich people so that they can develop. However, all science accomplishes these goals in its own way. Using its own methods and systems of thought, the science contributes to the study of reality. Since it is easier to achieve goals in cooperation, no science can treat its own way of cognition, scientific methods, and language as the only way of finding the truth. All science, while remaining itself, must be distinguished by its openness to the results of research of other sciences².

1. The concept of science

The term *science* is ambiguous and is therefore referred to in different ways. Most commonly the following four meanings of science are mentioned.

¹ Cf. W. Pytkowski, *Organizacja badań i ocena prac naukowych*, Warszawa 1985, pp. 7–21.

² Cf. J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, Wrocław 1981, pp. 9–10.

Science as scientific thinking (scientific attitude). It is the desire to know and understand, questioning to all statements, inventiveness of thought and criticism, versatility, exactitude, precision, and scientific detachment.

Learning as activity. In a broader sense, it is a set of activities of a science practitioner, i.e., teaching, learning, and acquiring knowledge. In the strict sense, it is scientific research leading to the cognition and systematisation of specialist knowledge based on experience or intellectual self-evidence of the subject, realised according to clearly stated and rational methods.

Science as a product (result) of scientific research. It is a scientific output of mankind, a result of scientific research systematised in a specific form, satisfying general intellectual interests of mankind, expressed in communicative language, rationally justified and organised.

Science as a field of culture directly related to science. It includes the aforementioned forms of scientific cognition, as well as the tools and means of practising science, the persons of scientists and scientific institutions (research institutes), as well as everything that is directly related to the process of scientific cognition³.

The object of scientific cognition can be anything that is accessible to scientific research. However, there are still areas of reality that we are unable to study scientifically. Scientists are looking for ways and methods to study such reality. Thus, the area of scientific research continues to expand⁴.

There are several criteria of scientificness. The first of these is the obviousness of cognition. It follows from this criterion that only those statements are certain that are self-evident. However, there may be direct and indirect obviousness. Directly self-evident assertions result from the structure of the human mind or emerge as such to the mind and cannot be meaningfully questioned. These are called

³ Cf. S. Kamiński, *Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*, Lublin 1981, pp. 11–18; Z. Hajduk, *Ogólna metodologia nauk*, Lublin 2001, pp. 178–179.

⁴ Cf. J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, op. cit., p. 31.

axioms. On the other hand, assertions that are indirectly self-evident can be reduced to axioms by appropriate reasoning sequences or can be derived from them⁵.

The second criterion of scientism is experimental verifiability. An experiment in the strict sense is a scientific experiment⁶. More broadly, experience is empirical research conducted using various methods and techniques of scientific observation. And in its broadest sense, experience means life practice⁷.

The third criterion of scientificness is the methodicalness of scientific cognition. Only cognition in which one of the basic scientific methods is applied has a scientific character. The most frequently mentioned methods of scientific thinking are analysis and synthesis, deduction and induction, comparison, and generalisation.

2. Development of science

Over the centuries there have been significant changes in the way the concept of science has been viewed. From antiquity to the present day, there have been many conceptions of science. It is difficult to discuss them all in this paper, hence only four basic ones⁸.

The first account of science is associated with Aristotle (384-322). He claimed that science consists in cognition of the external world through the senses. The cognition should be certain and obvious. It is achieved when one grasps the essence of a thing and its ultimate causes. Since cognition of the essence of a thing through its final causes has the character of necessity and generality, therefore individual facts and events do not belong to the scope of knowledge in the strict sense. Hence Aristotle distinguished between *episteme* (scientific cognition) and *doxa* (knowledge). By proper science Aristotle meant obvious,

⁵ Ibid, p. 28-29.

⁶ A scientific experiment consists in producing a specific phenomenon under conditions that enable the measurement of the relationship between a set of factors and the effect produced thereby. Cf. J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, op. cit., p. 29.

⁷ Cf. *ibid*, p. 30.

⁸ Z. Hajduk, *Ogólna metodologia nauk*, op. cit., p. 185.

causal, and general cognition. Based on such an understanding of science, he created a scientific system with a deductive structure, in which some of its tasks are directly obvious, while others are derived from them as conclusions.

Aristotle's definition of science was of a general nature. Detailed sciences could not be included within the scope of science understood in such a way since they do not reach the essence of sensuous objects. Therefore, they could not fulfil the conditions posed by Aristotle. Consequently, Aristotle's notion of science changed over the centuries, however, his concept of science survived through the Middle Ages⁹.

For St. Thomas in the Middle Ages, much as for Aristotle in antiquity, the point of departure in scientific cognition are real existing things subject to the senses. The human mind in the act of cognition reaches the essence of sensuous things, abstracting from their characteristics. In this way general, self-evident, and causal knowledge is attained. And this knowledge is what constitutes science. That is why the medieval definition of science says: *scientia est cognitio certa essentiae rerum per causas*.

According to Aristotle, the primary tasks of science should be self-evident. The articles of faith contained in Divine Revelation and constituting the starting point for theology do not contain this obviousness. Therefore, St. Thomas Aquinas, looking for a solution to this problem, introduced a distinction between superior sciences and inferior sciences. The first have their own primary tasks at the start, based on direct self-evidence, and they constitute premises for another science. The second do not have their own primary principles for their reasoning, but instead borrow them from another higher science.

The first premises of theology (articles of faith) are not straightforward. However, by accepting the primary tasks from the divine revelation, theology may come to know new truths in a methodical

⁹ In the Middle Ages, the so-called Franciscan school used a conception of science based on Plato and St Augustine. Such an approach claimed that philosophy and the secular sciences were not independent, and that they were only subservient to theology.

and scientific way. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, theology is a science insofar as its first premises are true and its statements have the obviousness of result. The truthfulness of the first premises may be proved by demonstrating the historicity and reliability of God's revelation. Accordingly, St. Thomas Aquinas extended the concept of science developed by Aristotle to theology¹⁰. That way of posing the problem persisted into the 20th century¹¹.

The second stage in the development of science took place in the 17th century as a result of the emancipation of the so-called detailed sciences. The Aristotelian and Thomistic conception of science contained postulates (necessity, generality, correctness, obviousness) that could not be realised in their entirety by the modern detailed sciences. That is why modern sciences did not accept the old concept of science. They strove to tighten the concept of science, and thus to exclude theology and philosophy from it. The narrow meaning of the term science is already found in F. Bacon († 1626), Galilei († 1642) and I. Newton († 1727), who based their research mainly on experience. As a result, in the 17th century there were two different conceptions of science: an Aristotelian-Thomistic one and a new conception of science as a deductive theory based on the results of quantitative analysis tested empirically. An attempt to combine those two approaches to scientific knowledge was made by E. Kant († 1804), but it proved unsuccessful. Further development of science clearly followed the path outlined by naturalists of the 17th century, although some representatives of science of that epoch still clung to the old understanding of science.

The 19th century was characterised by a wealth of scientific concepts and an exuberant development of individual branches of scientific knowledge, mainly due to the development of universities. During that period a third fundamental concept of science was born, mainly thanks to the positivists (A. Comte † 1857; J.F. Herschel † 1871;

¹⁰ See S. Thomas Aquinas, S. Th. q. 1 a. 8.

¹¹ S. Napiórkowski, *Jak uprawiać teologię*, Wrocław 1996, p. 173.

J. St. Mill † 1873). It aimed at grasping regularities that are obtained inductively and verified empirically.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, due to the differentiation and specialisation of knowledge on the one hand and the increased development of the humanities on the other hand, the concept of humanistic cognition that was autonomous in relation to natural sciences began to develop (W. Ditchey † 1911; W. Windelband † 1915; H. Rickert † 1936). Criticism of the positivistic conception of science was also undertaken, especially under the influence of a change in the way of practising science, especially physics (A. Einstein † 1955)¹².

As a consequence of the aforementioned events, a fourth fundamental conception of science (phenomenological, practical) emerged in the 20th century. According to the phenomenological concept of science (E. Husserl † 1938; M. Scheler † 1928; R. Ingarden † 1970), cognition takes place in several stages, the first and most important of which is phenomenology, and the next are imaginative variation and eidetic reduction, through which one reaches the perception and essence of things. In that approach, *both real and formal disciplines may deserve to be called sciences, with the proviso that the humanities have been very clearly treated*¹³.

The pragmatist conception of science adopts scientific research as a tool for action. This approach is based on the unity of thinking and acting. Therefore, every scientific assertion can be translated into a directive. True cognition is only true if it is useful and practical, and the action based thereon is effective. The truthfulness of scientific theories is recognised and assessed by their usefulness to man (W. James † 1910; J. Dewey † 1952). The research method emphasises the biological and social function of cognition, which leads to epistemological relativism.

¹² S. Kamiński, *Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*, op. cit., p. 93-95; Z. Hajduk, *Ogólna metodologia nauk*, op. cit., p. 189-191; S. Napiórkowski, *Jak uprawiać teologię*, op. cit., p. 178-179.

¹³ S. Napiórkowski, *Jak uprawiać teologię*, op. cit., p. 180; S. Kamiński, *Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*, op. cit., p. 165 and 146.

3. Division of sciences

The first divisions of sciences were developed in antiquity. Plato divided science according to the cognitive powers and aims of knowledge. In this way, he distinguished the field of mental cognition, the field of sensory cognition, and practical and technical skills.

A more comprehensive division of science was made by Aristotle. He achieved that on the basis of two principles of division: the aim of science and the degree of abstraction of its subject. Regarding the purpose of science, Aristotle distinguished theoretical (speculative) knowledge, which seeks to know the truth for its own sake, and practical knowledge, when knowledge serves to guide behaviour. And also, productive (conceptual) knowledge, when cognition serves to produce beautiful or useful things.

Due to the degree of the abstraction of the subject, Aristotle divided the theoretical sciences into physical sciences, mathematical sciences and the first philosophy, i.e. metaphysics. Aristotle's classification of science, in its basic assumptions, had a great influence on the subsequent divisions of science¹⁴.

During the Middle Ages there was a division between theoretical knowledge and secular knowledge. Secular disciplines were called liberal arts (*artes liberales*). They were further divided into *trivium* and *quadrivium*. The *trivium* was of a humanistic nature (grammatics, rhetoric and dialectic), while the *quadrivium* was of a mathematical-naturalistic nature (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music)¹⁵.

In modern times new divisions of science were made. For example, based on its sources, F. Bacon († 1626) distinguished

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 234-235; Z. Hajduk, *Ogólna metodologia nauk*, op. cit., p. 214.

¹⁵ S. Kamiński, *Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*, op. cit., p. 236; Z. Hajduk, *Ogólna metodologia nauk*, op. cit., p. 214-215. Hugo from St. Victor († 1141) distinguished four groups of knowledge: theoretical (metaphysics, mathematics, physics), practical (ethics, economics, mechanics and logic). St. Thomas Aquinas used Aristotle's classification giving it more methodological justification. St. Bonaventure († 1274) divided knowledge into: theology, philosophy, fine arts, mechanical arts and free arts. See S. Kamiński, *Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacji nauk*, op. cit., p. 236-238; Z. Hajduk, *Ogólna metodologia nauk*, op. cit., p. 214.

between theological (revealed) knowledge and knowledge acquired naturally by man. Depending on various human powers, it can be philosophical (based mainly on reason), historical (based on memory and observation) and poetic (based on imagination). Ch. Wolf († 1754), distinguishing theology from natural knowledge based on the method of the latter, distinguished three groups of sciences: philosophical, or rational; historical; natural, or empirical; and quantitative, or mathematical¹⁶.

In the 19th century there were many attempts to organise science. Among the better-known divisions of science of that period is the division by A. Comte († 1857) and H. Spencer († 1903). Comte distinguished between proper sciences, or fundamental sciences, that is of an abstract and explanatory nature, and derivative sciences, of a more specific nature. According to him, each science goes through three stages in its development: theological, metaphysical, and positive one. H. Spencer divided science by grouping it into abstract (formal), abstract-concrete (explanatory) and concrete (descriptive)¹⁷. Amidst many attempts to divide science in the 20th century, the most successful were proposals to divide it only into main fields of knowledge. The most frequently used epistemological principle of division is the area of research. It groups different sciences of the same material object. The organisational and institutional organisation of sciences by departments of academies of sciences or scientific societies, e.g., PAN (Polish Academy of Sciences), NSF (National Science Foundation), is more evident than before¹⁸.

Taking the sources of cognition as a criterion, all sciences can be divided into theology, based on divine revelation, and sciences based solely on reason. Of the sciences that are based on reason alone, in terms of the way they explain things one can distinguish philosophy,

¹⁶ S. Kamiński, *Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*, op. cit., p. 239; Z. Hajduk, *Ogól na metodologia nauk*, op. cit., p. 215.

¹⁷ S. Kamiński, *Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*, op. cit., p. 240-242.

¹⁸ Ibid pp. 243-245.

which considers reality in the light of ultimate causes, and the detailed sciences, which study the direct relationships between phenomena.

With regard to their subject and methods, detailed sciences can be divided into formal sciences using the deductive method¹⁹ and real sciences using the inductive method. Within the group of real sciences one can distinguish natural sciences, whose subject is the inanimate and animate nature, and whose aim is to learn about and establish relationships between phenomena. The technical sciences, as implementation sciences, aim to apply the results of natural research in practice, mainly chemistry, biology, and physics. The real sciences also include the humanities, which are concerned with man and culture²⁰. They are divided into three groups: the sciences of man and society (psychology, ethnology, anthropology, socioeconomics), the sciences of cultural resources (the sciences of religion, morality, art, and the sciences of the history of man living in society and his creations (historical sciences divided according to epochs, fields of culture, etc.))²¹. A complete catalogue of humanities raises problems due to the heterogeneity of their names and difficulties in their classification. Majka assumes a division of the humanities into theoretical humanities and practical humanities. The former includes nomological humanities (sociology, economics, legal theory, cultural theory) and idiographic humanities (historical sciences, including the history of religion, cultural history, social history, economic history, political history, humanistic geography, cultural anthropology, and ethnology). Cultural history includes the history of material culture, the history of literature, the history of art and the history of customs. The practical humanities include the political science (social and economic policies) and psychotechnics²².

¹⁹ Formal sciences include logic, mathematics, computer science, semiotics, semantics. See J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, op. cit., p. 36.

²⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 34-36; S. Kamiński, *Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*, op. cit., p. 250.

²¹ S. Kamiński, *Pojęcie nauki i klasyfikacja nauk*, op. cit., p. 267.

²² Cf. J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

4. The concept and division of theology

The term theology stems from the Greek *logos* (word, concept, science) and *Theos* (God). The term *teologia* (English theology) thus means the science of God; theology is the science of God²³. The object of theology is God and His creatures remaining in relation to God as their end and cause. From the point of view of its material object, theology is divided into many theological disciplines whose internal unity is secured by the formal object common to all theological disciplines, i.e., by the common point of view of all theological disciplines, which is the light of divine revelation. All theological disciplines constitute an internal unity since they treat the material object in the light of divine revelation.

Theology can be systematised in various ways. Commonly, a classification into historical theology, systematic theology and practical theology is accepted. Historical theology includes biblical history and theology, church history, patristics, history of dogma and theology. The focus is on the historical facts contained in Scripture and in the Church. The task of historical theology is to discover and determine the meaning of historical, cultural, and theological facts. This sense can only exist in relation to God as the subject of salvation history; the facts, things, signs, and events studied by historical theology would themselves have no theological sense and would be

²³ The term “theology” has undergone a semantic evolution. It is not found in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Initially, Christian writers did not use this term either. Origen is the first to give the term ‘theology’ a Christian meaning.

He defined the practice of theology as talking about God and Christ, confessing and worshipping them. In the writings of the Latin Fathers, the term „theology” had no ecclesiastical meaning until St Augustine. What we today call theology, in the Latin Fathers and writers was called: “doctrina christiana”, “sacra Scriptura”, and “sacra erudition.” It was not until Peter Abelard that theology was understood as the whole of Christian science (theologia christiana). The understanding of theology as a systematic knowledge about God based on Revelation did not come until the 13th century. From the 13th century the term „theology” became widespread and preserved its content till our times as a systematic science about God based on Revelation. W. Granat, *Dogmatyka katolicka*, Lublin 1965, pp. 8-9.

meaningless. By virtue of their role, they are included in the economy of salvation²⁴.

The revealed truths are contained in the articles of faith which constitute the content of Sacred Scripture and tradition. These truths, by themselves, do not yet constitute a structured system. They are, however, a starting point for theological scientific investigation. Systematic theology organises them, explains and justifies all that is contained in God's revelation. The task of systematic theology is to interpret the content of the truths of faith and to derive new truths of faith from God's revelation. Although the traditional classification of systematic theology into fundamental, dogmatic, and moral theology is not questioned, we also encounter a subjective division of theological issues. This is related to the tendency to study the same subject matter from different points of view applying different methods²⁵.

Since theology is a science, and pastoral (practical) theology has its own section of research within the whole material subject of theology, it follows that pastoral theology, as a part of theology, is a theological science with its own material subject, which is separate and distinct from other theological sciences. It conducts scientific reflection on the salvific activity of the Church, through which the Church embodies herself in a particular historical and social reality²⁶.

Because of its subject matter, pastoral theology is a practical science. Its subject is the salvific activity of the Church as the People of God. It is also a normative science, as a set of norms, models, and directives of action, which should be followed by the Church, ecclesial communities, and their representatives in various fields and on various levels of ecclesial activity. The practical and normative elements of the theological and pastoral cognition should form the totality. The entirety of the theological-pastoral thinking consists

²⁴ Cf. J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, op. cit., pp. 185–193; W. Granat, *Dogmatyka katolicka*, op. cit., pp. 46–49.

²⁵ Cf. J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, op. cit., pp. 195–196.

²⁶ Cf. F. Blachnicki, *Teologia pastoralna ogólna*, part 2, Lublin 1971, pp. 88–98.

of both practical and normative aspects of scientific cognition since norms and practical directives for ecclesial activity cannot be constructed without prior reflection on reality and the foundations of its evaluation²⁷.

5. Concept and issues of pastoral theology

The term *pastoral theology* is used in a twofold sense. In a broad sense, it is used to designate several branches of pastoral theology, each of which deals with the salvific activity of the Church. These disciplines cover: pastoral didactics, which includes catechetics and homiletics; liturgy and pastoral theology in the narrow sense. Each of the aforementioned sub-disciplines of pastoral theology addresses its own area of the Church's activity, as well as possesses its own way of scientific reflection and its own methodological workshop²⁸.

Pastoral theology in the narrow sense is one of the mentioned sub-disciplines of pastoral theology. Its subject is the activity of the Church as the People of God in the world. Since representatives of various directions and approaches of this discipline emphasise different aspects of the Church's salvific activity in the theological and pastoral reflexion, and stress either ecclesiological or communitarian elements, or praxeological or socio-political ones, etc., there are numerous different definitions of pastoral theology²⁹.

Representatives of the ecclesiological current believe that pastoral theology is the theological science of the Church's actualization in the present³⁰. Rahner considers that pastoral (practical) theology is a theological science which, based on theological reflection on the contemporary situation of the church, reflects on the actualisation

²⁷ Cf. J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, op. cit., p. 207.

²⁸ W. Furst, *Die Praktische Theologie und ihre Fächer*, in: *Katholische Theologie heute*, published F. Wohlmuth, Würzburg 1990, p. 317.

²⁹ Cf. R. Kamiński, *Wprowadzenie do teologii pastoralnej*, Lublin 1992, pp. 83–99.

³⁰ Cf. H. Schuster, *Istota i zadania teologii pastoralnej*, „Concilium: Międzynarodowy Przegląd Teologiczny” 1965–1966 no. 1–10, p. 156.

of the church today³¹. Similarly, Klostermann, for whom practical pastoral theology is the science of realizing the Church as a community in the modern world³². According to Greinacher, pastoral (practical) theology is a critical theory of the Church's practice in society³³. Zeffass approaches pastoral (practical) theology as the science of the practical activity of the Church³⁴. Representatives of the socio-political current define pastoral theology as the doctrine of the Church's salvific activity in the light of the historical practice of liberation³⁵.

On the basis of the ecclesiological concept of pastoral theology, taking into account the sociological aspect, there are definitions of pastoral theology formulated by sociologists of religion. One which is close to Houtart³⁶ and Laloux³⁷ is a definition by Fr Piwowarski, who defines pastoral theology as *a science aiming at working out current theological models and corresponding imperatives and programmes of action by means of a theological-sociological analysis of the concrete present situation of the Church*,³⁸ whereby the Church

³¹ *Die Praktische Theologie ist die theologische Wissenschaft, die aus einer theologischen Reflexion und Deutung der je jetzt gegebenen Situation der Kirche heraus auf den je jetzt falligen Selbstvollzug der Kirche reflektiert.* K. Rahner, *Pastoraltheologie*, in: *Handbuch der Pastoraltheologie. Praktische Theologie der Kirche in ihrer Gegenwart*, Freiburg-Basel-Wien 1964–1972, vol. 5, p. 394.

³² F. Blachnicki, *Teologia pastoralna ogólna*, part 1, Lublin 1970, p. 57.

³³ N. Greinacher, *Teologia praktyczna jako krytyczna teoria praktyki Kościoła w społeczeństwie*, „Collectanea Theologica” 61 (1991) fasc. 2, pp. 55–71.

³⁴ Cf. R. Zeffass, *Praktische Theologie als Handlungswissenschaft*, in: *Praktische Theologie Heute*, München-Mainz 1974, pp. 164–177.

³⁵ M. Midali, *Teologia pastorale o pratica*, Roma 1991, pp. 379–385.

³⁶ Cf. F. Houtart, *Sociologie et pastorale*, Paris 1963, pp. 171.

³⁷ Cf. J. Laloux, *Manuel d'initiation a la sociologie religieuse*, Paris 1967, pp. 105.

³⁸ The current theological model is a pattern (an ideal model) worked out by a pastoralist for Christians and Christian communities based on the disciplines of systematic theology and historical theology and on the basis of the humanities. The greater premise is provided by the above-mentioned theological sciences, the lesser premise by the humanities. The conclusion by virtue of the higher premise is theological in nature. The theological models provide the basis for developing imperatives and programmes of action. A pastoral imperative is a set of directives (orders and recommendations) referring to the implementation of the theological models in

*in that particular present situation actualises her own essence, fulfilling the mission of salvific mediation*³⁹.

John Paul II's apostolic exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis* describes pastoral theology as *scientific reflection on the Church as she is built up daily, by the power of the Spirit, in history; on the Church as the "universal sacrament of salvation", as a living sign and instrument of the salvation wrought by Christ through the word, the sacraments and the service of charity* (PDV 57). The document also reads that *[n] or is [pastoral theology] a set of exhortations, experiences and methods. It is theological in its own right, because it receives from the faith the principles and criteria for the pastoral action of the Church in history (...). Among these principles and criteria, one that is specially important is that of the evangelical discernment of the socio-cultural and ecclesial situation in which the particular pastoral action has to be carried out* (PDV 57).

Pastoral theology is a scientific discipline which brings together various reflections, analyses and proposals coming from theological research centres, from the hierarchy of the Church, from pastoral institutions and from individual pastoralists, in order to systematize, coordinate and, as far as possible, objectively present them in view of the common goal, which is the self-realization of the Church given the current conditions of place and time⁴⁰.

The task of pastoral theology is to elaborate and formulate the principles and directives which should guide the Church's present-ness, necessary at all times. By working out pastoral principles and directives, pastoral theology contributes to the effectiveness of ecclesiastical planning, to the delineation of paths for the Church's realization today and in the future. Pastoral theology cannot,

a specific place and time. Action programmes are substantively and methodically planned stages of realisation of the theological models. W. Piwowarski, *Perspektywa teologiczna a perspektywa socjologiczna w duszpasterstwie*, „Chrześcijanin w Świecie” 26 (1973), pp. 32-33.

³⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 30.

⁴⁰ H. Schuster, *Istota i zadania teologii pastoralnej*, art. cit., pp. 159-160; Cf. PDV 57.

however, be a substitute for conferences or pastoral councils, where it is discussed what needs to be done here and now and to what extent certain practical and theological principles can be applied in a particular situation. This is confirmed in the apostolic exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis* with the words: *the study of pastoral theology should throw light upon its practical application through involvement in certain pastoral services* (PDV 57).

It is also the task of pastoral theology to train pastors and lay apostles and prepare them for work in the Church⁴¹. It is about the formation of a theological-pastoral way of thinking, about the ability to evaluate and solve concrete pastoral problems and situations in the light of theological principles stemming from the essence of the work of salvation and its manifestation in the Church. It aims to improve the ability to make an independent diagnosis and appropriate decisions when confronted with a specific life situation (cf. PDV 57).

The material subject of pastoral theology is the life and work of the Church in contemporary conditions. This subject should be seen within the option of the conciliar vision of the Church as a community of God's people and the Mystical Body of Christ. Pastoral theology understood in such a way leads to scientific reflection on the life and activity of the Church, on the entities of the Church's salvific activity, on the functions, structures, and conditions of her realization in the present. The principles of the Church's activity are formulated on the basis of Divine Revelation and the teaching of the Church. They are the criteria for evaluating the current response of the Church to the calls to realize herself and her mission in the present time. Based on these principles the imperatives for the Church's activity today and in the near future are established.

Pastoral theology also analyses the current situation of the Church in which she carries out her activity. It is an analysis of a theological and sociological or theological and psychological nature, carried out with the help of methods characteristic for these disciplines. This analysis aims at verifying the legitimacy and effectiveness

⁴¹ R. Kamiński, *Wprowadzenie do teologii pastoralnej*, op. cit., p. 98.

of the existing forms of Church activity in the current conditions. What is crucial here is the interpretation of the Church's previous forms of activity, the institutions serving it and the existing relationship between the Church and culture. The theological interpretation of the aforementioned phenomena is connected with reading the signs of the times, which are phenomena from various fields of human activity, expressing the needs and aspirations of contemporary humanity. These phenomena become signs of the times only when they come to consciousness in the course of history⁴².

Pastoral theology also establishes certain directives and pastoral indications which the Church should follow in her activity. By formulating theologically sound principles and pastoral directives concerning the Church's activity today and in future, pastoral theology contributes to the formation of the consciousness of those who are responsible for the Church's pastoral activity. The outlined problems are realised within the framework of fundamental (general) pastoral theology and detailed pastoral theology.

Such an understanding of the material subject matter of pastoral theology allows to distinguish pastoral theology from ecclesiology, practiced within the framework of systematic theology. Ecclesiology practiced within the framework of systematic theology deals with the Church in its essential and static structure, especially with the transcendental-sacramental essence of the Church. Pastoral theology, on the other hand, deals with the Church in her existential and dynamic dimension, i.e., her manifold activity in the world, understood at the same time as a socio-historical and transcendental activity. Since both aspects of ecclesiology, i.e., essential and existential, permeate and complement each other, there is a need for cooperation between pastoral theology and systematic theology⁴³.

The formal subject of pastoral theology is the Church's making herself present in the present. This means that the formal point

⁴² A. Zuberbier, *Materiały do teorii teologii praktycznej*, Warszawa 1974, pp. 74-77.

⁴³ H. Schuster, *Istota i zadania teologii pastoralnej*, art. cit., p. 157; A. Zuberbier, *Materiały do teorii teologii praktycznej*, op. cit., p. 105-107.

of view of the field of pastoral theology is the conditions in which the Church is made present in the current situation. This subject is not dealt with by the basic theological sciences since they do not have suitable research tools for analysing the present situation of the Church. The subject for these disciplines is the Church in her essence. The analysis of the current activity of the Church with all its conditions is the task of pastoral theology⁴⁴. These conditions define the possibilities for the Church to establish herself and to respond to the growing ecclesial problems.

The specific situation in which the Church must fulfil her mission is not an accident, but the time foreseen by God in which the Church must exist and act. For this reason, the current situation in which the Church effects salvation is a constitutive element of the Church's salvific activity. The Church's interest in knowing the current situation is likewise a recognition of the Church's own condition and embodiment in the present. The analysis of the current situation of the Church is a theological analysis, although based on results provided by the extra-theological sciences⁴⁵.

6. Specificity of pastoral theology

The specificity of pastoral theology is determined by its practical and normative character. What is important for pastoral theology is the question whether the Church, actualising its activity in the specific conditions of place and time, realises in its structure, goals, forms, and methods of activity, in the results achieved and in the lives of its members – the salvific mission to which it has been called? The answer to this question must include reference to God's revelation and the logical teachings on the one hand, and on the other

⁴⁴ H. Schuster, *Istota i zadania teologii pastoralnej*, art. cit., p. 158; W. Piwowarski, *Eklezjologiczna koncepcja teologii pastoralnej*, „Ateneum Kapłańskie” 69 (1966)5, pp. 304-306.

⁴⁵ F. Blachnicki, *Teologia pastoralna ogólna*, part 2, op. cit., pp. 92-93; W. Piwowarski, *Eklezjologiczna koncepcja teologii pastoralnej*, art. cit., p. 306.

hand, to the given situation. Both elements, normative and practical, constitute one whole in the theological-pastoral research⁴⁶.

Pastoral theology is a practical science because of its object, which is the salvific activity of the Church as a community of God's people. For this reason, it is concerned with the study of social and individual reality and knowledge of the conditions of place and time in which the salvific activity of the Church takes place, knowledge of the Church's historical pastoral experience and everything that sheds light on the attitudes and behaviour of individual people and communities. Effective activity of the Church presupposes knowledge of social, historical, religious-pastoral, and psychological reality, i.e., knowledge of persons and groups of people on whom the Church acts. Pastoral reflection must be based on knowledge of a reality which is subject to constant change⁴⁷. The same forms of pastoral action may have different meaning and effectiveness in achieving their goal in different historical, social and religious contexts.

Pastoral theology is a normative science since it elaborates norms and principles which should guide the ecclesial communities and their representatives in various fields and at various levels of ecclesial activity. The norms and principles of the Church's activity are formulated in the light of the Revelation of God and the teaching of the contemporary Church. They are the criteria for evaluating the current response of the Church to the calls for realization of the Church and her mission in the present time. Based on these norms and principles, the imperatives for the Church's activity today and in the near future are established.

Attempts to subordinate or prioritize the practical or normative element would be a distortion of pastoral theology, as it has occurred so many times in the past. There must be no superiority of one element over the other, for theory and practice in pastoral theology are not

⁴⁶ R. Kamiński (ed.), *Teologia pastoralna*, vol. 1, Lublin 2000, p. 20.

⁴⁷ Cf. J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, op. cit., pp. 207–208.

opposites, nor do they stand side by side or against each other but constitute a bipolar and differentiated unity⁴⁸.

The mutual relationship between ecclesiastical theory and practice can be described as a relationship of mutual influence. There is a qualitative transition between the normative and practical elements of theological-pastoral reflection. Theory needs to be proven or countered by practice; ecclesiastical practice, on the other hand, makes normative presuppositions that justify and explain the conditions of implementation before it can derive practical conclusions. Practice puts theoretical models into practice. Theory also serves as a stimulus for action⁴⁹.

The specificity of pastoral theology also lies in the fact that its scientific research is based on two types of sources: God's revelation and the religious experience of people and religious communities. The task of pastoral theology is to work out the theological principles which determine the salvific activity of the Church in the modern world. Therefore, it first learns what demands God's revelation and the Church's teaching impose on the work of the Church's salvific mission, that is, what the Church is to do, in the light of revealed truths and principles, at various levels of pastoral activity. This research serves to know the goals, contents, means and methods of pastoral activity. In the light of the aforesaid principles pastoral theology reflects on the forms of the Church's salvific activity in order to reassess the value of the forms currently in use and to formulate guidelines for the future.

An important question for pastoral theology is whether the Church, which acts in specific conditions of place and time, realises-in her structure, goals and ways of acting, in the results achieved and in

⁴⁸ N. Greinacher, *Das Theorie-Praxis Problem in der Praktischen Theologie*, in: F. Klostermann, R. Zerfass, *Praktische Theologie heute*, München-Mainz 1974, pp. 109–110; T. Neufeld, *Das Theorie-Praxis Probleme als Anfrage an die Praktische Theologie*, „Franziskanische Studie“ 61 (1979) no. 2–3, pp. 210–235.

⁴⁹ T. Neufeld, *Das Theorie-Praxis Probleme als Anfrage an die Praktische Theologie*, art. cit., p. 218.

the lives of her members-the salvific mission she was called to carry out. The answer to this question must include reference to God's revelation and the theological sciences, ecclesiology, and on the other hand to the concrete situation which can be studied using sociological, psychological methods etc. The study of social and individual reality, knowledge of the conditions of place and time in which the salvific mission of the Church is carried out, knowledge of the historical pastoral experience of the Church and of everything which sheds light on the attitudes and behaviour of individual people and human communities constitute an important stage in the study of pastoral theology.

Effective ecclesial activity presupposes knowledge of social, psychological, religious-pastoral and historical reality, i.e., knowledge of individuals and groups of people whom the Church influences. The same forms of pastoral action may have different meaning and different effectiveness in achieving the goals in different historical, social, religious, and pastoral conditions. Pastoral reflection must be based on knowledge of the constantly changing reality⁵⁰.

Pastoral theology draws conclusions for more effective salvific activity of the Church. Based on God's revelation and the Church's teaching as well as the experience of Christians, pastoral theology formulates conclusions in the form of principles, directives and pastoral guidelines. They constitute an important element of pastoral theory, which takes into account the current needs and challenges emerging at the time. Pastoral theology justifies pastoral conclusions on the basis of divine revelation and human experience. Every pastoral principle, rule or instruction should be based on truths and principles derived from God's revelation or should be empirically justified and supported by sociological, psychological research, etc. Working out legitimate conclusions and theories of pastoral ministry requires taking into account both theological and empirical sources of theological and pastoral research upon which the value of theological and pastoral reflection depends.

⁵⁰ Cf. J. Majka, *Metodologia nauk teologicznych*, op. cit., p. 208.

The complexity of the subject matter means that there are different types of academic reflection in pastoral theology. Hans van der Ven speaks of four types of scientific research: monodisciplinary, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary⁵¹.

Monodisciplinary research is characterised by a common goal and method. Such a type of research was present in pastoral theology until 1777. At that time, pastoral theology was a combination of reflections, rules, advice, and recommendations directed towards pastoral practice. The individual theological disciplines touched upon problems related to pastoral practice.

After the introduction of pastoral theology as an independent discipline at the universities in 1777, a great development of the discipline occurred, however the renewed theological discipline still benefited from the research methods used in other theological disciplines.

Multidisciplinary research conducted within pastoral theology has various objectives and multiple methods. They indicate that pastoral theology cannot realise itself only in one dimension. It must also refer to research conducted by other scientific disciplines. Thus, the pastoral theology binds together the theological science with the results of empirical research. The empirical sciences provide data which pastoral theology applies in its scientific reflection. Pastoral theology considers the results of empirical research, compares them with the logical theory and then interprets them theologically. The empirical sciences focus on explaining the phenomena of individual and social life from a psychological, sociological and praxiological perspective. Theological reflection, on the other hand, is about critical reflection from the perspective of the Gospel and theological teaching⁵².

⁵¹ H. Van der Ven, *Unterwegs zu einer empirischen Theologie*, in: *Theologie und Handeln*, ed. O. Fuchs, Mainz 1984, pp. 102–128; Cf. S. Knobloch, *Was ist Praktische Theologie?*, Freiburg/Schweiz 1995, p. 206.

⁵² S. Knobloch, *Was ist Praktische Theologie?*, op. cit., p. 209.

Interdisciplinary research, as the name implies, points to an interdependence between pastoral theology and empirical sciences. Interdisciplinary research is characterised by a common goal and different methods. H. van der Ven defines multidisciplinary as following one another (*nacheinander*), while interdisciplinarity as walking together (*miteinander*). The former refers to a *serial monologue*, the latter to a *parallel dialogue* between scientific disciplines⁵³.

In intradisciplinary research, both theological and empirical research methods as well as the findings merge into one methodic and methodological unity. It means that pastoral theology itself should be *empirical*. It requires such a methodological instrumentarium in which the search for methods and research techniques of other sciences is integrated into theology.

Summary

The author discusses the place of pastoral theology in the world of science. Emphasizing that the content of any science is the accumulation of knowledge, learning the laws that govern it, which develops criticism, teaches ordering, leads to the knowledge and realization of truth in life, the author first explains the multiple meanings of the term *science*, showing in a synthetic way its concepts from antiquity to modernity and its division. Then, explaining the essence of theology, he presents its division and moves on to show the concept and problems of pastoral theology. Explaining its essence, he refers to the definition contained in John Paul II's exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis*, which describes it as *a scientific reflection on the Church as she is built up daily, by the power of the Spirit, in history; on the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation, as a living sign and instrument of the salvation wrought by Christ through the word, the sacraments and the service of charity* (PDV 57). He also points out that the Pope indicated its full-fledged status as a theological science, *because it receives from the faith the principles and criteria for the pastoral action of the Church in history (...). Among these principles and criteria, one that is specially important is that*

⁵³ Ibid.

of the evangelical discernment of the socio-cultural and ecclesial situation in which the particular pastoral action has to be carried out (PDV 57).

The author, presenting pastoral theology as a discipline dealing with the activity of the Church as the People of God in the world, stresses its specificity, which is related to its normative as well as practical character. Noting that pastoral theology, while seeking an answer to the question whether the Church, actualizing its activity in the specific conditions of place and time, realizes in its structure, goals, forms and methods of action, in the results achieved and in the lives of its members-the salvific mission to which it has been called, emphasizes that it must refer both to divine revelation and theological teachings, as well as to particular reality. Both elements, normative and practical, constitute a single whole in theological and pastoral studies.

Key words: science, pastoral theology, making the Church real, People of God, pastoral theory and practice

Streszczenie

Autor podjął kwestię miejsca teologii pastoralnej w świecie nauki. Podkreślając, że treścią każdej nauki jest gromadzenie wiedzy, poznawanie prawideł, którymi się rządzi, co rozwija krytycyzm, uczy porządkowania, prowadzi do poznania i realizowania w życiu prawdy, wyjaśnił najpierw wielorakie znaczenie terminu *nauka*, ukazując w syntetyczny sposób jej koncepcje od starożytności do współczesności oraz jej podział. Wyjaśniając następnie istotę teologii, przedstawił jej podział, przechodząc do ukazania pojęcia i problematyki teologii pastoralnej. Tłumacząc jej istotę, odwołał się do definicji zawartej w adhortacji Jana Pawła II *Pastores dabo vobis* ujmującego ją jako *naukową refleksję o codziennym wzrastaniu Kościoła, w mocy Ducha Świętego, w kontekście historii: a więc o Kościele jako powszechnym sakramencie zbawienia, jako znaku i żywym narzędziu zbawienia Jezusa Chrystusa, działającym przez słowo, sakramenty i posługę miłości* (PDV 57). Zauważył też, że papież wskazywał na jej pełnoprawny status nauki teologicznej, *ponieważ czerpie z wiary zasady i kryteria działalności duszpasterskiej Kościoła w historii (...). Wśród tych zasad i kryteriów szczególnie ważne miejsce zajmuje ewangeliczne rozeznanie sytuacji społeczno-kulturalnej i kościelnej, w której prowadzona jest działalność duszpasterska* (PDV 57). Autor ukazując teologię pastoralną jako dyscyplinę zajmującą się działalnością Kościoła jako Ludu Bożego w świecie, podkreślił jej specyfikę, która

wiąże się z jej charakterem normatywnym jak i praktycznym. Zauważając, że teologia pastoralna szukając odpowiedzi na pytanie czy Kościół, aktualizujący swoją działalność w określonych warunkach miejsca i czasu, realizuje w swojej strukturze, celach, formach i metodach działania, w osiągniętych rezultatach i w życiu członków–zbawczą misję, do której został powołany podkreślił, że musi ona odnosić się zarówno do Objawienia Bożego i nauk teologicznych, jak też do konkretnej rzeczywistości. Obydwa elementy, normatywny i praktyczny, stanowią w badaniach teologiczno-pastoralnych jedną całość.

Słowa kluczowe: nauka, teologia pastoralna, urzeczywistnianie się Kościoła, Lud Boży, teoria i praktyka duszpasterstwa

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PLANNING THE PASTORAL ACTIVITY OF THE CHURCH

The purpose of this article is to present the issue of pastoral planning¹. Houtart and Goddijn identified five necessary conditions for planning pastoral activities: 1) knowledge of the world in which the pastoral activity is carried out, along with knowledge of the concrete relations that occur between the Church and the world (socio-religious stage); 2) theological reflection on the Church's mission in a concrete world; 3) the laying out of a program of pastoral activities, with an indication of the essential points of pastoral orientation, based on the results of the individual inquiries; 4) the elaboration of a plan of pastoral activities with a strict definition of the stages of their implementation and the division of responsibilities; 5) periodic revision of the plan².

The elements of the pastoral action plan outlined above indicate the wide range of possibilities for collaboration among the various agents. On the other hand, based on daily experience, it can be said that in traditional pastoral ministry it is the priest who not only fulfills his priestly duties, but literally has to do everything, think of everything, and be everywhere. Meanwhile, the pastor should open his mind to the light of God's plans, which guide his activities and sustain the apostolic effectiveness³.

¹ J. Przybyłowski, *Koordinacja działań w duszpasterstwie*, „Warszawskie Studia Pastoralne” no. 18 (2002), pp. 201-214.

² F. Houtart, W. Goddijn, *Duszpasterstwo całościowe i planowanie duszpasterskie*, „Concilium: Międzynarodowy Przegląd Teologiczny” 1-10 (1965-1966), p. 176.

³ A. Ballestrero, *Vieni e seguimi*, Casale Monferrato 1991, p. 45.

In pastoral practice, however, the basic principle of planned activity should be the assignment of responsibility to those involved in carrying out specific tasks, and the inclusion of as many people as possible to carry it out. The second important prerequisite for the planned pastoral activity is the value of diagnostic studies, created with the participation of specialists in social sciences (especially sociologists and psychologists) and specialists-theologians (especially pastoralists). A reliable assessment of reality leads to the identification of key problems faced by contemporary man in the Church and in the world.

To solve the most urgent problems „tactical”-detailed plans are needed, in which the most important are the managerial decisions concerning the means, ways and time of action. However, the most pastorally valuable plans are „strategic” (general) which take into account the fundamental goals of the whole Church’s activity (orthodoxy and ecclesial orthopraxy), on which the direction of fulfilling the pastoral mission of the universal Church and the local churches depends.

1. Evangelical realism in pastoral activity

Evangelical realism plays a very important role in the planning (general and specific) of pastoral activity. In this case, it means that pastoral activity, although it concerns the current problems of the life of the Church and her members, yet its „fruitfulness” is related to the near or distant future, because all the manifestations of the ecclesial mission are „investments for the future” only in different degrees. Hence, in pastoral activity, the „today and tomorrow” of concrete undertakings are planned, but their effects remain a matter of the nearer or farther time perspective of the existence of the Church and of the life of each member of the ecclesial community individually⁴.

⁴ According to the Magisterium, the Church will enter the Kingdom only through the final Passover, in which she will follow her Lord in His Death and His Resurrection. *The Kingdom will therefore be fulfilled, not by the historical triumph of the Church according to a gradual development, but by the victory of God over the final unleashing*

Evangelical realism is related to two time perspectives. This can be analyzed using the example of the Gospel description of the young man's encounter with Christ⁵. It is significant that a young man who follows the requirements of the Decalogue in his life comes to Christ on his own initiative. For many pastors this is the „ideal” for the realization of which all pastoral means are engaged. For a person's life according to God's law is the epitome of Christian holiness. Meanwhile, a young person comes with a serious question: *Good Teacher, what must I do to attain eternal life?* So he is not satisfied with living according to God's law; he needs something more, or perhaps just reassurance that this is sufficient. Jesus' final answer is *Go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me.* This condition saddened the young man because he was rich and could not give up his possessions.

Here we are dealing with two time perspectives. The young man receives not one but two offers from Jesus: treasure in heaven and to follow him. Between them there is one condition: get rid of the possessions and the young man's reaction—he grieved. „Treasure in heaven” is the farthest time perspective, one might say an impassable (conclusive) perspective, and thus static. Following Jesus, on the other hand, is dynamic and concerns the present and immediate future. At this stage in the development of the life of faith and personal holiness, neither one nor the other of Jesus' proposals is a sufficient argument for the young man to take action to achieve eternal life.

This young man, although not prepared to „possess treasure in heaven” or to follow Jesus, nevertheless cannot be left „alone.” Here is revealed the power of evangelical realism, which makes it possible to present this ultimate goal in such a way that its realization „today and tomorrow” satisfies the idealism of a man whose faith is still being

of evil, which will cause His Bride to descend from heaven. The triumph of God over the rebellion of evil will take the form of the Last Judgment after the last cosmic upheaval of this world, which is passing away. Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego, Poznań 1994, 677.

⁵ Mt 19:16-22.

formed and concretized, and whose holiness is not yet sufficiently embodied.

In pastoral activity, therefore, one cannot assume that the subjects are mature and motivated people. Even if they are those who regularly fulfill their religious duties and try to observe God's law in their daily lives, their situation is still very difficult because they have two time perspectives before them: treasure in heaven and following Jesus. Both are conditioned by requirements that one must grow and mature to fulfill.

Therefore, very often Christians react to the Church's requirements for them like the young man in the Gospel: they leave sad. Under no circumstances can these people be left alone. For to be sad does not mean to give up maturity of faith and holiness of life. They need authentic pastoral care, for they are the main subjects of the Church's pastoral action. The mature in faith and the saints live with the desire to attain eternal life and follow Jesus as their Guide in faith. On the other hand, „ordinary” or perhaps „common” Christians very often live in the darkness of „sorrow” and really need the presence of the Church and expect pastoral ministry.

For this reason, pastoral activity should be characterised by individuality, uniqueness, „the perfection of the moment”. This young man, just like any other „ordinary” Christian, will more than once experience moments of elation and doubt, joy and sorrow. However, these are „momentary” experiences which only partially influence the consolidation of the most important moral-existential values. This is because the experiential element plays a large role in shaping the individual Christian's life of faith and personal holiness, but this is only a personal temporal perspective. Pastoral action, on the other hand, which has a communal character, should be based on evangelical realism, whose furthest perspective is the „treasure in heaven”-the basis for evaluating the past and the source of hope for „today and tomorrow”.

The spiritual problems of the contemporary Christian are connected with his own „experiences”, both joyful and painful. But these problems grow and become intrusive when one is confronted

with the negative experiences of others, including pastors, who live in sadness and are pessimistic about their „yesterday, today and tomorrow.” In the lives of such people, the „treasure in heaven” has not become a source of hope and optimism for life. For modern man, they are not witnesses of faith.

The young man, though he leaves Christ saddened, does not scare others away, because the reason for his sadness is his current situation („for he had many possessions”), which he will have to deal with alone. So he accepts Christ’s words with sadness (this is his experience), but the prospect of „treasure in heaven” can already become a permanent part of his further development.

In contrast, it is Jesus’ proposal to the young man to „follow him” that should be the primary dimension of Gospel realism. „Treasure in heaven” symbolizes an ideal also shown to contemporary Christians as the basic temporal perspective for a life of holiness. However, this ideal cannot be limited to the requirement of fidelity to God’s law.

A closer perspective is that of „following Jesus”, and this should be the primary goal of all pastoral activity. Even if something „grieves” a person, that is, hinders his growth in holiness at this stage of life, it does not affect his life of faith, the immediate perspective of which is to follow Jesus. Pastoral action should therefore guide and support the spiritual development of the person, for whom „following Jesus” is possible even in moments of „grief”. In the present, which belongs to man, only a relationship with Christ will satisfy his basic spiritual needs. In contrast, the prospect of eternal life is the seed of faith, the fruit of which will be the eternal happiness of being with Jesus (a treasure in heaven)⁶.

⁶ The fundamental purpose of pastoral ministry stems from the essence of evangelization. R. Cantalamessa, showing the basic goal of evangelization, states that to evangelize means *to begin from the beginning. This beginning-is: “Jesus is Lord”*. *This is the first kerygma, a proclamation that had existed before the Gospels were written. Jesus died for our sins, rose again for our justification. Jesus is Lord. This is the seed from which all the Gospels developed. We must sow the seed again. Jesus is Lord.* R. Cantalamessa, *Wsluchani w Duchą Świętego*, Kraków 1994, p. 119.

The words of Christ, who is the „Guarantor” of the truthfulness of all God’s promises, addressed to the young man, open to modern man the ultimate perspective of his life. So if even „yesterday, today, and tomorrow” are not a reason for optimism in life, the „treasure in heaven,” the seemingly farthest perspective on life, will forever remain a source of hope that is already being fulfilled. This is pointed out by John Paul II, who wrote to the youth: „There is hope in you, because you belong to the future and at the same time the future belongs to you. And hope is always linked to the future, it is an expectation of ,future goods. As a „Christian” virtue, it is connected with the expectation of those eternal goods which God has promised to man in Jesus Christ. At the same time, this hope, as a „Christian” and „human” virtue, is based on the expectation of goods which man will produce by making use of the talents which Providence has given him. In this sense, the future belongs to you, young people, just as it once belonged to the adult generation-and in turn, with them, has become the present. Adults are primarily responsible for this present, for its many shapes and profiles. You are responsible for what will someday become the present with you, but is now still the future. When we say that the future belongs to you, we are thinking in terms of human transience, which is always a transience into the future⁷.

Evangelical realism is thus based on the farthest perspective of eternal life associated with hope, but its driving force is the perspective of following Jesus in the way of faith. This is the most important challenge for pastoral activity.

In pastoral work there are no readymade formulas for achieving personal holiness, nor for solving the individual problems of contemporary Christians. One cannot treat pastoral actions instrumentally in a „commercial” way. The power of pastoral activity has its source in the truthfulness of the Gospel, which, even when it grieves, is „grieved in God’s way” and thus reveals and awakens the authentic Christian vocation.

⁷ Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter to the Young People of the World for the International Year of Youth*, Vatican 1985, 1 (hereinafter abbreviated as LM).

The principle of evangelical realism is particularly important in all forms of the communal exercise of the Christian vocation in groups of various kinds, since it makes it possible to draw a clear distinction between their natural and supernatural character. The confusion of these two orders in the activity of religious groups leads to a questioning of evangelical realism. The result is the application to their members of a falsely understood „psychological therapy” through spiritual means. Its positive effects are illusory and constitute „a new patch on an old garment”. Permanent evangelization must play a central role in the action plan of religious groups. It is a constant invitation to meet Christ in order to have one’s own conversation with Him, which is of crucial and fundamental importance for people, especially young ones⁸.

In pastoral ministry, evangelical realism makes possible pastoral contact „each with each.” „Following Jesus”, however, remains a personal decision of man, since it is a response to the individual call and invitation of Jesus. Pastoral care should therefore put at the forefront the unambiguous definition of the principles of man’s realization of his Christian vocation on an individual level. The only model for all to follow is Christ, and it is only the personal response to Jesus’ call that provides the basis for fulfilling the Christian vocation in the community dimension. Thus, evangelization efforts should precede pastoral work, for in the Gospel there is the answer to the fundamental question about the meaning of life. The truth of the Gospel, on the other hand, is so closely connected to the life of each person and his or her experiences, that an encounter with Christ cannot take place outside of the real world.

Evangelization is bearing witness to Christ. *This witnessing, however, cannot be separated from the truth and from reality*, writes M. Gogacz. *Because of this, the ability to recognize truth and reality is indispensable, the ability to be in the real world of created beings and in the real world of the Creator, who is our loving Father. (...) Our teaching of Christianity, our behaviour, action and testimony*

⁸ LM 2.

*will inspire confidence only when it is confirmed by the real world: the reality of creatures and the reality of the Creator who is God in the Trinity of Persons*⁹.

2. Pastoral programs

The task of pastoral theology is to make long-term predictions and to create programs of pastoral action¹⁰. This task is fulfilled by the pastoralist,¹¹ who is also a pastoral futurologist. Church action programs are usually ad hoc in nature and involve predictions for the short term¹². For such predictions a scientific diagnosis of the current ecclesiastical reality in the context of historical (external) conditions is needed. However, the planning of church activities should also take into account a longer-term perspective. In a scientific way such long-term forecasts can be formulated by pastoral futurology¹³.

⁹ M. Gogacz, *Warunki skuteczności apostołstwa świeckich*, „Communio” 1 (1986) 6, p. 125-126.

¹⁰ In the Church, long-term programs of activities may be related to the preparation for the celebration of the anniversary of historical events (e.g. novena before the 1000th anniversary of the Baptism of Poland), or a program of preparation for the celebration of the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Christ.

¹¹ In Poland, pastoral programs are prepared by a team of people, specialists in various fields, often only theoreticians or practical experts. These teams often lack pastoralists who combine theory with practice. A „collective pastoralist” is most desirable to create such programs.

¹² Pastoral programs cover one year.

¹³ Pastoral futurology is not about creating utopias or new ideologies, but about making valid predictions for the Church based on theoretical and practical knowledge about the Church. Predicting the future for the actions of the Church is easier than other kinds of futurology, because the main goal of the Church—the fulfillment of the salvific mission—cannot change, and secondary and intermediate goals do not affect the primary forms of realization of the Church. The second facilitation for pastoral futurology is pastoral anthropology, which shows man in the basic and unchanging dimensions of humanity (created man, saved man, eschatological man). Ecclesial futurology is also facilitated by the acceptance of the truth that the Church is guided by the Holy Spirit, therefore her development is purposeful, orderly, and the attainment of the final goal is certain despite all the shortcomings of ecclesial

a) pastoral futurology

Various methods can be used to make futurological predictions of ecclesial action. The most common is the extrapolation of current trends in ecclesial practice determined within the Church, taking into account the changes in the earthly reality in which the Church carries out her salvific mission. One can take into account various religious, moral, socio-cultural, moral, economic and even political transformations. Some of the transformations in the Church will concern structures (e.g., the growing importance of small groups in ordinary ministry, the emergence of various forms of extraordinary ministry), while other transformations will relate to specific pastoral activities (e.g., a change in the style of pastoral ministry in urban environments, greater participation of laity in parish councils).

The conditional predictions take into account both positive and negative factors that will affect pastoral activity over a period of time. The longer the time horizon of the pastoral prediction being prepared, the less controllable the accuracy of the prediction is, as the relationships between positive and negative factors influencing the shape of church practice will become looser and looser.

There may be elements of self-fulfilling predictions in classical conditional predictions. This is due to the fact that in determining the conditional prediction it is possible to indicate with a high degree of probability the inevitability of certain positive and negative phenomena in ecclesial reality (e.g. increase in the number of people recognizing the evangelical values while contesting church structures: Christ-yes; Church-no).

b) conditional forecasting

Forecasting the activities of the Church is closely related to the directions of changes taking place in earthly reality. The trends of phenomena resulting from the process of globalization, demographic changes, large-scale migration, ecological problems

communal life in the human sense. Pope John Paul II, Encyclical *Redemptor hominis*, Vatican 1979, 21 (hereinafter abbreviated as RH).

can be predicted with great accuracy, because these transformations are constantly monitored and scientifically studied and interpreted. Some of them have a very large impact on the practice of the Church. Therefore, in projecting the renewal of the Church's activity, taking into account the salvific character of the ontological community of Christ's disciples and followers, it is necessary to indicate how this community can become more and more also a „humanly” conscious community of life and action¹⁴.

In the activity of the Church the influence of grace is manifested and the conditions of nature are marked. However, there is no contradiction between the two, for they preserve their autonomy in pastoral practice. The ontological community of Christ's followers becomes the Church through the grace given to each member individually. The fruitfulness of saving „ecclesial” grace is unconditional. On the other hand, the natural conditions of the Church have a human dimension and are functionally dependent on people. For this reason, the Church unconditionally fulfills the salvific plan, while at the same time human activity is of great importance in the same Church, even though there may be abuses of nature and practice because of this. It is necessary, however, to accept the fundamental truth that although the building of the Church rests on man by his nature frail and flawed, yet through Christ he is changed as if into a strong rock which with God's help will never fail: „Upon this rock I will build my Church”¹⁵.

Speculative theology examines the essence of „ecclesial” grace, analyzes its supernatural character, seeks to justify its fruitfulness, considers the influence of grace on human spiritual development, and defines the role of grace in the salvific mission of the Church. The fruit of these studies is theoretical ecclesiology. Pastoral theology, on the other hand, studies ecclesial practice, analyzing its structural, personal and functional elements, monitoring the course of particular activities and procedures of their implementation, defining their

¹⁴ RH 21.

¹⁵ Mt 16:18; Pope Paul VI, Encyclical *Ecclesiam suam*, Vatican 1964, 37 (hereinafter abbreviated as ES).

organization in detail. In this way it forms a pastoral ecclesiology. However, it must be very strongly emphasized that pastoral theology, while studying the nature of the Church manifested through actions, does not violate the autonomy of salvific „ecclesial” grace, whose fruitfulness is manifested in the individual life of each member of the Church.

The ultimate goal of the Church is not subject to human influence, since God’s providence oversees the realization of the salvific plan and the ecclesial community acts under the influence of the Holy Spirit. The Church, therefore, as an organic salvific community, has no free will or thought of her own, but is completely subject to the actions of the Holy Spirit. The Church is constituted by people, but the organism of the Church is not the sum of persons and does not arise from the union of their existence. It was Jesus Christ who founded the Church to be the devoted mother and dispenser of salvation for the whole human community. The Church of Christ is thus called to carry out salvific mediation, but her mission is parental in nature, for she is a „mother” to the human community. The Church, therefore, gives birth to a saving human community. The Church’s born followers of Christ throughout the ages show their special love and care for the Church. The motive of love for the Church is the predilection for the glory of God Most High and the eternal salvation of human souls¹⁶.

c) positive and negative conditional predictions

In preparing both positive (optimistic) and negative (pessimistic) conditional predictions for church practice, several principles must be considered. First of all, it is necessary to precisely delineate the structural and functional elements of the projected phenomena (events, processes, qualitative and quantitative transformations). It is also important to determine the conditions that may positively or negatively affect the forecasted phenomena. The third principle concerns the influence of forecasted phenomena on people’s attitudes,

¹⁶ ES 21.

socio-cultural transformations and the value system. When setting conditional predictions they should also be „cleansed” of emotions that carry unfounded hopes or fears¹⁷.

The Church lives in the world and fulfills its salvific mission there, but the relationship between the Church and society varies. Given the manifestations of society’s aversion to the Church, she may keep these relations to a minimum in order to refrain from contact with a godless society. She may set herself the task of searching out the evils that are rampant in it and publicly denounce and combat them by waging „holy war”. On the contrary, she may approach secular society to such an extent that she seeks either to influence it or to govern it in the name of God. The Church, without excluding other appropriate forms, may also enter into dialogue with society. This dialogue must not be uniform all the time, but must be adapted to the abilities of those with whom it is conversed and to the circumstances. For dialogue is different with children and adults, with believers in Christ and those who do not believe in him. This is required first of all by the widespread habit of understanding the relationship between the sacred and the secular; then by the increased development which has so profoundly changed the appearance of human society in our time; by the pluralism of that society; and finally by the maturity reached by modern man, who, whether believer or nonbeliever, has, under the influence of civilization, become capable of thought, of conversation, of serious dialogue¹⁸.

Although the Church has contributed much to the progress of culture, we know from experience that for accidental reasons the reconciliation of culture and Christian teaching has not always been without difficulty. These difficulties are not necessarily detrimental

¹⁷ When predicting e.g. the possibility of the unity of Christian Churches it is necessary to indicate the necessary conditions in which this unity could take place, and also to predict how it could influence the system of values and attitudes of Christians united in one Church of Christ, as well as how this would affect the earthly reality.

¹⁸ ES 78.

to the life of faith, but can even stimulate the mind to a more accurate and profound understanding of it. Newer research and discoveries in the sciences, as well as in history and philosophy, raise new questions which have implications for life and call for new investigations on the part of theologians¹⁹. It is the task of theologians to seek ever more appropriate ways of communicating doctrine to contemporary people, while preserving the methods and requirements proper to the science of theology. For it is necessary to distinguish between the deposit of faith itself, that is, its truth, and the manner of expressing it, while preserving the same sense and meaning²⁰.

3. Principles of pastoral programming

Since the Church is a visible community, there must be room in pastoral activities for human activity, but within a well-defined scope. For this reason, the salvific mission should be an organized activity, and pastoral programming can take into account the tenets of organization and management theory and serve to help guide the salvific activity of the Church as well. However, the Magisterium's teaching on the supernatural nature of the Church and her hierarchical structure must be accepted. If her divine nature is fully recognized, her social dimension (human community) can be shown in this perspective. Considering the salvific purpose of the Church's activity and the social dimension of the ecclesial community, a very important question arises which must be taken into account in pastoral programming: to what extent will the intensification of social (complementary) activity serve the salvific mission?

The Church lives and acts in human society and is therefore deeply rooted in it. The Church's bond with human society has concrete dimensions: from it she receives her members, from it she receives the priceless treasures of human culture, she shares its destiny and

¹⁹ Second Vatican Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes*, Vatican 1965, 62.

²⁰ Cf. Pope John XXIII, *Speech on the occasion of the solemn opening of the Second Vatican Council*, Vatican 11 October 1962, AAS 54 (1962), p. 792.

promotes its well-being. Comprehensive studies show, however, that today's humanity is in the midst of changes, upheavals and developments that alter not only its external lifestyle but also its spiritual attitude. People's views, their mental culture, and their spiritual life are being strongly influenced whether by the great advances in the many sciences, technology, and social life, or by the philosophical currents or various theories of statehood that are troubling and permeating society. All this, like the waves of the sea, floods the Church and causes upheaval within her. The prevailing relationships in the world have a great impact on the members of the community of Christ and lead to bewilderment and confusion, which can undermine the very foundations of the Church's cohesiveness, since many expect the Church to renounce her mission and to adopt new and unexpected forms of life²¹.

In planning the pastoral activities of the Church, therefore, important questions of a cognitive nature arise: 1. are the needs of disciples of Christ fully united to the ecclesial community considered in the pastoral programs prepared? 2. do pastoral plans take into consideration the needs of people who are poorly connected to the ecclesial community? 3. does pastoral programming address the needs of people who are not connected to the Church?

The Church, before studying any special issue and before balancing the guidelines of her conduct toward the human community, must first reflect on herself. The Church must therefore discern more clearly the purposes entrusted to her by God, in order to acquire more light, new strength and a surge of joy in the performance of her tasks, and finally to find more appropriate ways of establishing closer, more effective and more fruitful relations with the human community to which she belongs, even though she differs from it in her own distinctive characteristics²².

In this perspective, further debatable issues arise. The planning of the Church's activities, both pastoral and complementary,

²¹ ES 26.

²² ES 18.

demands self-reflection on the part of the Church, who must come to know herself better and better. This is the task of all theology, but a special research mission in this regard falls to pastoral theology. It is only in the second stage of pastoral programming that the goals, tasks, methods and means of pastoral actions should be defined more precisely: pastoral, apostolic, evangelizing, complementary (education, upbringing, social and charitable activities, cultural and media activities). In pastoral planning the specificity of the internal situation within the Church is also very important, as well as external influences, conditioned by religion, social, cultural, moral, economic, political. Every evaluation of the external and internal situation of the Church must be verified by means of precisely defined criteria formulated on the basis of theological and pastoral research on the one hand and empirical research on the other.

In the assumptions of pastoral programs it is presupposed that the planned actions will be effective, i.e. will bring the expected effect. It is therefore necessary to determine exactly what should remain intact in the Church and what needs to be renewed. The supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit on the life of the Church leads to her becoming more and more in harmony with the original thought of her Founder, on the one hand, and with the proper character of human society, which the Church shapes through the proclamation of the Gospel of salvation, on the other²³. The planned vision of the Church in the future must therefore take into account the expectations of her members. However, one cannot operate here on the principle of supply and demand. Church members must be adequately prepared to receive and accept the new face of the Church. The Church is constantly transforming herself, striving towards Christ's ideal, but at the same time remaining close to people whose weaknesses limit her growth towards perfection. For this reason the Church seeks the possibility of renewing herself, that is, of correcting the errors committed by her members, which her own conscience points out and condemns in the mirror of her model-Christ. The purpose of pastoral programs,

²³ ES 44.

therefore, is to make the members of the Church aware of the need to correct their own mistakes and to strive earnestly for all things more perfect, as well as to select carefully the means for achieving this necessary renewal, the goal of which will be the improvement of the life of the ecclesial community²⁴.

Pastoral programs should be prepared collaboratively, involving specialists from various disciplines of knowledge about the Church and its activities. In pastoral programming, the help of specialists from secular sciences and practical experts in various fields of the broader life of the human community is also necessary. Pastoral programs should be prepared holistically, without the necessity of adapting their main principles to the pastoral work carried out in individual dioceses. Thus a high degree of organizational generality should remain. It is impossible to prepare national programs in such a way that individual dioceses change their basic assumptions. Diocesan pastoral ministry has its own specificity, which should not be violated by a well-constructed national program. Instead, there is a need to harmonize the goals of the national program with diocesan initiatives. Creating constantly new proposals introduces unnecessary organizational mess. The national program should not demolish the diocesan pastoral ministry, but complement it, support it, inspire it, renew it, and build it up. In each diocese the Church fulfills her salvific mission in communion with the whole Church. This is the basic assumption. The basic salvific and complementary functions are also carried out in the local Church. Pastoral programs should therefore be built on these foundations, without introducing unnecessary organizational novelties. Every diocese, regardless of the program, must update the ways in which it fulfills its salvific mission. The task of each local Church, on the other hand, must be to monitor pastoral activity on an ongoing basis, to establish a calendar of works to be carried out and to promote pastoral initiatives on a diocesan level.

Finally, it is worth returning once again to the first question: can salvific activity be programmed? Pastoral programs mobilize

²⁴ Cf. ES 44.

the members of the Church and guide their activities. It is therefore necessary to prepare annual pastoral programs. On the other hand, it is necessary to think seriously about the addressees. A pastoral program will fulfil its role if it reaches the addressees. It may be considered that until now the program has been known by selected people, especially pastors. Instead, the program should be in every Catholic family's home. Do contemporary Christians not read the Bible or the Catechism? This is not an argument. The program should be found in Catholic families.

There are very many possibilities and ways to reach people. You can prepare important content in the form of very small publications; you can reach them through catechized youth, through members of various church associations; you can look for ways to reach the recipients through the Internet. The assumptions of the program should be known to the widest possible group of people. The program itself will not change anything, neither will the knowledge about it fulfil its role, but the test of its need and effectiveness is every disciple of Christ, who identifies himself with the Church or is far from it. The pastoral program should be alive, and the strength of its life comes from each person who will find in it guidance for himself on the path of his life in Christ and in the world. The program has a fundamental task: to attract to Christ and to help His disciples in their daily lives to follow the way of faith to reach the treasure in heaven.

Summary

The aim of this article is to present strategies and tactics of planning in pastoral practice. A very important role in pastoral planning (general and detailed) is played by evangelical realism, which points to eternal life as the most distant perspective of the work of salvation (pastoral future research). This ultimate goal of the Church is not subject to human influence, since divine Providence watches over the realization of the plan of salvation and ecclesial communion acts under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Since the Church lives in the world and fulfils her mission of salvation there, the results of theological research and the achievements of the laity must be included in the planning. This helps the Church to understand better

the conditions under which she can fulfil her mission of salvation. In pastoral planning, the Church's self-reflection also plays an important role in determining precisely what should remain intact in the Church and what should be renewed. Properly planned pastoral activity helps the Church to draw people to Christ and to support them on the path of faith that leads to eternal life.

Key words: planning, program, pastoral, Church

Streszczenie

Celem tego artykułu jest przedstawienie strategii i taktyki planowania w praktyce pastoralnej. Bardzo ważną rolę w planowaniu pastoralnym (ogólnym i szczegółowym) odgrywa realizm ewangeliczny, który wskazuje na życie wieczne jako najdalszą perspektywę działalności zbawczej (futurologia pastoralna). Ten ostateczny cel Kościoła nie podlega wpływom ludzkim, gdyż nad realizacją planu zbawczego czuwa Boża Opatrzność, a wspólnota eklezjalna działa pod wpływem Ducha Świętego. Ponieważ Kościół żyje w świecie i tam spełnia swoją zbawczą misję, dlatego w planowaniu należy uwzględnić wyniki badań teologii i osiągnięcia nauk świeckich. Pomaga to Kościołowi lepiej rozeznaczyć warunki, w jakich spełnią swoją misję zbawczą. W planowaniu pastoralnym ważną rolę spełnia również autorefleksja Kościoła, dzięki której można dokładnie określić, co powinno pozostać w Kościele nienaruszone, a co podlega odnowie. Właściwie zaplanowana działalność pastoralna pomaga Kościołowi przyciągać ludzi do Chrystusa i wspiera ich na drodze wiary, która prowadzi do życia wiecznego.

Słowa kluczowe: planowanie, program, działalność pastoralna, Kościół

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IDENTITY OF THE LAITY IN THE LIGHT OF POST-SYNODAL EXHORTATION „CHRISTIFIDELES LAICI” AND SOCIAL THEORY

1. Conciliar novelty in teaching about the laity

In the introduction to the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, Council Fathers postulate that those aspects of social cultural or economic life which are subject to secularization should also undergo laicization¹. The Council understands this process as

¹ Although this is not the right place for this kind of explanation, it seems reasonable to dispel doubts as to the understanding of the concept of secularization. The author notes that in the quoted document Council Fathers indicate that rightly many spheres of human life have „become independent”. In this way, they make a positive overall assessment of the process of secularization, which should be distinguished from the phenomenon of secularism, which, from the theological perspective, is a concept perceived negatively. Authors of the decree expressly refer to sociological thought of the time which underlined the social and institutional level of secularization which was realized precisely as a result of subsequent areas of human life becoming independent from the reign of religious institutions. Numerous sociologists prophesying the fall of the religion had to verify their theses based on empirical knowledge thus shifting the meaning of the phenomenon of secularization. Contemporary sociology of religion does not confirm that religion will disappear from social life, however its character, influence, form, and functions will change (more on this topic: P.L. Berger, *Święty baldachim*, Kraków 1997; J. Casanova, *Religie publiczne w nowoczesnym świecie*, Kraków 2005; N. Luhmann, *Funkcje religii*, Kraków 2007; T. Luckmann, *Niewidzialna religia*, Kraków 2006. In such a situation, pastoral theology should discuss the process of secularization not as a threat to the existence of religion, but as a reality that challenges pastoral care. It is worth noting, however, that the Magisterium of the Church uses the terms secularization (*Ecclesia in Europa*, 19) and secularism interchangeably (*Christifideles laici* 32, *Evangelium*

the inclusion of subsequent spheres of life and activity into the field of the lay apostolate. While emphasizing the importance of this task, the document at the same point underlines that in many countries *the Church could scarcely exist and function without the activity of the laity*. (The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, *Apostolicam actuositatem*, 1). The novelty of the conciliar thesis prompts us to ask fundamental questions which, because of their obviousness, elude not only laypeople, but also clergy or monks and nuns. Since so much importance is attached to the presence of the laity in the Church, it is worth considering what meaning is attached to the laity, what is their identity and the specificity of their presence in the world.

2. Identity in social sciences

Social sciences began to consider identity relatively recently as the concept gained popularity only in the second half of the 20th century, thanks to the works of Erich Eriksson, who looked at the issue from a psychological perspective, or Zygmunt Baumann, who undertook a sociological analysis².

According to Bauman, we become interested in identity only when we begin to have problems with finding answers to questions like „who am I?”, „Where do I belong?”. It stimulates us to consider and carefully reflect upon our identity. The need to define one’s own identity is especially important when there are rapid changes taking place, when a person must define himself or herself precisely to face the challenges of the present which require changeability and mobility. As new situations cause divisions and social ties to diversify,

vitae 21, *Reconciliatio et paenitentia* 17), adding the term: laicization (*Novo millennio ineunte* 6). It seems that in pastoral theology it is necessary to systematize these terms, discover their true meaning, causes and effects for the Church.

² E. Erikson, *Dzieciństwo i społeczeństwo*, Poznań 1997; Z. Bauman, *Tożsamość. Wtedy, teraz, po co?* in: *Idee a urządzanie świata społecznego*, E. Nowicka, M. Chałubiński (ed.), Warszawa 1999, p. 43; M. S. Archer, *Człowieczeństwo. Problem sprawstwa*, Kraków 2013, p. 257; J. Straub, *Tożsamość osobista i zbiorowa. Analiza pojęciowa*, in: *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne*, vol. 2, A. Jasińska-Kania, L.M. Nijakowski, J. Szacki, M. Ziółkowski (ed.), Warszawa 2006, p. 1119.

overlap and cross. It is then that an individual needs to define their own unity, integrity, and continuity, as well as their identity and dissimilarity³. In the psychological theory of identity, this action is called self-definition, and it consists in developing a set of ideas, judgments, and beliefs about oneself. Erikson argues that such self-identification continues throughout life as we build our character. By respecting our own system of values, which we have developed in the course of our lives or accepted from others, we manifest, but also prove our personal identity, that is who we are. It means, as Taylor pointed out, that an individual's identity depends on having a moral horizon, in other words, if I distinguish between good and evil, then I know who I am⁴.

3. Shaping identity

An individual shaping their own identity is present in a social environment in which there are also others. Those "others" play an important role in the process of shaping identity because they represent a coherent structure of various identities, among which the individual will shape their own. However, this is not an identity imposed normatively by some groups, societies, or nations, because those "others" are not able to form an individual human identity, which is the resultant of many roles and functions assumed in society. Apart from the individual identity, a person also finds themselves within common identity.

³ Cf. A. Jasińska-Kania, *Teorie tożsamości i różnicy*, in: *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne*, vol. 2, A. Jasińska-Kania, L.M. Nijakowski, J. Szacki, M. Ziółkowski, op. cit., p. 1113.

⁴ In this context, the psychological theory shows that identity can take on various types: a dispersed identity (the contents of the experience are mixed up, their structure is impermanent and unstable), an identity that organizes a whole (a person has a sense of integrity and individuality as well as continuity of existence), or a total identity (boundaries are strong, stiff, and distant from the environment). Cf. A. Brzezińska, *Spółeczna psychologia rozwoju*, Warszawa 2007, pp. 247-249; Z. Bokszański, *Tożsamość*, in: *Encyklopedia socjologii*, vol. 4, Warszawa 2002, p. 252.

Based on their own experience, attitudes, and behaviours, an individual determines to what extent they identify themselves with the community representing a given identity. An individual tries to understand themselves and the world of objects and on this basis constructs and interprets a common identity to identify therewith. It binds together certain people who describe themselves with certain features that characterize them as similar. Members of a community share background, tradition, behaviours, lifestyles, orientations, and expectations⁵. However, it should be remembered that due to the interactive way in which various roles coexist, the identity created on their basis is always individual. How is the identity of an individual shaped then? We can talk about two most important factors that influence this process, namely: the reflected self and identification with the „we” group.

When shaping one’s own identity, it is necessary to look at oneself from the perspective of one’s own abilities and confront them with the expectations that an individual raises towards themselves, as well as those raised by the environment. This is the main principle of symbolic interactionism, according to which we think about ourselves what others think about us. Thus, a lay person has a sense of the self to know that the expectations towards the laity apply to them precisely.

A lay person, like anyone who wants to discover their own identity, defines himself/herself based on how others perceive them. They answer the question to what extent they are a lay person in the eyes of others. It is not enough to be aware of fulfilling a role and the resulting social expectations. It is necessary to have a sense of a self-regarding these expectations that will make it possible to internalize them⁶. It is worth noting at this point that such an unconscious thought

⁵ J. Straub, *Tożsamość osobista i zbiorowa. Analiza pojęciowa*, in: *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne*, vol. 2, A. Jasińska-Kania, L.M. Nijakowski, J. Szacki, M. Ziółkowski (ed.), op. cit., p. 1130, 1134. J. Assmann, *Pamięć kulturowa. Pismo, zapamiętywanie i polityczna tożsamość w cywilizacjach starożytnych*, Warszawa 2008.

⁶ Cf. M.S. Archer, *Człowieczeństwo. Problem sprawstwa*, op. cit., p. 256.

process makes it possible to realize the features of secular identity, but also to define oneself in a social situation, and thus constantly create one's own identity.

The presence in the interpersonal space, specific to everyone, dictates the sense of who I am, what is my place in this space, who I get on with, who I think of as „we”. Looking at others from my own perspective, I define my social identity by comparing myself (my own behaviours and characteristics) with others in the reference group. An individual identifies themselves with groups, organizations, social movements, or church communities. The identity of these communities is usually emphasized by their separate and comprehensive character and the continuity of existence, which give meaning to ambitions and aspirations⁷.

Each of us, therefore, belongs to some communities that we call „we”, it is not one group, because „we” means students, „we” means Poles, „we” means members of the Catholic Youth Association. We become bound with other people, identify with their goals, values, and rules of conduct. We also share with other people similar categories of self-description and their presence in the individual's contacts with their social environment. But the identification of the category „we” will not be possible without opposing alien groups. It is only from this perspective that can we see what distinguishes us, what characterizes us, in what space we can behave in a conformist way, whom we will perceive stereotypically.

Social identity is a group of all those who think „we” about each other and separate themselves from others, who they think of as „them”. This means that there is my, our space, where I feel good and at ease, but also „their” space from which I distance myself. This distance is marked by specific boundaries: material, mental or symbolic, which distinguish me and my interpersonal space from others. Who are the others? Social sciences, depending on the scale

⁷ A. Jasińska-Kania, *Teorie tożsamości i różnicy*, in: *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne*, vol. 2, A. Jasińska-Kania, L.M. Nijakowski, J. Szacki, M. Ziółkowski (ed.), op. cit., p. 1113.

of otherness, distinguish four types of otherness: enemies, strangers, misfits, and neighbours. Despite being helpful, this division seems to be less and less clear nowadays.

4. Theoretical doubts about the identity of the laity

Currently, traditional determinants of identity, such as the division into our own crowd and strangers, the sense of community and similarity, historical memory, etc., are losing their importance. We are dealing with a constant process of self-reconstruction of identity, continuous change. Until now, identity has been determined by one's background or religion. Nowadays our identity is evolving, it depends on mobility and openness to constant changes. How are we going to describe the identity of the laity in this perspective? Does the identity of the laity even exist?

The mere cursory review of the issue could have prompted many to ask strictly theological questions, to what extent can we talk about social identity since Christianity has led to the full individualization of a person thanks to the exposition of the soul. On the other hand, if we were to focus only on the identity of numerically identifiable persons, i.e. the followers in our case, we would not be able to grasp anything permanent except for what marks the Catholic identity⁸. Besides, how can one speak of the identity of the laity individually, since it is an object of interpretation of the Magisterium, and therefore it is assumed that a lay person is a certain identification that is characteristic of many people. At this point we face yet another theoretical problem. For if we recognize that there is such a thing as the collective identity of the laity, we must decide whether it is reconstructive or normative. In other words, is the identity of the laity what the laity is like, how laypeople present themselves as laymen, and therefore how they define their secularity through their attitudes

⁸ Cf. Z. Stachowski, *Chrześcijańska tożsamość narracyjna*, in: *Wokół tożsamości: teorie, wymiary, ekspresje*, I. Borowik, K. Leszczyńska (ed.) Kraków 2008, p. 69.

or behaviours⁹? Or perhaps the identity of the laity is imposed on members of this community by external authors. And if so, it is in some sense ideologized, if only through the guidelines of the Magisterium. Navigating through these doubts is extremely difficult, especially since these are not the only difficulties faced by a researcher of secular identity. Thus, it should not be expected that this paper will answer all these questions. They certainly provide a wider platform for discussion on the idea of secular identity, presented in doctrinal documents, and the real image of secular identity present in today's world.

5. Searching for the concept of lay identity in the documents of the Magisterium

Let us look at the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which puts our knowledge about the laity in order. It turns out, however, the very beginning of the paragraph concerning the lay faithful shows that they are negatively defined as the faithful as faithful *who are not in holy orders and those in the state of religious life*¹⁰.

The term laity is here understood to mean *all the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those who belong to a religious state approved by the Church. These faithful are by baptism made one body with Christ and are constituted among the People of God; and are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out for their own part the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world* (Dogmatic Constitution on The Church *Lumen Gentium* 31, hereinafter LG).

Thus, the identity of the laity may be defined as the identity of those who have made the decision not to follow a religious or priestly vocation.

In this way, we can easily distinguish the category of „we”-the lay faithful, which is a congregation distinguished from other categories,

⁹ Cf. J. Straub, *Tożsamość osobista i zbiorowa. Analiza pojęciowa*, in: *Współczesne teorie socjologiczne*, vol. 2, A. Jasińska-Kania, L.M. Nijakowski, J. Szacki, M. Ziółkowski (ed.), op. cit., p. 1131.

¹⁰ *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego*, Poznań 1994, 897.

or „they”-priests and men and women religious¹¹. It is therefore worth noting at this point that the decision to choose a vocation determines our life plans, career path meaning all our efforts to pursue the set goal, which is salvation. So what is this way? We will not find its description in the quoted fragment of the Catechism, because the only distinction in this definition taken from the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church is the statement that *they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ* (LG 31). The Catechism does not leave us with an unsolved question, and it shows the uniqueness of the lay faithful by describing their purpose, which is common to other states, but at the same time shows the specificity of their vocation.

The Catechism defines the common vocation of all Christ’s disciples as *a vocation to holiness and to the mission of evangelizing the world* (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1533). This is a slightly different approach to the same vocation mentioned elsewhere in the Catechism where we read that all the faithful *are called to exercise the mission which God has entrusted to the Church to fulfil in the world* (Catechism of the Catholic Church 871). In the same chapter of the document there is a detailed reference that the Catechism makes to the vocation of laypeople. It is interesting, however, that only with regard to this state does the Catechism outline a task resulting from the Christian vocation. In paragraph 898 of the section on the vocation of laypeople the Catechism of the Catholic Church says that it is their task *to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will*.

¹¹ Certainly, such a division is the effect of the centuries-old distinction between the Church and the secular community, which is reflected in the provision in the Decree of Gratian from the 12th century, in which we read that: *There are two kinds of Christians. One kind is devoted to the service of God and devotes itself to contemplation and prayer. It is therefore fitting for it to be free from all the noise of worldly things; these are the priests and those who have given themselves to God, namely men religious (...). The second type of Christians are the laity. Laos means as much as the people. They are allowed to possess temporal goods, but only for use”.*

The Magisterium of the Church has prepared a separate document which is a result of the Synod of Bishops and is thus entirely devoted to the discussed issue. In 1988, Pope Saint John Paul II presented the Exhortation *Christifideles laici* to the world, where he formulates the most important teaching about the lay faithful and tries to show their specific vocation. According to this document, the constructive elements of a lay person are Baptism, the offices of Christ and presence in the world.

The Exhortation reminds that Baptism gives newness to every life as it regenerates us in the life of the Son of God; unites us to Christ and to his Body, the Church; and anoints us in the Holy Spirit, making us spiritual temples¹² (Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the vocation and the mission of the lay faithful in the Church and in the world twenty years after the Second Vatican Council, *Christifideles laici* 10, 13). This newness concerns every state, so it is difficult to point to its specificity in the context of lay vocation. For in the same way all the baptized, as St. Paul writes, are saints and are chosen and loved in Christ (Romans 1, 7). But at the same time, the document reminds that each state, being a spiritual temple, is equal, because they all have the same dignity and vocation to perfect love, they are all related to each other and serve one another (ChL 55). It is a reference to the Biblical image of the vineyard where the lay faithful, together with all the other members of the Church, are branches engrafted to Christ the true vine, and from him derive their life and fruitfulness (ChL 9). *Christifideles laici* points out, however, that by virtue of this common dignity, within the vocation proper to the faithful, all laypeople, priests, men and women religious are jointly responsible for the mission of the Church. The post-conciliar teaching resembles

¹² However, the Magisterium tries to find the specificity of other sacraments of Christian initiation. Receiving the sacrament of Confirmation of the laity obliges them to strengthen their defense and spread the faith through word and deed (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* 33). And receiving the Eucharist is a source of dignity and the basis of the commitment of lay faithful (ChL 16).

the thought of Pius XII who said that the laity *not only belong to the Church, but are the Church* (ChL 9)¹³. Having the same mission, they differ in their ministry (*Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* 2).

The participation in the threefold mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King referred to in the Exhortation defines the identity of the lay faithful a bit more clearly than baptism. Participation of the laity in the *prophetic mission* of Christ means acceptance of the gospel in faith and proclaiming it in word and deed, allowing the newness and the power of the gospel to shine out every day in their life, denouncing evil and expressing their hope of future glory (ChL 14). Therefore, they are called to exercise their kingship as Christians, above all in the spiritual combat in which they seek to overcome in themselves the kingdom of sin, and to serve Jesus who is himself present in all his brothers and sisters. Special attention should be paid to the priestly mission through which the lay faithful incorporated in Jesus Christ are united to him and to his sacrifice in the offering they make of themselves and their work, prayers, and apostolic endeavours. During the celebration of the Eucharist, they offer their family life, relaxation, and the hardships of life along with the Lord's body. Here *Christifideles laici* points out to yet another presence specific to the laity in the ministry of Christ, which is the sacralization of the world (ChL14).

Since the main task of the Church is the Christianization of the modern world and its structures, its fulfilment has been entrusted to lay faithful. As they are on the front lines, inside the world, they sanctify it with their holiness. Clergy and men and women religious, being and sanctifying the world from the outside, support them indirectly with their sacramental ministry, preaching the word and sacrifice resulting from their charisma¹⁴. In this way, we change the perception of the Church and her salvation mission. However, for the world to be sanctified by the laity, their presence in

¹³ Pius XII, *Address to new cardinals* (February 20, 1946), AAS 38 (1946), 149.

¹⁴ Cf. R. Kamiński, *Powołanie katolików świeckich*, „Roczniki Pastoralno-Katechetyczne”, vol. 1 (56) 2009, p. 12.

the world is necessary. This is underlined by the third aspect indicated in the Exhortation, concerning the setting of the life of laypeople in the world, which is also intended to glorify God the Father in Christ.

If we recall the most important purpose of Christ's redemptive work which is the salvation of humanity, and the renewal of the whole temporal order, we have the possibility to identify the role of the Church in this work. The Church, in fact, lives in the world, even if she is not of the world and continues the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Thus, the Church has its secular dimension and thus the ministry of all the faithful has its reference to this secular character. However, the Pope points out that it is primarily the lay faithful that are entrusted with this specific property of the Church, that is, the „secular character” (ChL 15). *The „world” thus becomes the place and the means for the lay faithful to fulfill their Christian vocation* (ChL 15).

Only now, having a more complete perspective of the various dimensions of the lives of lay faithful, as indicated by the Exhortation, can we recognize the proper and specific meaning of God's call directed to the lay faithful. They are not called to abandon the position that they have in the world. as *So, brethren—the Apostle Paul says—in whatever state each was called, there let him remain with God* (1 Cor 7:24). Baptism does not take the lay faithful from the world at all but entrusts a vocation to them that should be fulfilled in the world, inside the world. They are in fact *called by God so that they, led by the spirit of the Gospel, might contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within like leaven, by fulfilling their own particular duties resplendent in faith, hope and charity they manifest Christ to others* (ChL 15).

There is, however, a certain pastoral doubt whether in this context the pilgrim nature of man's vocation is not stressed too much as it is emphasized that our homeland is in Heaven, that we are to abandon the world and live for spiritual matters. It seems, however, that this doubt can be dispelled by sensitizing the faithful also about their responsibility in the world. Living in the world, not only in an anthropological or sociological reality, but also in theological and ecclesiological reality, as the Pope emphasizes, is the way for the lay

faithful to pursue their spiritual life. The Exhortation expresses this in the beautiful statement that the lay faithful living within the world, hear the voice of God who manifests his plan and communicates to them their vocation of *seeking the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God* (ChL 15). In this way, the Synod very clearly formulates the most important challenges for the lay faithful. Above all, they are to participate in the work of creation, free creation from the influence of sin and sanctify themselves (ChL 15).

It is not without reason that, in the context of the explanations outlined above regarding the lay faithful, we can speak of the novelty introduced by the Council and the post-conciliar teaching regarding the lay faithful. The position of lay faithful in the Church, then, comes to be fundamentally defined by their newness in Christian life and distinguished by their secular character (ChL 15)¹⁵. On this basis, a new style of cooperation emerges between the laity and priests and men and women religious. The new secular character of the laity's ministry consists, among other things, *in bearing witness and, in its own way recalling for priests, women and men religious, the significance of the earthly and temporal realities in the salvific plan of God*. The sacramental presence of Christ, the Redeemer in this reality and time is to be guaranteed by the ministerial priesthood. Women and men religious are to bear witness to the eschatological character of the Church, that is, the straining towards the Kingdom of God (ChL 55).

Taking into account all the recommendations that the teaching of the Magisterium formulates for the lay faithful, it is worth considering how the lay faithful themselves fulfil the ambitious and important ministry defined in the documents? How do they respond to Christ's call to work in his vineyard? How they respond

¹⁵ The lay faithful were invited to actively participate in the liturgy, in the preaching and in catechesis. In this context, it is also worth noting that the Synod also drew attention to a more significant participation of women in the life of the Church and the development of society (ChL 2).

to the call to join actively, consciously, and responsibly in the mission of the Church? The Synod uses a very strong word *idleness*. *If a lack of commitment is always unacceptable, the present time renders it even more so* (ChL 3). In this context, the Synod Fathers draw a picture taken from the parable of the workers in the vineyard. *Why do you stand here idle all day? Because no one has hired us. You go into the vineyard too* (Mt 20:6-7). *Since the work that awaits everyone in the vineyard of the Lord is so great there is no place for idleness* (ChL 3). This passage from the Gospel of Matthew is included in the chapter of the Exhortation entitled *The Pressing Needs of the World Today*. Thus, the Pope, following the indications of the Synod, notices that these needs are not only urgent, but also require the involvement of people who are present in this world with their entirety. So where does this idleness which is emphasized so much in the program document for the laity come from?

The history of secular idleness in the Church dates to the 12th century Gregorian movement, which introduced the theology of authority, which resulted in church hierarchs becoming more like secular rulers, both in their form of management and their form of life. Additionally, during the Council of Trent, which was to defend the truths of faith, a specific hierarchology is created, i.e., an apology of hierarchy and authority as those that are to defend Catholic doctrine. Currently, breaking the nine centuries of absolutizing Church authority, it is necessary to look at the Church from an ecclesiological perspective. To do this, apart from inclusion in the scientific and pastoral discourse, a very specific pastoral conversion is needed so that every believer, whether lay, priest or men and women religious, can fulfil his or her vocation in their own state. Therefore, it is worth pointing out a few elements that will help in distinguishing and valuing the ministry of three different states. It is about grasping the essence of salvation, fulfilling the offices of Christ as well as outlining the competences given to lay faithful, clergy and women and men religious.

6. Shaping the identity of the lay faithful

The postulate that conditions pastoral conversion is an appropriate approach to the essence of salvation. At this point, reference should be made to Apostle Paul's call to "be in Christ." Therefore, it is important to properly emphasize Christian anthropology and existence, and not the means of salvation, which include, inter alia, the hierarchy or the sacraments. Excessive focus on certain aspects only takes us away from the essence of salvation, that is, being in Christ. Thanks to this approach, we are able to appreciate equality of vocations we received and a similar availability of means that are to lead us to salvation¹⁶. However, it should be remembered that such an approach, if misinterpreted, can blur those identities, as it partially happened when the emphasis in the understanding of the priesthood was shifted.

The teaching of the Second Vatican Council, which compared the ministerial priesthood of bishops and priests with the universal or royal priesthood of lay faithful as members of the Church, was misunderstood. However, in the face of doubts about the priestly identity of priests,¹⁷ it is necessary to emphasize the secondary dimension of the fulfilment of the office of Christ by the lay faithful. The fulfilment by the lay faithful of priestly, prophetic, or kingly mission is to result from their identity and the roles they assume. In this way, we refer to the identity theory presented at the beginning,

¹⁶ A.L. Szafranski, *Kairologia. Zarys nauki o Kościele w świecie współczesnym*, Lublin 1990, p. 248.

¹⁷ It is worth referring to the *Presbyterorum ordinis*, where an attempt is made to restore balance in the Conciliar doctrine concerning the priestly ministry of bishops and the role of the laity in the Church. For this view of the ministerial priesthood turned out to be problematic and raised questions about the priestly identity of priests. J. Baniak claims that the departure from the tradition and the insufficient emphasis on the priestly character of priests resulted in an overly secular and typically "professional" approach to the pastoral ministry of priests. J. Baniak, *Źródła i przyczyny kryzysu tożsamości kapłańskiej księży rzymskokatolickich w Polsce – studium socjologiczne*, in: *Tożsamości religijne w społeczeństwie polskim. Socjologiczne studium przypadków*, M. Libiszowska-Żółtkowska (ed.), Warszawa 2009, p. 69.

which points out that it is not identity that is supposed to result from the functions performed, but functions are the fulfilment of expectations towards specific identities. First, a lay person finds fulfilment as a lay person in the world and only then secondarily participates in the kingly priesthood. It is different with the clergy. Their identity is evidenced by the performance of a priestly ministry, even if we call it a ministerial one. Thanks to this, it will be easier to see the specificity of a priestly vocation, which is not only a profession, but a mission as unique as that of the lay faithful. The latter are to regain their place in the Church and the world by first carrying out their secular tasks, in which there is a strong hope for eternal life. In this way, they indicate and give the world eschatological dimensions and perspectives (*Lumen Gentium* 35, 38).

Therefore, one should truly understand one's identity as a lay or clergy person and discover its specificity. For, if identity is formed upon being separate or different from others, then since the lay faithful are defined as those who are to live in the world, other states should live outside the world.

Lay faithful stay in the world and priests and men and women religious leave the world. It is planned by God that the lay faithful, living in an ordinary way, develop their religiosity and, by entering worldly matters, christianize the world¹⁸. In this perspective, a priest, by passing on his faith, is a mediator between God and people, he is an apostle and servant of the Church community. *What the soul is to the body, the priest is to the faithful* (Gregory of Nazianzus, *Logoi* 2, 3). Through his prayer, fasting and suffering, he engages himself in the work and cause of God, and with his whole life he communicates to the people what is his life and treasure: God's faith and love¹⁹.

It is supposed to be an attitude of ministration of priests to the People of God (Hebrew 5:1). It is important, however, that not only priests see their vocation in this perspective. It is necessary that

¹⁸ Cf. R. Kamiński, *Powołanie katolików świeckich*, op. cit., p. 11.

¹⁹ A.L. Szafrński, *Kairologia. Zarys nauki o Kościele w świecie współczesnym*, op. cit., p. 249.

the lay faithful acknowledge that the ministerial priesthood is totally necessary for their participation in the mission of the Church (ChL 22). This is also the essence of ecclesial communion, which is a *great gift of the Holy Spirit*. The sense of responsibility for the Church and appreciation of the service rendered to them by the clergy should motivate them to participate in the life and mission of the Church they serve through various and complementary services and charisma (ChL 20).

The problems outlined above indicate difficulties faced in this matter by the laity, inadequately formed to accept the ecclesiological novelty of the conciliar message. First of all, it is necessary to recall two temptations which the lay faithful were not always able to face: the temptation to engage in Church ministries and tasks so much that it often led to the neglect of specific obligations in professional, social and economic, cultural and political fields, as well as the temptation to justify the unacceptable separation of faith from life, acceptance of the Gospel from concrete actions in the temporal and earthly realities (ChL 2). Meanwhile, as the Council has already shown, neither family concerns nor other secular matters should remain outside the sphere of their spiritual life, according to the words of the Apostle: *Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him* (Col 3:17). In this way, it is necessary to recognize the striving for holiness among the laity in normal circumstances of everyday professional and social life. Therefore, the lay faithful must enrich their spiritual life, join themselves to God, fulfil his will, serve other people, and lead them to communion with God in Christ (ChL 17).

7. Pastoral challenges

All in all, there are several main challenges faced by the entire pastoral ministry, the laity themselves and the clergy who form them. Certainly, one should show the specificity of the vocation of the lay faithful, who are equal to other states in the Church as to the dignity of their vocation. Using the presented theory of collective identity, it should be done by distinguishing the character and ministry of the three

states. Identifying each state with its „we” will help to establish in the laity a sense of their own, separate, and specific identity. Thanks to this, they will be able to see the other „we”, i.e., laypeople around them, and to formulate specific expectations that are set for them-lay faithful. Subsequently, the sense of separateness of identity based on identification with other laypeople, may be a factor in mobilizing this community to joint action.

A separate issue related to the building of lay identity is to show what the unique character of lay vocation is about. The extraordinary and important role they need to play in the world in sanctifying it should drive their daily activities. Since the sacralization of the world is the most important expectation of laypeople, they will not be able to shape their identity until they understand this vocation. It is therefore necessary to show the complementarity that occurs between the vocations of all three states, as each of these states is needed by the others, but also for the whole Church in its saving mission.

Therefore, it seems that discovering the identity of laypeople is just as important today as discovering the identity of clergy or men and women religious. All these states, realizing their separate vocations, are to serve the Church in the work of salvation for the whole world. The post-synodal document discussed above explains the complementarity of the three states and the necessity of their coexistence. Understanding this shared responsibility for the salvation of oneself and other people is an important moment in the process of pastoral conversion of every baptized person. It is an invitation addressed to all believers, but also to the Church, as an institution which, having the necessary resources for this ministry, facilitates their missionary mission. The need to create a pastoral space in which laypeople, clergy and religious will have the opportunity to experience unity in dignity, a different vocation and interdependence in missionary activity. A space in which each state will be able to obtain the necessary support to realize their ministry in the best possible way, for example in their own piety: laypeople by strengthening themselves with the sacraments, clergy by

deepening their spiritual motivation, and men and women religious in giving meaning to the sacrifice of life.

8. Introduction instead of a conclusion

A whole new question arises that should initiate another discussion about the laity. In theology, much attention is paid to priestly and monastic piety. The piety of the laity seems to be neglected in this reflection. Until recently, popular piety played a key role, but as societies became more diverse, it is difficult to say that this approach is sufficient for the contemporary lay faithful. It is worth noting that the discussion on this issue was initiated as early as in the 16th century by St. Francis de Sales, who wrote *there is no place in such vocations, however, apart from these kinds of piety, there are also others, capable of perfecting people who live in secular professions (...). Wherever we are, we can and must strive for a perfect life* (ChL 56). The perspective presented by the Holy Doctor of the Church should inspire theologians, but above all priests, and the lay faithful themselves to seek what the piety of those living in the world is about.

Summary

After 10 centuries, Vatican II took a new look at the role of the laity in the Church and the world. This thought was deepened in the post-synodal exhortation *Christifideles laici*, dedicated to the vocation and mission of the laity in the church and the world. Drawing attention to the difference of their vocation from other states, it emphasised the task of the laity to sacralise the world they live in every day, contrary to the clergy and religious. According to the social theory, the laity's awareness of their own identity will enable them to see their difference from other states and thus to engage in the pastoral mission of the Church. The question of identity is particularly relevant for all the faithful in the perspective of pastoral conversion.

Key words: laity, secular, identity

Streszczenie

Po 10 wiekach Vaticanum II w nowy sposób spojrzano na rolę świeckich w Kościele i świecie. Tę myśl pogłębiła posynodalna adhortacja *Christifideles laici*, poświęcona powołaniu i misji świeckich w kościele i w świecie. Zwracając uwagę na odmienność ich powołania od pozostałych stanów, podkreśliło zadanie świeckich do sakralizacji świata, w którym żyją na co dzień, przeciwnie do duchownych i zakonników. Zgodnie z teorią społeczną, świadomość własnej tożsamości świeckich, pozwoli im dostrzec swoją odrębność od innych stanów, a przez to zaangażować w misję duszpasterską Kościoła. Zagadnienie tożsamości jest szczególnie istotne dla wszystkich wiernych w perspektywie nawrócenia pastoralnego.

Słowa kluczowe: laikat, sekularyzacja, tożsamość

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LAYPEOPLE IN THE MISSIONARY MINISTRY BASED ON THE TEACHING OF POPE FRANCIS

The central idea of Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* is a call for *pastoral conversion* and *pastoral care carried out in a missionary key*¹. The activities undertaken are to be part of the implementation of the Church's main task, which is *evangelisation*. It seems that this call is insufficiently realised in the life of the particular Churches. The reasons for it may vary, yet they are interconnected. For instance, there is a lack of certain models showing

¹ The call for pastoral conversion and missionary pastoral care was included in the final document of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean in Aparecida in 2007. The aim of this conference was to re-awaken the awareness of the Church in Latin America and revitalise the enthusiasm for evangelisation. Cardinal Bergoglio, now Pope Francis, took an active part in its preparation and headed the team that edited the final version. He pinned his hopes on the message of the Aparecida conference, calling it the *Evangelii nuntiandi* of Latin America. The document was drawn up using the *see-evaluate-act* method. It contains an in-depth analysis of the socio-cultural, economic, and political changes in Latin America, as well as a proposal of a number of specific pastoral actions, which constitute a response of the Church to those changes, which involves the call for pastoral conversion and missionary renewal of the Church. On the initiative of the Polish Bishops' Conference Team for the New Evangelization, a Polish translation of this document was published in 2014. See APARECIDA. V Ogólna Konferencja Episkopatów Ameryki Łacińskiej i Karaibów. *Dokument końcowy Jesteśmy uczniami i misjonarzami Jezusa Chrystusa, aby nasze narody miały w nim życie*, Gubin 2014 (hereinafter abbreviated AP); *Jose Mario Bergolio*, "L'Osservatore Romano" 2013, no. 5, p. 5.

how to realise this challenge in particular ecclesial circumstances. It is therefore hoped that *others will show us how to do this*. We may also not yet be mature enough for *pastoral conversion*, which is a complex process involving our personal conversion, which in turn will allow us to open ourselves fearlessly to the action of the Holy Spirit, becoming *evangelizers with the Spirit* who pray and work².

Referring to the teaching of Pope Francis, the role of the laity in missionary pastoral ministry should be indicated. The reflections will first show what missionary pastoral ministry is in the context of the Church's call to evangelisation, then they will outline the role and place of the laity in this process. The reflection will conclude with some proposals and pastoral postulates. The reflection is part of Francis' address to all theologians, especially to pastoral theologians, so that while practising theology *they must always remember that the Church and theology exist to evangelize, and not be content with a desk-bound theology* (EG 133).

1. Missionary ministry in the context of the Church's call to evangelisation

The main aim of the Church's work is to proclaim the Gospel and to lead people in the community to salvation. In the context of the crisis of faith so commonly observed today, it is evident to many people that the pastoral activities carried out so far are not sufficient, often being a kind of *preservation* of the existing reality. These are often addressed only to those who come to church, without taking into account those who find themselves on the *periphery* for various reasons. In this context, there is a call for the implementation of a *pastoral care* that is based on *pastoral conversion*. The perspective into which these activities are to be embedded is that of *evangelisation*. It is worth defining the aforementioned notions, which have become one of the key terms in the pontificate of the current Pope.

In defining the basic concepts, it is first necessary to clarify the concept of evangelisation, upon whose service missionary pastoral

² Pope Francis, Exhortation *Evangelii gadium*, Vatican 2013, 262 (hereinafter EG).

ministry is to be. The fruit of the 2013 Synod of Bishops on the new evangelisation is Pope Francis' 2014 apostolic exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*. The Pope defines the concept somewhat differently from his predecessors³. In his exhortation, Pope Francis mentions three areas in which the new evangelization is fulfilled and locates four groups of recipients within them. In the first of these, he includes the area of *ordinary pastoral ministry*, which encompasses those who regularly participate in the life of the Church and benefit from the sacrament of the Eucharist, as well as the faithful who maintain a lively and sincere Catholic faith but often do not participate in worship. A second area is that of *the baptized whose lives do not reflect the demands of Baptism*, do not belong wholeheartedly to the Church, and do not experience the consolation that comes from faith. The third area of evangelisation concerns *preaching the Gospel to those who do not know Jesus Christ or who have always rejected him* (EG 14). It should be emphasised that, compared to John Paul II's teaching in *Redemptoris missio*, whereby the new evangelisation is addressed to those Christians

³ In his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi*, which was the summary of the Third Synod of Bishops in 1974, on the theme of *evangelisation in the modern world*, Paul VI attempted to show the rich and complex reality of evangelisation, defined it in terms of bringing the Good News to all circles of people in order to transform them from the inside and thus turn them into a new humanity, as well as *proclaiming Christ to those who do not know Him, of preaching, of catechesis, of conferring Baptism and the other sacraments* (EN 17-18). On the other hand, referring to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and threads contained in the exhortation, as well as taking into consideration those to whom it is addressed, John Paul II differentiated *three types of evangelisation*: missionary, also called the first evangelisation, missions or mission *ad gentes*, which consists in revealing Jesus Christ and His Gospel to those who do not know them (cf. DM6; EN 51; 53; RMi 31; 33); *pastoral*, addressed to those who, having had a long relationship with the Gospel, are Christians; its task is to deepen, strengthen, revive and strengthen their faith (cf. EN 54; RMi 31); *new evangelisation*, also called re-evangelisation, second evangelisation, evangelisation 2000 - it is directed to those Christians for whom the Gospel message is no longer the Good News (cf. EN 54; RMi 33). See W. Przychyńska, *Evangelizacja*, in: R. Kamiński, W. Przygoda, M. Fiałkowski (ed.), *Leksykon teologii pastoralnej*, Lublin 2006, p. 254-257.

for whom the evangelical message is no longer the Good News (see RMi 33), Pope Francis, following the voices of the Fathers of the 2013 Synod of Bishops, clearly widened the circle of recipients of the new evangelisation. He believes that the new evangelisation has become, in a sense, synonymous with all types of evangelisation.

The second important concept is pastoral conversion and the inherent missionary pastoral. It appears in the concluding document of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America, known as the Aparecida Document, which emphasises that this process must involve all ecclesial structures and pastoral plans of dioceses, parishes, religious communities, movements, and other ecclesial institutions. The document points out that the personal conversion of all the members of the Church, that is, bishops, priests, permanent deacons, male and female religious and the laity, *engenders the ability to make everything subject to establishing the Kingdom of life* (AP 366), which will also involve *promot[ing] a spirituality of communion and participation making it the guiding principle of education* (AP 368). Pastoral conversion *requires pastoral communities to be communities of disciple-missionaries around Jesus Christ, the Master and Shepherd* (ibid). Pastoral conversion, as the Aparecida document very clearly emphasises, *requires moving from a pastoral ministry of mere conservation to a decidedly missionary pastoral ministry* (AP 370).

This issue was taken up by Pope Francis in his exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, where he indicates that this is the main direction of the Church's work (EG 28-30). The Pope, addressing the Christian faithful, invites them to a new stage of evangelisation connected with the joy at the source of the encounter with Jesus Christ (EG 1). In his presentation of the path to be followed by the Church as a missionary community of disciples in the coming years, Pope Francis points out that it should be *the Church which "goes forth"* (EG 24). It must *advanc[e] along the path of a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are.* (EG 25). This involves, among other things, the need to transform structures *to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more*

inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth (EG 27). Following the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, the Pope reminds us that the conversion of the Church consists in openness to a constant self-renewal born of fidelity to Jesus Christ (EG 26). Pastoral conversion means that each particular Church, that is, all dioceses, parishes, religious communities and movements, undertake[s] a resolute process of discernment, purification and reform (EG 28-30). By stressing that [p]astoral ministry in a missionary key seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says: “We have always done it this way”. Pope Francis invite[s] everyone to be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in their respective communities (EG 33). Every particular Church is called to pastoral conversion, both for at diocesan and parish level (EG 28; 30). This process must also affect all communities and small communities, movements, and forms of association which cannot lose contact with the rich reality of the local parish (EG 29). The insufficiently hospitable structures and climate of parishes and some communities mean that part of our baptized people lack a sense of belonging to the Church (EG 63).

In many of his statements, the Pope clarifies his understanding of the concept of evangelization, at the service of which missionary pastoral work, related to pastoral conversion, is to be realized. Speaking of the new evangelisation, Pope Francis states that the aim of the Church’s evangelising activity is to transmit the Christian faith⁴. He also points out that the notion of the new evangelization indicates the necessity of proclaiming the Gospel anew in countries with an ancient Christian tradition, which is to lead to an encounter with Christ. This should have its consequences in pastoral activity. Referring to Paul VI’s exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi*, Pope Francis stresses that this text has lost none of its relevance⁵. According

⁴ Address of Pope Francis to members of the XIII Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops *Collegiality in the life and mission of the Church*, Vatican, 13 July 2013, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 8-9, p. 31.

⁵ *Ibid.*

to the Pope, the new evangelization means *awakening the life of faith in the hearts and minds of contemporary people*⁶. In this regard, it is worth noting that in his speeches Pope Francis constantly speaks of evangelisation, without actually using the term new evangelization⁷.

It is worth emphasising that the Pope's teaching warns against undertaking evangelisation in a spirit of misunderstood individualism: *Evangelization is not an isolated individual or private act; it is always ecclesial*⁸. Referring to the teaching of Pope Paul VI, who, when writing about the various pastoral activities undertaken by individuals, stresses that they always act in communion with the mission of the Church and in its name, Pope Francis points out that *this gives strength to the mission and makes every missionary and evangelizer feel (...) part of a single Body animated by the Holy Spirit*⁹.

Speaking about the work of evangelization, the Pope points out what its effectiveness is linked to: openness to the Holy Spirit, who is *the real driving force of evangelization in our life and in the Church*¹⁰. The Pope stresses that the evangelising Church must begin its work by praying for the fire of the Holy Spirit, for *[w]ithout prayer our acts are empty*¹¹. He points out that *[a]lone, without Jesus, we can do nothing! In Apostolic work our own strengths, our resources, our structures do not suffice, even if they are necessary. Without the presence of the Lord and the power of his Spirit our work, though it may be well organized, winds up being ineffective*¹². In the work of evangelisation the Church

⁶ Address of Pope Francis to participants in the plenary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization *We need the oxygen of the Gospel*, Vatican, 14 October 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 12, p. 18.

⁷ H. Waldenfels, *Sein Name ist Franziskus. Der Papst der Armen*, p. 80. ???

⁸ Message of Pope Francis for World Mission Day 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 10, p. 11.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Speech by Pope Francis during the General Audience *The Language of Reconciliation*, Vatican, 22 May 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 7, p. 48.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 49.

¹² Pope Francis at Sunday's *Angelus: Jesus is always at the side of each of us*, Vatican, 1 June 2014, http://ekai.pl/wydarzenia/temat_dnia/x79151/jezus-jest-zawsze-u-boku-kazdego-z-nas/ (accessed on 12.01.2015).

is to be led by prayer to Jesus. Planning *programmes of evangelization carefully, thinking of strategies and making plans, [but] these are only tools, small tools. What matters is Jesus and letting ourselves be led by him*, as well as the testimony of life¹³. The Pope says that *evangelization is done on one's knees*, following Jesus, who *prior to any important decision or event he recollected himself in intense and prolonged prayer*¹⁴. The fruit of apostolic action does not depend directly on pastoral creativity, joint meetings and planning of activities, but above all on fidelity to Jesus in prayer, adoration and receiving him in the Eucharist¹⁵. Stressing the need for *perseverance, effort, hard work, planning and organization*, the Pope points out that *the Church's power does not reside in herself; it is hidden in the deep waters of God, into which she is called to cast her nets*¹⁶.

The Pope's statements also clarify the essence of pastoral ministry and pastoral conversion. "*Pastoral care*" is *nothing other than the exercise of the Church's motherhood*, which gives birth, feeds, educates, corrects, and leads by the hand. The Church must constantly discover its maternal mercy, for without it the Church will not enter the world of wounded people, who need understanding, forgiveness, and love¹⁷. In his explanation of the essence of pastoral ministry, His Holiness Francis refers to the model of the polyhedron. He claims that *it is the polyhedron, which reflects the convergence of all its parts, each of which preserves its distinctiveness. Pastoral and political*

¹³ Address of the Holy Father Francis at the Vigil of Pentecost with the Ecclesial Movements, New Ecclesial Communities and Associations *The Church goes out to meet everyone*, Vatican, 18 May 2013, "L'Osservatore Romano" 2013, no. 7, p. 18.

¹⁴ Homily of Pope Francis during the Holy Mass for Seminarians, Novices and those Discerning their Vocation *Evangelization is done on one's knees*, Vatican, 7 July 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano" 2013, no. 8-9, p. 46.

¹⁵ Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis at the Holy Mass with Bishops, Priests, Religious, Nuns and Seminarians *Go and search for them at the crossroads*, Rio de Janeiro, 27 July 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano" 2013, no. 10, p. 17.

¹⁶ Address of Pope Francis at the meeting with the Bishops of Brazil "*Pastoral care*" is *nothing other than the exercise of the Church's motherhood*, Rio de Janeiro, 27 July 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano" 2013, no. 10, p. 20.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 23.

activity alike seek to gather in this polyhedron the best of each (EG 236). In turn, speaking about pastoral conversion, he draws attention to the necessity of going outside one's community, directing towards the peripheries of existence¹⁸. According to the Pope, the Christians who make up the Church must not *shut [themselves] up in the parish, with our friends, within the movement, with the like-minded*, but they must be a Church that goes beyond itself, precisely towards the periphery of existence. Admittedly, this involves the possibility of an accident or a sickness, but as the Pope says, *a Church that has had a few accidents is much better than a Church that has fallen sick from being closed*¹⁹. The Church which carries out pastoral ministry is to be an open-door Church in which there shall not be *the sacrament of the pastoral customs office* associated only with an emphasis on formal requirements²⁰. We need to go out to those who are on the periphery and do not usually come to the parish—they are the invited VIPs we are supposed to be looking for on the roadsides²¹. Referring to the account of the disciples' journey to Emmaus (Lk 24: 13-15), the Pope points out that today there are plenty of people who resemble those disciples. For some of them, the Church appears far from their needs, cold, too self-centred, not answering to new questions, using too harsh a language. According to Pope Francis, *[w]e need a Church unafraid of going forth into their night. We need a Church capable of meeting them on their way. We*

¹⁸ Address of the Holy Father Francis at the Vigil of Pentecost with the Ecclesial Movements, New Ecclesial Communities and Associations *The Church goes out to meet everyone*, Vatican, 18 May 2013, op. cit., p. 18.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 18-19.

²⁰ Pope Francis' reflection at the Morning Meditation in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae *Christian openness*, Vatican, 25 May 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 7, pp. 43-44.

²¹ Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis at the Holy Mass with Bishops, Priests, Religious, Nuns and Seminarists *Go and search for them at the crossroads*, op. cit. p. 18.

*need a Church capable of entering into their conversation and capable of (...) bringing them home*²².

2. The role and place of the laypeople in evangelisation

To present the tasks to be undertaken in the Church and in the world by laypeople who are involved in the work of evangelization, one must begin with the ecclesiology proclaimed by Pope Francis. He considers the Church in the light of the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council contained in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, stating: *I like the vision of the Church perceived as the holy and faithful people of God. I myself often use this definition, which is found in Lumen Gentium*²³.

According to the Pope, the task of the whole Church, that is, both the clergy and the lay faithful who make up the People of God, is evangelization (EG 111). He emphasizes that we are all called to contribute to bringing new Christians to the faith²⁴. *[W]e all must be pilgrims, in the countryside and in the city, bringing the joy of the Gospel to every man and woman*²⁵. *Every member of the People of God is an inseparable disciple and missionary*²⁶. The Pope points out that in virtue of their baptism, all the people have become “missionary disciples”, and regardless of their function in the Church and their level of education in the faith, they are active subjects of evangelisation

²² Address of Pope Francis at the meeting with the Bishops of Brazil “*Pastoral care*” is nothing other than the exercise of the Church’s motherhood, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

²³ H. Waldenfels, *Sein Name ist Franziskus. Der Papst der Armen*, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

²⁴ Address of Pope Francis at the General Audience *When the Church gives birth to us*, Vatican, 11 September 2013, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 11, p. 51.

²⁵ Message of Pope Francis to the basic ecclesial communities in Brazil on evangelization and unity with the local Church, Vatican, 7 January 2014, http://pl.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/01/07/franciszek_do_ko%C5%9Bcielnych_wsp%C3%B3lnot_podstawowych_w_brazylia_o/pol-761925 (accessed on 12.01.2015).

²⁶ Message of Pope Francis to the participants in the Conference promoted by the Vicariate of Rome on the theme *The Lay Christian’s Mission in the City*, Vatican, 7 March 2014, http://pl.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/03/08/ojciec_%C5%9Bwi%C4%99ty_zach%C4%99ca_stowarzyszenia_ko%C5%9Bcielne_laikat_u_parafie_swej/pol-779835 (accessed on 12.01.2015).

(EG 120). The Pope emphasizes that it would be inappropriate to think of a scheme of evangelization carried out by qualified *professionals*, while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients (EG 120). No one forming the People of God may renounce their participation in evangelization, for after all, if someone has experienced God's love, he or she must begin to proclaim it immediately. Each of us has received from God various spiritual, intellectual, and material talents, which we must use not for ourselves but for Him, the Church and others, taking care to multiply the good in the world²⁷. The Holy Spirit, forming the communion and harmony of the People of God, awakens the manifold and varied richness of the gifts which are expressed in a particular cultural garment (EG 130). The Holy Spirit enriches the whole Church which evangelises through the charisms which are a gift for its renewal and edification (EG 130). None of the Christians is useless or of secondary importance in the Church—all are needed to work and build up the Church together²⁸. We must not contribute to the Church remaining dormant²⁹.

How should evangelisation by the Church be carried out? First and foremost, the Pope draws our attention to the necessity of bearing witness. He emphasizes that the power of the Holy Spirit, which we received during the sacrament of baptism, must drive us forward to proclaim Jesus with our life, testimony, and words (EG 120). It is necessary to give others a clear testimony of the „saving love of the Lord. Missionary activity is a *constant stimulus not to remain mired in mediocrity but to continue growing* (EG 121). To evangelise means to testify with joy and simplicity about who we are and what

²⁷ Address of Pope Francis at the General Audience *The life of slumbering Christians is a sad life*, Vatican, 24 April 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 6, p. 43.

²⁸ Address of Pope Francis at the General Audience *The Temple of the Holy Spirit, in which we are all equal and no one is useless*, Vatican, 26 June 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 8-9, p. 54.

²⁹ Homily of Pope Francis at Mass at the Chapel of the Domus Sancte Marthe *The Church is not a babysitter*, Vatican, 17 April 2013, <https://homilezycie.wordpress.com/tag/papiez-franciszek/> 9 (accessed on 12.01.2015).

we believe in³⁰. The heart of evangelisation is bearing witness to faith and love. A Christian must *use a language of mercy which is expressed in gestures and attitudes even before words*³¹. God assigned Christians a mission to fulfil towards all people: through faith and love they can orient and sanctify humanity. All the baptised are disciples and missionaries called to be a living Gospel in the world: through a holy life they are to give flavour to various environments and protect them, like salt, from deterioration. They are to bring the light of Christ to the world³².

In his teaching, Pope Francis stresses that all Christians are called to bear witness. Most of them live in families, study, and learn, others belong to various groups and communities, carrying out their life mission in social, economic, and political life. It is now worth recalling the teaching of Pope Francis to the different circles of the laity to bring out the essential threads.

Pope Francis points out that the family plays an important role in evangelisation through the witness of its life, proclaiming the good news of the family³³. Parents are to be the first catechists for their children, educating them in the faith through witness and the word³⁴. Speaking about the role of father and mother in the religious and emotional upbringing of children who, confronted with masculinity

³⁰ Pope Francis, Twitter post of 5 May 2014.

³¹ Address of Pope Francis to the participants in the Plenary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization *We need the fresh air of the Gospel*, op. cit. p. 18.

³² Address of Pope Francis at the Angelus prayer *As burning lamps!* Vatican, 9 February 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 3-4, p. 51.

³³ Address of Pope Francis to the participants in the Plenary of the Pontifical Council for the Family *In the family we learn to love and defend life*, Vatican, 25 October 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 12, p. 28.

³⁴ Address of Pope Francis to the participants in the Plenary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization *We need the fresh air of the Gospel*, op. cit. p. 19.

and femininity, reach their maturity, Pope Francis stresses the need to support the rights of parents to educate their offspring³⁵.

Since *[t]he family is the first core for relationships* with parents and siblings,³⁶ the Pope warns against educational experiments on children and youth, which, *with the pretense of modernity, push children and young people to walk on the dictatorial path of “only one form of thought”*³⁷. The first community that complements the family is the school, where children establish social relationships by meeting people of different ages, cultures, backgrounds and abilities. The Pope emphasizes that family and school should not be in opposition to each other, but should work together, respecting each other³⁸. In his speeches, the Pope refers to personal experiences, recalling his grandmother from whom he first heard the Christian message of the risen Christ³⁹. According to Francis, the characteristics of a Christian family are prayer, guarding one’s faith and living a life of joy. Christian families *are missionary also in everyday life, in their doing everyday things, as they bring to everything the salt and the leaven of faith*⁴⁰! The family is a teacher of *openness and solidarity*, where one can learn not to fall into individualism, while maintaining a balance between self and we. The family plays an important role in caring for the elderly, thus bearing witness to the whole of society

³⁵ Address of Pope Francis to members of the delegation of the International Catholic Child Bureau *It is necessary to defend children*, Vatican, 11 April 2014, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 5, p. 27.

³⁶ Address of Pope Francis to students and teachers from schools across Italy *Why should I love school?*, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 6, p. 44.

³⁷ Address of Pope Francis to members of the International Catholic Child Bureau *It is necessary to defend the children*, op. cit., p. 27.

³⁸ Address of Pope Francis to students and teachers from schools across Italy *Why should I love school?*, op. cit. p. 44.

³⁹ Address of the Holy Father Francis at the Vigil of Pentecost with the Ecclesial Movements, Communities and Associations *The Church goes out to meet everyone*, Vatican, 18 May 2013, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 7, p. 16.

⁴⁰ Homily of Pope Francis at the Holy Mass for the Family Day *A patient love that generates joy*, Vatican, 27 October 2013, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 12, p. 13.

to their importance as a subject of community⁴¹. Grandparents must be cared for, as they possess *the wisdom of history* and are *the memory of a people*⁴². How older people are treated is *an indicator of the quality of a community*⁴³. An important role in the formation of family relationships is played, among other things, by a well-lived Sunday, which serves to build relationships with God, the community and loved ones. In this context, the Pope asks us to consider whether working on Sundays, apart from necessary services, is *true freedom*⁴⁴.

According to Pope Francis, women play a key role in passing on the faith. The Pope calls on the Church not to limit women's involvement in the Church, but to promote their active role. He stresses that *[i]f the Church, in her complete and real dimension, loses women, she risks becoming sterile*⁴⁵. According to him, *[a] Church without women is like the college of the Apostles without Mary*. The Pope postulates working out a deep theology of women, explaining their role and charisma, because it is not only about *their acting as altar servers, heads of Caritas, catechists*. According to Francis, the Church cannot be understood without active women with their profile leading the way into the future⁴⁶. The Pope also

⁴¹ A message of Pope Francis on the 20th anniversary of the Pontifical Academy of Life „Pro Vita” *The most serious disease to which the elderly are exposed is abandonment*, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 3-4, p. 21.

⁴² Address of Pope Francis to members of the Italian Pro-Life Movement *Babies and grandparents are the hope of a people*, Vatican, 11 April 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 5, p. 28.

⁴³ Address of Pope Francis to the Community of Sant'Egidio Community *The true revolution is compassion*, Vatican, 15 June 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 7, p. 19.

⁴⁴ Address of Pope Francis at a meeting with representatives of the world of labour and industry of the Molise region at the University of Campobasso *The most important thing is human dignity*, Campobasso, 5 July 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 7, p. 36.

⁴⁵ Address of Pope Francis at the meeting with the Bishops of Brazil *“Pastoral care” is nothing other than the exercise of the Church's motherhood*, op. cit., p. 23.

⁴⁶ Press conference of Pope Francis during his return flight to Rome on 28 July 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 10, p. 35.

*highlights the vocation and mission of the man in the family, in the Church and in society, as fathers, workers and citizens*⁴⁷. One of particular importance is that of being a good father who, by being close to his children, becomes a true educator. Fathers should look to St. Joseph as a role model⁴⁸.

Pope Francis often addresses young people. He urges them to *be committed to your daily duties, your studies, your work, to relationships of friendship, to helping others*⁴⁹. They are especially called to go throughout the world to all people and *proclaim the Gospel, which must not remain locked up in your life or in the small group of your parish, your movement, or your community*⁵⁰. The Pope stresses that the Church needs the enthusiasm, creativity and joy of young people, who are the best tools for evangelising other young people⁵¹. The Pope urges they *make themselves heard in their dioceses and the noise should go out, and the Church [to] go out onto the streets, and we all must resist everything worldly, everything static, everything comfortable, everything to do with clericalism, everything that might make us closed in on ourselves*⁵².

Universities and schools, including Catholic schools, play an important role in evangelization (EG 134). Pope Francis says that these institutions, having *their duty to be an expression of a living presence of the Gospel in the field of education, of science and*

⁴⁷ Address of Pope Francis at the meeting with the Bishops of Brazil “*Pastoral care*” is nothing other than the exercise of the Church’s motherhood, op. cit., p. 23.

⁴⁸ Address of Pope Francis at the General Audience of St Joseph and his mission as protector, Vatican, 19 March 2014, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 3-4, p. 49.

⁴⁹ Address of Pope Francis at the General Audience *Work is fundamental to the dignity of a person*, Vatican, 1 May 2013, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 6, p. 45.

⁵⁰ Homily of Francis at the closing Holy Mass of the XXVIII World Youth Day *Go, do not be afraid, and serve.*, Rio de Janeiro, 28 July 2013, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 8-9, p. 17.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 18.

⁵² Address of Pope Francis at the meeting with the young people from Argentina *Make yourselves heard*, Rio de Janeiro 25 July 2013, „L’Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 8-9, p. 8.

of culture (...) cannot isolate themselves from the world, they must know how to enter bravely into the aeropagus of current culture and open dialogue⁵³. In particular, the university must be a place where, on the basis of ethical criteria, reality is discerned, *the culture of closeness develops* and solidarity is forged⁵⁴. Speaking about the characteristics of a good educator, the Pope points out that educating is an act of love and giving life. An educator should be competent, well-educated and *rich in humanity*. He or she should be able to communicate with young people and, referring to values, should *promote their human and spiritual growth*. One of the most important characteristics of an educator should be consistency. Therefore, educators themselves need continuous formation⁵⁵.

An important role in the work of evangelization is played by basic communities and small communities, movements, and forms of association which constitute *a source of enrichment for the Church* and which are *raised up by the Spirit for evangelizing different areas and sectors*. They must not lose contact with the parish but must be incorporated into the *overall pastoral activity of the particular Church* (EG 29). All evangelizers, especially families and communities, are to evangelize with love, taking care of one another, remembering the poorest, learning the language of the cultures of those to whom they are sent by the Holy Spirit, while respecting their freedom⁵⁶. Christian communities need to be *committed to a courageous*

⁵³ Address of Pope Francis to participants in the plenary session of the Congregation for Catholic Education *Education is a great open building site*, Vatican, 13 February 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 3-4, pp. 16-17.

⁵⁴ Address of Holy Father Francis to representatives of the academic and cultural world *Apocalypse that will not happen*, Cagliari, 22 September 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 11, pp. 27-29.

⁵⁵ Address of Pope Francis to participants in the plenary session of the Congregation for Catholic Education *Education is a great open building site*, op. cit. p. 17.

⁵⁶ Address of Pope Francis to representatives of the Neocatechumenal Way *Communion is essential*, Vatican, 1 February 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 2, p. 25.

apostolate, bearing witness to their faith in Jesus⁵⁷. The members of the various communities and movements are to go out into the streets, where they will evangelise and touch *the wounded flesh* of the poor. The groups and movements are to be united in their actions and remain in mutual love, *caring for the poor and needy*⁵⁸.

[T]he lay faithful are called to fulfil their mission in the areas of social, economic and political life. Christian entrepreneurs must bear effective witness in the field of engagement in the world of labour to implement the Christian ethical principals in the current situation in the world of labour. For this to happen, the entrepreneur's conscience must be rooted in the Gospel, taking the time to pray, in particular, to the Holy Spirit for *the gift of counsel*⁵⁹. At the same time, the Pope notes that politicians, businessmen and trade unionists should have the support of parishes, dioceses and associations, drawing from them *life to feed their commitment*⁶⁰. The Pope encourages everyone to show solidarity with the unemployed, calling in particular on *those in public office* to promote the dignity of the person, to increase employment and to speak out against human trafficking for slave labour⁶¹. All are called to overcome the lust for possessions and *share even one's wealth, to set it at the service of projects of solidarity and development*⁶².

⁵⁷ Address of Pope Francis to volunteers of the Year of Faith *Let Christians bring love and hope*, Vatican, 25 November 2013, <http://odnowa.przemyska.pl/2013/11/franciszekniech-chrzescijanie-nios-mio-i-nadziej/> (accessed on 12.01.2015).

⁵⁸ Address of Pope Francis to members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal *The [D] on't put the Holy Spirit in a cage!* Vatican, 1 June 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 7, pp. 26-27.

⁵⁹ Address of Pope Francis to participants in the congress promoted by The *Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice* Foundation *The value of solidarity*, Vatican, 10 May 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 6, p. 43.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Address of Pope Francis during the General Audience *Work is fundamental to the dignity of a person*, Vatican, 1 May 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 6, pp. 44-45.

⁶² Address of Pope Francis at the Angelus prayer *Divine Providence and Solidarity*, Vatican, 2 March 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 3-4, p. 53.

The Pope also points out the important role of the cross in the work of evangelisation, without which there can be no fruitful apostolic work⁶³. The Pope stresses that the pastoral fruitfulness of preaching the Gospel depends on *becoming conformed to the logic of the Cross of Jesus*, which is the logic of going out of oneself and making the gift of love⁶⁴. In this context, the words of Pope Francis to the sick and disabled, who, as active and responsible subjects of the work of evangelization and salvation, are to integrate their sufferings into apostolic activity, so that they may become a support and a world for other sufferers and for pastoral workers, are of particular interest⁶⁵. Speaking of the forms of evangelization, the Pope points out that there is a multiplicity of formulas for communicating the Gospel message, so that *it would be impossible to describe or catalogue them all* (EG 129). He insists on the necessity of a great evangelising dynamism. He points out that the inhabitants of parishes should go out onto the streets with the message of the Gospel, because they will end up as NGOs, and the Church cannot be an NGO⁶⁶. Among the many forms of evangelisation, he underlines the role of person-to-person preaching, which *takes place in the middle of a conversation, (...) on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey* (EG 127). He points out that this form is realised in a personal dialogue, in which we first need to listen to the other person, who shares with us his or her joys, hopes, worries about loved ones and the many things on his or her heart. Only then can we present them with

⁶³ Pope Francis on the meaning of the cross in the Christian life *Fear of the Cross*, Morning Meditation in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, Vatican, 28 September 2013, <http://www.naszdziennik.pl/wiara-stolica-apostolska/55307,nasladowanie-jezusa-prowadzi-do-krzyza.html> (accessed on 12.01.2015).

⁶⁴ Homily of Pope Francis during the Holy Mass for Seminarians, Novices and those Discerning their Vocation *Evangelization is done on one's knees*, op. cit. p. 46.

⁶⁵ Address of Pope Francis to the members of the associations founded by Blessed Louis Novarese *How to live suffering*, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 6, p. 47.

⁶⁶ Address of Pope Francis at the meeting with the young people from Argentina *Make yourselves heard*, op. cit. p. 8.

a passage of Scripture or a story that reminds them of God's love. It is necessary to be open to the action of the Holy Spirit, who will give us the appropriate form, including personal witness and gesture. It is good to conclude this meeting with a short prayer that embraces the expression of care (EG 129). Speaking of the role of the personal relationship in the evangelization, the Pope points out that not only pastors but all those in pastoral ministry can make present the fragrance of Jesus' close presence and his personal gaze. We are to learn the *art of accompaniment (...) to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other (cf. Ex 3:5)* (EG 169), and to learn the art of listening, which is more than hearing (EG 171). The need to adapt one's step to the abilities of the people on their way and to be always close⁶⁷.

As those called to work as evangelizers, all members of the People of God are *to have better training* so as to strive for a better formation (EG 121). The formation of clergy and laity, carried out at a good level and within an appropriate structure, should provide evangelisers who are *able to step into the night* of the disillusioned, broken and disintegrated people.⁶⁸ *All evangelization is based on that word, listened to (...): the laity are to be formed in the direction which involves promoting the prayerful reading of the Scriptures in dioceses, parishes and Catholic communities* (EG 174-175). The Pope also encourages Christians to carry *a little book of the Gospel in your pocket or in your purse to read in little stages every day* to hear the voice of Jesus⁶⁹.

It is also important to note that when addressing the different environments of the laity and pointing out their role in the work of evangelisation and missionary pastoral care, Pope Francis constantly emphasises the role of Christian witness. It is the Christian witness that lies at the root of evangelisation, which Paul VI already

⁶⁷ Address of Pope Francis at the meeting with the Bishops of Brazil "*Pastoral care*" is nothing other than the exercise of the Church's motherhood, cited, p. 22.

⁶⁸ Ibid, pp. 22-23.

⁶⁹ Address of Pope Francis at the Angelus prayer *With the Gospel in your pocket*, Vatican, 16 March 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 3-4, p. 55.

underlined in *Evangelii nuntiandii* when he said that *[m]odern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.* (EN 41) This testimony is particularly linked to the service of the poor, whom the Church is called upon to serve unceasingly.

In his addresses, the Pope tends to use the term *culture of encounter*, which he contrasts with *a culture of conflict, a culture of fragmentation, a culture in which I throw away what is of no use to me, a culture of waste.* The culture of encounter, which is to be built on the faith of Christians, concerns both the poor, the elderly and those who think differently and profess a different faith. It involves *[g]oing out to meet everyone, without losing sight of our own position*⁷⁰. The Pope emphasizes that the attitude of a good evangelizer, following the example of Jesus, is tied to openness to all who need to be listened to. For example, he mentions people who do not have a church wedding or atheists among those who need to be listened to in a particular way⁷¹. The media have an important role to play in creating a culture of encounter, so that *the Gospel* can thereby cross the threshold of the temple and *can go out to reach everyone.* We must not be afraid of living in a digital world, through which we can also keep *the doors of our churches open*, dialoguing with today's world and at the same time directing it towards encountering Christ⁷².

An important group of people to be surrounded by a culture of encounter is the poor, and this relates to the social dimension of evangelisation. Immediately after his election, Pope Francis stressed

⁷⁰ Address of the Holy Father Francis at the Vigil of Pentecost with the Ecclesial Movements, New Ecclesial Communities and Associations *The Church goes out to meet everyone* Communities and Associations *The Church goes out to meet everyone*, Vatican 18 May 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 7, p. 19.

⁷¹ Pope Francis' reflection at the Morning Meditation in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae *Jesus excludes no one*, Vatican, 8 May 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 7, p. 31.

⁷² Message of Pope Francis for the XLVIII World Communications Day. *Communication at the Service of an Authentic Culture of Encounter*, Vatican, 24 January 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 2, pp. 7-8.

that he *would like to a Church which is poor and for the poor*⁷³! He further develops his thought in the exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, underlining that the proclamation of the kerygma has social and communitarian repercussions. There is a close link between acceptance of the salvific message and active brotherly love, as the texts of Scripture point out (Mt 25:40). These texts, which call us to go forth from ourselves towards our brothers, remind us that *the service of charity is also a constituent element of the Church's mission and an indispensable expression of her very being* (EG 179). It is not just *an accumulation of small personal gestures to individuals in need*, which could constitute a series of acts aimed solely at easing our conscience, but *it is about loving God who reigns in our world* (EG 180). The Pope underlines that *[o]ur faith in Christ, who became poor, and was always close to the poor and the outcast, is the basis of our concern for the integral development of society's most neglected members* (EG 186). All are called to be *an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society* (EG 187). The Pope says: *For the Church, the option for the poor is primarily a theological category rather than a cultural, sociological, political or philosophical one. It is understood as a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness* (EG 198). Pope Francis wants *a Church which is poor and for the poor. They have much to teach us. It is because they know the suffering Christ. We need to let ourselves be evangelized by them* (EG 198). The Pope stresses that *the worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care. The great majority of the poor have a special openness to the faith; they need God and we must not fail to offer them his friendship, his blessing, his word, the celebration of the sacraments and a journey of growth and maturity in the faith. Our preferential option for the poor must mainly translate into a privileged and preferential religious care* (EG

⁷³ Address of Pope Francis at an audience to representatives of the communications media *A Church which is poor and for the poor!* Vatican, 16 March 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 5, p. 13.

200). We must be close to *new forms of poverty and vulnerability, in which we are called to recognize the suffering Christ, even if this appears to bring us no tangible and immediate benefits* (EG 210).

3. Conclusions and Pastoral Recommendations

Following the presentation of the essence of the missionary pastoral in the context of the Church's evangelising goal and the tasks set by Pope Francis for the laity, we will try to unite these two realities and draw some conclusions and pastoral postulates. Pastoral conversion must be the point of reference, and the point of destination must be the prospect of salvation through missionary pastoral activity imbued with an evangelising spirit. It must not be forgotten that pastoral conversion is related to the personal conversion to Christ and the Holy Spirit of every member of the Church, both clerical and lay. In this context, one must also remember the primacy of grace in all the Church's activities.

In order to preserve the correct priorities in pastoral activity and not to lose its essence, there is a need for *a comprehensive formation* of both clergy and laity. Pope Francis appeals to the laypeople to demand such formation from the clergy. Speaking of this, the Pope refers to a writing of St Caesarius of Arles, where a hungry calf is mentioned-it approaches the mother cow and wants to drink milk from her. The Saint gives this example: *when a calf is hungry it goes to the cow, its mother, to get milk. The cow, however, does not give it right away: it seems that she withholds it. And what does the calf do? It knocks with its nose at the cow's udder, so that the milk will come.* He further writes: *"So also you must be with your pastors", this saint said: always knock at their door, at their hearts, that they may give you the milk of doctrine, the milk of grace and the milk of guidance*⁷⁴. Referring to these words, Pope Francis appeals to the laity: *bother the pastors, disturb the pastors, all of us pastors, so that we might give*

⁷⁴ Address of Pope Francis at the Angelus *You must bother your pastors*, Vatican, 11 May 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 6, p. 52.

*you the milk of grace, doctrine and guidance*⁷⁵. Within this formation, it is necessary to learn *the correct theological vision of the Church understood as a communio*, where each person, both lay and clerical, well aware of his or her specific identity and of the tasks flowing from the sacraments received, must take action to bring it to fruition.

In a world which primarily places emphasis on tangible actions, the Church should pay attention to the role of the witness of Christian life, which has the greatest power to convince, especially those who are experiencing a crisis of faith caused by the lack of credible witnesses to the Gospel. To this witness all Christians are called, who, taking up the responsibilities of their state and profession, will be convincing evangelizers of the environments in which they live every day, becoming the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Mt 5:13-16). The role of such a testimony should be emphasized in various forms of lay formation conducted as part of homilies and sermons, retreats, and missions, as well as adult catechesis. When speaking about the evangelistic significance of *the Christian lifestyle*, not only do we need to proclaim its necessity, but we must also demonstrate specific examples of how it should look like. In this context it is worth referring to well-known journalists, actors or politicians who are not ashamed to admit that they belong to the Church, implementing her teachings in their everyday lives.

Pastoral conversion which involves a turning to Christ, as well as proper formation, including ecclesiological knowledge and spiritual direction, should bear fruit in the actions of *pastoral guidance*, which are to become a space for taking responsibility for the life of the Church on its various levels (DA 10; 26; DP 9; ChL 27; EG 31). In this context, we must recall Pope Francis' warning against clericalism, which is one of the ills of the Church.

The Pope believes this is a mutual evil: *priests take pleasure in the temptation to clericalize the laity, but many of the laity are on their knees asking to be clericalized, because it is more comfortable*,

⁷⁵ Ibid.

*it is more comfortable*⁷⁶! The pope calls for this temptation to be overcome, stressing that the laypeople must preserve their identity resulting from the received sacrament of baptism. The Pope addresses the need to learn *harmony* in the collaboration between clergy and laity and stresses that parish and diocesan pastoral and economic councils are the places to learn this. The Pope stresses *a parish that does not have a pastoral Council and a Finance Council, is not a good parish: it lacks life*⁷⁷. He insists that neither the pastor nor the bishop can *guide a diocese without pastoral councils*⁷⁸.

In this context, it is worth referring to the questions that Pope Francis poses to the whole Church, both clerical and laypeople. He questions the clergy persons: *In practice, do we make the lay faithful sharers in the Mission? Do such Councils and Parish Councils, whether pastoral or financial, provide real opportunities for lay people to participate in pastoral consultation, organization and planning? (...) [A]re we conscious and convinced of the mission of the lay faithful and do we give them the freedom to continue discerning, in a way befitting their growth as disciples, the mission which the Lord has entrusted to them? Do we support them and accompany them, overcoming the temptation to manipulate them or infantilize them?* On the other hand, the Pope addresses another question to laypeople: *Do they feel part of the Church, do they identify with her and bring her closer to the baptized who are distant and alienated*⁷⁹?

⁷⁶ Address of Pope Francis to members of the „Corallo” Association *We need truth, goodness and beauty*, Vatican, 22 March 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 3-4, p. 35.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Address of Pope Francis at the meeting with the clergy, consecrated people, and members of diocesan pastoral councils *The Church grows through attraction of the witness*, Assisi, 4 October 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 11, p. 13.

⁷⁹ Address of Pope Francis to the Leadership of the Episcopal Conferences of Latin America during the General Coordination Meeting *The “revolution of tenderness” brought by the incarnation of the Word should not be ignored*, Rio de Janeiro, 28 July 2013, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2013, no. 10, p. 26.

Pastoral councils working on many levels are to make a correct diagnosis of the situation, enabling the signs of the times to be read correctly, as called for by the Second Vatican Council (*Lumen Gentium* 4; 44). One of them is the increasing number of people living in multiple poverty. It is precisely to these people that the attention of the Church should be drawn, since according to Pope Francis the witness of charity is *the royal road of evangelization*⁸⁰. It is the laity in particular, acting individually and collectively, who have to go out to the peripheries of existence in order to show *the Lord's consoling presence*, not limiting themselves to charitable assistance, but *must also extend to a practical concern for human growth*, opposing the culture of money⁸¹.

Another postulate is *the need to be open to the Holy Spirit, seeking methods and forms of action that are appropriate to the challenges we are facing*. By being linked to the witness of the lives of individuals, communities, and movements, they can have the effect of reviving the faith of those in whom it has died out. However, we must not forget that the proclamation of the kerygma must come first, both in homily and in the personal proclamation of the risen Christ *from person to person* (EN 46; EG 127-128). It must never be forgotten that all pastoral activities are to be incorporated into the main purpose of the Church, which is to lead people to salvation through evangelisation.

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In his message for World Mission Day 2014, Pope Francis refers to the missionary reality *ad gentes* regarding the activities undertaken among people who do not yet know Christ. However, the Pope stresses

⁸⁰ Homily of Pope Francis at the Mass at the Old Romagnoli Stadium of Campobasso *Faced with the dignity of the human person, everything else is secondary*, Campobasso, 5 July 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 7, p. 37.

⁸¹ Address of Pope Francis at a meeting with the leaders of the apostolate of the laity *The dignity of earning our daily bread*, Kkottongnae, 16 August 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 8-9, p. 17.

that certain initiatives also concern actions taken by laypeople in missionary pastoral work towards and among baptised people whose faith has become dead. He encourages *parish communities, associations and groups to live an intense fraternal life, grounded in love for Jesus and concern for the needs of the most disadvantaged. Wherever there is joy, enthusiasm and a desire to bring Christ to others, genuine vocations arise. Among these vocations, we should not overlook lay vocations to mission. There has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the lay faithful in the Church, as well as a recognition that they are called to take an increasingly important role in the spread of the Gospel*⁸². In this context, the Pope urges that the laity be given a suitable training for the sake of an effective apostolic activity⁸³.

In his address to the participants of the symposium on the pastoral project *Evangelii gaudium*, Pope Francis appeals: *please, let us not pursue the voice of the sirens who call us to perform pastoral care in a disjointed series of initiatives, without managing to grasp the essential commitment of evangelization. At times it seems that we are more concerned with redoubling activities than with being attentive to the people and their encounter with God. (...) Pastoral care without prayer and contemplation can never reach the heart of the people. (...) In the difficulties as in disappointments which are present, not infrequently, in our pastoral work, we must never fail to have faith in the Lord and in prayer (...). Let us sow and bear witness. Testimony is the beginning of an evangelization.*⁸⁴ It seems that openness to the work of God's grace and taking joint responsibility for the work of missionary pastoral activity on the part of the clergy and the laity working closely together with them is the main path which the Church must follow in these times.

⁸² Message of Pope Francis for World Mission Day 2014 *A welcoming home, a mother for all peoples*, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 7, p. 5.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Address of Pope Francis to the participants in the international meeting for promoting „Evangelii gaudium” *The Church is to be a sign of the mercy of the Lord*, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 10, p. 33.

Summary

The main idea of the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* issued by Pope Francis is an appeal for pastoral conversion and ministry performed by missionary activity, which should remain in accordance with the main task of the Church, i.e., the evangelization. Lay pastoral workers also play an important role in this process. The author presents the characteristics of the missionary ministry in the context of the call for evangelization expressed by the Church, and then discusses the tasks he sets for the laypeople. His reflection is crowned with outlining of the pastoral conclusions and postulates. This cogitation corresponds with the appeal of Pope Francis addressed to all theologians, especially to the pastoral theologians, who while preaching—should always have in mind that *the Church and theology exist to evangelize, and not be content with a desk-bound theology* (see EG 133).

Key words: evangelization, new evangelization, teaching of Pope Francis, lay and laity, laypeople, missionary ministry, pastoral conversion.

Streszczenie

Myślą przewodnią adhortacji apostołskiej *Evangelii gaudium*, wydanej przez papieża Franciszka, jest apel o nawrócenie duszpasterskie i posługę misyjną, która powinna pozostawać w zgodzie z głównym zadaniem Kościoła, czyli ewangelizacją. Ważną rolę w tym procesie odgrywają również duszpasterze świeccy. Autor przedstawia charakterystykę posługi misyjnej w kontekście wezwania ewangelizacyjnego wyrażonego przez Kościół, a następnie omawia zadania, jakie wyznacza świeckim. Zwieńczeniem jego refleksji jest zarysowanie wniosków i postulatów duszpasterskich. Rozważania te korespondują z apelem papieża Franciszka skierowanym do wszystkich teologów, a zwłaszcza do teologów pastoralnych, którzy głosząc kazania, powinni zawsze mieć na uwadze ewangelizacyjny cel istnienia Kościoła i nie mogą zadowalać się teologią uprawianą przy biurku (zob. EG 133).

Słowa kluczowe: ewangelizacja, nowa ewangelizacja, nauczanie papieża Franciszka, świeccy, laikat, duszpasterstwo misyjne, nawrócenie pastoralne

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Pope Francis at Sunday's Angelus: *Jesus is always at the side of each of us*, Vatican, 1 June 2014, http://ekai.pl/wydarzenia/temat_dnia/x79151/jezus-jest-zawsze-u-boku-kazdego-z-nas/ (accessed on 12.01.2015).

Address of Pope Francis to the Community of Sant'Egidio Community *The true revolution is compassion*, Vatican, 15 June 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 7, p. 19.

Address of Pope Francis at a meeting with representatives of the world of labour and industry of the Molise region at the University of Campobasso *The most important thing is human dignity*, Campobasso, 5 July 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 7, pp. 35-36.

Homily of Pope Francis at the Mass at the Old Romagnoli Stadium of Campobasso *Faced with the dignity of the human person, everything else is secondary*, Campobasso, 5 July 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 7, p. 37.

Address of Pope Francis at a meeting with the leaders of the apostolate of the laity *The dignity of earning our daily bread*, Kkottongnae, 16 August 2014, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2014, no. 8-9, p. 17.

Przyczyna W., *Ewangelizacja*, in: R. Kamiński, W. Przygoda, M. Fiałkowski (ed.), *Leksykon teologii pastoralnej*, Lublin 2006, p. 254-257.

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MARRIAGE AND FAMILY CRISIS AS A CHALLENGE FOR ADULT MINISTRY

From the very beginning of its existence, the Church founded by Jesus of Nazareth has been particularly concerned with the family, for its Founder was born into the family. One could say that he himself gave a model of pastoral care for adults starting families, and he elevated marriage to the rank of a sacrament. It is in the family, through pastoral ministry, that human salvation is accomplished from the very beginning. It is there that the catechumenate occurs, being the foundation for the formation of the Christian life of the faithful. From the very beginning, the community of Christ's disciples has recognized the need for pastoral care and formation of adults in the family, so that it may be the place where the great responsibilities of parenthood are carried out, where the young generation is brought up according to the values of the Gospel, which is to be translated into an effective apostolic mission of the faithful¹. Therefore, there is no doubt that the reflection on the family, based on sacramental marriage, which is part of the pastoral care for adults in the Church, is one of the most important issues of the contemporary Church. The present world, including the ecclesial community existing in Poland and worldwide, must face the undeniable crisis of such institutions as marriage and family. However, one can find it consoling that the crisis,

¹ R. Kamiński, *Wstęp*, in: *Duszpasterstwo rodzin. Refleksja naukowa i działalność pastoralna*, R. Kamiński, G. Pyżlak, J. Goleń (ed.), Lublin 2013, p. 17.

apart from negative experiences, provides an opportunity, a hope of renewal and a greater awareness of the value of family and marriage, built on Christian values. Undoubtedly, the subject matter is very extensive and there is a great deal that could be said about it, so this paper is certainly only an outline of the diagnosis of the contemporary family and the pastoral proposals related to the care of adults living out their faith in marriage and the family.

1. Theological foundations of marriage and the family

Scripture begins with an account of the creation of the world, culminating in the Creator's calling into existence of man and woman, created in the image and likeness of God, and ends with a vision of *the marriage supper of the Lamb* (Rev 19:9). Throughout history, the Bible speaks of the covenant between a man and a woman and of the marriage „mystery,” its origin and God-given meaning, its beginning and goal, the various ways it has been fulfilled during salvation history, its hardship due to sin, and its renewal „in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 7:39), in the New Covenant of Christ and the Church (CCC 1602).

Religious marriage between a man and a woman, therefore, finds God's blessing from the very beginning. As the Word of God states: *[t]herefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh* (Genesis 2:24). Further Christ himself teaches: *Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female* (Mt 19:5). The theology of marriage is also beautifully portrayed in *Song of Songs* in the Old Testament, which tells the story of the love between a woman and a man who need each other simply to be themselves, yet remain distinct in their identity, opening up and revealing themselves in the mutual gift of self². *My kind is mine, and I am his (...). I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine* (BC 2:16; 6:3). Therefore, it should

² Third Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, *A house with doors always open. Message of the Synodal Fathers to Christian families and all families in the world*, "L'Osservatore Romano" 35 (2014), no. 11, p. 6.

be stated that the institution of marriage is a natural reality and finds its foundations in the economy of creation, which is the work of God Himself.³

At the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus performed the first sign, at the request of his mother, at the wedding feast of Cana (Jn 2:1-11). The Church gives great importance to the presence of Jesus at the feast of Cana. She views it as a confirmation that marriage is good and an announcement that from now on it will be an effective sign of Christ's presence (CCC 1613). It must be emphasized that the essential characteristics of the sacrament of marriage between a man and a woman, which is to be the beginning and the foundation of family life, are holiness, unity, and indissolubility. John Paul II states in his teaching on the family that "the family is in fact a community of persons whose proper way of existing and living together is communion: *communio personarum*".⁴

God calls man in marriage and family life to happiness. The profound community of married life and love is established and endowed with rights given by the Creator Himself; He is the creator of marriage. The vocation to marriage is inscribed in the very nature of man and woman, who came out of God's hand. Marriage and the family are therefore not purely human institutions, although over the centuries the way we think about them may have undergone many changes in different cultures, social structures, and spiritual attitudes. That diversity should not make us forget its common and enduring features (CCC 1603).

While reflecting on the theology of the family, one can never deny that it is the sacrament of marriage that is the foundation of the family and gives it durability and strength. The family is also the basic institution of every civil society. In its genesis, the family—one can

³ M. Żurowski, *Eklezjalny charakter małżeństwa i rodziny*, „Prawo Kanoniczne” 21 (1978), no 3-4, p. 108-109.

⁴ Pope John Paul II, Letter to Families, Częstochowa 2013, no. 7.

say-is as much natural as pre-political,⁵ and therefore when one speaks of a crisis of marriage and the family, it must be assumed that the whole human community is weak. It should be emphasised that *[i]t is as though matrimony were first a human sacrament, where the person discovers himself, understands himself in relation to others and in a relationship of love which is capable of receiving and giving,*⁶ teaches Pope Francis. Marriage and the family are also of particular concern to the Church. In fact, a vast majority of the ecclesial community is made up of families. Pope Bergoglio asks directly: *Can we imagine the Church today without family communities? Without them it would be a Church of statues, a Church of lone individuals.* But the Creator Himself wanted families to be lights radiating the brightness of His love⁷.

The teaching of the Church on this subject is very clear and precise. The Second Vatican Council states that the marital community is established by God the Creator Himself, and it is established by the marriage covenant, that is, by irrevocable personal consent (*Gaudium et spes* 48). Marriage as an „institution” of natural law, established by God in paradise, was elevated by Christ to the dignity of a sacrament. This marital “yes” is surely based on God’s intention. It is a Fatherly „yes” to the union of man and woman, open to life and its defence in all its phases. The family, therefore, is the “yes” of God as Love⁸. We can say that the family is thus a school of humanity, it

⁵ A. Kłos-Skrzypczak, *Korzyści płynące z rodziny zakorzenionej w małżeństwie sakramentalnym—perspektywa Amerykańskich Biskupów Katolickich*, „Family Forum” 7 (2017), p. 16.

⁶ Pope Francis, *In the family we learn to love and defend life*, „L’Osservatore Romano” 34 (2013), no. 12, p. 27.

⁷ Pope Francis, *Like a big family. Address at Croke Park Stadium*, Dublin on 25 April 2018, „L’Osservatore Romano” 39 (2018), no. 8-9, p. 17.

⁸ Pope Francis, *Letter on the occasion of the IX World Meeting of Families on the theme: The Gospel of the Family: Joy to the World*. 2018, „L’Osservatore Romano” 38 (2017), no. 3-4, p. 8.

becomes the foundation of human society⁹. *Thus the family, in which the various generations come together and help one another grow wiser and harmonize personal rights with the other requirements of social life, is the foundation of society (Gaudium et spes 52).*

2. Sociological profile of the family community

It seems that there is no one in the world who would question the importance of the family in the development of human personality. Many artists have written, spoken, or sung about it, thus advocating family life and its value in human life. It was the family community and its atmosphere that gave birth to great rulers, mighty men or artists, while its absence or deficiencies, generated by the lack of parental and fraternal love, brought about numerous madmen who spread war and death. It is therefore undeniable that the family shapes not only the life of a single person, but also of entire nations, and affects the fate of a country and the history of the world. Everyone longs for it and everyone feels more secure when they can count on its support and assistance. The family is still one of the most important values in human life¹⁰.

The simplest definition of what a family means is that it is *a group of people linked together by marriage, kinship, affinity or adoption*¹¹. The family based on the marriage covenant of one man and one woman is, from a sociological point of view, an environment of socialisation. It is in the family that the process of human upbringing takes place. The family is a transmitter of knowledge and specific system of values. It is also, as Prof. Mariański notes, *a place of shelter from aggression and external threat, a social group providing a sense of security and support in life, but also a «space» in which a man is accepted as he or*

⁹ J. Dyduch, *Małżeństwo i rodzina w optyce dokumentów III Nadzyczajnego Synodu Biskupów*, „Polonia Sacra” 20 (2016), no. 1, p. 146.

¹⁰ K. Woś, *Uwarunkowania kryzysów w rodzinie. Analiza problemów*, „Pedagogika Rodziny” 4 (2014), no. 4, p. 104.

¹¹ Z. Tyszcza, *Socjologia rodziny*, Warszawa 1979, p. 74.

*she is, and can develop as a person*¹². The family, whose foundation remains marriage between a man and a woman, is an inevitable mixture of enjoyment and struggles, tensions and repose, pain and relief, satisfactions and longings, annoyances and pleasures (AL 126). This is where man learns and understands what co-existence in diversity should be about (EG 66).

3. Crisis and its significance

When addressing the issue of crisis in the family and marriage, it is necessary to look at the entire phenomenon of crisis and what meaning it holds for individuals and individual social groups. Apart from the difficult issues it brings along, can it become an opportunity and a new beginning, a kind of positive disintegration? If we speak about the crisis of the family and the institution of marriage today, is it possible to build a strong and more mature family, aware of its vocation and value, on the „debris”¹³? Many dictionaries define a crisis as a breakthrough, a turning point, a serious breakdown of the state of equilibrium, a sudden solstice or a disturbance of the existing reality and order. However, if one takes a look at the sociological and psychological conceptual setting, a duality of the situation resulting from the crisis can be observed in the crisis, which treats the crisis as an immanent feature of an individual personality favouring his/her development. *Crisis is therefore undoubtedly a very difficult and special situation, which disturbs the proper functioning of an individual or a group, such as a family*, but well worked through it becomes an opportunity. Much in the course of experiencing this specific state of human development depends on the personal characteristics as well as on the resources of the individual family community (e.g. the family being part of the Church community, its faith, determination, evangelicalism). This may prove decisive in terms of whether the community in question is able to cope with the crisis it

¹² J. Mariański, *Rodzina wobec wartości: rozpad czy transformacja?* in: *Rodzina: źródło życia i szkoła miłości*, D. Kornas-Biela (ed.), Lublin 2000, p. 90.

¹³ Z. Kroplewski, *Kryzysy kapłańskie*, Kraków 2010, p. 69.

is facing, and whether this difficult situation can contribute to either the development of addictions or the breakdown of the family, for example¹⁴.

Crisis is usually associated with negative, pejorative connotations; when someone says, e.g. *my marriage is in crisis*, no one congratulates them. In pastoral ministry, however, we must remember that every crisis also contains good news, a lesson to teach us; we need to learn how to listen for it with the ear of the heart (AL 232). The noun 'crisis' is derived from the Greek verb κρινω (krino), which means 'separate'. And this is what a crisis is—a separation. Some realities must be separated in order to discern them anew and make a good choice. As if it were possible to stand between them and take a fresh look at these realities. This is the etymology of the Greek word 'crisis'. It is an immanent feature of the individual, which determines his or her line of development, which in human life constitutes a breakthrough, a turning point, often a breakdown, a breach of balance. Such a state in the life of a person or people interacting with him or her may have a destructive influence on the further course of events¹⁵. As far as the crisis that affects the family is concerned, it should be stated that it usually relates to difficulties in making unanimous decisions, in the inability to undertake tasks, which is due to existing barriers or deficiencies, resulting from the scope of functioning of the intra-family system of needs and wishes, professed values, as well as the goals and interests of individual family members¹⁶.

On the other hand, there is also a positive side to the crisis. In psychology, Erikson's theory states that crisis is part of human development¹⁷. We may therefore dare to say that even nowadays the crisis of marriage and the family can help the contemporary

¹⁴ K. Woś, *Uwarunkowania kryzysów w rodzinie. Analiza problemów*, op. cit., p. 108.

¹⁵ B. Nowak, *Rodzina w kryzysie złożonym—kontekst resocjalizacyjny*, „Resocjalizacja Polska”, 2011, no. 2, pp. 159-169.

¹⁶ M. Górecki, *Człowiek w kryzysie*, „Pedagogika Społeczna” no. 1, 2001, p. 77.

¹⁷ E. Torończak, *Teoria stadiów rozwojowych E. Eriksona a kształtowanie decyzji zasadniczej człowieka*, „Studia Gdańskie” 23 (2008), p. 96.

Church to realize anew the value of these two realities and their importance for the life of the ecclesial and world community. The Church must also have the courage to go through that crisis, to face it, and to look at those realities anew.

Hence, one can adopt a positive conception of the crisis, that it may prove to be developmental for the present community of the Church. It is the assumed direction of the ongoing changes, as well as the choice of appropriate strategies of action in a noticeable state of crisis that become decisive and answer the question: will the changes that have to be made have a more positive overtone (effective handling of individual and family developmental crises), or will they be negative and destructive, which will be the aftermath of the accumulation of problems, and what is worse, may depress the individual or the whole family through helplessness and lack of action to overcome the difficult life situation¹⁸? If the Church and the Gospel are embedded therein, it is worth noting that the Lord Jesus Himself says: *I have not come to bring peace, but a sword* (see Mt 10:34). He came to separate because the scribes began to mix a good ethic with an inhuman, Pharisaic ethic. It was an ethic that destroyed rather than strengthened relationships. Therefore, one may venture to say that Christ himself is the „crisis” of humanity. *I have come to bring a sword, to make clear: to separate the light from the darkness, to separate the good and the evil.* Following it as well as the meaning of the Greek word κρίνω, Christ is the crisis¹⁹. He comes to show man of all ages that it is possible to separate marriage and the family from ethics, from Christian morality, and to see what emerges therefrom. In a way, the answer comes to us when we look at the present time. Nothing good and no profound relationships.

¹⁸ M. Górecki, *Człowiek w kryzysie*, op. cit., p. 159.

¹⁹ K. Grzywocz, *Crisis in love-Love in Crisis*, conference delivered at the Academic Pastoral „Resurrexit” in Opole, 18 May 2015, <http://kskrzysztofgrzywocz.pl/pl/publikacje/video/item/20-akademia-damsko-meska-kryzys-w-milosci-milosc-w-kryzysie> (accessed on 31.08.2019).

4. A sociological approach to contemporary threats

The family and marriage are currently undergoing a kind of crisis, so it is worth reflecting on its causes. Difficulties accompanying the modern family can be divided into sociological, hitting the very organization of family life, fashionable lifestyles, state policy, as well as those resulting from religion itself, and which directly affect the spiritual condition of individuals and their morality. Certainly, there are many reasons behind these, but it is tempting to point to a few of them. As for the sociological ones, it is worth noting that the number of marriages contracted in Poland is plummeting. In 1990 Poles entered approximately 230,000 sacramental marriages and in 2016 only 136,000—according to the *Statistical Yearbook of the Church in Poland*²⁰. The effect is certainly a growing number of so called „free relationships” or de facto unions (which weaken the condition of the Polish family. Father Marek Dziewiecki seeks to find lack of logic and misrepresentation in the very etymology of „free relationships”. If something is free, it is not bound by anything, so it is not in a relationship²¹. Society itself gives them tacit consent and is outraged when this institution is called concubinage or cohabitation.

For quite a long-time informal relationships were called concubinage, *which literally means con-together, cubare-to lie down, con cubare therefore means as much as ‘to lie down together*. The term cohabitation is slightly different in a broad social context and is derived from the Latin *cohabitare*—meaning living together. The issue of sexuality and intercourse is not so explicitly emphasised, and the aspect of running a joint household comes to the fore. Today, this aspect is being watered down and justified more, thus giving more permission for this kind of informal relationship²². These

²⁰ <https://ekai.pl/gus-w-2016-r-wiecej-malzenstw-mniej-rozwodow/> (accessed on 31.08.2019).

²¹ M. Dziewiecki, *Małżeństwo, krzywda i obrona*, https://opoka.org.pl/biblioteka/Z/ZR/malzenstwo_krzywda.html (accessed on 31.08.2019).

²² See M. Cieślowska, *Współczesna kohabitacja—charakterystyka zjawiska, w: Współczesna rodzina. Szanse—zagrożenia—kierunki przemian*, K. Pujer (ed.), Wrocław 2016, pp. 13-25.

days, you may even hear on many occasions during pastoral visits to parishioners: *But please don't call us a concubine*, as it sounds so bad. But does it not aim at blurring the awareness of sin and weakening the whole society built on insecure people?

Another sociological phenomenon which has an impact on the crisis of family life is the lack of respect for the elderly. In various European countries, where the pattern of multi-generational family disappears, grandparents are placed in nursing homes, and it is not uncommon for no one to attend the funerals of elderly family members. Pope Francis, crying out for repentance for modern people, teaches: *A society—listen carefully to this!—a society that does not value grandparents is a society that has no future. A Church that is not mindful of the covenant between generations will end up lacking the thing that really matters, which is love. Our grandparents teach us the meaning of conjugal and parental love*²³. Such a turn of events may be caused by the weakening of family ties due to the forced emigration of many couples and entire families, which has taken place in Poland in recent years. The distance separating members of particular families, the lack of important moments of life experienced together, such as the birth of a child or a grandchild, have certainly not contributed to the deepening of family relations.

The lack of time for the closest relatives is often generated by what is now known as a professional career and more and more often it affects women, who sacrifice family happiness for it. One can also observe a serious depreciation of the woman and her role as a housewife. On a cross-family social scale, the position of the housewife has undoubtedly been degraded today²⁴. When considering women's roles in the areas of parenthood and career, it is also essential to mention the 'mother guilt' syndrome, which results from a lack of time devoted to children as a result of a woman's involvement in

²³ Pope Francis, *Like a big family. Address at Croke Park Stadium Dublin*, op. cit., p. 20.

²⁴ F.Adamski, *Rodzina. Wymiar społeczno-kulturowy*, Kraków 2002, p. 206.

professional pursuits²⁵. Unfortunately, all of this takes its toll on the distorted view of motherhood. As a result, many Polish women do not decide to have children at all or make the decision to become mothers much later²⁶. Such an attitude of modern man towards childbearing and a consumerist, even hedonistic, contraceptive lifestyle leads to an antinatalistic mentality, which is also creeping into Catholic families. It should be remembered; however, that human sexuality and its proper use is inscribed in the greatness of God's plan and cannot be belittled, as is the case today in many communities not only in Europe²⁷. And it does not help to build a family united and open to life²⁸. Another cause determining the crisis of family and married life is work-related stress, which becomes the cause of addictions, depression and psychosomatic diseases. This happens under the influence of many stimuli, and there is probably no family that does not struggle with this kind of adversities. The dizzying pace of life, stressful work, the development of social networks and the availability of various drugs make it easy for individual family members, children and parents to fall into various addictions, neuroses and depressive states, which can manifest when there is no strong bond between family members²⁹. In the sociological observation of the society today, there is much talk of *homo tabletis*, i.e. people who manifest excessive use of tablets, smartphones or computers. Lack of interpersonal communication at home and lack

²⁵ See M. Bobulska, *Kariera zawodowa kobiet a rodzina*, in: *Współczesna rodzina. Szanse-zagrozenia-kierunki przemian*, K. Pujer (ed.), op. cit., pp. 49-64.

²⁶ R. Hryciuk, E. Korolczuk, *Pożegnanie z Matką Polką? Dyskursy, praktyki i reprezentacje macierzyństwa we współczesnej Polsce*, Warszawa 2012, p. 15.

²⁷ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *On the trivialisation of sexuality. In relation to certain interpretations of The Light of the World*, "L'Osservatore Romano" 32 (2011), no. 2, p. 57.

²⁸ Benedict XVI, *Letter for the 7th World Meeting of Families 2012*, "L'Osservatore Romano" 31 (2010), no. 11, p. 8.

²⁹ K. Woś, *Uwarunkowania kryzysów w rodzinie. Analiza problemów*, op. cit., p. 111.

of marital dialogue³⁰ can also lead to various types of violence in families and marriages: physical, psychological, sexual, or economic. This is connected to another danger, which is the phenomenon of consumerism, that is using another person to satisfy one's own hunger for love. To satisfy the fear of loneliness. Anxiety and loneliness are among the greatest emotional threats to the family at the turn of the millennium. From a sociological point of view, there are probably many other hardships associated with family and marriage. However, we cannot ignore what has been dragging on for centuries in Polish society, namely the problem of alcoholism in families. The population with different categories of alcohol problems are illustrated in the table below (estimated data)³¹.

Tab. 1

	In Poland 38.6 Mio	In a city of 100,000 inhabitants	In a city of 25,000 inhabitants	In a mu- nicipality of 10,000 inhabitants	
Number of alcohol addicts	approx. 2% of the population	approx. 800,000	approx. 2,000	approx. 500	approx. 200
Adults living in an alcoholic environment alcoholic (spouses, parents)	approx. 4% of the population	approx. 1.5 Mio	approx. 4,000	approx. 1,000	approx. 400
Children growing up in alcoholic families	approx. 4% of the population	approx. 1.5 Mio	approx. 4,000	approx. 1,000	approx. 400

³⁰ S. Waluś, *Homo tabletis wyzwaniem dla współczesnego rodzicielstwa*, in: *Współczesna rodzina. Szanse zagrożenia – kierunki przemian*, op. cit., pp. 111-123.

³¹ <http://www.parpa.pl/index.php/33-analizy-badania-raporty/132-statystyki> (accessed on 31.08.2019).

	In Poland 38.6 Mio	In a city of 100,000 inhabitants	In a city of 25,000 inhabitants	In a mu- nicipality of 10,000 inhabitants	
Harmful drinkers	approx. 5-7% of the popu- lation	2-2.5 Mio	5,000-7,000	1,250-1,750	approx. 500-700
Victims of do- mestic violence in families affected by alcoholism	2/3 adults and 2/3 children in these families	total approx. 2 Mio persons: adults and children	approx. 5.300 persons: adults and children	approx. 1,330 persons: adults and children	about 530 persons: adults and children

5. Threats to family and marriage religiosity

Sociological difficulties aside, we must also mention those connected with man's religiousness, which plays a significant role in the scale of his needs. With regard to the experience of faith, it is necessary to point out the profound cultural crisis of today. The family as well as other communities are exposed to attempts of disintegration through the ideology of secularism (See EG 64). This is reflected in the secular style of experiencing love, often misunderstood, detached from God and His commandments. The manifestation of the worldly philosophy of love, which determines married life, emphasises only the dimension of carnal pleasure, which leads to the consolidation of an anti-natalist and anti-conceptual mentality. John Paul II linked such a way of thinking also to the development of the pornographic and contraceptive industries (FC 30). Today's cultural trend seems to contradict the truth that a marital community, established through an oath, should be permanent and fruitful.³² Therefore, there is no place here for degenerating and calling marriage a relationship that is not one, such as same-sex couples or informal relationships.

³² G. Pyżlak, *Aktualność teologicznego ujęcia przysięgi małżeńskiej*, w: *Sakramentalna przysięga małżeńska w obliczu wyzwań współczesnego świata*, P. Landwójtowicz, S. Pawiński (ed.), Opole 2017, p. 59.

This is closely related to another threat posed to the religiousness of marriage and family, which is the ideology of *gender*. It is a specific challenge for the contemporary Church to face, because it is an ideology that denies the difference and natural complementarity of man and woman. It strikes at the decisions of God Himself to call into existence man and woman as persons equal in dignity and at the same time in need and complement to each other. However, the contemporary voice of the Church remains unambiguous: *There is no basis for comparing or assuming any analogy, even a distant one, between homosexual relationships and God's plan for marriage and the family*. Such relationships cannot be called marriages, but men and women with homosexual tendencies cannot be discriminated against³³. The contemporary culture of promiscuity and sexual revolution is certainly reflected in the growing number of divorces. The CBOS (Public Opinion Research Centre) statistics are alarming, informing that in Poland around 65,000 divorces are pronounced annually by the courts. Unfortunately, it should also be added that the number of marriages has declined since 2008. In 2017, Poles contracted about 193,000 marriages, which is only 13,000 more than in 2013, when there was the lowest number of marriages in history (180,000). And it shows that statistically, there is one divorce for every three marriages contracted in Poland³⁴. What is worse, there is also a growing group of those who are decisive supporters of divorce³⁵.

³³ J. Dyduch, *Matżeństwo i rodzina w optyce dokumentów III Nadzwyczajnego Synodu Biskupów*, op. cit., p. 153.

³⁴ Public Opinion Research Centre, *Poles' attitudes to divorce*, Research Communication 7 (2019), p. 1.

³⁵ The CBOS research shows that the number of those in favour of divorce has been increasing year by year and in Poland there are three times as many of them as of those who are declared to be against the breakdown of marriages. Every eighth respondent (12.0% of the population) is a declared supporter of divorce and every third respondent (32.0%) considers such a way of marriage breakdown when there are difficulties in the relationship. The largest group of the survey respondents remains those (52.0%) who do not support divorce but think that under certain circumstances it may happen. Ibid, p. 2.

Undoubtedly such thinking is not unfamiliar to many Catholics, for whom the sacrament of marriage and the good of the family should be understood in an evangelical way, as one and indissoluble.

This is certainly related to another threat to human religiousness, which is “spiritual desertification”. It is beyond doubt that nowadays, in this era of history in which an ill-understood freedom is promoted, the only obstacle on the way to the “happiness” of lost man is God and all religious and moral restrictions. Unfortunately, such an understanding of reality leads to moral relativism and religious syncretism. It puts man, not God, in the centre. Hence, also in the family God is not in the first place. This can be clearly seen when it comes to absence of attendance at Sunday Eucharist and lack of prayer in many Polish families. The 2017 figures show that 38.3 per cent of the Catholics attend Sunday Mass and 17 per cent take Holy Communion³⁶. No Christian community can grow without nurturing persistent prayer. As Pope Francis reminds us, in prayer, [the family] express[es] their faith and their trust, and God reveals his closeness, also by giving us the angels, his messengers³⁷.

This approach to the Blessed Sacrament and lack of faith in the Eucharistic Lord gives rise to another threat to religious life, which is the lack of mutual forgiveness in families. There are so many families today who are ‘in conflict’ with one another, who have been torn apart by various financial affairs. The affliction of the Church are Catholics who receive the sacraments and do not see the problem that they are stuck in conflict, which generates an anti-evangelical attitude and scandal (See Mt 5, 24). Meanwhile, the power of forgiveness, as the present Pope reminds us, is a real antidote to the sadness caused by resentment and the desire for revenge. Forgiveness leads to joy and serenity. Retained resentments inflame a person’s mind and tear

³⁶ <https://ekai.pl/religijnosc-polakow-w-liczbach-najnowsze-dane-iskk/> (accessed on 31.08.2019).

³⁷ Pope Francis, *A powerful call to prayer, to faith and to witness*, “L’Osservatore Romano” 36 (2015), no. 7-8, p. 41.

the heart, which consequently leads to a disturbance of rest and peace in the family and society³⁸.

Nor can we pass over in silence, when it comes to the threats to the faith of modern families, the scandals of sexual abuse in the Church, which have shaken both the clergy and the lay members of God's people, and for many have become an occasion for contesting the faith. This is a great wound on the organism of the Mystical Body of Christ. However, it is worth listening to the voice of Benedict XVI, teaching: *Jesus Himself compared the Church to a fishing net in which good and bad fish are ultimately separated by God Himself. There is also the parable of the Church as a field on which the good grain that God Himself has sown grows, but also the weeds that «an enemy» secretly sown onto it. Indeed, the weeds in God's field, the Church, are excessively visible, and the evil fish in the net also show their strength. Nevertheless, the field is still God's field and the net is God's fishing net. And at all times, there are not only the weeds and the evil fish, but also the crops of God and the good fish*³⁹.

6. The Family Strong in God. Pastoral care for faith in family and marriage

Since marriage is holy with the holiness of God Himself, it is an image of Christ's spousal love for the Church, it must also be a sign of opposition. Why is there such a fierce battle for the family and its Christian shape happening right? The question may remain rhetorical, but it is important to know what the Church and the families within it do when face various experiences, quite often crises? It is certain that there is a need for people who will live out their faith more and more consciously in such situations, mature Catholics

³⁸ Pope Francis, *The power of forgiveness as the true antidote to resentment and revenge. Homily delivered at the Holy Mass in the Basilica of St. Mary Major on 1 January 2016*, "L'Osservatore Romano" 37 (2016), no. 1, p. 27.

³⁹ Benedict XVI, *The Church and the scandal of sexual abuse*, letter of 11 April 2019, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/41013/full-text-of-benedict-xvi-essay-the-church-and-the-scandal-of-sexual-abuse> (accessed on 26.03.2022)

who treat their vocation to marriage and family properly and with responsibility before the Lord. By mature individual, we mean a person who manages himself skilfully and wisely⁴⁰. The pastoral care of the ecclesial community for marriage and the family is undoubtedly a necessary matter in conducting the pastoral care of adults and should lead to a higher level of maturity. The higher the level of human, psychological and religious maturity of the people forming the family, the better will be the matter for God to make Himself present in marital and parental love, since those relationships of the more mature spouses find their translation in the mystical co-operation of the natural with the supernatural⁴¹. The missionary experience of the Church shows the importance of pastoral care for adults in marriage and family. There the truth emerges that the ecclesial community will be as strong as the family community. The parish itself is called by pastoral theology a “community of communities” (family communities in the first place). Therefore, when missionaries went to distant countries, discovered villages, baptised people, catechised them and went on, after some time, even when the previous missionary died and someone else reached a village somewhere far away in the mountains or the bush, he found faith in God. Why? Because it persisted in the family. It is marriage and the family that have been the depositories of the true faith. Therefore, the pastoral conclusion related to the pastoral care for couples and families is that the family is the subject and not only the object of evangelisation (AL 202). The Church will be as strong as a faith-strong and morally sound family. Hence, when discussing the genius of the family as an environment for the formation of religious life, it is worth emphasizing that a characteristic of the conjugal community

⁴⁰ W. Łukaszewski, *Szanse rozwoju osobowości*, Warszawa 1984, p. 206.

⁴¹ P. Landwójtowicz, *Małżeństwo sakramentalne a terapia*, in: *Sakramentalna przysięga małżeńska w obliczu wyzwań współczesnego świata*, P. Landwójtowicz, S. Pawiński (ed.), op. cit., p. 145.

is to 'guard' the deposit of faith, stresses Pope Francis.⁴² Therefore, following the path of deduction, one must conclude that it is no coincidence that today the fight against the Church is a fight for the family.

The shepherds of the Church must realise that they need to undertake pastoral tasks to be as close to families as possible and to support married couples with all their strength. In his encyclical *Humanae vitae*, Pope Paul VI defined the pastoral care of families as *the most urgent mission, the most important work and duty in our time* (HV 20). John Paul II stressed: *Every effort should be made to strengthen and develop pastoral care for the family, which should be treated as a real matter of priority, in the certainty that future evangelization depends largely on the domestic Church* (FC 65). Afterwards, the Polish Pope signalled a general principle applicable to the pastoral care of adults, including the pastoral care of couples and families: *Pastors must know that, for the sake of truth, they are obliged to exercise careful discernment of situations* (FC 84). When analysing the crisis of marriage and family observed today, as well as diagnosing the difficulties and dangers faced by contemporary people of faith, it is worth drawing a few conclusions and pastoral postulates, which may contribute to coming out of the crisis successfully and make the crisis itself creative in terms of the functioning of a marriage and family community.

- A change in the mentality of the clergy, who should put care for marriages in the first place - a pastoral return. This process of change must begin in the formation of clerics or the priesthood, so that they will be better prepared to engage more effectively in ministering to spouses and so that they will better understand the complex problems currently facing families (AL 202).
- Solid, scholarly reflection related to the pastoral care of families.
- Prayer for vocations, not only to the priesthood, religious and mission, but also for vocations to holy matrimony. The Church

⁴² Pope Francis, *Patient love that generates joy*. Homily of the Holy Father at the Mass for Families, "L'Osservatore Romano" 34 (2013), no. 12, pp. 12-13.

will have such priests as Christian families are like. It is they who become the first seminaries and role models for many people.

- Promotion of the family built on sacramental marriage. The greatest danger is the liberal approach to marriage, the attitude depreciating the sacramental bond, which contributes to generating definitions of marriage according to social expectations and worldviews. The Church should only be promoting and indicating the only and proper way of love between a wife and husband, completely free, absolute, and faithful, which is expressed in their opening to life⁴³.
- Greater involvement of lay Catholics on behalf of the family. Acquiring theological education and psychological skills. Involvement in parish family counselling centres and the sound organisation of pre-marriage courses.
- Placing more emphasis on the pastoral care of engaged couples and more effective premarital courses, which would allow couples to find answers to the question: *how do I know that I am ready for marriage, is this the right person?* Apart from the traditional forms of organising preparatory meetings at parishes, following the American pastoral guidelines, it is worth thinking about preparing films devoted to marriage, its theology, meaning, informing candidates for marriage about formal and organisational issues of a wedding ceremony or a wedding reception in a Catholic way⁴⁴.
- As far as marriage and the family are concerned, Pope Francis clearly places at the heart of the contemporary Church the skill of accompaniment, which makes it possible to be close to the other person. Without such a form of pastoral closeness, there will be no real spiritual encounter. Such spiritual accompaniment and pastoral care can help spouses on their journey of growth and save

⁴³ A. Kłos-Skrzypczak, *Korzyści płynące z rodziny zakorzenionej w małżeństwie sakramentalnym – perspektywa Amerykańskich Biskupów Katolickich*, op. cit., p. 24-25.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 31

them from life's mistakes. In the document *Amoris laetitia*, Jorge Bergoglio points out the importance of accompanying young couples, in particular, on their journey of strengthening their bonds and reaching perfection, and of helping them to acquire competence in their upbringing, which is to be reflected in the prudent accompaniment of parents to their children. Another important role is that of accompanying divorced persons or those who have lost their spouse through death (AL 296).

- Well-prepared venues and times of Mass and services for whole families, including children.
- Retreats for whole families combined with recreation, which will not be in the form of spiritual exercises typical of movements, groups, and religious associations.
- Spiritual direction offered to spouses and devoting time to them in pastoral care.
- Organising help for the poorest families and a parish family volunteer service, which could help pastoral workers to discern the current state of families within the parish.

* * *

The Christian ideal of the family is right and proper not because it is conveyed by the Church, but because it promotes this ideal and represents an objectively good value. No nation or community can survive if it is built on false and inappropriate foundations. Undoubtedly, the crisis of family and marriage has already existed in the Church in Europe and in Poland. However, it may turn out to be a creative crisis if the Church experiences it wisely and understands anew that there is no other way, and that Christian marriage and life in the family will be so attractive, beautiful, and appealing when it is anchored in the love of God. Each member of the family, spouses, parents, grandparents, and children are called to find love and live for the glory of God, as icons of his love and holiness in the world⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ Francis, *Like a big family. Address at Croke Park Stadium Dublin*, op. cit., p. 18.

The family is the basic cell not only of society but also of the ecclesial community, where man can experience love together with others. It is not enough simply to be born into a community, but to grow within it. This requires cooperation between the individual members of the family, but also cooperation with the Creator and the use of the means He offers to reach the goal of salvation⁴⁶. Pastoral care for marriage and the family is therefore a priority for the modern Church, because when faith is saved in families, the Church will also survive in those places where it seems today there is its greatest crisis. The family-the domestic Church-is the evangelising environment. Parents are the first evangelisers for their children. Therefore, adult pastoral care is so important. Jesus himself gives an example during his earthly ministry, where he taught adults and blessed children and took them on his lap. The Church, proclaiming the Gospel of the family entrusted to her by Christ and taught in the Church from the beginning, proclaims that the family is the subject and object of evangelization⁴⁷. Why are family and marriage the object of reflection in the pastoral tasks of the contemporary Church? Pope Francis responds *we should kneel down before these families, who are a true school of humanity in saving societies from barbarity*.

Summary

Nowadays crisis of marriage and family based on Christian foundations has been quite visible recently. Less and less people believe in God and express the willingness to receive the sacramental bonds of matrimony as a relationship between a man and a woman that is one and indissoluble. However, Christ calls His Church to guard firmly the truth about marriage and family as the highest values. It needs to be done in ministry for adults who have to become more aware of the responsibility for taking up their vocation and more mature in their faith through the pastoral care of the ecclesiastical

⁴⁶ J. Prado Flores, *Idźcie i ewangelizujcie ochrzczonech*, Poznań 2016, p. 150.

⁴⁷ J. Dyduch, *Małżeństwo i rodzina w optyce dokumentów III Nadzwyczajnego Synodu Biskupów*, p. 150.

community. Crisis experienced with faith as study of drawing conclusions for future will not become their destruction, but their great chance.

Key words: Ministry for adults, marriage, family, crisis, faith

Streszczenie

W obecnej dobie daje się zauważyć istniejący kryzys małżeństwa i rodziny opartej na chrześcijańskich fundamentach. Coraz mniej osób wierzy w Boga i chce zawrzeć sakramentalne małżeństwo jako związek, który jest jeden, nierozzerwalny i zawarty między mężczyzną i kobietą. Chrystus jednak wciąż wzywa swój Kościół, aby niezachwianie stał na straży prawdy o małżeństwie i rodzinie oraz bronił jej jako najwyższej wartości. Ma się to dokonywać w duszpasterstwie osób dorosłych, którzy poprzez pastoralną troskę wspólnoty eklezjalnej mają się stawać bardziej świadomi odpowiedzialności za podjęte powołanie i dojrzałsi w wierze, którą wyznają. Kryzys, przeżyty z wiarą oraz będący nauką i prowadzący do wyciągnięcia wniosków, może okazać się nie zatraceniem a szansą.

Słowa kluczowe: duszpasterstwo osób dorosłych, małżeństwo, rodzina, kryzys, wiara

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