



CHARACTERISTICS
OF THE RELIGIOUS SPIRITUALITY
IN THE POLISH LANDS
IN THE XIX AND XX



Fr. Włodzimierz Gałązka

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Warszawa 2021

Recenzje naukowe/ Peer review

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ISBN 978-83-66640-58-0

Wydawnictwo Naukowe Muzeum Niepodległości
Scientific Publishing House of the Museum of Independence
(identyfikator 42 700 / ID 42 700)

Muzeum X Pawilonu Cytadeli Warszawskiej
Museum of the 10th Pavilion of the Warsaw Citadel
ul. Skazańców 25, 01-532 Warszawa
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List of abbreviations

AAS	ACTA APOSTOLICAE SEDIS
AK	Ateneum Kapłańskie
AKK	Archiwum Sióstr Karmelitanek Bosych w Krakowie na Łobzowie
ANiep	Archiwum Generalne Sióstr Niepokalanego Poczęcia NMP w Szymanowie
ARMW	Archiwum Generalne Sióstr Franciszkanek Rodziny Maryi w Warszawie
AZ	Archiwum Zakonne
BK	Biblioteka Kórnicka PAN w Kórniku
HD	Homo Dei
ms	manuscript

pos.	position
RT	Roczniki Teologiczne
sign.	signature
tscp of dt	typescript of the diploma thesis
tscp of md	typescript of the master's dissertation
tscp of Phd	typescript of doctoral thesis

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INTRODUCTIONS

In the pursuit of the renewal of Christianity, the Church is currently paying special attention to the internal formation of the faithful and wants through a vision of a spiritually mature man help them become new creatures according to God's purpose. Over the centuries, this idea of Christian perfection has been presented by many masters of spiritual life, to whose writings we are currently reaching in search of role models.

Polish masters of spiritual life at the turn of the XIX and XX century, such as Bogdan Jański, father Konstanty Łubieński, Archbishop Zygmunt Feliński, mother Florentyna Dymman, mother Marcelina Darowska or Zofia Kończa, had a direct or indirect influence on the formation of religious congregations in the Polish lands, both in the Austrian and Russian annexation.

Being founders or co-founders of religious communities, they cared for the creation of new houses, both within the borders

of the Commonwealth and outside them. In this way, they became the main theologians and spiritual masters of established congregations. While working on the formation of the internal life of their members, they also developed active pastoral activity. The students and followers of their works were sisters from these communities. This work was conducted to bring the founders' spirituality and teachings to the members of the communities.

By giving communities a spiritual face and clearly specifying the nature of their later activities, all the creators of new assemblies also had a clear impact on the development of Christian life in the Polish lands in the second half of the nineteenth century and in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Recreating the teachings of Jański, Łubieński, Feliński, Dymman, Darowska or Kończa, as well as their contemporaries, is important for studying the history of Polish spirituality for many reasons. Their doctrine of the theology of spiritual life, which is a spiritual church-wide heritage, is not known to the general public and has not yet been sufficiently studied in its entirety. Following the biographical, historical and diploma theses which have been written during scientific seminars from various theological disciplines, we note that they are limited to some general remarks regarding the ascetic-mystical system of the authors and do not constitute a comprehensive development of the characteristic features of religious spirituality. In addition, these works have mostly individual and popular science character. Therefore, it is necessary to show the achievements of those who were once considered to be prophets of Polish and Christian spiritual thought.

The important role of Feliński, Łubieński, Jański, Semenka, Dymman, Darowska or Ends in the history of their Congregations

and religious life at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries is indisputable. For many years, each of the founders supported the superiors of new religious orders they founded. After returning from exile, they assisted the sisters in their service to the order and its work. Not only did they specify the basic laws of the religious organization, but they also created the concept of spiritual formation. Although they are quite typical for that era, they are not devoid of some universal features, which is another argument in favour of the need for a broader study.

Although the founders of monastic families devoted much attention to monastic excellence, many elements of their teaching can be related to the formation of the spiritual life of every Christian. These authors wanted, one might think, that their instructions would help in the revival of the spiritual life of the entire nation. This would also eliminate the causes that led to the fall of independence.

Even a cursory familiarity with the characteristic features of monastic spirituality leads to the conclusion that they bear the hallmarks of originality. An analysis of the founders' thoughts based on the research of fr. prof. Stanisław Urbański, fr. prof. Jerzy Gogola or fr. prof. Włodzimierz Gałązka will reconstruct the jointly created concept of the formation of spiritual life, which consists – in general – of the same problem threads, while the differences between the authors are expressed only in a more or less detailed discussion of specific issues. It should be noted that these views complement each other, forming a whole, which is the consequence of their leaving the same trunk, i.e. independence spirituality.

Although the authors' thoughts about spiritual formation are scattered in various publications in the form of fragmentary statements,

not always closely related, they can be combined into a common ideal of spiritual life. The task of this work will be to present them in an orderly manner.

Therefore, the above work on the characteristic features of monastic spirituality is to answer, among others, the following questions: how are the authors' teachings about spiritual formation? To what extent do they derive from the treasury of Revelation and patristic tradition, and from the thoughts of the great masters of the spiritual life? what constitutes the originality of the authors' teaching? what value do their views have for the spiritual formation of modern man? Although the authors' doctrine will be presented from the theological rather than the pedagogical side, some of its elements, especially the methods used by Kończa or Darowska in raising the young generation, shown by Urbański or Gałązka, will also be included in the content of this work.

Due to the theological and historical nature of the publication, it uses an analytical and synthetic method consisting of critical analysis of sources and making a certain synthesis on its basis. The research method makes it possible to comprehend religious spirituality at the turn of the century.

It should be added that the scope of the detailed issues examined will depend on the extent to which the authors deal with them and their importance in the whole concept. Hence, the reader may be surprised by the disproportionate distribution of the material, and thus the different number of links to individual issues and omission of too little importance.

To bring the specifics of the authors' teaching their reasoning were used, which was reflected in the systematics of work, as well as in quotes derived directly from sources. Many of the terms

they use cannot be replaced by modern vocabulary, and therefore the terms used will be taken from the authors.

Difficulties in presenting the authors' thoughts have been increased by the need to examine the enormity of their heritage. Theological writing of Feliński, Jański, Semenenska, Darowska or Kończa, presented among others by Urbański, Gogola and Gałazka, includes publications in the field of spiritual formation.

Most of the literary achievements of the above-mentioned authors of spirituality were published, but many remained in the sphere of studies.

Important parts of the sources on which the research was based are letters written by the sisters of individual congregations. The creators of the Polish school of spirituality do not limit themselves to polite answers but express their theological comments in them, theoretically consider some problems, dispute with addressees on controversial issues.

The material under analysis also includes retreats written by the individual founders themselves or noted down by the sisters and then authorised by them. The most mature in their studies were theological letters in the form of retreats, which were delivered to the sisters on topics related to internal life.

This study attempts to focus attention on the characteristic of theologians spirituality – Urbański and other – elements of science in the field of the internal life of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in the hope that it will serve to show its specificity.

The thoughts of Feliński, Jański, Semenenska, Darowska or Kończa presented by contemporary theologians regarding the characteristic features of the spirituality of consecrated people will be presented in a way that shows their main currents.

In this purpose, not only studies based on source material were used, but also the literary output of the best theologians of the 20th and 21st centuries. Among others, research was used, including Ratzinger, Bochenek, and Ladrange.

The above publication consists of six chapters. The first of these concerns the Love of Divine Providence. According to the theologians of spirituality mentioned above, Love of God's Providence should be manifested not only in acts of love during prayer but also in doing God's will in everyday monastic duties.

The second was dedicated to following Christ. The founders of religious congregations in Poland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century believed that Christians were associated with Christ in a special way and intended to become like Him (cf. Rom 8:29)

The next section discusses openness to the Holy Spirit. The third person of the Holy Trinity will be presented here as Creator of the supernatural life, a resident of the Church striving to unite him and a Teacher of truth and love. The fourth chapter shows the importance of following God's family in Nazareth. Chapter five concerns loyalty to the Church. Sixth and last – refers to the witnessing as an apostolate. Issues such as upbringing, saving the poor, atonement and remuneration prayer as well as spreading the Kingdom of God.

1. Love of Divine Providence

Because the essence of perfection is the development of God's love, the love of Divine Providence is the way to achieve it. The love of Divine Providence should be manifested not only in the acts of love during prayer, but also in fulfilling the will of God in everyday monastic duties¹. For this reason, T. Trzaskawka pays special attention to the love of Divine Providence as a fundamental feature of the spirituality of a religious. In his teaching, therefore, he emphasizes love and the need to trust in Divine Providence. This trust manifests itself in getting to know God's will, fulfilling it and uniting with it.

¹Cf. A. Tanqurey, *Zarys teologii ascetycznej i mistycznej*, Kraków 1949, vol. I, pp. 269–270; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, Kraków 2001, p. 104; cf. Th. Mainage, *Les principes de la théosophie*, Edition de la Revue des Jeunes, Paris 1922.

1.1 Love of God's Providence

Reflecting on the subject of love for Divine Providence, Bartman states that man himself is unable to fully understand it. For it is necessary to experience the love of God. The reason for this is that human love cannot be compared to true love, which is God's love. Like God, it is a mystery to which man can come close to, and even to some extent know, because in creation God has implanted into human nature the need for love, contained in the likeness of God². However, because of original sin, the result of which man could not get close enough to God to know Him, also getting to know the love of Divine Providence became very difficult. God, however, came out with the initiative to help human inability, to know Him and His love³. This help became Jesus Christ, who is both a revelation of God's love and its object. It is the Son of God who gave people instructions in the form of commandments, through which one can get to know the Creator and His love in some way. It is the Son of God who gave people instructions in the form of commandments, through which one can get to know the Creator and love in some way. The knowledge of the revealed God is therefore a condition for knowing the essence of love, and also a condition for fulfilling the commandment of love. Therefore the consequence of this knowledge is love⁴.

² Cf. T. Trzaskawka, *Rola miłości w zjednoczeniu mistycznym chrześcijanina z Bogiem w piśmiennictwie Sługi Bożego Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, in: *Mistyka drogą zjednoczenia z Bogiem*, ed. M. Szymula, S. Urbański, Warszawa 1999, p. 58; S. Moysa, *Teraz zaś trwają te trzy*, Warszawa 1986, p. 262; Św. Tomasz z Akwinu, *Suma teologiczna*, Londyn 1986; cf. S. th., II-II-ae, q. 45, a. 2, 4 (from this point on, the abbreviation S.th is in use); cf. T. Goffi, *L'esperienza spirituale, oggi. Le linee essenziali della spiritualità cristiana contemporanea*, Queriniana, Brescia, 1984, p. 17.

³ W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe w charyzmacie założyciela Fr. Anzelma Gądka*, Białystok 2013, p. 102; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne, teologia, praktyka, formacja*, Kraków 2003, p. 282.

⁴ Cf. B. Bartman, *Nasza wiara w Opatrzność*, Kraków 1932, p. 26. W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość, "Episteme"* (UKSW) 112, Łomża 2018, p. 115; cf. S. th., I-Ia, q. 82, a. 3; cf. A. von Speyr, *L'Eglise dans la force de l'Esprit*, Paris 1980, p. 81.

Bartman points out that God's love as a supernatural virtue was given to man at baptism⁵.

This is the moment when the development of the inner life begins in the Christian, which consists in abandoning the old man (Rom 13:14) so that he can fully dress in Christ (Col 3:9-10)⁶. The end of this development is the union in love with God⁷. But before this mystical union can be achieved, it is necessary to develop the virtue of love instilled in it. It is achieved through two means, which include prayer and the sacraments, among which the Eucharist comes first⁸. However, Czajkowski stresses the need for a Christian to use these measures voluntarily, because only then can they be effective. God, although he wants a man to respond with love to His love and is ready to help him, but does not want to force anyone to love. That is why he waits patiently for a man's request⁹.

The first means of facilitating the love of God's Providence is, according to Gałązka, a prayer that prepares in Christian for love. It happens thanks to the awakening of the desire for love in man. Because the love of Divine Providence is a grace, a man should ask for

⁵ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., p. 26; cf. S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 45, a. 2, 4.

⁶ Cf. R. Kostecki, *Tajemnica współżycia z Bogiem. Zagadnienie cnót teologicznych wiary, nadziei i miłości*, Kraków 1985, p. 139.

⁷ Cf. *ibid.*; Cf. S. Kieregaard, *Vie et regene de l'amour*, Paris 1952, p. 120.

⁸ Cf. Kongregacja Zakonów i Instytutów Świeckich, *Essential elements. Instrukcja o istotnych elementach nauczania Kościoła na temat życia konsekrowanego w zastosowaniu do instytutów oddających się pracy apostołskiej (31 V 1983)*, in: Jan Paweł II, *O życiu zakonnym, Przemówienia, listy apostołskie, instrukcje*, ed. E. Weron, A. Jarocha, Poznań 1984, pp. 434–437; Kongregacja Zakonów i Instytutów Świeckich, *Optiones evangelicae. Instrukcja o zakonnikach i promocji ludzkiej*, in: Jan Paweł II, *O życiu zakonnym*, op. cit., pp. 374–400; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu, Teologia i duchowość życia konsekrowanego*, Kraków 2013, p. 327–342; cf. E. Mersch, *Le Corps mystique du Christ. Études de théologie historique*, Paris–Bruxelles 1951, vol. I, pp. 278–288.

⁹ Cf. R. Czajkowska, *Duchowość zakonna Uczennicy Boskiego Mistrza w pismach księdza Jakuba Alberione Założyciela Rodziny Paulińskiej*, Warszawa 2004, pp. 126–127; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 181–189; cf. Św. Jan Damasceński, *De fide orthodoxa*, 1, 3c, 24; cf. Św. Tomasz, *STh II-II*, q. 83, a 1 i 9.

it in prayer¹⁰. Prayer then intensifies in man the love poured by God. Thanks to prayer, the Christian learns his infirmity, especially in the field of supernatural life. If, therefore, with full confidence he will turn to God for help, it will be a sign of the growth of love for the One who is the Source of human life¹¹.

Theologians of spirituality pay special attention to the prayer of thanksgiving and praise, thanks to which man, feeling completely dependent on God, gives himself to Him in order to love Divine Providence¹².

The second means necessary for the development of man's love for God's Providence is, according to Bar, the Eucharist, and the other sacraments. However, he devotes most attention to the Eucharist, which prepares the Christian to receive God's love even more than prayer. He also prepares a man for having God in eternity. The Blessed Sacrament, being *the bread of life*¹³, introduces to the soul of man Christ himself who is Love¹⁴. Spiller emphasizes the necessity of the Eucharist for the development of man's love for God, because Christ, the true God, left himself in this Sacrament. Frequent taking to Holy Communion it is the expression of the highest reverence and love for Him, and thus the fulfillment of the words: *Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.* (Jn 6,51.56)¹⁵.

¹⁰ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 77; idem, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., p. 78.

¹¹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., p. 231.

¹² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 23; cf. A. Fonck, *Priere*, DTC, vol. 13, kol. 175.

¹³ Cf. J. Bar, *Droga rad ewangelicznych. Wprowadzenie do życia zakonnego*, Warszawa 1978, pp. 287–288; S. Urbański, *Teologia modlitwy*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 101–108; John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mt Carmel*, vol. III, ch. XXX, XXXII, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, London 1993.

¹⁴ Cf. P. Spiller, *Konsekracja zakonna*, in: *Formacja zakonna*, ed. J. Gogola, M. Zawada, P. Spiller, vol. III, Kraków 1998, p. 141.

¹⁵ M. Zawada, *Teologia wspólnoty zakonnej*, in: *Życie we wspólnocie zakonnej. Formacja zakonna*, vol. 7, ed. J. Gogola, Kraków 2002, p. 20.

Both prayer and the Eucharist lead to the development of love in man, which gradually acquires the qualities of which St. Paul wrote in Hymn of love (1 Cor. 13:1-13)¹⁶.

The first feature of loving God's providence is patience. It expresses itself in patiently anticipation of all the gifts of God's Providence that man needs to develop his spiritual life. However, this is not an attitude of indifference or laziness, which does not allow a person to take any action even when without work and prayer one can be deprived of God's gifts. Thanks to the patience, the Christian's prayer does not include self-concern or the requests deprived of humility. For a man who loves God trusts his providence without limits and with childish trust presents to him all the needs of himself and others. He trusts without any doubt that God will do everything necessary for his good. Patient love manifests itself in the performance of daily duties, especially when accompanied by the experience of hardship¹⁷.

Patience in love for God is manifested in a special manner in the way we accept illness and temptation. Love should bear everything in the teaching of the Catholic Church. That is why, treating sickness as the will of God's providence and accepting them with great patience, at the same time offering our suffering to God, man gives proof of his love. The patience is also needed in amorous accepting temptations. Even in the most humiliating temptations, the man filled with God's love isn't doubting in the presence of God. Rather, he thinks he has committed a betrayal of love himself. He accepts every temptation, even if combined with great suffering,

¹⁶ Cf. *ibid.*; W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., p. 78; cf. A.Ch. Bernard, *Teologia spirituale*, Roma 1983, pp. 301-303.

¹⁷ Cf. Paul VI says that consecrated persons should have something of St. Paul's madness, that is, ET 29; S. th. op. cit.; W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, series: *Mistyka Polska* 100, Warszawa 2010, pp. 53-61; cf. Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, AAS 35, 1943, p. 214.

as a cross given to him by God's will and endures it patiently. In such acceptance of temptations and experiences, man is helped by a trust that Divine Providence will not allow temptations or suffering beyond what man can bear¹⁸.

As a second feature of loving God's providence, Paul VI gives kindness. This feature is particularly relevant to relationships with other people. He believes that a Christian who loves God in his life will try to follow Him and, like God, treat all people with great kindness, especially to people who hurt and insult others. Love is gracious, that is, it does not repay evil for evil, but gives a salutary remedy¹⁹, which is work to repair not only harm, but also man himself²⁰.

Love is not arrogant because a man who loves God's Providence still has his sins before his eyes. For this reason he does not desire and does not expect self-worship. Knowing his misery, he is firmly convinced that he is not worthy of it. And the only desire is to please God, and thus give Him the highest honor and glory²¹. A man who loves God's Providence does not seek his own benefit, that is, he does not follow his advantage. It comes from the very essence of love, which is to completely offer yourself to a loved one. Therefore, a man who loves God does everything selflessly, not expecting reward or gratitude²².

Another feature of loving God's providence is the total trust that the teachings of the Catholic Church have in relation to God

¹⁸ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., pp. 53–61; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, Warszawa 1988, pp. 74–78.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 151; Cf. S. th., op. cit., I-a q. 60, a. 5, i II-a, q. 26, a. 3.

²¹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit.; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 220–228.

²² Cf. *ibid.*

and to other people. A loving man assumes that everything that a loved one does is useful and good for him. There is no room for any suspicion or hypocrisy. A loving person prefer to become a victim themselves rather than attribute bad intentions to their loved ones²³.

A full love of God's Providence is also manifested in anticipation of one of the greatest gifts God gives to people – the gift of forgiveness. A loving man trusts that God can and wants to forgive a repentant sinner regardless of the magnitude of his sins. The teaching of the Catholic Church refers here to the text of the Gospel of St. Lucas, speaking of Jesus' forgiveness repenting to Magdalena's sins (cf. Lk 7, 36-43)²⁴. The author of the gospel, about Pharisee Simon doubting in the sincerity of Magdalena's grief, says that pride has killed his supernatural love to such an extent that he not only fails to see and rejoice in the sinner's repentance but even doubts the Son of God²⁵. The argument confirming the necessity of trusting God and expecting the gift of forgiveness is Jesus' forgiveness for the regretting Peter. Not only did Christ believe in the sincerity of his regret, he not only forgave him, but also, believing in his confession of love, he built his Church on it as a foundation (cf. Jn 21: 15-19)²⁶.

The last feature of loving God's Providence is perseverance in all sorts of trials and afflictions, sacrifices, and responsibilities. A man who loves God is also persistent in the fight against the temptations of the world, with his own tainted nature, as well as with the tricks

²³ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 75, 164, 350, 457; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., p. 255.

²⁴ Cf. B. Bro, *Człowiek i sakramenty*, trans. M. Bocheńska, Warszawa 1976, p. 85; S. Czerwik, *Praktyka pokutna w Kościele poprzez wieki*, AK 1977, no. 70, vol. 70, p. 175; A. Marchetti, *Zarys teologii życia duchowego*, trans. J.B. Bielecki, Kraków 1996, vol. 2, p. 46; S. Aurelii Augustini, *De Sermone Dominini in monte*, Turnholt 1967, ch. IV; cf. St. Francis de Saleze, *Treatise on the Love of God*, trans. by Francis de Sales, Henry Benedict Mackey, TAN Books 1988, ch. IX, XVI, XVII, XVIII.

²⁵ Cf. A. Marchetti, *Zarys teologii życia duchowego*, vol. 2, op. cit., p. 46.

²⁶ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., pp. 70, 80.

of Satan. He is not discouraged at times of apparent abandonment and rejection by God's Providence. Lasting in this all experience, not hesitating even for a moment in the faithfulness to the Bridegroom, comforted and strengthened man with God's love can follow St Paul by crying out, that neither the death nor the... life or present, or future things, neither what is high, neither what deep, neither any other creature can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8, 38-39)²⁷.

Particular attention in the teaching of the Catholic Church is attached to the manifestations of God's providence, which are the love of God's omnipotence and the love of God's goodness and His mercy²⁸. Man loves God's omnipotence when he considers himself incapable of any good deeds. Because of his powerlessness, he considers God Almighty as a Source of power. The consequence of this is total self-sacrifice to God and entrusting him with your whole life. As an example of this attitude theologian of spirituality puts the Old Testament Abel who on the altar of sacrifice to God all that he had best (cf. Gen 4: 4)²⁹. Therefore, what man is to offer to Almighty God, he is himself, especially his free will and all troubles and difficulties. When they are sacrificed to God they give the best testimony of love for God's providence and recognition of his omnipotence³⁰. The love of God's omnipotence should also be manifest in obedience. It is the shortest and easiest way to salvation. Obedience requires sacrifice and overcoming yourself. That

²⁷ Ibid., p. 118.

²⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 53, 78.

²⁹ Cf. J. Tupikowski, *Miłość osobowa fundamentem konsekracji wspólnoty zakonnej*, „Życie Konsekrowane” 2010, no. 1, p. 32; cf. W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny, Święty Zygmunt Szczęśny Feliński*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 69–70; St. Francis De Sales, *Philothea, or an Introduction to the Devout Life*, Image 1972, ch. VIII.

³⁰ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, *op. cit.*, pp. 69–70; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

is why it gives strength to victory over its tainted nature and to recognize God as its all-powerful Lord³¹.

Another manifestation of the love of God's Providence, according to the same theologians, is God's love and His mercy, which is expressed in the love of neighbor. They first pay attention to the love of each person who is neighbor, then consider the love of neighbor in the context of religious life, in order to finally tie the love of neighbor with the love of the homeland. The reference to God's love for the love of neighbor results, in their opinion, from the words taken from the Gospel: *I give you a new commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you... By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love each other* (Jn 13:34-35) and the words of the letter of St. John: *If anyone says: I love God and hates his brother, he is a liar, for whoever does not love his brother whom he sees cannot love God whom he does not see* (1 Jn 4:20)³². It is, therefore, necessary to follow Christ not only in love for God but also in the love of neighbor, which expresses the love of God's goodness and mercy³³. Fr. P. Ogórek, explaining the relationship between God's love and love of neighbor, states that God is to be the first and only object of love. Love of neighbor results from God's love and is its consequence. A Christian loves his neighbor because of God. Therefore, wanting to sacrifice everything for the love of God, he should love his neighbor and it is under the penalty of losing salvation. This position is confirmed by the words:

³¹ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., pp. 147–153; cf. S. Alonso, *Consejos evangelicos*, in: *Doccionario teologoco de la vida consagrada*, Madrid 1989, p. 437; cf. B. Goya, *Formazione integrale nella vita consecrata alla luce della esortazione post-sinodale*, Bologna 1997, pp. 61–62.

³² H. Wyczawski, *Arcybiskup Zygmunt Szczesny Feliński 1822–1895*, Warszawa 1975, pp. 95–99.

³³ Cf. John Paul II writes that Eucharistic worship educates a Christian to love his neighbour, *List Dominicae coenae o tajemnicy i kulcie Eucharystii*, 24 II 1980, in: *Eucharystia w wypowiedziach papieży i innych dokumentach Stolicy Apostolskiej XX w.*, ed. R. Rak, Londyn 1987, pp. 102–104; cf. J. Ratzinger, *Bóg jest blisko nas. Eucharystia: centrum życia*, trans. M. Rodkiewicz, Kraków 2002, p. 113; cf. A. Bandera, *Vida Religiosa. Tiempo de clarification*, "Confer" 12, 1984, p. 539.

Whoever does not love remains in death (1 Jn 3:14)³⁴. That is why every Christian should love his neighbor as himself and care for his salvation as well as for his own³⁵. The duty of love of neighbor applies to all people. For the purpose of this love is to restore the likeness of God to sinful man, and thus to repair the corrupt image of God³⁶. Every person becomes a subject of love because of the possibility of his conversion. The same teaching indicates that the duty of love of neighbor never ceases for anyone, even in relation to the greatest criminals. In these particularly difficult cases, there is an even greater duty to show love to point them the possibility of God's mercy³⁷.

Bouyer believes that in everyone one should love not his body but his soul. So it is supposed to be spiritual, not natural, love coming from inborn sympathy. This love should not bring people closer physically, it should not be born because of someone's good deeds. The theme of love of neighbor is his immortal soul *created in the image and likeness of God – redeemed by the Holy Blood of Christ*³⁸. So every soul tainted with sin should be taken in by the service of love to lead to the knowledge and love of God's Providence, renunciation of sin and the fulfillment of God's commandments³⁹. Therefore it is stressed in the theology of spirituality that the expression of God's love for

³⁴ P. Ogórek, *Życie wspólnotowe karmelitów bosych jako życie miłości – w ujęciu Sługi Bożego o. Anzelma Gądka OCD*, in: *Sługa Boży o. Anzelm Gądek OCD w służbie życia konsekrowanego*, ed. W. Gałązka, K. Dubel KDZ], S. Urbański, series: *Mistyka Polska* 110, Warszawa–Łódź 2010, p. 85. R.P.F. Suarez, *De diuina gratia pars prima continens prolegomena sex, duos priores libros. De necessitate diuinae gratiae ad honesta opera. Operum tomus sextus*, vol. VIII, ch. III.

³⁵ Cf. S. Moysa, *Teraz zaś trwają te trzy*, op. cit., p. 279; cf. A. Brusco, *Le persone consacrate e la cura degli ammalati* in: *Studi e saggi sulla Vita consecrata*, ed. P. Vanzan, F. Volpi, Roma 1997, pp. 129–133.

³⁶ Cf. L. Bouyer, *Wprowadzenie do życia duchowego. Zarys teologii ascetycznej i mistycznej*, trans. L. Rutkowska, Warszawa 1982, pp. 164–165.

³⁷ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., p. 316; por. *L'Esprit de saint François de Sales*, vol. XV, ch. XIII.

³⁸ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., pp. 164–165.

³⁹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dziesięćstwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 87; Y. Cognac, *Le theme du Dieu Créateur et les explications de l'Hexaéméron dans la tradition chrétienne*, in: *L'Homme devant Dieu. Melagnes offerts au Père Henri de Lubac*, vol. 1, *Exégèse et artistique*, Aubier–Paris 1963, pp. 190–222.

goodness and mercy is the performance of works of mercy, among which it attributes a special role to works relating to the soul⁴⁰. Following the example of Christ, who came to call the righteous, but sinners (cf. Mt 9:12), the Christian should first embrace sinners with his love. For them, he should be ready to sacrifice his spiritual consolation he experiences from communing with holy souls⁴¹. In the manifestations of love, it is necessary to take into account both supernatural and natural relationships, which the Christian is connected with others. Nodes imposing special obligations are family relationships: spouses among themselves, parents with children, children with parents, between siblings. The relationship between these people is to be based on love, whether they deserve love or not⁴².

According to Ogórek realizing the love of neighbor cannot be limited only to the spiritual sphere. Although it is basic, man is a spiritual and bodily being, so it is necessary to pay attention to his bodily needs. Ogórek refers to the words of Saint John: *Let us not love in word and language but in deed and truth* (1 Jn 3:18)⁴³. Help full of love and mercy should be directed primarily to those who are most in need. Failure to help one's neighbour is a sign of a man's lack of love for God's goodness and mercy⁴⁴. At the same time, it is a sign that there is self-love in man, hindering relationships with others, and even posing a danger to them⁴⁵. Catholic literature warns against

⁴⁰ W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 87.

⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴² Cf. *ibid.*

⁴³ P. Ogórek, *Życie wspólnotowe karmelitów bosych jako życie miłości*, op. cit., p. 85; A. Pigna, *La povertà evangelica*, Roma 1985, p. 80.

⁴⁴ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 253–254; cf. S. th., op. cit., I-a q. 60, a. 5, i II-a, q. 26, a. 3; cf.; St. Francis De Sales, *Treatise*, op. cit., vol. I, ch. IX, XVI, XVII, XVIII.

⁴⁵ W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., pp. 253–254; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, Kraków 2017, pp. 49–50.

the effects that self-love leaves in the soul beginning of religious life. It is a cause of animosity, which often drift sisters apart and makes between them an insurmountable barrier. Self-love hampers the act of mutual apology, necessary in common life. It is also the cause of anger born in the soul against the teachings of Christ, which results in the sisters' distance from Holy Communion, which should be a feast of *union with God and brothers*⁴⁶.

One is cautioned against misunderstanding the love of God's goodness and mercy expressed in the love of neighbor. This happens when it is undertaken for reasons other than supernatural. One serves man for his own sake and his qualities, without regard for his relationship with God, i.e. his salvation. In this case, man serves one neighbor more willingly, more eagerly and diligently, neglecting the others. It is a sin that is impurity and an offense against God⁴⁷. God's providence can also be opposed by good deeds done with dedication and with good intentions if they are not done in a way that is God's will. Spiritual theologians argue this with the example of a sister who, without her superior's permission, deprives herself of food and clothing to perform a deed of mercy. They teach that in this case the sister is opposed to the vow of poverty and obedience, and thus loses the merit of her deed⁴⁸. Badly understood love of neighbour also leads to silence of evil committed by sisters in the name of human reasons and to avoid unpleasant excuses. Love of neighbour should lead to advising in a polite way⁴⁹.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 93.

⁴⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 310–395.

⁴⁸ Cf. T. Dubay, *Życie zakonne*, Niepokalanów 1994, pp. 36–38; A. Cencini, *Życie konsekrowane*, trans. Z. Kijas, B. Piotrowska, Warszawa 1996, p. 82. Cf. Jan Paweł II, *To Women Religious in La Paz – Bolivia*, in: *John Paul II Speaks to Religious*, ed. J. Beyer, vol. 5, Baltimore 1989, p. 129.

⁴⁹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, *op. cit.*, p. 340; S. Urbański, *Duchowość zmartwychwstańcza*, Warszawa 2003, pp. 46–52.

Another manifestation of the misunderstood love of God's goodness in other people is awakening in the heart of our neighbor's personal attachment. This attachment is described as sacrilegious theft⁵⁰. Due to the sinful nature of man, it is difficult to keep the heart moving away from created things that give signs of love, attachment or human gratitude. Theologians of spirituality remind, however, that all affections, inclinations and attachments to another person separate the heart of a man, especially a religious person, from God⁵¹. They appropriate human glory and the love of others, instead of directing this love to God, teach other people how to give praise and worship to God. The whole evil of misunderstood love, however, is not that the sisters arouse in themselves and other people these feelings, but in the fact that they explain this practice with love of neighbour⁵². They should take care to make good use of human attachment, directing others to God⁵³.

When analyzing the theme of the goodness of God's love and mercy, attention is paid to its implementation in everyday religious life. That is why one distinguishes the duty of love towards two families: a domestic family and a religious community, and the other, which is the Homeland and the Catholic Church⁵⁴.

Spiritual theologians draw the sisters' attention to their family connections, pointing to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue. They point out that every good daughter, by fulfilling her duty

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Cf. Ch. Bernard, *Wprowadzenie do teologii duchowości*, series: *Mysł Teologiczna*, Kraków 2003, p. 109; W. Gałazka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., pp. 252–253; por. A. Słomkowski, *Teologia życia duchowego w świetle Soboru Watykańskiego II*, Ząbki 2000, p. 251; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 351; S. th., op. cit., II- II-ae, q. 83, a. 16, corp. I, ad 2.

⁵² Cf. J.W. Gogola, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 351.

⁵³ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., p. 204.

⁵⁴ Cf. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Trzy okresy życia wewnętrznego*, trans. T. Landy, Niepokalanów 1998, p. 354; A. Santorski, *Duchowość sakramentów chrześcijańskiej inicjacji*, in: *Teologia duchowości katolickiej*, Lublin 1993, p. 174; S. th., op. cit., I-a II-ae, q. 114, a. 9. cf. Jan Paweł II, „*Vita consecrata*” 41, 42.

of veneration, shows love to parents regardless of their material status. She is to be a loving sister to her siblings and build an atmosphere of mutual agreement and love in the family. She should also care for the fame and good name of the family⁵⁵.

The love of God's goodness and mercy should be expressed by a nun in her relations with other sisters of the Congregation. Theologians compare these relationships to the mutual references prevailing in family homes. The love of a nun to other sisters should be alternately childlike, sister and motherly. And this regardless of the offices held in the given assembly. Each Mother Superior should feel that she is a child of this community, to which she owes her reception, spiritual assistance and religious life. And the youngest sister is guilty of child's gratitude and sisterly love, sharing with her superiors and older sisters concern for the material and moral good with her work and prayer⁵⁶.

Alongside love, in the monastic assembly, the love of a nation is mentioned. In their view, it should also be kept in the religious order. However, one is cautioned against arousing hatred in the sister's hearts against any nation. They should be characterized by an attitude of love manifesting in the forgiveness of resentment and harms, which is considered to be the accomplishment of works of mercy. Such an attitude is necessary in the congregation, especially when sisters of different nationalities belong to it. Such words and deeds that hurt the national feelings of the sisters are unacceptable and are considered doubly sinful because they are opposed not only to love of neighbor but also to God⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ Por. R. Czajkowska, *Duchowość zakonna*, op. cit., pp. 126–127.

⁵⁶ Cf. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Trzy okresy życia wewnętrznego*, op. cit., p. 354; A. Santorski, *Duchowość sakramentów chrześcijańskiej inicjacji*, op. cit., p. 174; G. Escudero, *De la obediencia religiosa*, in: *Decreto Perfectae caritatis. Renovación de la vida religiosa*, Madrid 1966, p. 270.

⁵⁷ Cf. *ibid.*; W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., p. 75.

The love of the homeland should be manifested in religious life in a prominent, exemplary, sacrificial and sacred work for its countrymen. The sisters are reminded that each one is responsible to God and people if their actions bring harm or disgrace to their homeland⁵⁸.

The duty which result from the loving of God's Providence is also, love to the Catholic Church. The Church is called by him *the Mother, through whom we have become God's children, who feed us with the bread of life – the word of God, the Body and the Blood of Christ – who forgives the guilt and gives graces to our improvement and sanctification, is everywhere with us, in the family and above all in the Order*⁵⁹. Sisters should remember what they owe to the Mother Church. This memory should evolve into a faithful and sacrificial fulfillment of God's service in the fullness of feelings, thoughts, love, obedience and sacrifice, spreading the teaching of Christ⁶⁰.

1.2. Trust in God's Providence

According to Obertyński's teaching, love of God's providence should be manifested in trust. At the same time, in trusting God's Providence, he distinguishes three elements and points to knowing God's will, doing it and uniting with it.

⁵⁸ Cf. J. Bar, *Droga rad ewangelicznych*, op. cit., p. 62; J. Kiciński, *Powołanie – konsekracja – misja. Personalistyczny aspekt teologii życia konsekrowanego we współczesnym Magisterium Kościoła*, Wrocław 2008, p. 121; S. Urbański, *Duchowość zmartwychwstańcza*, op. cit., p. 89.

⁵⁹ T. Szałkowska, *Tajemnica Miłosierdzia*, Warszawa 2005, p. 226–228.

⁶⁰ Cf. M. Bartoszevska, *Pokora w pismach św. Teresy od Dzieciątka Jezus*, Warszawa–Łódź 2002, p. 56.

1.2.1. Getting to know God's will

According to the teachings of the Catholic Church, knowing God's will is done through faith. To know God means to know His perfection and almighty intentions; it is to know his holy will, or to know the nature of the Creator himself. This nature is revealed through God's works, which he compares to a temple made of various materials. Although these materials have a different appearance, they are all joined by the same binder, which is faith⁶¹.

According to Majkowski, appropriate tools for knowing God's will is everything that surrounds man, i.e. other people, the environment, weather conditions, illness, suffering, death, etc. Pointing to all these conditions, he calls them manifestations of God's will⁶². These include *the sun that enlightens and warms us, the earth that feeds us, the rain which gives the growth to plants, the animals that work for us; but also an illness that consumes us, lightning which destroys our belongings, death which takes the dearest ones from us, it is God's will a symptom*⁶³.

Based on the teaching of the Church, Trzaskawka also counts the nature of the qualities that are in every human being as tools for knowing God's will. He divides these qualities into those possessed from birth, acquired through upbringing, developed by ones work and those which are entitled to supernatural gifts of grace. Innate qualities include *the beauty of the body, sharpness*

⁶¹ Cf. Z. Obertyński, *Zmartwychwstańcy a Niepokalanki, Próba dokumentacji wzajemnej zależności*, "Studia Historico-Ecclesiastica" 7, 1949, p. 291; por. Jan Paweł II, *Katechezy „Bóg Ojciec”*, Kraków-Ząbki 1999, pp. 162–165; cf. F. Ruiz Salvador, *San Giovanni della Croce mistico e maestro*, Bologna 1989, pp. 171–182; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, op. cit., p. 168.

⁶² Cf. J. Majkowski, *Ewangelia a życie zakonne*, AK 1967, no. 59, vol. 70 (5–6) (352–353), p. 316.

⁶³ Ibid.

and perspicacity of mind, willpower, cheerful disposition and character qualities⁶⁴. These values the chosen persons get from God without any merit or cooperation. The acquired qualities are related to the education of the mind and heart, human respect, performed work and acquired assets. And although they are the fruit of the work of human hands, each sister should remember that they are the processing and use of gifts from God and a consequence of the blessing and care of Providence. They can affect the happiness of a monastic person, to the extent that they are used according to Her will. And finally, the supernatural gifts, the origin of which is seen by Trzaskawka in God's grace. Therefore, they should be accompanied by constant care, because they are easier to lose than innate qualities⁶⁵. When discussing the tools of knowing God's will, Obertyński pays special attention to his neighbour, who, using his freedom, becomes the intermediary of God's will for others. And although this man will receive a well-deserved reward or punishment for his conduct, he should be seen only in the dimension of God's will⁶⁶.

Obertyński analyzed the functioning of the specified tools of the knowledge of God's will, which form the image of the whole idea of Providence, and concluded that it was to man that the Creator left the full knowledge of him. This can be done by the most perfect of the creatures in two ways. The first possibility appears when the sisters carry out God's commandments. In them, the Creator's will is clearly stated⁶⁷. The words of the Decalogue contain

⁶⁴ T. Trzaskawka, *Rola miłości w zjednoczeniu mistycznym*, op. cit., pp. 118–120.

⁶⁵ Cf. *ibid.*; S. th., op. cit., I-a II-ae, q. 69, a. 3, corp. I ad 3; II-a II-ae, q. 8, a. 4; q. 45, a. 6; q. 19, a. 12.

⁶⁶ Cf. Z. Obertyński, *Zmartwychwstańcy a Niepokalanki*, op. cit., p. 288; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 85; S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 123, a. 6: „Principalior actus fortitudinis nest sustinere, id est, immobiliter sistere in periculis, quam aggredi”.

⁶⁷ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 85.

a specific relationship of God to specific situations⁶⁸. Besides, they enable man to love and serve his Creator and Redeemer⁶⁹. Therefore, all those who know and implement God's will should have confidence in the Divine Legislator. The most important for them should be recognitions in the words of the commandments the will of the Supreme, to achieve full happiness⁷⁰.

For this reason, we are often encouraged to listen to and implement the Ten Commandments in our lives. They can satisfy the spiritual hunger associated with knowing God. The way the sisters accepted God's messages was also important. Following St. Lukas one can consider that one who listens to the commandments, listens to God. And he who despises them is as if he despises God himself (cf. Lk 10:16)⁷¹. The most perfect example of knowing God's will through His commandments was revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. He based his conviction on the words spoken by the Son of God himself: *my teaching is not mine, but the One who sent me* (Jn 7:16) and *I and my Father are one* (Jn 10:30)⁷². The above words testify that Jesus, with the attitude of his life, not only showed a real possibility of recognizing the will of the Father. They also indicate the possibility of doing this will in everyday life⁷³. Based on this attitude, the life of Christ, who realizes the Decalogue, has become a role model for the sisters. They should, therefore, accept it following the plan of God's will, and thus confidently accept the plan of Providence. The implementation of this idea should take place

⁶⁸ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 362; S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 184, a. 2.

⁶⁹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 362.

⁷⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

⁷¹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁷² Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 13–14.

⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. J. Castellano, *La presenza di Cristo nella liturgia*, in: *Gesu Cristo mistero e presenza*, Roma 1971, p. 263.

as soon as monastic persons enter the footsteps of the Incarnate Word⁷⁴. Therefore, if the sisters want to meet and follow the Son of Man, they should submit their will to the law contained in the Lord's commandments⁷⁵. As spiritual theologians write, all the duties of people dedicated to God are inscribed in His commandments. However, the item itself to which the above law applies does not always have the same value. That is why God gives us to know his will in various ways. It speaks most clearly and openly when the whole of the commandment carried out contains His will. Such behaviour, being the fulfilment of the commandment that uses the law, then becomes the primary and necessary of the virtues of religious life. Knowing God's will depends on this attitude⁷⁶. For the Decalogue to be used to know God's will, it must be implemented in humility and deep trust. For it is only in this attitude that one can know the Creator's intentions and achieve the holiness he offers⁷⁷.

The teaching of the Catholic Church indicates the distinction between the commandments. Some protect the rights of others and observe its implementation. These are commandments related to the basic principles of justice. They forbid, for example, idolatry, the assassination of life, property, or fame of a neighbor. By guarding the goods of others, they also do not agree to offense against God. The other commandments, however, seek to multiply the sum of the general good. It is about focusing on joint action and behavior of neighbor. The purpose of this interaction is to increase material

⁷⁴ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 362.

⁷⁵ Cf. ibid.; T. Goffi, *L'esperienza spirituale cristiana*, in: *L'esperienza cristiana*, Città di Castello 1990, p. 16.

⁷⁶ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 57, 362; S. Urbański, *Świętość chrześcijanina według Jana Pawła II*, "Episteme" 110, Warszawa–Łomża 2015, pp. 333–348.

⁷⁷ Cf. ibid., p. 60; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., p. 130.

value on earth and to pay rightful worship to God⁷⁸. The last duty as a commandment rests with the person called by the natural law, which the Creator carved in her heart. It is the need of the soul that gives her the highest pleasure⁷⁹. This state of mind can be recognized and affirmed through practical devotion and access to God's mercy as contained in the dictating commandments⁸⁰.

Discussing the above thread, Gałązka teaches his charges that the will of God who reveals himself through knowledge is that the glory of the Creator spreads in a special way by realising the commandment of love⁸¹. This obligation was imposed on man by the voice of God on Mount Sinai. Confirmed by the Son of Man, he became the most important of the commandments⁸². The correct attitude to know God's will in this commandment is the attitude of love. It should embrace both God and other people. For the Creator, through the Decalogue, does not say that man should love only God, but love Him above all and your neighbour as yourself⁸³. To make this real, every religious person in the congregation should be ready to sacrifice everything for God's and neighbour's love⁸⁴. God's assumption was that each of them would love him and his neighbor according to the scale they received from the Supreme Legislator. This means that what the sisters received under the commandment should be returned entirely without being able to keep anything for themselves. It is only

⁷⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 57–58.

⁷⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 186.

⁸⁰ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 80.

⁸¹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁸² Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Wierni własnemu charyzmatowi. Przemówienie w dniu 28 listopada 1981 do generalnych przełożonych zakonów*, in: *idem, O życiu zakonnym*, op. cit., p. 61.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Cf. P. Spiller, *Wspólnota w służbie Ewangelii Królestwa*, in: *Formacja zakonna*, vol. 7, ed. J.W Gogola, p. 74; R. Czajkowska, *Duchowość zakonna*, op. cit., p. 125; S. th., II-a II ae, q.17, a. 6, ad 3.

with this attitude that one can speak of mutual trust and learning the thoughts of the Supreme⁸⁵.

However, some religious persons wish to remain free to choose to know God's will and to follow it. Such people, according to spiritual theology, do not lose the possibility of salvation at the beginning. However, they are turning away from themselves the voluntary possibility of absolute confidence in everything to God. This is because every free choice is determined by the commandments. Those who want to keep this freedom do not have complete self-abnegation (cf. Mt 19,17.21)⁸⁶.

This situation is used by Satan, who by his promises tries to break God's plan in man. It encourages him to oppose the Creator, promising in return equality with Him in everything⁸⁷. In this way, Lucifer wants to prove that a yoke of commandments has been placed on man, which he describes as a burden that binds him with an immutable moral law⁸⁸. Man, however, accepting this state of affairs, allows the appearance of disorder in himself, which destroys God's generally understood honesty. In this way, he pushes away the commandments and deprives him of the ability to recognize God's will. It is enough to break one of the ten laws in question to lose the trust of the Divine Legislator⁸⁹.

It is noticed that when one exceeds God's commandments, fear may arise in man. It will first concern the possibility of revealing his sin and getting to know it by other people. On the other hand,

⁸⁵ Cf. J. Kiciński, *Prorocki charakter życia konsekrowanego*, „Życie Konsekrowane” 2000, nr 4, pp. 41-44; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 333.

⁸⁶ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 203; cf. S. Alonso, *Consejos*, op. cit., p. 437.

⁸⁷ Cf. E. Weron, *Teologia życia wewnętrznego ludzi świeckich*, Pallotinum, Poznań-Warszawa 1980, p. 72; A. Hipponensis, *De perfectione iustitiae Hominiis*, ch. VIII, *De spiritu et littera*, ch. XXXV.

⁸⁸ Cf. E. Wernon, *Kierownictwo duchowe*, op. cit., p. 72.

⁸⁹ Cf. A. Słomkowski, *Teologia życia*, op. cit., p. 53.

at this moment there may be a fear of knowing God's will, which will lead to remorse⁹⁰. By defending against these fears, man seeks to justify his deeds. To this end, he blames the Legislator, who is God Himself or the Church. He believes that the rights set out are too heavy and therefore difficult to implement⁹¹. However, this fear will increase until a person changes his behaviour. Getting rid of fear, so that internal metanoia is possible, only when on account of remorse and confession to guilt, God's instructions will be realised again. Commandments then again will become a guideline for correct getting to know the will of the Creator⁹².

Ratzinger in his ascetic Letters to the sisters also writes that if they want to achieve the above state in a perfect way, they can not stop at just implementing the commandments. They must go further, that is, they must freely know and accept the will of God established for them by the Providential government. According to the teaching of the Catholic Church in religious congregations, this process is accomplished by accepting and implementing the will of superiors⁹³. This gives the religious people who are representatives of the consecrated life to know God's will⁹⁴. Feliński looked for the consequences of this teaching in the words of Saint Peter, who urge people to submit to human power because of God's will (cf. 1 Peter 2: 13-18)⁹⁵.

Therefore, all established and existing power, according to the Apostle of the Nations, was also established by God

⁹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

⁹¹ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 65–66.

⁹² Cf. B. Przybylski, *Chrzest – tajemnica paschalna*, AK 1965, no. 57, vol. 68, p. 194.

⁹³ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *W drodze do Jezusa Chrystusa*, trans. by J. Merecki, Kraków 2004, p. 11.

⁹⁴ Cf. *ibid.*; Cf. J. Danielou, *I religiosi nella struttura della Chiesa*, in: *La Chiesa del Vaticano II*, Firenze 1966, pp. 1093–1100.

⁹⁵ Cf. Ch. Bernard, *Wprowadzenie*, op. cit., p. 109; W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., pp. 252–253; S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 83, a. 2, 16.

(cf. Rom 13,1)⁹⁶. Therefore, anyone who relies on this teaching should be subjected to the authority that manifests itself in the will of his superiors (cf. Rom, 13: 1)⁹⁷. For those who exercise authority in the congregation on behalf of God are His representatives. They make sure that His will is properly known and fulfilled. Giemza also indicates that compliance of this will with the will of superiors should be read with the help of God's and church commandments and the Rules of the Congregation⁹⁸. Because they are faithful to these instructions, they can come to a deep knowledge and close union with their Bridegroom. Therefore, in the attitude of superiors, they should expect to know God's will⁹⁹. Who, however, would try to oppose the order of things thus established, must remember that he will not oppose those in power, but God, who has established this power. For everyone who opposes power opposes God's order. Those who opposed are bringing the judgment upon themselves (cf. Rom 13.2)¹⁰⁰.

Discussing the knowledge of God's will, he also points out that the authority legally established and binding is not any abuse. Nor should it be called a human institution because, as mentioned above, it is of God's appointment¹⁰¹. Remembering that every person, especially religious, should submit to the supreme authority. Accepting such established legal authority will not be any wickedness, but by its very nature, it will become something good because it is consistent with God's Providence¹⁰². This conviction will

⁹⁶ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., p. 252–253; idem, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., pp. 65–67.

⁹⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

⁹⁸ Cf. B. Giemza, *Pokusy wobec komunii Kościoła*, „*Życie Konsekrowane*” 2011, no. 2, pp. 40–41.

⁹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Cf. J. Kiciński, *Powołanie – konsekracja – misja*, op. cit., p. 69; P. Ogórek, *Chrzest a konsekracja zakonna*, „*Życie Konsekrowane*” 2006, no. 2, p. 58, pp. 53–62; S. th., op. cit., I-a II-ae, q. 77, a.

¹⁰¹ Cf. J. Kiciński, *Powołanie – konsekracja – misja*, op. cit., p. 69.

¹⁰² Cf. P. Ogórek, *Chrzest a konsekracja*, op. cit., p. 58.

be strengthened even more when people called in the will of their superiors will see God's will¹⁰³. This can be achieved by the sisters seeing in the attitude of their superiors the realization of the laws, established by Christ, or in His Mystical Body¹⁰⁴.

The credibility of such reasoning is increased by the fact that the discussed possibilities of getting to know God's will were placed by God Himself in the hands of appropriate hierarchical structures¹⁰⁵. The church, on the other hand, extended this possibility to religious superiors, giving them a fairly large scope of power¹⁰⁶. Superiors according to Ogórek in virtue of such great trust, on the one hand, can protect God's will with the greatest care against contamination. On the other hand, they can make sure that this will is best known and accepted by people staying in monasteries¹⁰⁷. The recognition of God's will towards the sisters should, therefore, be consistent with the will of their superiors¹⁰⁸. The model for the church hierarchy showing the possibility of implementing such attitudes is the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Pointing to himself, he says that he came to earth to do the will of the Father (cf. Jn 4:34, 38). So he came to know the will of The One who is above Him¹⁰⁹. Jesus' attitude is called obedience. It is a model for a group of people who, by God's will, have become superiors for others¹¹⁰. But this obedience will only make sense and produce the desired results if it is based upon the conduct of the Son of God, who was

¹⁰³ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Cf. P. Liszka, *Charyzmatyczna moc życia zakonnego*, Wrocław 1996, p. 93.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. S. Urbański, *Mistyczny wymiar świętości*, "Episteme" 106, Warszawa-Łomża 2012, pp. 391-405.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. P. Ogórek, *Chrzest a konsekracja*, op. cit., p. 58.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ Cf. J.W. Gogola, *Ogólne wprowadzenie do formacji zakonnej*, in: *Formacja zakonna*, vol. 1, ed. J. Gogola, Kraków 1995, p. 68.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., p. 223.

obedient to the end of the Father's will¹¹¹. Religious obedience for people under the authority of superiors is to become an extension of God's will for His Son¹¹². Acceptance of such interdependence not only allows you to know but also to love God's will¹¹³. And this leads to the avoidance of any purely human restrictions and inherent attachments in this regard. Obedience is, therefore, an important element that allows religious people to recognize in the will of superiors the will of God. And this leads to the avoidance of any purely human restrictions and inherent attachments in this regard. Obedience is, therefore, an important element that allows religious people to recognize in the will of superiors the will of God¹¹⁴. Knowing this will and fulfilling it in his life, the called person is obedient not to man but God in the person of the superior¹¹⁵.

Consecrated persons, who want to know God's plan with the help of their superiors as fully as possible, should with full responsibility, although sometimes it may be accompanied by fear, accept the obligations imposed on them. They will recognize God's will in this responsibility. This will allow to conscientiously fulfil the entrusted instructions, and thus to obtain a higher level of spiritual life¹¹⁶. None of the sisters should forfeit the chance given by God, to know His will. However, this may happen, as a result of refusing to carry out instruction or transferring its implementation to another

¹¹¹ Cf. *ibid.*, J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., pp. 255–266.

¹¹² Cf. The need for a communal discernment of obedience as an acceptance of the will of God is increasingly emphasized; C. Parzyszek, *Istotne treści Instrukcji Posługa władzy i postuszeństwo*, „Życie Konsekrowane” 2009, no. 1, p. 21; cf. S. Alonso, *Consejos*, op. cit., p. 437.

¹¹³ Cf. J. Kiciński, *Powołanie – konsekracja – misja*, op. cit., p. 122–123.

¹¹⁴ Cf. J.W. Gogola, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 105–107; Św. Augustyn, *In Seremonem Domini in monte (Matth., V). Similar De quantitate animae*, vol. 1. ch. XXXIII; *Wyznania*, IX, ch. X; *Soliloquia*, I, ch. 1, 12, 13.

¹¹⁵ Cf. J.W. Gogola, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., pp. 105–107.

¹¹⁶ Cf. J. Kiciński, *Powołanie – konsekracja – misja*, op. cit., p. 121; *idem*, *Postuszeństwo drogą duchowej wolności*, „Życie Konsekrowane” 2002, nr 2, p. 72–73; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 102; cf. M. Azevedo, *O religiosi vocazione e missione*, Milano 1988, pp. 146–148.

time. However, this would be a mistake, because nothing better than doing God's will can happen to man¹¹⁷. Spiritual theologians are convinced that superiors endowed with the privilege of authority, by defining the needs of the assembly, help those under their care to read God's will. This leads to learning about the abilities of individual sisters and entrusting them with appropriate activities. The implementation of these activities as a love of God's will become a glorification of God's glory. The basic attitude for God's will learned in such a way is the attitude of readiness, which strives to fulfill its obligation¹¹⁸.

1.2.2. Doing God's will

The realization of the will of the Creator, according to the teaching of the Catholic Church, is carried out using temporary or local circumstances that are often independent of man and affect his fate¹¹⁹. Here, God plays the role of the beginning and end of all action. He is also the true and sole contractor of all good. In this sense, In this sense, God is a master, *the real performer of his masterpiece, whose idea in his mind was formed and He realized this idea with his own hands, only needed the right tools*¹²⁰.

Witek rates the duties that God put on the shoulders of those called as the instruments of God's will, through which the plan of Providence is implemented. He is making it proportionally to the development of the spiritual life, all the way to the moment

¹¹⁷ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Postuszeństwo zakonne. Teologia i praktyka*, in: *Formacja zakonna*, vol. 2, Kraków 1998, pp. 41–43, 46–47; cf. T. Goffi, *L'esperienza spirituale, oggi*, op. cit., p. 16.

¹¹⁸ Cf. E. Gambari, *Życie zakonne po Soborze Watykańskim II*, trans. J.E. Bielecki, Kraków 1998, pp. 396–397.

¹¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 209.

¹²⁰ S. Witek, *Miłość chrześcijańska w życiu człowieka*, Warszawa 1983, pp. 20–21.

of achieving the Kingdom of God. And so they are also a means of the ultimate unification with God. It is only necessary on the part of those called to fulfill their duties with the greatest diligence and trust. This is not about seeking recognition of our merits among people, but about doing God's will and following the Savior faithfully¹²¹. It becomes important that the validity of the obligations that are established by the Creator be maintained. However, the subject of the performed activities has a different value, because the amount of revelation of one's will in particular duties depends on God. Such reasoning is given as a basis for the functioning of communities, and a cornerstone of all moral principles. All these principles are the basis of religious conduct in order to implement God's providence¹²².

Monastic persons can acquire readiness to do God's will in two ways. First, by giving your will to God's will. The model for this attitude is Jesus Christ, who surrendered his will to the will of the Father (cf. Jn 7,16). This commitment took place in complete freedom and without any reservations¹²³. And God expects such devotion to his will from persons whom he called for his sole service. This act can take place through various forms, but it will always be characterized by one thing – loyalty to God. Therefore, if a religious person has really offered himself to Him, he should always accept and love the experience that comes from Him, even if there is any bad opinion on the outside¹²⁴. For in the daily life of religious

¹²¹ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 17–32.

¹²² Cf. Paweł VI, *Adhortacja apostołska na temat odnowy życia zakonnego według nauki Soboru Watykańskiego II Ewangelica testificatio*, in: *Życie konsekrowane w dokumentach Kościoła*, ed. B. Hylla, op. cit., p. 119; cf. A. Czternastek, *Zawierzenie Bożej Opatrzności w życiu i pismach sługi Bożego Arcybiskupa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, tscp of md, ARMW, Kraków 2001–2002, p. 48.

¹²³ Cf. T. Trzaskawka, *Rola cnót teologicznych w rozwoju życia duchowego chrześcijanina w piśmiennictwie Sługi Bożego arcybiskupa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego (1822–1895)*, tscp of Phd, ARMW, Warszawa 1996, p. 197; cf. S. Gamarra, *Teología espiritual*, Madrit 1994, pp. 198–199.

¹²⁴ Cf. T. Trzaskawka, *Rola cnót teologicznych...*, op. cit., p. 197.

people, as Trzaskawka teaches, the following principle applies: everything that does not come from human will and that happens independently of human consent is for those called by God's will, and to this, these people should be fully prepared to give up¹²⁵. Acceptance of love will allow God's love to dominate over feelings that affect the human will. In this way, the man realises filial love for God¹²⁶. Loving God wants everything that happens in man to lead him to voluntarily give his actions to the Creator. That is why God, as noted by Trzaskawka, bestowed persons called such qualities of body and soul. He wanted that it would help them fulfil their obligations. It was also important for God that man should be able to recognise emerging threats and choose safe solutions. They appear when a man gives his will to the will of God¹²⁷.

Trzaskawka also draws sisters' attention to situations that often accompany on the road to the connection of man's free will with God's will. He means everything that has been planned with the help of Providence to help man clear up the values on which he tried to build his illusory happiness¹²⁸. If in this place cooperation of the man with God takes place, He will let, that the will of the man will become a will of God¹²⁹. However, it is necessary that man to explore God's intentions and then accept them. Important in all this is the subject of acceptance, as well as the time when God's intentions will be realised. The teaching of the Catholic Church states that a monastic person, by a well-read vocation, has the conviction that what he was called to do is done by God. She is also aware that

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 197.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 197.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 197.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 197; cf. F. Ruiz Salvador, *Místico y maestro san Juan de la Cruz*, Madrid 1986, p. 123.

¹²⁹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., s. 33; J. Tauler, *Sermons*, trans. M. Shrady, New Jersey 1985.

her purpose is also to realise God's intentions. On its own, however, it should not do anything until Providence, at the most appropriate moment, issues a sign to start a given proceeding. God knows best when and what to do. However, a man should only offer his Lord a free will which is ready to accept His will. Therefore, the Creator and Redeemer does not require anything more from him¹³⁰.

However, a man, as a result of the misuse of free will, can lead to the loss of his readiness, which has a decisive impact on doing God's will. This can happen not only as a result of a simple human refusal to accept God's will but also by rejecting conditions which, if not fulfilled, prevents the called person from realising his proposed mission. These relationships are presented by the teachings of the Catholic Church, asking three questions: first, whether God wants his will to be done; second, whether he calls this person and not another person to do it; and third, whether the time has come to do this will. Presenting the above conditions, theologians of spirituality show that each of them is not of any value, but a relationship arising from the nature of the vocation itself, the implementation of which may or may not be accomplished by acquiring individual stages of the development of Christian perfection¹³¹.

If as a result of the interaction of these three relations will be missing even if one, evil will immediately appear, which will lead to complete internal destruction. To avoid this extreme situation and thus not lose the general readiness to do God's will, a person should undertake to carry out a double resolution¹³². First, that he would get rid of everything that belongs to him (cf. Mt 19:21).

¹³⁰ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 33; S. Urbański, *Duchowość zmartwychwstańcza*, op. cit., p. 77.

¹³¹ Cf. *ibid.*

¹³² Cf. *ibid.*

In the words *follow me* is included a call to deny your own will¹³³. And secondly, he will ask God, that purified in this way inner life, He will complete with his own supernatural life. Implementation of this will make man live not his own life but God's life, and his vocation will become like a *tuned lute on which only the Creator's hand will have a rights to play a harmonious song of praise and love*¹³⁴. All this will allow a person called, to exclusively serve God, to deprive himself of what was wrong with him and in this way, he will be able to do his Master's will. However, this will only happen if one does not follow nature's inspiration but grace¹³⁵. The second way that enables those called to gain internal readiness to do the will of the Creator, and which theology indicates, is the prayer of thirsting. It consists of being with God and striving for man to obtain the necessary ability. The moment of achieving such a state of mind begins when a religious person tries to place his human free will in the will of God with the help of prayer¹³⁶. On the other hand, the Creator, being the giver of this gift for man, respects him to such an extent that he does not accept even the slightest act of pressure that could be directed on him to do God's will. This is because God intends that each of the called persons should be not only responsible but above all free in their conduct¹³⁷. Therefore, God is waiting for the man that he through its free choice to invite Him to help cleanse his free will of disordered attachments¹³⁸. This should be done through a prayer

¹³³ Cf. *ibid.*

¹³⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

¹³⁵ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 94.

¹³⁶ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Od objawienia do zjednoczenia*, Kraków 2005, pp. 143–153; cf. P. Régamey, *Les principes d'un véritable renouveau des arts sacrés*, Bruxelles 1948, p. 72.

¹³⁷ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Od objawienia do zjednoczenia*, op. cit., pp. 143–153.

¹³⁸ Cf. S. Urbański, *Trzy etapy życia duchowego w ujęciu Sługi Bożego o Anzelma Gądka OCD*, in: *Stuga Boży o. Anzelm Gądek OCD w służbie życia konsekrowanego*, op. cit., p. 102; S. th., op. cit., I-a II-ae, q. 77, a. 4: „Inordinatus amor sui est causa omnis peccati”.

in which a person has a chance to express not only his request for help but also to confess his weakness and powerlessness towards evil. Based on this attitude, God may or may not present his will to man. Then comes the consistency or incompatibility of the human will with God's will¹³⁹.

It is important at such a time, as S. Urbański writes, that when turning to God while praying, he would also hear His voice in which he reveals his will¹⁴⁰. No intelligent being should at such moments admit anything that would question any solutions proposed by God¹⁴¹. If a person accepts during prayer everything that comes from the Creator and from the very plan of God's Providence it will be focused on good, then a human will desire nothing but the pleasure of the Lord¹⁴². What's more, such a prayer supported by sacraments will change the previous sinner into a good man. The spiritual state that will be achieved in this way by every person called will be the starting point, i.e. the state of readiness to do God's will¹⁴³.

However, if, as Kiciński argues, God will delay using the above condition, this situation may mean that the request made by prayer in a specific matter is not God's will, or the time of God's influence has not yet arrived. Spiritual theologians also point out that, even if various other events would occur in life especially monastic person should not stop praying, who should be guided by the Lords call, not our will but Yours should be done¹⁴⁴.

¹³⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, S. Urbański, *Trzy etapy życia duchowego...*, op. cit., p. 102.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Cf. M. Dziewiecki, *Psychologia Ewangelii*, „*Życie Konsekrowane*” 2013, no. 2, pp. 17–18.

¹⁴² Oral, individual prayer complements community prayer (cf. SC 90). J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 87.

¹⁴³ Cf. J. Kiciński, *Podstawy teologii modlitwy*, „*Życie Konsekrowane*” 2002, no. 4, pp. 107–108; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Od objawienia do zjednoczenia*, op. cit., pp. 99–124; S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 83, a. 2, 16.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Od objawienia do zjednoczenia*, op. cit., pp. 99–124.

Gogola points out in his teaching that doing God's will is extremely difficult¹⁴⁵. This is because everyone is most willing to act according to God's instructions when they coincide with his intentions. Otherwise, he seeks to free himself from them¹⁴⁶. The basis for such human behaviour should be the truth that doing God's will is accompanied by suffering. For the Creator has no such possibility to treat a man differently from his own Son, who came down to earth to do the will of his Father¹⁴⁷. And in this is where spiritual theologians see everything that prevents a man from lovingly doing God's will. In his opinion, Christ foresaw everything that is participation of human in his daily conduct. Therefore, wanting to give people a model of real-life in unity with his Father, he worked out for others the inner power to fulfil the tasks that God puts in their lives. Therefore, by fulfilling God's will, which was supported by the cross, man does not act only with his own strength, but with the power of God himself¹⁴⁸. In this teaching, Werbiński places the need for unity of monastic persons with his Redeemer. This can be done with prayer, which should include a plea for overcoming the reluctance to accept God's will, as well as a request for the desire to accept of fulfilling that will and suffering that is inextricably linked to it¹⁴⁹. Everyone, and especially called persons, should bear witness to God's love and submission to His will through their actions. It happens when a man gives glory to God, doing in a spirit of love His will¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Wpływ św. Jana od Krzyża na duchową drogę Edyty Stein*, in: *Mistyka i mistycy Karmelu*, Kraków 2007, p. 24; Aurelius Augustinus, *Sancti aureli Augustini episcopi De Civitate Dei*, vol. 14, ch. XXVIII.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Wpływ św. Jana od Krzyża na duchową drogę Edyty Stein*, op. cit., p. 24.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ Cf. P. Góralczyk, *Uszlachtetnie dążenia i pożądania*, "Communio" 21, 2001, pp. 84–90.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. I. Werbiński, *Jedność i wielość duchowości*, in: *Teologia duchowości katolickiej*, ed. W. Słomka, M. Chmielewski, J. Misiurek, A. Nowak, Lublin 1993, pp. 70–84; S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 17, a. 1, 2, 4, 5.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. I. Werbiński, op. cit., pp. 70–84; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 65.

Werbiński, directing his teaching to the members of the congregation he founded, draws attention to a threat that becomes dangerous to them when they take the will of the Creator. This is about attachment. The only right attachment is dependence on God's will, which they should not only accept but to love with the whole being¹⁵¹. However, there should be no place for such realities that come from God's will and which are completely indifferent to man. They have nothing in themselves that could prove their value. They gain meaning only in conjunction with God's will. The fruit of this is giving man joy and inner happiness, which will last even when the object of God's will is changed. It happens as a result of depriving this man of any external form of joy of attachment to things¹⁵².

According to theologians of the spirituality means of implementation of the will of God are determined by the idea of the Creator¹⁵³. Płaskonka argues that the realization of God's will is the first and immediate condition of love, which by its very nature seeks the most complete relationship with a loved person one and of the mutual giving. Therefore, the act of giving oneself to God's will is something very necessary and concerns not only baptized people, but also those who were chosen by God in a special way¹⁵⁴. The act of devotion is above all weddings. Moreover, he reminds the sisters of their duty to fulfill their duties, which in their consciences have been set by God as requirements. From this, it is necessary to entrust all human powers to the Creator and to cooperate with

¹⁵¹ Cf. The need for community discernment of obedience as an acceptance of God's will is increasingly stressed.

¹⁵² Cf. K. Hołda, *Główne zadania odnowy życia konsekrowanego*, AK 1967, no. 59, pp. 281–282; Cf. A. De Boissieu, des Frères Prêcheurs, *La Patience enseignée par les saints*, éditions de la „Vie spirituelle”, Paris 1926.

¹⁵³ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Zasady wierności charyzmatowi Założyciela*, Kraków 2000, pp. 30–31.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. E. Płaskonka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe jako realizacja miłości Boga w życiu Karmelitanek Dzieciątka Jezus na podstawie wybranych pism Ojca Założyciela*, Warszawa 2011, p. 52.

Him. It is to be done with the maximum involvement of forces, which were motivated by God's grace for this purpose¹⁵⁵. Therefore, this event should include not only a declaration of the willingness of a man of faith to make all sacrifices for God, but also a full disposition to accept him¹⁵⁶. The consequence of such devotion to God's will is a feeling of peace and certainty that a person devoted to God will always do the will of his Bridegroom, even if it concerns the simplest activities. In this way, the soul will be protected from the scruples that may arise in the life of monastic persons in the moment of making vows by them¹⁵⁷.

The model that theologians of spirituality show to religious is the Passion of Christ. Although it was a crime for Jews, was so deeply immersed in the intentions of Providence that Jesus himself confessed that he was born to accept the cup of bitter passion and this way the will of God's will fill. God was not portrayed as the culprit or co-participant of human iniquities taking place in the world, but as the One who can do everything if it is consistent with his will. God allows evil and iniquity only because He has His providential intentions. Secondly, he wants to increase the glory of the righteous, and therefore those who were faithful to him. Thirdly, he punishes those guilty of evil (cf. Mt 26: 36-46)¹⁵⁸. God, acting in this way, according to spiritual theologians, acts like a doctor who knows his profession, who, using his skills, always takes action for the benefit of the sick and those in need. This approach to the matter often

¹⁵⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Cf. F. Lethel, *Chrystocentryzm dynamiczny Teresy z Lisieux*, in: *Święta Teresa z Lisieux słowem Boga dla świata*, ed. J.W. Gogola, Kraków 1998, p. 88.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Sekret świętej Teresy z Lisieux*, Kraków 1997, pp. 52–53, 56–58.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. C. Martini, *Przeżywać przeciwności w świetle Miłości Miłosiernej*, in: *Między wiarą a niewiarą. Doświadczenie duchowe świętej Teresy z Lisieux*, ed. R. Dudek, Kraków 2001, pp. 71–72; J.-P. Camus, *L'Esprit de saint François de Sales*, Nabu Press, vol. XV, ch. XIII.

causes that this what is harmful to some works the most desirable medicine for others¹⁵⁹.

Duties towards our fellow men, which are an expression of God's will, are divided into innate and supernatural. Among the first are the duties towards the homeland, i.e. the land on which the person grew. Whereas as a supernatural obligation, shows the duties regarding the Church, which includes all created and striving for one eternal homeland. And although these responsibilities often overlap, they do not interfere with the fulfillment of the mission recommended by the Creator. Supernatural duties combine the mission of the Church in terms of redemption of souls through the blood of the Savior; joining them with the love of God and neighbor; keeping the commandments revealed at Sinai; and strengthening with the Eucharist in order to achieve supernatural life. All these duties are to indicate what is positive in natural values and what is in accordance with God's will. That is why spiritual theologians refer to the message contained in Saint. Paul (cf. 1 Tim. 5,8), by which respect is accorded in accordance with God's will, obligations related to the family home and tradition. So they call the home dweller not only the inhabitants of the house or representatives of the religious community, but all those redeemed. For those who are redeemed but not yet saved, it is necessary to be able not only to offer prayer following God's will but if necessary, the dearest gift on earth, one's own life (cf. Jn 15:13)¹⁶⁰. The masters of spiritual life remind their pupils to learn deeply about God's will, to love it and faithfully

¹⁵⁹ Cf. M. Zawada, *Życie teologalne - Teresy z Lisieux*, in: *Święta Teresa z Lisieux słowem Boga dla świata*, ed. J.W. Gogola, Kraków 1998, pp. 125-137; A.M. Liguori, *Uniformità alla volontà di Dio*, Roma 2014.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. J. Grou, *Rozmyślenia o miłości Bożej*, Warszawa 1910, p. 34; R. Kostecki, *Tajemnica życia nadprzyrodzonego*, Warszawa 1975, p. 47; *Directorium mysticum*, ed. 1733, vol. III, disp. III, sect. IV; vol. IV, disp. I, sect. VI.

fulfil it, for which they will receive eternal life¹⁶¹. When they write this, they warn that the sisters should not deal with matters outside God's will¹⁶². They point out that every consecrated person with duties meets in his calling the people to whom they were sent by God's will¹⁶³.

Michalik emphasizes that the duties accompanying the daily life of the Congregation, imposing different experiences on its members, depending on their faithfulness, the pure intention with which they serve God, are conditioned by God's will. They depend above all on the One Who knows the necessary needs of the called person. This knowledge determines whether God gives a person dedicated to Him special comforts of grace through a tangible presence in her heart, or leaves him in constant struggle and the path leading to union with Himself. Each consecrated person, being an instrument of God's will, should strive for the grace necessary to do God's will not only for himself but also for those to whom he was sent¹⁶⁴.

God realizes his idea by directing sisters to people, to the world¹⁶⁵. That every action of the called could become pleasing to the Creator, it should begin not only by God's will but also only for Him should be performed so that everyone, including a neighbour, would be an instrument of doing God's will from beginning to end¹⁶⁶. Therefore, from each of the sisters, the Savior himself demands that they implant the unconditional love of doing God's will in the heart

¹⁶¹ Cf. O. Filek, O. Anzelm od św. Andrzeja Corsini. *Wspomnienie z okazji 50-lecia powstania Zgromadzenia Sióstr Karmelitanek Dzieciątka Jezus*, Rzym 1972, pp. 23–24, 27–28.

¹⁶² Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., pp. 122–130.

¹⁶³ Cf. A. Michalik, *Zrozumieć chrześcijaństwo. Istota chrześcijaństwa według Josepha Ratzingera*, Tarnów 2008, pp. 237–239; Św. Tomasz z Akwinu, *Summa theologiae. Myst.*, ed. 1874, vol. 2, p. 299; vol. 3, p. 43.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. A. Michalik, *Zrozumieć chrześcijaństwo*, op. cit., pp. 237–239.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

of the met and needing person. This attitude will allow, not only in every intention but also in the work of Providence, to see the effective action of God's grace¹⁶⁷. Consecrated persons, being chosen and called from among many people, should, therefore, ensure that these tools are well used for the full exercise of God's will. According to theologians of spirituality, each of called persons who uses the help of sanctifying grace, learning God's will towards itself and filling it with their everyday life, remains faithful to it until death and thus goes to the heights of perfection¹⁶⁸.

1.2.3. Union with God's will

Theologians of spirituality following St. Augustine emphasizes that it is faith as a supernatural *bond and foundation*¹⁶⁹ that should accompany the spiritual structure so that the spiritual values thus acquired and accumulated are not destroyed. Therefore they ascribe to the virtue of faith one of the primary meanings, believing that it is from it that values flow and that is giving the beginning and the end to work of uniting with God. And it is through its properties that it helps the monastic person achieve what is important in their lives¹⁷⁰. Theologians of spirituality also point out that the work of creating a spiritual structure will be completed with the help of God through faith only when it will be carried out according to His will¹⁷¹. Therefore, they attribute to God the role

¹⁶⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Cf. G. Martin, *Mała droga dziecięctwa duchowego według pism św. Teresy od Dzieciątka Jezus*, Wadowice 1925, pp. 101–102; B. Książkiewicz, *Duch dziecięctwa Bożego w postannictwie karmelitanek Dzieciątka Jezus na podstawie pism o. Anzelma Gądka OCD*, Lublin 1996, p. 14, (MA, arch. AZ).

¹⁶⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ Cf. *ibid.*; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, op. cit., pp. 61–63.

¹⁷¹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., pp. 252–253.

of a builder, who, thanks to his knowledge of the work being done, along with the person called and thanks to the grace of faith, not only finishes but also beautifies the inner temple¹⁷².

Man, however, as a created being, having his share in the consequences of original sin as a result of a nature that is prone to fall, is limited and fallible. In the sphere of spiritual life, he needs inner light that would enable him to supplement the necessary values. For this to happen in the chosen person, it needs double certainty. The first certainty is a belief that relates to the insufficient function of reason in solving all problems related to natural and eternal life. Whereas, the second certainty refers to the omniscience and infallibility of the Creator, who, by revealing the highest and most important values, cannot mislead man, nor can he be misled. In this way, recognizing one's calling, which the teaching of the Catholic Church identifies with God's will, the chosen person receives the ability to read the supernatural light. However, this attitude of this virtue does not give yet, because faith is the fruit of grace. Instead, it paves the way for the virtue of faith by removing what is an obstacle to its acceptance. Everything about God's will is recognized by faith, because, as the Catholic Church teaches, *we can only know about God, what He reveals about Himself*¹⁷³. Whereas faith as St. Paweł Apostoł wrote comes from what is heard (cf. Rz 10.17)¹⁷⁴. However, it is not enough to just hear about God to believe in Him. It is also necessary to cleanse the heart, straighten the will, to humble the mind, and submitting these powers to God. If this does not happen, observes the teaching of the Catholic Church, then the hearts of religious will be unclean

¹⁷² Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁷³ A. Tahquerey, *Zarys*, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 384, J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii*, op. cit., pp. 159–167; S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 29, a. 3, ad 3. similarly Pius XI, encyclical *Ubi arcano*, I, 156.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii*, op. cit., pp. 159–167; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, op. cit., pp. 138–171.

because they will have a vile attachment. The will of these persons will be unlawful because will be oriented so that God fits oneself to their world view. The mind will be obscured because instead of looking at the world through the eye of the Creator's wisdom, he tries to recognize everything in his way¹⁷⁵.

Spiritual theologians show this relationship on the example of heart and reason. It is enough if some passion will shade or infect these powers, and the chosen person will not only not believe in God but will blaspheme to Him (cf. Jn 7:18)¹⁷⁶. As an example, the theology of spirituality shows the person of Lucifer who wanted to take God's glory. This faith did not bring him the desired fruit, for it was deprived of God's will¹⁷⁷.

God, as the highest value, does not need anything from man and all creation. However, faith convinces that the Creator has done everything he has done for his glory¹⁷⁸. Explaining the above issue, the teaching of the Catholic Church states that this is because, through all creation, including man, who, being a tangible and visible sign of the Most Perfect Wisdom and Omnipotence, God's glory is manifested outside. This means that from the moment of getting to know of your Creator, pure reason and heart should take on the duty to adore His unique nature¹⁷⁹. This obligation originates from the natural law, which has been

¹⁷⁵ Cf. S. Urbański, *Etapy rozwoju życia duchowego*, op. cit., pp. 263–278; P. Ogórek, *Mistyka według Tomasza Mertona*, Warszawa 1996, p. 199; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, op. cit., p. 168.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. M. Rokosz, *Wartość pracy w rozwoju osobowości człowieka według pism abpa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, in: *Duchowa spuścizna Arcybiskupa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, ed. J. Machniak, Kraków 2002, p. 272.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. L. Boriello, *Padre*, in: *Dizionario di Mistica*, a cura di L. Boriello, E. Caruana etc., Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1998, pp. 947–959.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. M. Rokosz, *Wartość pracy w rozwoju osobowości człowieka według pism abpa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, op. cit., p. 272.

written and revealed in the hearts of creatures, so that, as a result of the supernatural grace obtained, it can be fully united with God's will¹⁸⁰.

According to Rokosz, the concept of God's glory appears in the Old and New Testaments in a dual sense. First, as the dignity of God Himself, in which all His attributes are contained. God's glory arose spontaneously and independently of anyone. It is the most perfect, unique and does not undergo any changes¹⁸¹. Secondly – the glory of God is a reverence and adoration which creation gives to its Creator. The glory of God in this interpretation is changeable and depends on what has been done. This is because this glory, like all creation, can change over time, without a leading man to union with God's will¹⁸². According to the same author, by union with God's will, man is responsible for giving and spreading the worship due to God. God does not give glory to himself, because He is the most perfect Being and it is impossible to add something to this perfection¹⁸³. Elsewhere, the same doctrine proves that God, concerning man, did the work of creation so that man could experience *eternal glory in heaven*¹⁸⁴. This great distinction of man has its reason in the fact that he was destined by God for full union with Him. This means that the mutual communion of the Creator and creation is nothing but God's will, thus making man and at this moment

¹⁸⁰ Cf. The duty to praise God is by no means a commandment of the kind that we would not have known existed if it had not been revealed to us. It stems from the natural law which the Creator himself engraved on our hearts. It is enough to put before the eyes of the soul a true image of God's perfection and to stop the heart from stirring up the tainted lusts. And soon the soul will burn with the fire of God's love, undergo of only its own nature attraction. It will be natural love, but when the ray of grace comes to sanctify it, it will soon turn it into a virtue over the natural, not destroying the original feeling; Cf. Y. Cognac, *Le theme du Dieu Créateur et les explications de l'Hexaéméron dans la tradition chrétienne*, op. cit.

¹⁸¹ Cf. M. Rokosz, *Wartość pracy w rozwoju osobowości człowieka*, op. cit., p. 272.

¹⁸² Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁸³ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Św. Teresa od Dzieciątka Jezus, *Dzieje duszy*, Kraków 2009, p. 465.

a living element of the supernatural organism. Consequently, it allows man to use everything that belongs to the Creator. The unification of man with God, however, was broken due to the consequences of original sin. That is why the Messianic promise, through the help of faith, which can reconnect man with His will, has become crucial. The faith accepted by a monastic person pours strength coming from God into the soul. This force was defined as the grace of faith, carrying the message of redemption from Him from whom it came. Besides, she is announcing not only rescue but above all the eternal life which is enclosing the fullness of definition of the will of God. And although this union begins on earth, it reaches its fullness once it reaches eternal life. Also, faith allows those who stand for Christ to receive the favours needed for union with Him. All this gives grounds for the monastic person to achieve union with God's will¹⁸⁵.

Speaking of union with God's will, Gądek points out that man never should seek his glory in it, but the One from whom everything begins. Such an attitude will not only cause perfection but also sanctify creation. It is important that the process of human transformation through faith is in accordance with God's will. Such an attitude will not only cause perfection but also sanctify creation. The process of human transformation through faith must be compliant with God's will. This way it will lead creation to the unity with the Creator¹⁸⁶. Gądek gives the history of the Kiev belfry as a model for building this unity in the spiritual life¹⁸⁷. He shows on her example that anyone can build a spiritual building of faith

¹⁸⁵ Cf. *ibid.*; W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., p. 134; cf. B.G. del Albino, *Acetica e mistica*, Padova 1953.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. A. Gądek, *Będę mówił do twego serca. Rekolekcje*, Łódź 2002, p. 24; cf. S. Urbański, *Trzy etapy życia duchowego*, op. cit., p. 108–110.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. P. Góralczyk, *Jezus Chrystus normą moralności chrześcijańskiej*, "Communio" 2, 1997, pp. 104–110.

in their interior if tedious work is accompanied by perseverance and dedication to union with God's will¹⁸⁸.

Behind the Book of Genesis (cf. Gen 3:19), theologians of spirituality remind us that man has to make the earth his subject and to gain daily food in the sweat of somebody's brow¹⁸⁹. This work should be undertaken and performed in the sense of fulfilled duty. A man fulfilling his duties, with full commitment and with all his might think that God will help him¹⁹⁰. But only to the extent that His wisdom deems necessary. The certainty of such a course of action should flow from the belief that it happens with the consent of God's will, to show His glory and unity with Him to those who believe in Him. According to Merton, every being who wants to unite with God's will assumes a double duty. The first is to strive for this unity by knowing and experiencing God's perfection. This requires, above all, to deepen issues related to faith¹⁹¹. The second duty is to make sure that man does not lead the soul to indifference to God because of the excessive action of nature's drives. Spiritual work carried out in this direction will limit the drive of impulses, but will also bring about union with Him and thus God's will¹⁹². A person devoted to God who received faith in his heart should constantly revive it by the internal conviction of achieving union with God's will, i.e. *a mysterious and supernatural relationship of the soul with God*¹⁹³.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 78; N. Cabasilas, *The Life of Christ*, trans. C.J. de Catanzaro, Crestwood (NY) 1974, pp. 174–174.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 78.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*; Cf. S. th., op. cit, I-a II-ae, q. 57, a. 1: „Utrum habitus intellectuales speculativi sint virtutes”.

¹⁹¹ Cf. T. Merton, *Wspinaczka ku Prawdzie*, in: *Szukanie Boga*, Kraków 1985, p. 42.

¹⁹² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁹³ G. Martin, *Mała droga dzieciństwa duchowego*, op. cit., pp. 101–102; B. Książkiewicz, op. cit., p. 14, (MA, arch. AZ).

The same faith is supposed to teach consecrated persons responsibility for the compliance of their behavior with the path of unification that God has outlined. So all experiences are being sent by God for so that in chosen hearts an immediate return to him took place. They are supposed to show the surrender of sisters of the will of God and the unity with her. This virtue, acting in this way, becomes the perpetrator of the conviction that thanks to God's will and admission, everything that occurs in the life of a religious person brings her closer to union with God's will¹⁹⁴.

However, this attitude requires an internal fight of a person dedicated to God, which will consist of breaking away from worldly vanities and adhering by faith to her Bridegroom¹⁹⁵. And although it will require deep determination and internal conversion, so received and carried attitude consistently will prove to the interested parties the rightness of the decision made. As theologians of spirituality indicate, this will also be rewarded by the inner certainty of doing God's will and the promise of full union with the Savior in the future. In striving for this unification, a person dedicated to the exclusive service of God will become worthy of faith and will get rid of all iniquities that could disconnect him from His will (cf. Jn 7:18)¹⁹⁶.

Bartoszewska, showing an attitude of accepting faith, teaches that this is not only the correct attitude but also the only attitude shaped on the will of the One who calls her¹⁹⁷. Faith becomes

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Św. Tomasz z Akwinu, *O miłości nadprzyrodzonej. De Caritate*, trans. J. Rusczyński, Warszawa 1994, p. 49; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 104; S. th., op. cit, II-a II-ae, q. 136, a. 1; De patientia, ch. II.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 104.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe*, op. cit., p. 63.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. M. Bartoszewska, *Pokora w pismach św. Teresy od Dzieciątka Jezus*, Warszawa-Łódź 2002, p. 40 (MA, arch. AZ).

a spiritual treasure, without which the internal life of those called would not develop. This is because every creature who head to unite with the will of the Creator must have faith, that is, the internal conviction of the correctness of the implementation of its provisions¹⁹⁸.

Spiritual theologians also point out that it is grace that accepts the decisive burden of union with God's will through faith. It renders, that union that does not weaken, but increases, leading to eternal life¹⁹⁹.

According to Bochenek, an example of receiving and nurturing faith, in the way we were talking about, are saints, people raised to the altar. They show how to believe so that one could participate in the effects of union with God's will²⁰⁰. According to theologians of the spirituality, following people who were familiar with God's will is nothing other than participation in the goods left by those canonized by the Church and determined as the faith in the communion of saints²⁰¹. If a person devoted to God is guided by the grace of faith, despite his weaknesses, he finds the right direction to unite with his Creator and uses the spiritual gifts accumulated by the saints.

According to the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Apostle of the Nations is the leading figure. He not only acknowledged his weakness and despised what the world proposed, but above all he believed in the effectiveness of the grace that comes from God and was consistent with His will. They also believe that

¹⁹⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ Cf. J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, Warszawa 1972, p. 359–360; S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 24, a. 3, ad 2; I-a II-ae, q. 69, a. 2; *De Veritate*, q. 14, a. 2.

²⁰⁰ Cf. J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, op. cit., p. 359–360.

²⁰¹ Cf. W. Gałazka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., pp. 252–253; St. Francis De Sales, *Treatise*, op. cit., vol. II ch. XVII.

a man can do nothing by himself. It is only the acceptance of God's will that gives him the basis for unification based on faith²⁰². Faith should be received with great confidence and simplicity from the office of the Church²⁰³. This institution, as John Paul II often pointed out, was created from twelve simple people who, despite suffering and persecution, thanks to faith in the rule of Providence, did not fear evil but walked the path to full union with their Founder²⁰⁴.

The number of those who have misused God's will, those who have followed their own and not God's indication, as history says, is quite large. Having received in their mortal life a call and a chance to achieve full union with their Creator, they did not live up to their trust in them. Guided by their reasoning, they experienced a lot of coolness, which not only led to internal falls but also the destruction of personal happiness, consisting in participation in the Kingdom of the Saved. According to the teaching of the Catholic Church, Judas was a person who deprived himself of eternal happiness in the model way. Drawing away, because of his infidelity from his calling, he extinguished not only the inner light but seeing in Christ only an ordinary man at some point, he also lost the ability to recognize God's will²⁰⁵. To avoid such a state of affairs, and thus enable persons called to fully unite with God's will, John Paul II recommends that they deepen and nurture *living faith*²⁰⁶.

²⁰² Cf. W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., pp. 252–253.

²⁰³ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Bóg jest blisko nas*, op. cit., p. 113; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 159–167.

²⁰⁴ Cf. John Paul II writes that the Eucharistic cult educates the Christian to love his neighbor, Jan Paweł II, *List Dominicæ coenæ*, op. cit., pp. 102–104.

²⁰⁵ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 353–354.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

So when, with the help of the power of reason, there is a conviction that such an attitude is possible and is following God's will, then spiritual work should begin. In this situation, it is irrelevant at what internal stage of perfection the person is. Behavior, combined with spiritual exercises, should be more sacrificing, the greater the distance the sisters divide from union with God. The goal of this effort will be achieved only when the union with God's will becomes more complete and will not shy away from any difficulty²⁰⁷.

One of these difficulties is to crucify with Christ what is worldly here on earth. Faith, according to spiritual theologians, teaches that everyone who devotes himself to this crucifixion will be fully and completely united if he could accept God's will and recognize it as his own²⁰⁸. And although at such a moment all internal lights may disappear which leads man to accept obvious truths, even though the soul is based only on faith will nevertheless be guided towards union with God²⁰⁹.

However, for this to happen, you need to be able to see the love of the cross in you²¹⁰. This is possible only with the help of faith that notices this love, e.g. in the poor and those experienced by life. The founders of Polish schools of spirituality wanted the love of the cross to be passed on by those called to others with unconditional love of God's will²¹¹. In such an approach to emerging difficulties, he saw the most effective *tool of God's glory and his salvation*²¹².

²⁰⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁰⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁰⁹ Cf. T. Merton, *Wspinaczka ku Prawdzie*, op. cit., p. 42.

²¹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

²¹¹ Cf. K. Czyżyk, *Duchowość apostołska świętych. Studium na podstawie piśmiennictwa bł. Honorata Koźmińskiego*, series: *Mistyka Polska* 101, Warszawa 2010, pp. 65–71; S. Urbański, *Duchowość zmartwychwstańcza*, op. cit., p. 33.

²¹² Cf. J. Kiciński, *Powołanie – konsekracja – misja*, op. cit., pp. 185–186; S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 5, a. 4.

Faith in Jesus, in his conviction, is not only an acceptance of the truth that Christ is Lord and Redeemer, but also an acceptance of those requirements which the Savior preached in his earthly life. Among others, this: If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. (Lk 9: 23-24)²¹³. Following this reasoning, spiritual theologians believe that following the Master of Nazareth was to lead to the faith of those who followed him. And, consequently, to full union with God's will (cf. Jn 17: 19-21)²¹⁴.

By extending the above, the Polish founders of the schools of spirituality wanted to show that Christ based the work of man's redemption on faith as an unbreakable foundation. This unrepeatable and salvific work is preserved and expanded by the Church as a heritage of this faith from generation to generation. Centuries ago, the Apostles, and now their successors, using the power of bonding and dissolution granted at the Ascension, along with those who cooperate with them on the path of unification, mutually cooperate, thanks to faith, they can lead to the total unification of the Creator with his creation (cf. Mt 18, 18-20)²¹⁵.

Spiritual theologians point out that power in the church should be exercised in union with God's will. It teaches that if the authority transferred in the Church comes from Christ, it should be exercised and respected according to the will of God, who is its legislator. Besides, all those who exercise this authority on behalf of the Creator with deep faith should do it for the glory of God and for the general benefit of those to whom they

²¹³ Cf. J. Kiciński, *Powołanie – konsekracja – misja*, op. cit., pp. 185–186.

²¹⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

²¹⁵ Cf. W. Smoczyński, *Ksiądz Zygmunt Szczęsny Feliński arcybiskup metropolita warszawski* [dated by him on 05.1890], Kraków 1896, p. 52; J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, op. cit., pp. 338–341.

were sent. Everyone called to serve in love and mercy will be accounted for in how through his life and conduct he led others to unite them with God's will²¹⁶.

According to Urbański, accepting all kinds of experiences that are allowed by God's will is nothing but an *act of perfect faith*²¹⁷. This act includes the belief that everything God does, although very often difficult for individuals to understand, happens to bring about complete union with Him. What's more, the soul being in such difficult conditions not only heads in the direction marked by faith but strengthened by grace breaks the intrusion of everything that drove her away from God's will²¹⁸.

Urbański also believed that each of the consecrated persons in the sphere of faith should act in such a way that, at the end of earthly life, she could say, after the author of the Letter to Timothy: I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.

From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, (2 Tim. 4,7-8)? The implementation of such assumptions will occur when they are accompanied by the zeal that leads to the heights of perfection. The meeting with the Eternal Judge then becomes nothing more than a reward for faithfully doing God's will. It is the full union to such extent that man and God are one (cf. Jn 17: 19-21)²¹⁹.

²¹⁶ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. A. Pigna, *La vita religiosa, IV - La obbedienza*, Roma 1985, pp. 65-70, 71-78, 79-80.

²¹⁷ Cf. S. Urbański, *Trzy etapy życia duchowego*, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

²¹⁸ Cf. A. Ballestrero, *Wiara, nadzieja i miłość drogą do świętości*, Kraków 2000, p. 127; A. Perzyński, *Życie duchowością dziecięctwa według Anzelma Gądka OCD (1884-1969)*, „Rocznik Teologii Katolickiej” 2007, vol. VI, p. 87; S. Urbański, *Duchowość zmartwychwstańcza*, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

²¹⁹ S. Urbański, *Etapy rozwoju życia duchowego*, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

2. Following Christ

Following Jesus Christ is another feature of religious spirituality. Christians are united particularly with Christ and are destined to conform to him (cf. Rom 8:29)? That is why every Christian is called to follow his Master²²⁰. In particular, consecrated persons are obliged to do so. In the reflections on this quality of spirituality, theologians emphasize: getting to know the Son of God, union with the suffering Christ, and devotion to Him.

2.1. Getting to know the Son of God

Before Bochenek presents getting to know of God's Son, he first writes about the cognitive possibilities of the man himself. He reminds us that God not only created the world but also desires that

²²⁰ Cf. J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, op. cit., p. 76-77; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 105.

His most perfect work, which is man, would be saved²²¹. This was the primary purpose of creation. Therefore, man, being the image and likeness of the Creator, was at the very beginning allowed to know God directly. Therefore resembling the Creator, he was destined for eternal glory. This idea was based on the close union of God with the man. As a result, man became a living member of the Mystical Body of God. Moreover, he entered into communication with God in this way²²². By this term is called not only the participation of man in happiness but also in the qualities of God. This condition took place in paradise. Man and God could lead a shared life²²³. However, as a result of original sin, man through his fault has lost the happiness of knowing the Creator, which was accomplished by being with Him constantly. The founders of Polish schools of spirituality note that as a result of sin, this blessing of creation could be a burden for man. Worse still, it could have turned into a defeat against the man if the Redemption had not occurred²²⁴. Everyone, therefore, should be aware of this truth that happened in the person of Jesus Christ – the Son of God²²⁵. It is possible when an enlightened by faith mind is used for it²²⁶. Mind, according to Słomka although a gift from God himself, became *obscured* as a result of original sin²²⁷. The reason for this is the lack of a view of world affairs in harmony with God's Wisdom. All people affected by this flaw continue to use reason, but only with limited cognitive ability. However, this does not allow this possibility of knowing the Creator that the first

²²¹ Cf. *ibid.*

²²² Cf. Św. Teresa od Dzieciątka Jezus, *Dzieje duszy*, op. cit., p. 465.

²²³ Cf. *ibid.*

²²⁴ Cf. E. Weron, *Teologia życia*, op. cit., p. 72; A. Słomkowski, *Teologia życia*, op. cit., p. 53.

²²⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

²²⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

²²⁷ Cf. W. Słomka, *Charyzmat św. Teresy z Lisieux a powszechne powołanie do świętości*, in: *W Sercu Kościoła będą Miłością*, Kraków 1998, p. 25.

parents had in paradise. Original sin leaves a triple mark. First of all, a person experienced with an eclipse of the mind does not recognize his falls, the redemption of the Son of God, and the necessity of the grace he has merited for salvation²²⁸. Secondly, he doesn't accept the contamination of his nature. This inclination is the awakening of passion at the expense of eliminating the redemption of the Son of God, which shows the corruption of one's soul²²⁹. These people, basing their lives only on what is inherent, try to reform everything according to their light²³⁰. In this way, man deprives himself of the opportunity to know the Son of God²³¹.

The mind is a natural gift offered to man by God²³². With the help of reason, man can come to natural cognition, that is, to know the very fact of God's existence. However, it cannot be used to come to know God's essence. The reality of God in an endless way is exceeding the cognitive abilities of the human mind. Therefore, the mind to fulfill its duty well towards man, it must surrender its action entirely to the Son of God (cf. Jn 14:24; Mt 7:21)²³³. Therefore, in the process of this knowledge, Jesus' help is necessary as the form of a supernatural light of faith, which man receives in the sacrament of baptism²³⁴. By this sacrament, the reason acquires the inner capacity to receive the *revealed light*²³⁵. It allows man to get to know

²²⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

²²⁹ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Implikacje do formacji zakonnej wynikające z „Małej drogi” św. Teresy z Lisieux*, in: *W Sercu Kościoła będą Mitością*, op. cit., p. 117.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

²³¹ Cf. *ibid.*

²³² Cf. M. Smilgin, *Świętość w pismach ks. Michała Sopoćko*, Wrocław–Gorzów Wlkp. 1993, pp. 21–22; J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, op. cit., p. 83; L. Bouyer, *Duch Święty Pocieszyciel. Duch Święty i życie w łasce*, trans. L. Rutkowska, Kraków 1998, p. 353.

²³³ Cf. W. Granat, *Dogmatyka katolicka*, Lublin 1960, vol. VI, p. 226.

²³⁴ Cf. S. Urbański, *Trzy etapy życia duchowego w ujęciu Sługi Bożego o. Anzelma Gądka* OCD, op. cit., p. 111; A. Ballestrero, *Wiara, nadzieja i miłość drogą do świętości*, op. cit., p. 127; A. Perzyński, *Życie duchowością dziecięctwa*, op. cit., p. 87.

²³⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

anew and understand through the Son of God his attitude towards his Creator. It enables him to choose the way to follow Christ²³⁶.

Hence, Szałkowska claims that only mind enlightened by faith can know the Son of God. But God's revelation expressed in Jesus is necessary for this. Knowing God is nothing more than exploring His nature, works, and the law He established. All this is done with the participation of the virtue of faith because a person can know about Christ only what He has wanted to reveal about himself and the Father²³⁷. God, therefore, by revealing himself to man in Jesus Christ, can show his reason, enlightened by faith, everything he has prepared for him²³⁸. The fullness of God's revelation took place in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Therefore, whoever has the opportunity to know Christ will also know the Father, because the Son and the Father are one (cf. Jn 17: 19-21)²³⁹. Faith, therefore, based on Revelation, allows us not only to recognize but also to know what he brought with his coming to earth in human nature, the Son of God²⁴⁰.

Spiritual theologians teaching monastic persons in this topic give several ways that they can use to know the Son of God. Faith in man, as Urbański notes, was born in the contemporary of Jesus, by His words²⁴¹. Jesus, knowing this, preached the Gospel. He wanted the Good News proclaimed by him to be credible. For this reason, he confirmed all his learning with everyday behavior. Such an attitude of Jesus made his contemporaries believe in the rightness

²³⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

²³⁷ Cf. T.K. Szałkowska, *Tajemnica miłosierdzia*, Warszawa 2005, p. 226–228; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 96.

²³⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

²³⁹ Cf. K. Dubel, *Charyzmat i duchowość Zgromadzenia Sióstr Karmelitanek Dzieciątka Jezus*, in: *Sługa Boży o. Anzelm Gądek OCD w służbie życia konsekrowanego*, op. cit., p. 193.

²⁴⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁴¹ Cf. *ibid.*

of his teachings²⁴². Based on the teachings of St. Paul, the teaching of the Catholic Church confirmed this truth with the conviction that faith is born and shaped under the influence of the heard Word of Christ (cf. Rom 10:17)²⁴³. It leads the Christian to follow Christ and to thoroughly become acquainted with the truths of faith. They show clearly that to fully know Jesus, not only human knowledge is enough, but faith is necessary. Faith-based on God's truths allows man to get to know the Son of God thoroughly by acquiring knowledge²⁴⁴. Constant knowledge of these truths increases faith, thanks to which a Christian can know the perfection of Jesus. Feliński recognizes these truths not only as a condition for getting to know Christ through faith but also as a reason for giving Him due glory and a motive for salvation²⁴⁵.

To make it easier to get to know himself, Christ chose to remain with people forever. He did this by making the Church His Mystical Body. He is to be God's instrument in the work of redemption that, once accomplished on Calvary, lasts forever²⁴⁶. And because in Him the Savior's triple mission is now accomplished to reparation the justice of the Father for sins and to make it possible to achieve the Kingdom of God, Christ left the inexhaustible treasury of graces to those who want to follow Him. Therefore is important to know how to use the condition earned by Jesus. The more that Jesus,

²⁴² Cf. J. Nowak, *Człowiek wiary, nadziei i miłości*, Katowice 1988, p. 17; *Introduction à l'Union intime avec Dieu, d'après l'Imitation*, Paris 1916 (Téqui), p. 9.

²⁴³ Cf. J. Nowak, *Człowiek wiary, nadziei i miłości*, op. cit., p. 17.

²⁴⁴ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *Katechezy Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II. Jezus Chrystus*, Kraków-Ząbki 1999, p. 303; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., p. 260; cf. S.Th. II-a II-ae, q. 15.

²⁴⁵ Cf. W. Dąbrowski, *Chrystus Pedagog według św. Tomasza z Akwinu*, „*Studia Theologica Varsaviensia*” 35, 1997, p. 28; S. Kobiela, *Krzyż Chrystusa. Od znaku i figury do symbolu i metafory*, Warszawa 2000, p. 28; A. Słomkowski, *Miłosierdzie Boże we Wcieleniu i Odkupieniu*, in: *Ewangelia miłosierdzia*, ed. ks. W. Granat, Poznań-Warszawa 1970, p. 100; E. Weron, *Modlitwa chrześcijanina*, op. cit., p. 76.

²⁴⁶ Cf. P. Ogórek, *Mistyka według Tomasza Mertona*, op. cit., p. 199; A. Tanquerey, *Zarys teologii ascetycznej i mistycznej*, Kraków 1949, vol. I, p. 359; S. Urbański, *Mistyczny wymiar świętości*, op. cit., pp. 391-405.

with his passion and death, though in a non-bloody way, continues to purify us; He restores to his followers the dignity of God's children and, through the power of the sacraments, gives them the strength to achieve eternal happiness²⁴⁷. Such a state of affairs is possible because the Church, by God's will, has become a minister of the sacraments, a guardian, and, above all, an interpreter of supernatural science. The essence of this activity of the Church is that man, in the mission of the Church, should know how to get to know the teaching of Christ²⁴⁸. If he does not do so, *inner darkness*²⁴⁹ may form in him, which will deprive him, in the specified time, of the ability to know the Son of God²⁵⁰.

To warn consecrated persons about this condition, Ratzinger gives the saints of the Church as a model of correct behavior. For they, being people generously endowed with the attributes of nature and grace, they point to ways to know the Son of God²⁵¹.

Based on their spiritual experiences, Ratzinger explained to those under his care that Jesus Christ in the Church allows man to know Himself. This is done primarily through prayer. According to him, a person who wants to get to know the Son of God in the Church continuously and more deeply should talk to him inside his heart. In the heart, an encounter with Jesus takes place very often without human words²⁵². Prayer enables man to meet Jesus in the depths of his heart. Then His Kingdom is present in man. Therefore,

²⁴⁷ Cf. H. Wyczawski, *Arcybiskup Zygmunt Szczęsny Feliński*, op. cit., pp. 310–311, 351–352, 440–441; Cf. S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 188, a. 7, ad 1; a. 8.

²⁴⁸ Cf. A. Tanquerey, op. cit., vol. I, p. 359.

²⁴⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁵⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁵¹ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *W drodze do Jezusa Chrystusa*, op. cit., p. 11; P. Arrupe, *La vita religiosa oggi*, „*Vita consecrata*” 12, 1982, p. 733.

²⁵² Cf. J. Ratzinger, *W drodze do Jezusa Chrystusa*, op. cit., p. 11; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., p. 173.

it is the King who should be among his subjects. Christ does this through the Church – His Mystical Body. Man, on his part, striving to meet Him, should achieve a state of internal readiness, which the teaching of the Catholic Church describes as full justice²⁵³. Therefore Jesus, living inside a person, makes himself known to this person if her heart is His real Kingdom, i.e. when the man is properly prepared for it by prayer²⁵⁴.

Getting to know the Son of God during prayer also enables to consider the work of redemption²⁵⁵. Redemption is the most perfect and free gift given to man by Him. Because the man offended God by original sin, sin itself became infinite evil. The reason for this is the infinity of the Creator himself and the size of the ransom that the Son of God himself became. When committing evil, a man had to reckon with the fact that he would be punished for its effects. Eternal damnation was the proper punishment for the offense committed. This is also the punishment that the Creator, as just God, has appointed²⁵⁶. However, to reconcile man with himself, he sent the Son of God, who through death redeemed him and gave him the possibility of God's mercy to appear and act in him. The important thing in all this is that during prayer, a person should be able to see Jesus and acquire the ability to recognize the Son of God who is coming to him²⁵⁷.

²⁵³ Cf. J. Schryvers, *Zasady życia duchowego*, Kraków 1926, p. 162.

²⁵⁴ Cf. J. Schryvers, *Zasady życia duchowego*, op. cit., p. 162; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., p. 178.

²⁵⁵ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. E. Nęcek, *Miłosierdzie wyrazem twórczej miłości*, „*Życie Konsekrowane*” 2013, no. 2, pp. 39–40.

²⁵⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁵⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

2.2. Union with the suffering Christ

In deliberations, theologians of spirituality first pay attention to the suffering of Christ contained in the work of human redemption, and then to the need for union with the suffering Savior. The death of the Savior, which was a crime for the Jews, was so much part of the intention of Providence that Christ himself confessed that he had come into the world to *fulfill this bitter cup*. In this way, Jesus confirmed that suffering was an event planned by God. And He only fulfilled this will²⁵⁸. The suffering and torment of the Savior were also foretold by God. God has already revealed the details of this saving passion through the prophets. However, it was fulfilled by the Son of God himself, who came to earth to *shed his holy blood for mankind*²⁵⁹.

The teaching of the Catholic Church emphasizes that Christ came into the world and became a man for this, he worked, taught, called the Apostles to help him, to atone for human sins by suffering death on the cross and to leave an example of the greatest sacrifice of love, the sacrifice of life. Jesus accepted this suffering in order to win human hearts and reign in them²⁶⁰.

The passion of Christ and His suffering thus became the fulfillment of the Savior's mission. Through earthly suffering, Jesus first *obtained the forgiveness of the angry Father*²⁶¹, that is, he reconciled

²⁵⁸ Cf. L.M. Neves, *Życie zakonne*, op. cit., pp. 241–246; A. Pierożek, *Problem poznawania i wypełnienia woli Bożej w świetle listów Księdza Arcybiskupa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, tscp of md, ARMW, Warszawa 2000, p. 36.

²⁵⁹ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., pp. 178, 191, 216.

²⁶⁰ Cf. T. Trzaskawka, *Rola miłości w zjednoczeniu mistycznym chrześcijanina*, op. cit., pp. 124–125; L. Rapała, *Fenomen cierpienia w świetle życia i nauczaniu Abpa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, in: *Duchowa spuścizna Abpa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, ed. J. Machniak, Kraków 2002, pp. 239–240; Cf. S. th., II-a II-ae, q. 188, a. 7, ad 1; a. 8.

²⁶¹ Cf. L. Rapała, *Fenomen cierpienia w świetle życia i nauczaniu Abpa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, op. cit., pp. 239–240.

people with God. Secondly, he obtained the grace of divine filiation, which we receive through holy baptism, becoming the Lord's chosen friends²⁶². Third, Christ, through his torment, has left people an inexhaustible treasure trove²⁶³ of graces that he grants to those who wish to follow Him²⁶⁴. Christ fulfilled this threefold task not only by suffering torment and death, but he continues to do it through his Mystical Body²⁶⁵. While hanging on the cross, he did not stop working for human salvation²⁶⁶. Christ's sacrifice and his suffering continue²⁶⁷. For the same sacrifice of the cross, which became the source of salvation, is constantly offered for sins today, in a non-bloody way by the hands of the priest. Christ's faithful followers fulfill it by offering their afflictions and sufferings for the Church²⁶⁸. Through this participation in the sufferings of the Savior, His worshipers achieve a share in His glory, not only for themselves but also for those for whom they offer their sufferings²⁶⁹. By uniting to the suffering of Jesus, the man realizes that He has redeemed human sins²⁷⁰. Sin is an evil that corresponds to eternal punishment, and only the Blood of the Son of God could redeem him. Jesus died for every sin because every sin offends God. He shed his Blood for even the slightest venial sin. That is why God in his inexhaustible mercy forgives people every evil²⁷¹. Unity with the suffering Christ makes us realize that he suffered, also for

²⁶² Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 336.

²⁶³ Cf. *ibid.*; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, op. cit., p. 196.

²⁶⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁶⁵ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 35.

²⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 68.

²⁶⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁶⁸ Cf. *ibid.*; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, op. cit., p. 254.

²⁶⁹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 236; cf. J. Vosté, *Studia Joannea*, Roma 1930, p. 323.

²⁷⁰ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 176.

²⁷¹ Cf. *ibid.*

souls striving for union with Him, who cares for grace and thirst for God's glory²⁷². In other words, he suffered and carried the cross with love for every soul that was called, and he testified this love with his death on the cross²⁷³.

According to spiritual theologians, suffering was inflicted on Christ by people of that time in a direct and bodily way. Some of them were aware that they were murdering an innocent. Yet in their blindness, they did not think He was God. That is why Christ, with great love through this suffering, asks forgiveness for them, *Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing* (cf. Lk 23:34)²⁷⁴.

Górski notes that Christ's death did not change the nature of sin, because even today mortal sin deserves eternal punishment. The Savior's Cross Sacrifice redeemed from the torments of hell all those who want to use it. Even today, after the death of Jesus, hell remains open to unrepentant and incorrigible sinners²⁷⁵. The teaching of the Catholic Church emphasizes that converts who repent for their sins are obliged to make amends for their sins²⁷⁶. For if someone does not desire unity with the suffering Jesus, that is, does not want conversion and atonement, Christ cannot show him mercy²⁷⁷.

Through his Passion, Christ also merits man the right to an eternal inheritance²⁷⁸. It is nothing but the reconciliation of man with

²⁷² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 20; W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., p. 244.

²⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 174; cf. M. Gogacz, *Filozoficzne aspekty mistyki. Materiały do filozofii mistyki*, Warszawa 1985, p. 122–123; R.W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages*, New Haven (CT) 1963, p. 234.

²⁷⁴ Cf. K. Górski, *Duchowość chrześcijańska*, Wrocław 1978, p. 245.

²⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁷⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁷⁷ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., p. 248.

²⁷⁸ Cf. F. Mickiewicz, *Krocząc śladami męki Chrystusa. Komentarz teologiczno-duchowy do ewangelicznych opisów męki, śmierci i zmartwychwstania Jezusa Chrystusa*, Ząbki 2000, pp. 319–324; L. Rapała, *Fenomen cierpienia*, op. cit., pp. 239–240; W. Gałązka, *Duchowy sens cierpienia na podstawie nauczania o. Anzelma Gądka*, in: *Duchowość cierpienia*, series: *Mistyka Polska* 103, Warszawa 2010, pp. 217–230.

God. By this Christ invites man to share in God's glory. This glory is achieved through the grace of divine filiation, which man receives in baptism. Christ strengthens with this grace through the ministry of the Church, especially in the sacraments²⁷⁹. Grace in union with his suffering enables man to achieve eternal happiness in heaven²⁸⁰.

Trzaskawka here emphasizes the merits of Jesus' suffering by writing that He healed humanity with the *love of the Cross*²⁸¹. Christ's suffering which He endured for the poor, humiliated, afflicted and sinners bring people a lasting peace of heart and conscience²⁸². However, a condition must be achieved. A Christian is to love the Cross of Christ because it was thanks to Him that redemption was accomplished²⁸³.

Rapała notices that despite the redemption made by the Savior and the right to forgive sins and punishments due to the Church, the strict duty of believers is to make amends for sins in a spirit of penance. He encourages the fulfillment of this duty since it aims to at least partially accept the sufferings of Christ. Compassion as an expression of penance cannot be merely a burdensome duty, requiring heroic courage from those consecrated to God. Above all, it is to be a conscious and free choice, flowing from the heart and closely connected with the Savior's Passion, offered for our sins²⁸⁴. Therefore, Liszka puts the suffering of Jesus on a par with

²⁷⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁸⁰ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 96; Cf. S. th., op. cit., I-a II-ae, q. 114, a. 9.

²⁸¹ Cf. T. Trzaskawka, *Rola cnót teologalnych*, op. cit., p. 100; Św. Augustyn, *Wyznania*, vol. 9, 10, 13, Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2018; idem, *Państwo Boże*, Hachette, Warszawa 2010, vol. 2, pp. 13, 20–21; 14, 10–13.

²⁸² Cf. T. Trzaskawka, *Rola cnót teologalnych*, op. cit., p. 100.

²⁸³ Cf. L. Rapała, *Fenomen cierpienia*, op. cit., p. 88; St. Francis De Sales, *Treatise*, op. cit., vol. VIII, ch. III; vol. XI, ch. VI.

²⁸⁴ Cf. L. Rapała, *Fenomen cierpienia*, op. cit., p. 88; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 338, 340–342.

His love for God and people. It is endless, lasts as His love. For Christ has not ceased to suffer and love over time²⁸⁵.

Analyzing the science of union with the suffering Christ in the work of human salvation, we notice that the essential features of this suffering are mentioned and described. Jesus' suffering is reflected throughout his life; from the stable in Bethlehem, where he was laid in a manger, among cattle, through the carpenter's workshop, hard work, life in poverty, to the suffering suffered during cruel torment²⁸⁶. It is noted that Jesus suffered both physical, such as scourging and spitting, and spiritual, such as being exposed on the cross, slander, and humiliation. The suffering was caused to him by the people he sacrificed for²⁸⁷. The teaching of the Catholic Church emphasizes that Jesus, in suffering, gave himself up not only to people and endured all pains patiently²⁸⁸. He gave himself completely to God above all. This fully shows the image of Jesus stretched on the tree of the cross between heaven and earth. This is evidence of Christ's total dedication to people. It was devotion until sacrifice of Himself²⁸⁹. In union with the suffering Christ, despite the pain, we see serenity and joy²⁹⁰. Because carrying the Cross to Golgotha was nice to Jesus. Christ loved his suffering, he loved the cross²⁹¹. And although was heavy greeted him with the kiss, accepting on his shoulders and three times collapsing carried him

²⁸⁵ Cf. P. Liszka, *Charyzmatyczna moc życia zakonnego*, op. cit., p. 181; St. Francis De Sales, *Treatise*, op. cit., vol. I, ch. IX, XVI, XVII, XVIII.

²⁸⁶ Cf. P. Liszka, *Charyzmatyczna moc życia zakonnego*, op. cit., p. 181.

²⁸⁷ Cf. Paweł VI, *Właściwa odnowa zakonna*, in: idem, *Charyzmat życia zakonnego*, op. cit., p. 160–161; Prayer, according to St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus, is the elevation of the heart, a simple look to Heaven, a cry of gratitude and love both in suffering and in joy, as cited, in: P. Salamon, *Liturgia Kościoła w służbie życia konsekrowanego*, in: *Życie we wspólnocie zakonnej. Formacja zakonna*, vol. 7, ed. J. Gogola, Kraków 2002, p. 36; cf. J. Kiciński, *Powołanie – konsekracja – misja*, op. cit., p. 156.

²⁸⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁸⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

²⁹¹ Cf. *ibid.*

to – Mountain of Calvary place of executions²⁹². Jesus suffers, although he is innocent. He suffers like a sacrificial lamb. He endures all suffering with silence, does not murmur against his oppressors, but accepts this undeserved suffering voluntarily²⁹³.

Another element of the Savior's suffering is that Jesus offers His suffering to the Father for people. This attitude shows not only God's love for man. It also includes the most perfect Sacrifice of his Son to God. But in love, one should look for the most important element of the Savior's suffering²⁹⁴. It is a disinterested love, therefore it can be said that Christ's suffering was also disinterested. Christ's suffering is Christ's love. This love is revealed in his suffering²⁹⁵. Thus, the greatest gift Christ could give to his Father was to do His will, becoming obedient to death²⁹⁶.

Christ's saving suffering continues because his sacrifice lasts. Therefore, the Sacred Heart of the Savior constantly pours on people the grace of forgiveness and love²⁹⁷. Christ's sacrifice is God's sacrifice to man – the sacrifice of the Heart – *which loves people so much*²⁹⁸. It points out that Christ, to show how much He loves man, allowed his side to be pierced with a spear, and by pointing to him, he shows a great, perfect love for people²⁹⁹.

The teaching of the Catholic Church states that Christ also suffers today. The justification for this is that every sin committed by man today hurts His Merciful Heart as much as all suffering during

²⁹² Cf. *ibid.*

²⁹³ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., p. 61.

²⁹⁴ Cf. Św. Tomasz z Akwinu, STh I, q. 28, a. 1; Św. Augustyn, *Sermones de tempore*, Sermo CLXVII, PL 38; Cf. J.P. Camus, *L'Esprit de saint Francois de Sales*, op. cit.

²⁹⁵ Cf. św. Augustyn, *Sermones de tempore*, op. cit., PL 38.

²⁹⁶ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 52.

²⁹⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 88; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., p. 61.

²⁹⁸ Cf. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Trzy okresy życia wewnętrznego*, op. cit., p. 354; A. Santorski, *Duchowość sakramentów chrześcijańskiej inicjacji*, op. cit., p. 174.

²⁹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

Passion and Death³⁰⁰. The Savior's Heart suffers even more painfully if sin is concealed in the sacrament of penance³⁰¹. The heart of Christ also experiences suffering because of the dishonest rendering of God's service, apparent fidelity, selfishness, and when the soul does not benefit from the fruits of redemption³⁰².

Therefore, it is emphasized that the soul devoted to God should unite itself with suffering Christ and shelter in His Heart, which has suffered so much³⁰³. All believers have such a task, and especially those who are called to do so are to take care of it³⁰⁴. The soul cannot be indifferent to the fruits of the Savior's Passion but should wish that they will fruit in her heart as much as possible and contribute to it with their sacrificial work³⁰⁵. This enables believers to share in the work of His suffering. Christ, as it were, inscribed this possibility in the essence of Christianity, teaching that every true disciple of Him walks the path of the Master and follow Him. We are to follow Christ also in suffering. He said himself: *Whoever wishes to come after me must, (...) take up his cross, and follow me* (Mt 16,24)³⁰⁶. Therefore, it is necessary to desire Christlikeness, which can be obtained by picking up your cross and following in His footsteps³⁰⁷.

³⁰⁰ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. W. Gałązka, *Duchowy sens cierpienia*, op. cit., pp. 217–230. Cf. S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 26, a. 7.

³⁰¹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Duchowy sens cierpienia*, op. cit., pp. 217–230; *idem*, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., pp. 227–241.

³⁰² Cf. *ibid.*

³⁰³ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁰⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁰⁵ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., pp. 104–105; Cf. S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 157, a. 1, 2.

³⁰⁶ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., pp. 104–105.

³⁰⁷ Cf. *ibid.*; I see that you have already understood the whole depth of the wisdom of the cross, since you no longer desire and intend anything except what pleases your Heavenly Bridegroom; comfort or affliction, light or darkness, success or disappointment – all these are merely means leading to the goal of union with God; cf. G. Turbessi, *Imitazione (e sequela) di Cristo*, in: *Dizionario enciclopedico di spiritualità*, Roma 1990, II, pp. 1267–1270.

Therefore, Suchocka encourages us to suffer with Christ, and through it, to participate in the work of redemption. It states that the only wisdom of the penitent is: the madness of the cross³⁰⁸. The whole life of a nun is to be filled with suffering and love. The theologians of spirituality describe the life of those called to a special co-suffering with Christ as a *long mortification on the cross*³⁰⁹. He claims that life on earth, the entire temporal world, is to become a huge instrument of penance. The soul that co-suffering with the Savior, demands nothing from the world except pain and affliction, it stays only with the Divine Bridegroom, striving towards Him in mind and heart, sacrifices its passion to Him³¹⁰.

Paszowska draws attention to the fact that the purpose of religious orders, and most of all penitential orders, is to love and accept the Cross with faith and dedication. The willingness to carry him behind the Cross of Christ for the glory of God is also an effective means of saving oneself and others³¹¹.

The suffering of a monastic person should have two basic goals. This is to be suffering for the glory of God and atonement for the sins of individual sisters and neighbors³¹². She believes that all suffering should be offered to God with Christ. And whenever you endure the persecution of others, you shouldn't pay them back in the same way. Whereas there is a need to readily accept suffering as a righteous punishment from God Himself, administered through people. At the same time, it encourages thanksgiving

³⁰⁸ Cf. B. Suchocka, *Jezus Chrystus wzorem posłuszeństwa zakonnego w świetle pism Arcybiskupa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego (1822–1895)*, (tscp, MA ARMW), Warszawa 2001, p. 44.

³⁰⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

³¹⁰ Cf. T. Paszowska, *Misterium konsekracji*, *op. cit.*, pp. 231–345; C. Parzyszek, *Życie konsekrowane w posoborowym nauczaniu Kościoła*, Ząbki 2007, p. 559; W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, *op. cit.*, pp. 227–241.

³¹¹ Cf. *ibid.*

³¹² Cf. *ibid.*

for this experience of suffering, because it helps make amends for sins. If, on the other hand, we suffer unjustly, let us forgive our persecutors like Jesus³¹³.

The teaching of the Catholic Church encourages us to remember the following words of St. Peter: *For whenever anyone bears the pain of unjust suffering because of consciousness of God, that is a grace. But what credit is there if you are patient when beaten for doing wrong? But if you are patient when you suffer for doing what is good, this is a grace before God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps.* "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth. When he was insulted, he returned no insult; when he suffered, he did not threaten; instead, he handed himself over to the one who judges justly (1P 2,19-23)³¹⁴. According to Paszkowska, this is a special task for people devoted to the exclusive service of God. This task is to be fulfilled with joy³¹⁵. The apostles, who were scourged at the behest of the Jewish Council, are set as a model of suffering with Christ. According to St. Luke, they went on, *rejoicing that they had been found worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name of Christ (Acts 5:41)*³¹⁶.

Spiritual theologians note that so the suffering of a monastic person was a real co-suffering with the Son of God, it must contain the same elements as the suffering of the Savior. Thus, it teaches that suffering should be endured with persistence, zeal, and love³¹⁷.

³¹³ Cf. John Paul II writes that the Eucharistic cult educates the Christian to love his neighbor, Jan Paweł II, *List Dominicae coenae*, op. cit., pp. 102–104; cf. J. Ratzinger, *Bóg jest blisko nas*, op. cit., p. 113.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Cf. T. Paszkowska, *Misterium konsekracji*, op. cit., p. 231–345; C. Parzyszek, *Życie konsekrowane...*, op. cit., p. 559; S. th., op. cit., I-a, q. 21, a. 4, ad 1.

³¹⁶ Cf. C. Parzyszek, *Życie konsekrowane...*, op. cit., p. 559; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., p. 61.

³¹⁷ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 61; G. de Myriam, *Louise de Ballon*, «*Dérobée et retrouvée*», Réformatrice des Bernardines, Paris 1935, p. 317.

This should be done without any doubt, willingly and with great trust. Only then will the sisters be able to enter Calvary with Christ³¹⁸. With love and for the love of God, they can accept all afflictions that encounter them, both physical and spiritual, which, by co-crucifying them with Christ, enables them to achieve God's glory³¹⁹. The model of suffering with Christ is recalled by St. Benedict, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ignacy Loyola, and other religious patriarchs³²⁰.

Spiritual theologians also notice that sisters are often afraid to unite with the suffering Christ because they are afraid of accepting the suffering and sacrifices that may befall them in life. They provide advice to be followed in times of fear. If suffering seems beyond human strength, it even becomes martyrdom, it encourages us to stick to the Crucified Savior and ask ourselves whether you love Christ. Then they recommend seeing the wounds that Jesus received for us and the drops of blood He shed for people. As gratitude, offer this suffering to God³²¹. Moreover, they recommend that these counsels be applied to the sufferings we experience in prayer when we do not understand the sufferings and trials that are being sent upon us. The soul, following only the instruction of faith, strengthened by grace, with submission and trust, accepts these painful crosses from the hand of God and joins them with the *Savior's Passion in love*³²².

³¹⁸ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dziewięctwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 61; cf. L. Crippa, *Il bene dell' obbedienza*, Milano 1987, p. 151.

³¹⁹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dziewięctwo duchowe...*, op. cit., pp. 303–306.

³²⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 303–306.

³²¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 339.

³²² P. Sieradzki, *Sługa Boży o. Anzelm Gądek OCD w służbie Kościoła powszechnego i Zakonu Karmelitańskiego*, in: *Sługa Boży o. Anzelm Gądek OCD w służbie życia konsekrowanego*, op. cit., pp. 27–42; O. Filek, *O. Anzelm od św. Andrzeja Corsini Karmelita Bosy (1884–1969)*, Rzym 1972; idem, *Gądek Maciej OCD*, in: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*, vol. 5, Lublin 1984, p. 910. Cf. L. Lallemand TJ, *La Doctrine spirituelle*, Rule IV, art. 3.

For religious people, suffering can also be a consolation for the soul, because it flows from God's heart. They are to sigh to them, desire them, and strive for them. To suffer with Christ, betrothed should fall in love with the Heart of the Spouse. This is her duty defined by the Religious Rule³²³. In all difficulties in enduring suffering of any kind, every consecrated person should seek strength, strength, and light in the Heart of God³²⁴.

2.3. Commitment to Jesus

Commitment to Jesus is discussed based on the way of purification. The beginning of this path is getting to know the essence of a perfect life and the desire to pursue holiness. Those who take their first steps on this path experience fear of God. Religious people at such a time do not like suffering. Sometimes they try to avoid him. However, if they experience it, they accept it because they prefer to suffer rather than offend God³²⁵.

The interior purification of a Christian, according to Tanquerey, surpasses his natural human powers. Therefore, what is needed is human involvement in spiritual work and God's help. The spiritual work of a religious person is therefore to consist of meeting the conditions indicated by the Redeemer. If this happens, then God does not refuse man an effective help in the form of His grace³²⁶.

³²³ Cf. O. Filek, *Gądek Maciej OCD*, op. cit., p. 910.

³²⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

³²⁵ Cf. A. Tanquerey, op. cit., vol. I, p. 394; J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, op. cit., pp. 55–56; S. Urbański, *Świętość chrześcijanina*, op. cit., pp. 333–366. S. th., op. cit., I-a II-ae, q. 68, a. 5.

³²⁶ Cf. S. Urbański, *Świętość chrześcijanina*, op. cit., pp. 333–366; cf. Lucien-Marie, *Expérience de Dieu. Actualité du message de Saint Jean de la Croix*, Paris 1968, p. 255.

Under the influence of this grace, a moment arises that causes a great desire for one's sanctification. Such a moment arises immediately or appears gradually under the influence of appropriate preparation. Nevertheless, it is always a certain and clear decision. It is also important at this point that an extremely simple but profound question should arise inside a person: *is it getting me closer or distancing me from God?*³²⁷ The answer to this question shows the true importance of the way of purification. This path makes a man good. It also teaches how to do God's will, which in turn provides a Christian with ultimate and complete devotion³²⁸.

On the path of purification that leads to a full and final surrender to Jesus, the positions of the scriptures indicate the necessity for man to see in himself the malice of sin. This sin is rebellion, disobedience, and ingratitude towards Jesus. It was the sin that made man lose what he was called to³²⁹.

Rebellion, disobedience, and man's ingratitude towards God followed his creation. For man has been gifted with the image and likeness of God himself. The consequence of this was that a man would become as good, wise, and strong as his Lord³³⁰. God's request was aimed at making the man feel more perfect than other creatures and was not guided only by passions. For they equate him with the rest of the creation, not with the Creator. Therefore, the greatest sin of man is that he humiliates his soul and makes it a slave of the body – the place of animal passions. And although he keeps his mind and will, he loses the purity of his feelings and refuses

³²⁷ Cf. S. Urbański, *Świętość chrześcijanina*, op. cit., pp. 333–366.

³²⁸ Cf. Św. Teresa od Jezusa, *Dzieła*, trans. H.P. Kossowski, Kraków 1995, p. 190; J.W. Gogoła OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 133–144.

³²⁹ Cf. E. Działa, *Rozwój życia wewnętrznego*, AK 1963, no. 55, vol. 66 (3–4) (326–327), p. 214; J.W. Gogoła OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., pp. 255–266.

³³⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

to obey his God³³¹. Man, being in such a state, still lives the world. By rebelling against his Lord, he becomes a wicked being³³². He wants nothing else in this state but to use and rule the earth³³³. At the same time, believes that everything he does is the best and perfect³³⁴. Satan prompts him to do this through contaminated desires such as the body and the world³³⁵. He sows his venom in man in the form of one of the deadly sins. The consequence of this is the non-compliance of man's will with the will of God. Discussing this issue, Słomkowski explains that anyone who questions the will of God stands up against the hand that moves everything according to His will³³⁶. Thus, by acting against God, the man not only commits a grave sin but also begins to lead himself through all degrees of doubt and unbelief³³⁷.

The founders of Polish schools of spirituality note that rebellion and disobedience as a sin develop gradually in man. First, sin has its share in the petty affairs of a man who explains his conduct with many apparent reasons³³⁸. The soul of man at this point is not devoid of the fear of the Lord. She can tame her passions to some extent so that the *external matters of moral disorder do not reveal her*³³⁹. Yet the source of all these little activities is already contaminated³⁴⁰. Then, under the influence of increasing selfishness, binding rules

³³¹ Cf. O. Filek, *Modlitwa odpocznienia*, in: *Mater spiritualium*, ed. O. Filek, Kraków 1974, p. 209; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., pp. 187–197. S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 151, a. 1, 2, 3.

³³² Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., pp. 187–197.

³³³ Cf. *ibid.*

³³⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

³³⁵ Cf. E. Weron, *Teologia życia*, op. cit., p. 72; Cf. S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 152, a. 3 i a. 5, ad 5.

³³⁶ Cf. A. Słomkowski, *Teologia życia*, op. cit., p. 53.

³³⁷ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. S.Th., II-II, 24, 9

³³⁸ Cf. Ch. Bernard, *Wprowadzenie*, op. cit., p. 109; W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., p. 252–253; Cf. S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 19.

³³⁹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., pp. 252–253.

³⁴⁰ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., pp. 61–76.

are broken³⁴¹. Faith in God is greatly strained. The basis of this state of affairs is that human deeds are not accepted by God, and He is not the motive and goal of human activity. His selfishness directs everything towards himself³⁴². Finally, the above actions, which are sinful, openly violate the established and binding law³⁴³. In this way, obedience to God is expressed by rejecting His will³⁴⁴. Whereas, the person himself becomes convinced that he did the right thing by following his own opinion. For the fruits of his deed correspond to selfish expectations³⁴⁵.

Such an attitude means that the benefits of creation and vocation may become a burden for man. It can also, if misused, become the greatest defeat for his spiritual life. The cause of this is considered to be ingratitude shown to God by man as a result of rebellion and disobedience³⁴⁶.

By developing this issue, one can conclude that a rebellious and disobedient man is inconsistent in his attitudes. In these negative values, he sees the cause of ingratitude. Only a thankless person can forget about the good shown to him. He only wants to achieve what can make his life more pleasant. This method does not lead to dedication to Jesus³⁴⁷.

³⁴¹ Cf. E. Płaskonka, op. cit., p. 64; Cf. S. th., op. cit., III-a, q. 7, a. 6.

³⁴² Cf. E. Płaskonka, op. cit., p. 64.

³⁴³ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 102.

³⁴⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁴⁵ Cf. Św. Teresa od Dzieciątka Jezus, *Rękopisy autobiograficzne*, trans. by A. Kuraś, Kraków 2017, pp. 324–326; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., pp. 255–266.

³⁴⁶ The teaching of Fr. Anselm Gądek is in line with the post-conciliar guidance of the Church. In the literature after 1962, the problem of the concept of consecration appears many times interchangeably. It refers both to the term profession of evangelical counsels and devotion to God. In Fr. Founder's terminology, it is used as an indication of God's action towards a person who, through the profession of the evangelical counsels, responds to a call to surrender to God. Thus, it will include both divine and human action; cf. T. Paszkowska, *Konsekracja*, in: *Leksykon duchowości katolickiej*, ed. M. Chmielewski, Lublin–Kraków 2002, pp. 428–432.

³⁴⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

Kotlewski warns consecrated persons against an attitude of ingratitude as it prevents dedication to Jesus. He also draws their attention to the attitude of people who, being rebellious and disobedient, oppose God's Providence. They do this to show questionable harm and to manifest their views against God. This is inappropriate. For it undermines the credibility of a Christian's actions, especially when he persistently persists in his ingratitude towards God's gifts³⁴⁸.

³⁴⁸ Cf. T. Kotlewski, *Z sercem hojnym i rozpalonym miłością*, Warszawa 2005, p. 268; S. th., op. cit., II-a II-ae, q. 122, a. 2.

3. Openness to the Holy Spirit

Before the coming to earth of the Only-Begotten Son, the merciful God spoke to man not only through the lips of the prophets but also through men inspired by the Holy Spirit³⁴⁹. The New Testament often speaks of the participation of the Holy Spirit in the salvific mysteries of Christ. This is evidenced by the presence of the Holy Spirit in the desert. It was the Holy Spirit who led the Savior to the place where he was tempted by Satan (cf. Mt 3:16; 4: 1)³⁵⁰. The Holy Spirit was present in all Jesus' activities, especially in His teaching. Also, the Apostles, supported by the power of the Holy Spirit, spread the teaching of Christ among all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and confirmed its truthfulness with their martyrdom. Jesus also promised them to send the Church the Holy Spirit³⁵¹.

³⁴⁹ Cf. J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, op. cit., p. 83; cf. S. Virgulin, *Lo Spirito Santo nel mistero di Cristo*, in: *Spirito Santo nella vita spirituale*, Roma 1991, pp. 39–58.

³⁵⁰ Cf. J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, op. cit., pp. 83–84.

³⁵¹ Cf. L. Bouyer, *Duch Święty Pocieszyciel*, op. cit., p. 353.

Bouyer, in his reflections on opening himself to the Holy Spirit, draws attention to the issue of the Holy Spirit as the Creator of supernatural life, the Holy Spirit living in the Church, who is the unifying force, and the Holy Spirit as the teacher of truth and love.

3.1. The Holy Spirit, the creator of supernatural life

Bouyer points out that supernatural life comes from the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who is the direct agent of the Christian's participation in the glory of Christ. It is He who heals and enlivens the human interior, sharing in the life of Christ. He points to this role of the Holy Spirit in one of the Conferences³⁵². He emphasizes that the incarnation of the Eternal Word and the redemption brought about by it, pouring the Spirit of Love in hearts reborn by grace, restore to people God's sonship lost by original sin. And now, thanks to the Holy Spirit, every child of God, having the life of grace in him, has the right to turn to God as to the best Father³⁵³.

According to Górski, the supernatural life that the Holy Spirit pours into the soul is implantation into the life of Jesus³⁵⁴. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is the creator of union with Christ and the agent of fruitful fulfillment of the tasks arising from the Christian's vocation³⁵⁵.

Ogórek justifies the above thesis in the words of St. Paul from the First Letter to the Corinthians: *you have had yourselves washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.* (1Kor 6,11). Thus, the Holy Spirit dwells

³⁵² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 353.

³⁵³ Cf. K. Górski, *Zarys dziejów duchowości*, op. cit., p. 343.

³⁵⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 342.

³⁵⁵ Cf. P. Ogórek, *Mistyka według Tomasza Mertona*, op. cit., pp. 116–117.

in the souls of believers, and the human body is His tabernacle (cf. 1 Cor 6:19), it is God's temple (cf. 1 Cor 3:16). He works in the soul of every person and sends his graces to each soul³⁵⁶.

Ogórek notes that as in the distribution of natural gifts also in distribution of the gifts of grace there is inequality. Following the Evangelist John, he claims that the Holy Spirit breathes wherever He wants because God gives the Spirit from immeasurable abundance (cf. Jn 3: 8,34). He gives many gifts to some, less generously to others, but requires everyone to develop their spiritual life in proportion to the number of gifts received³⁵⁷. According to the teachings of St. John of the Cross, the teaching of the Catholic Church emphasizes that love in man is the reason why the Holy Spirit gives him his gifts. The more a person grows in love, the more opens himself to the Holy Spirit, who enlightens him and helps him grow in holiness³⁵⁸.

Speaking about the role of the Holy Spirit in the spiritual life of a person called to the exclusive service of God, Działa emphasizes the need to be open to His actions if he wants to develop an inner life. For where the Holy Spirit is at work in the soul, supernatural life develops³⁵⁹. Elsewhere the teaching of the Catholic Church explains that in such a soul the fullness of Christian virtues develops³⁶⁰. And the soul open to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit and thus cooperate with Him is described as internally beautiful. Such a soul attracts other persons to holiness³⁶¹.

³⁵⁶ Ibid.

³⁵⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁵⁸ Cf. E. Działa, *Rozwój życia wewnętrznego*, op. cit., pp. 218–219; S. Urbański, *Świętość chrześcijanina*, op. cit., pp. 333–348;

³⁵⁹ Cf. S. Urbański, *Świętość chrześcijanina*, op. cit., pp. 218–219; cf. E. Gambari, *Per me vivere è la Chiesa*, Roma 1968, pp. 34–50.

³⁶⁰ Cf. P. Góralczyk, *Być dzieckiem dla Boga*, "Communio" 3–27, 1987, pp. 75–86.

³⁶¹ Cf. *ibid.*; S. Urbański, *Świętość chrześcijanina*, op. cit., pp. 349–366.

Spiritual experience has convinced theologians of spirituality that every Christian, acting under the influence of the Holy Spirit, becomes His “instrument” and experiences exceptional interior consolations³⁶². The experience of peace and joy is especially connected with the action of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity³⁶³. For this reason, Parzyszek counts joy and peace as the fruit of the Holy Spirit, as the Apostle does in the Letter to the Galatians (cf. Gal 5:22)³⁶⁴.

The development of the inner life depends on prayer in which the Holy Spirit acts³⁶⁵. The prayer of the Church, and thus individual prayer in the name of Jesus’ merits, help most effectively in all spiritual efforts because it draws its strength from the grace of the Holy Spirit working in the Church³⁶⁶. In prayer, God speaks to man through the Holy Spirit and reveals His will. For this reason, spiritual theologians also advise following the inspirations of the Holy Spirit in prayer³⁶⁷.

Filek also draws attention to the help of the Holy Spirit in shaping conscience and His role in the sacrament of penance. It is the Holy Spirit who, thanks to his light, helps to *dispel the darkness that lies in the sinful conscience*³⁶⁸, that is, he enlightens the person to recognize the condition of his soul³⁶⁹. It states that without His action man is not able to do it himself³⁷⁰. Therefore, it emphasizes the need

³⁶² Cf. *ibid.*

³⁶³ Cf. E. Parzyszek, *Życie konsekrowane...*, op. cit., p. 487–490.

³⁶⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁶⁵ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p.23; cf. Ch.A. Besnard, *La prière chrétienne*, Burges 1967, p. 93.

³⁶⁶ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 23.

³⁶⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁶⁸ Cf. O. Filek, *O. Anzelm od św. Andrzeja Corsini. Wspomnienie z okazji 50-lecia powstania Zgromadzenia Sióstr Karmelitanek Dzieciątka Jezus*, Rzym 1972, pp. 23–24, 27–28.

³⁶⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁷⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

to start preparing for confession, i.e. examination of conscience, by summoning the help of the Holy Spirit, because He frees you from sin³⁷¹.

Spiritual theologians sensitize consecrated persons to the effects of sin against the Holy Spirit, which hinder the development of the spiritual life. They quote the words of the Savior himself: *whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come* (cf. Mt 12:32), they warn against the importance of this. sin³⁷².

Openness to the action of the Holy Spirit in the development of spiritual life with apostolic work. They claim that only a Christian, supported by a deep life of faith, hope and love, and obedient to the Holy Spirit, gives himself up to his apostolic work³⁷³.

3.2. The Holy Spirit lives in the Church and is a unifying force

Parzyszek emphasizes that all the symptoms of supernatural life in the Church are the fruit of the Holy Spirit³⁷⁴ who is eternal, unchanging, and present everywhere. She lives constantly in the Church, hosting her members with her grace³⁷⁵. The main purpose of the Holy Spirit's action is the sanctification of the Church. That is why he gives the Church his gifts. Referring to the teachings of St. Paul's spiritual theologians state that gifts are different, but

³⁷¹ Cf. B. Przybylski, *Istota życia zakonnego*, AK 1967, vol. 70, no. 5/6, pp. 278–279; E. Weron, *Teologiczne podstawy duchowości wcielenia*, „Collectanea Theologica” 1971, vol. 41, no. 1, p. 76.

³⁷² Cf. *ibid.*

³⁷³ Cf. C. Parzyszek, *Życie konsekrowane...*, op. cit., p. 396; idem, *Jan Paweł II – animator życia konsekrowanego*, „Życie Konsekrowane” 2006, no. 2, pp. 280–295; cf. *Orędzie Jego Świętobliwości Papieża Jana Pawła II na Dzień Życia Konsekrowanego*, Ząbki 1997, p. 14.

³⁷⁴ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 360, 362.

³⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

it must be remembered that they all come from the one, eternal and unchanging Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 12: 4-5), who is always present in the Church and always works in him³⁷⁶.

Therefore, the presence and indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church is the principle of his unity, because it unites all believers in Christ³⁷⁷. Quoting the words of St. Paul from the First Letter to the Corinthians: For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. There are different gifts of grace, but the same Spirit; there are also different types of service, but one God, the author of all in all (cf. 1 Cor 12: 4-6, 13) This unity of the Church, to which we have been incorporated through holy baptism, is emphasized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He also writes that from the moment of receiving the first sacrament, the newly baptized, becoming a member of the community of believers, becomes one with this community and with the Holy Spirit³⁷⁸.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit is a unifying force, expressed in the co-joying and co-suffering of individual members of the Church. Spiritual theologians argue that this unity of the Body of Christ concerning the things that flow from the spirit of the Church comes from the fact that the Holy Spirit permeates all manifestations of supernatural life in the Church³⁷⁹. Its unity depends only on the Holy Spirit. The teaching of the Catholic Church emphasizes this by telling consecrated persons about the unity of the various congregations. In their

³⁷⁶ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. J.C. Cervera, *Linee teologiche portanti, dimensione trinitaria ed ecclesiale-mariana della Cita consacrata*, in: A. Vari, *Consacrata Dio dono alle Chiesa e al mondo. Approfondimenti sull'Esortazione. Via conecrata*, Roma 1997, pp. 63-96.

³⁷⁷ Cf. M. Smilgin, *Świętość w pismach ks. Michała Sopoćko*, op. cit., pp. 21-22; J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, op. cit., p. 83; L. Bouyer, *Duch Święty Pocieszyciel*, op. cit., p. 353; cf. S. Virgulin, op. cit., p. 46.

³⁷⁸ Cf. L. Bouyer, *Duch Święty Pocieszyciel*, op. cit., p. 76.

³⁷⁹ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. S. Virgulin, op. cit., p. 48.

opinion, only the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Love, harmony, and strength at the same time, has the power to unite a community so that no external or internal difficulties could break this unity. The necessary condition for the true unity of every community, of the Congregation, and finally of the whole Church, is perfect love for God and neighbor, for which every member of the Church should strive. For the Holy Spirit unites through love³⁸⁰.

Taking the primeval Church as a model of unity, T. Merton says that the Holy Spirit testifies that in multitudes of believers there was one heart and one soul, neither of them called his what he had, but they had everything in common (cf. Acts 4,32)³⁸¹. Thus, it invites consecrated persons to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Love, in the pursuit of unity with one another. Merton states that the activity of the Holy Spirit in the Church implies the cooperation of people who, by voluntary decision, may enter into the work of unity or resist or limit it³⁸².

Merton also encourages the adoption of all the decisions and teaching of the Church. For in all the activities of the Church, the Holy Spirit sends his breath upon believers. The Church, therefore, exists under his inspiration³⁸³.

Merton also presents the Holy Spirit as the inner strength, the soul of the Church, which animates the Body. The Holy Spirit points to an essential feature of the Church, which, despite the sins existing in his community, will never perish. There will always be truth and love in the Church because the Holy Spirit works effectively in him³⁸⁴.

³⁸⁰ Cf. T. Merton, *Wspinaczka ku Prawdzie*, op. cit., p. 42.

³⁸¹ Ibid.; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 65.

³⁸² Cf. *ibid.*

³⁸³ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., p. 264-273.

³⁸⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

3.3. The Holy Spirit a teacher of truth and love

Bar emphasizes another important element of the teaching of the Holy Spirit that He is a teacher of truth and love. Among others, after the Letter of St. John the Apostle writes that the Holy Spirit asks the members of the Body of Christ to love not in word, but in deed and truth (cf. 1 John 3:18) True love manifests itself in concrete actions, both in works for the soul and the body³⁸⁵. Only when these conditions are met can we speak of true love. So, true love is love in deed and truth³⁸⁶. Spiritual theologians point out that the essential character of true love is explained by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of St. Paul, who writes: Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, (...) It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.(1 Cor13: 4-7)³⁸⁷. In another statement, he says that the Holy Spirit teaches love that it is as strong as death. This explains that just as death empties a man of everything, so true love regenerates him to a new life in the glory of the Lord, it frees him completely from the old man³⁸⁸. This transformation is brought about by the Holy Spirit, who reveals the forgiving love of God himself³⁸⁹.

The Holy Spirit, according to the teaching of the Catholic Church, not only teaches love and truth but also helps a Christian to love because he gives him his gifts. At this point, attention is drawn

³⁸⁵ Cf. J. Bar, *Ubóstwo*, in: *Franciszkańską drogą*, ed. J. Bar, Warszawa 1982, pp. 226–228; R. Czajkowska, *Duchowość zakonna*, op. cit., pp. 301–303; M. Lipiński, *Nowa interpretacja ubóstwa, postuszeństwa i pokory życia w duchu św. Franciszka*, „Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Teologiczne” 1977, no. 10, pp. 154–160; R. Tomaszewski, *Chrystocentryzm w duchowości Rodziny Świętego Pawła*, Częstochowa 2011, pp. 301–30; P. Góralczyk, *Ubóstwo realne dla Królestwa Niebieskiego*, in: *I nic dla Boga. Apostolski wymiar życia konsekrowanego*, ed. A. Dyr, P. Góralczyk, Ząbki 1999, pp. 115–128.

³⁸⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁸⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁸⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁸⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

to the gift of the fear of God. Noting that Christianity regarded this gift as a supernatural and obligatory virtue, as did the faith, hope, and love. However, the same theologians argue following the New Testament that they give priority to love (cf. Rom 13:10). They claim that there is no fear in love because perfect love removes it (cf. 1 Jn 4:18). Based on the above teaching, they advise that in the spiritual life begin with the fear of God and end with love, then a person will remain faithful to the spirit of the Gospel. They also emphasize that the Church has followed the path from fear of God to love from the very beginning. The whole supernatural life of the Church, although based on love, also includes motives for the virtue of fear of God. Therefore, the fear of God is the beginning of true love³⁹⁰ taught by the Holy Spirit, often referred by spiritual theologians as the Spirit of Love³⁹¹.

³⁹⁰ Cf. A. Tanquerey, op. cit., vol. I, p. 528; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, op. cit., pp. 138–171.

³⁹¹ Cf. *ibid.*

4. Following God's Family in Nazareth

Spiritual theologians first write about following Mary. Gifted with the exceptional grace that she received because of being elected the Mother of the Savior, Mary became completely free from sin³⁹². Thus she did not know the effect of the original contamination³⁹³. Therefore, he reciprocates these gifts with flawless fidelity. To confirm this attitude, they quote the words of Mary uttered at the moment of the Annunciation with all truth and simplicity: My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; (...) For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness. The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name (Lk 1, 46-49)³⁹⁴. They emphasize that with these words, Mary confesses that she owes this grace

³⁹² Cf. E. Gambari, *Życie zakonne*, op. cit., p. 337; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 369; cf. J. Castellano, *La spiritualità mariana nella „redemptoris Mater”*, in: *La spiritualità mariana nella Chiesa alla luce dell'enciclica Redemptoris Mater*, "Fiamma viva" 1988, nr 29, pp. 182-195.

³⁹³ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 369; cf. A. Pigna, *Consigli evangelici. Virt' e viti*, Roma 1990, p. 242.

³⁹⁴ J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., p. 369.

of choosing to be the Mother of the Incarnate Word to her humility, nothingness before God. An attitude of humility will bring the blessing of all nations upon her³⁹⁵. Mary, although full of grace, becomes the most humble person³⁹⁶. This is her that Kiciński puts forward as a model of humility, claiming that she is the *sincerest embodiment of humility*³⁹⁷. He also adds that to keep the fullness of grace, Mary was required to avoid temptations brought by the world. That is why Mary should be a model of man's struggle with sin in the soul³⁹⁸.

At the same time, it is emphasized that Mary, being full of grace, did not cease to feel like the lowest handmaid of the Lord. Thus, it shows an ideal example of a man's relationship with God³⁹⁹. The Immaculate Conception accepts and fulfills her call to be the Mother of the Savior. As a result, he becomes a worthy model in accepting God's will⁴⁰⁰.

According to individual theologians of spirituality, people can also follow the faith of Mary, strong and living, from which flowed great hope and love. Although she saw the Divine Child with the eyes of faith, her whole being felt the presence of the Lord, and all the faculties of her soul were occupied only by Him⁴⁰¹.

Therefore, they encourage people to gaze at the Mother of God during the visit of Angel Gabriel. They claim that in seeing God's Messenger and hearing the words of the Annunciation, she was helped by loneliness and detachment from worldly desires,

³⁹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Od objawienia do zjednoczenia*, op. cit., p. 37.

³⁹⁶ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 69–71.

³⁹⁷ Cf. J. Kiciński, *Powołanie – konsekracja – misja*, op. cit., p. 74.

³⁹⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

³⁹⁹ Cf. J. Rokosz, *Rola Matki Bożej w życiu zgromadzenia Sióstr Franciszkanek Rodziny Maryi*, (tscp, MA, ARMW), Kraków 1992, p. 15.

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *List apostolski Ad omnes personas consecratas*, op. cit., p. 288.

⁴⁰¹ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 170–179.

and focusing only on God⁴⁰². For this reason, Mary became the most perfect model of an optimal disposition to pray, to meet God. It is not only the scene of the Annunciation that shows Mary's listening to every word of God. Both in the house of the Holy Family, in the temple in Jerusalem, in Bethlehem and Nazareth, and at the cross on Calvary, Mary is always and everywhere engaged in God's mission⁴⁰³. According to the theologians of spirituality, imitating the Mother of God in her disposition towards God will allow the sisters to know God's will and mercy towards them. Hence, they recommend that you begin following by gazing at Mary's prayer⁴⁰⁴.

The teaching of the Catholic Church teaches that Mary occupied a very modest position in society, she was a laborer⁴⁰⁵. She remained in this position all her life, she did not undertake any projects apart from those arising from her duties. And yet this simple work did not prevent her from becoming a model of all perfection on earth⁴⁰⁶. Apart from the fact that she became a model of love and purity, her essential features were: modesty and diligence⁴⁰⁷.

The Mother of God performed all her duties in such a way as to fulfill God's will with love. Therefore, she should always be a model for consecrated persons to fulfill the Creator's will, despite changing conditions, requirements, and obligations. Mary is eagerly and joyfully moving from the consolations in her family home to the austere life of the Lord's servant. From contemplation to the troubles of a poor farm, from modest living in one's own

⁴⁰² Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁰³ Cf. M. Uberman, *Maryja – Matka Boga i ludzi w życiu i Pismach Sługi Bożego Ks. Arcybiskupa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, (tscp, MA, ARMW), Warszawa 1979, p. 66.

⁴⁰⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁰⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁰⁷ Cf. M. Bartoszewska, *Pokora w pismach św. Teresy od Dzieciątka Jezus*, (MA, arch. AZ), Warszawa-Łódź 2002, p. 40.

home and country to wandering abroad. On his return to Nazareth, he steps back from the companionship of the Divine Son now and then to fulfill the simplest duties that every poor woman in her home performed. She met the needs of the whole family by sewing, washing, and cooking while St. Józef worked in a workshop to support God's Family⁴⁰⁸.

Spiritual theologians show yet another virtue of Mary worth to follow, namely her relationship to her relatives and household members, that is, to poor craftsmen who live by their hands, and to the Apostles, who make up Mary's spiritual family. Our Lady ministered to these simple and poor people. She always remembered that God is most pleased to work with souls who were in the greatest danger⁴⁰⁹. Mary and St. Joseph are examples of a relationship with others based on love⁴¹⁰. The Holy Mother gave her Son to people to be of service to them. In this way, like a real Mother, she wants to save her neighbors, and care for their salvation⁴¹¹.

Mary, although Immaculately Conceived herself and knowing no sin, did not hesitate to consent to the bloody sacrifice of her Son on Calvary for sinners. At the same time, she herself accepts the suffering of her Son⁴¹². Accepting the way of the cross with the Son, she fulfills God's will, offering herself to God, her maternal suffering. That is why the theologians of spirituality pay attention to the possibility of following Our Lady in suffering, which is the privilege of the elect, and in offering oneself to the service of God, even up to suffering⁴¹³.

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. *ibid.*; S. Urbański, *Teologia modlitwy*, op. cit., pp. 172–222.

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 329.

⁴¹⁰ Cf. J. Rokosz, *Rola Matki Bożej*, op. cit., p. 26.

⁴¹¹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴¹² Cf. *ibid.*

⁴¹³ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 50.

Then the teaching of the Catholic Church points to consecrated persons following the example of the Holy Family during their stay in Nazareth. Thus, it shows the essential sense of following this model in carrying out the tasks of the Congregation, especially the apostolic tasks⁴¹⁴.

Spiritual theologians say that the Holy Family is an example of life for both religious and laypeople. Therefore, it encourages consecrated persons themselves to follow the example of the Nazareth Family in their daily life and to spread this model among its wards. They claim that God's Family, which lives by labor and in poverty, is a good example and encouragement, above all, for the poorest people. They pay special attention to two possibilities of following the Holy Family during her stay in Nazareth. The first is to follow God's Family in poverty and at work⁴¹⁵. Spiritual theologians teach that the pattern of life of the Holy Family is valid at all ages and should be followed in every social system. At the same time, they emphasize that a given social system is following the life of God's Family when it is based on God's law and the teachings of Christ, so that the law and love among people secure the life and property of every human being⁴¹⁶.

Institutes of consecrated life by taking a vow of poverty, renouncing comfort and pleasure, renouncing wealth for the sake of the poor, follows the Holy Family in the poor life in Nazareth.

⁴¹⁴ Cf. T. Paszkowska, *Dojrzałość chrześcijańska w postawie zakonnej*, in: *Dojrzałość chrześcijańska*, ed. A.J. Nowak, W. Słomka, Lublin 1994, p. 87.

⁴¹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*; Vowing to poverty, work, humiliation, you are in a way embodying your spirit in the Holy Family, feeding yourselves with the elements with which She has been feeding yourselves with; cf. G. Escudero, *De la prueba*, in: *Decreto Perfectae caritatis. Renovación de la vida religiosa*, Madrid 1966, p. 232.

⁴¹⁶ The Second Vatican Council stresses that the consecrated person is obliged to worship God (cf. LG 44). Thus prayer is to accompany the entire religious life (cf. ET 45), which is to care for the spirit of prayer and for prayer itself (PC 6). A communal life (...) sustained by evangelical teaching, the holy liturgy and especially the Eucharist, is to last in prayer (PC 15).

Cabra points out that in poverty it is not enough to detach the heart from love for the things that give wealth. True poverty, like the poor life of the Holy Family, consists in despising the pleasures and the awareness of the evil they bring to the community⁴¹⁷.

The second model of imitating the Holy Family in Nazareth is her work which grows out of poverty. Poverty requires that you love work for work and because work is commanded by God himself. In a work that expresses poverty, one should put spiritual benefits before material ones. Religious people should, by word and example of their own life, encourage to work, instill a love of work among children entrusted to their care and people among whom they work in the countryside, at school, or in the orphanage. Following the example of the work of the Holy Family, the sisters should instill it in their pupils from an early age. Education for work from an early age allows you to postpone temptations, the pursuit of pleasure and getting rich at any cost⁴¹⁸.

According to Derdziuk, observing the life of the Holy Family helps and makes it easier for believers to endure the hardships of work. Every believer, and therefore every monastic person as well, should bear in his soul the image of the work of the Holy Family. Life on the model of the Holy Family is working on combining their hardships with the hardships of God's family and placing them in a sacrifice in the stable of Bethlehem, in the workshop of St. Józef, or the house of Nazareth. Then it is easier to endure strenuous and unpaid work and thus arouse love for it in others⁴¹⁹.

⁴¹⁷ Cf. P. Cabra, *Krótką medytacją o ślubach*, trans. H. Ćmiel, Kraków 2001, pp. 28–29; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., pp. 157–176, 179; cf. A. Pigna, *Consigli evangelici*, op. cit., pp. 135–144.

⁴¹⁸ Cf. A. Derdziuk, *Wspólnotowy i wspólnototwórczy charakter osób konsekrowanych*, „Życie Konsekrowane” 2002, no. 4, pp. 30–31; cf. A. Pigna, *La povertà evangelica*, op. cit., p. 80; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Oddani Bogu*, op. cit., pp. 157–176.

⁴¹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

Since most of the children raised by religious orders came from the countryside and were called to do service and agricultural work, Adamska sensitized sisters to the fact that they should be happy to undertake this type of work. Due to this attitude, they can help their charges love a poor life⁴²⁰. She emphasizes the need for consecrated persons to develop such a service attitude during the novitiate period and in the first years of their stay in the congregation. He claims that in the first stage of religious life, young sisters should be sensitized to the fact that every work, even if it brings some contempt from people, is fitting for sisters and is an occasion for service. Because the goal of a given congregation, as shown by Adamska, is to enter the people to carry there science and a good example. Therefore, it points to certain principles that are contrary to those generally accepted in the world. He emphasizes the need for denial, simplicity, humility, and self-renunciation even in permitted consolations⁴²¹. Consecrated persons are to follow the Holy Family by carrying out service work. Theologians of spirituality include ministry to the sick in hospitals and care for children. Every job is valuable, therefore, in work until old age, the sisters should not make any choice, because no work is degrading, insulting. And as such, the sisters should not consider any work. Moreover, she encourages exercise in service work to preside over its poor pupils, thus setting an example of following the Holy Family living from service work in Nazareth. Serving work brings another important benefit. In addition to being of material benefit, it is primarily fruitful in the spiritual realm⁴²².

⁴²⁰ Cf. J. Adamska, *Wszyscy kochać mnie będą*, Poznań 1997, pp. 47–49.

⁴²¹ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. S. Gamarra, *Teología espiritual*, op. cit., pp. 295–296.

⁴²² Cf. *ibid.*

5. Fidelity to the Church

According to Liszka, fidelity to the Church flows from its mission, which is to spread the Kingdom of God on earth. The Church is the instrument through which the work of salvation accomplished by Christ on Calvary is passed on from generation to generation. It is an instrument of God's providence that guides mankind towards its ultimate ends, so necessary that without It the very work of redemption is in vain⁴²³.

Liszka reminds us that it is the Church that humanity owes all its favors and all spiritual goods because it is the minister of the sacraments, the guardian and interpreter of science, the intermediary between God and people, and the shepherd of souls. Therefore a Church deserves the appreciation for this service through prayer,

⁴²³ Cf. P. Liszka, *Charyzmatyczna moc życia zakonnego*, op. cit., s. 97; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., pp. 83–85; cf. P. Mariotti, *Chiesa*, in: *Nuovo dizionario di spiritualità*, ed. Paoline, Roma 1982, pp. 122.

sacrifice, and service rendered to Him⁴²⁴. The answer to the benefits that man receives through the Church is to use the sacraments, take up mortifications and continuous work on oneself as well as accept and fulfill the teachings and laws of the Church⁴²⁵.

Veron emphasizes that every Christian should contribute to the growth and glory of the Church, pray earnestly for the Church, and for Christ's Vicar on earth, who is the head, and therefore the focus of life in the Church, and for the shepherds of the Church, i.e. bishops and priests⁴²⁶. Moreover, it teaches that every baptized person should not only accept the faith from the Church with the simplicity and trust of a child but also undertake work on the destruction of *the old man* within himself. On the other hand, with the means of development that the Church makes possible, we should be *permeated with the spirit of Christ*⁴²⁷. In this way, man will not waste the opportunity offered to him by the Church, that is, choosing the safest way to reach heaven⁴²⁸. That is why Gogola emphasizes that fidelity to the Church should be manifested in everyday life in trust in God's providence in every life situation. An example of such fidelity to Christ and the Church is the attitude of the twelve apostles⁴²⁹. M. Stapor notes that the manifestation of faithfulness to the Church is the acceptance and conscientious fulfillment of His teachings, given in documents and the living proclamation of the word of God⁴³⁰.

⁴²⁴ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., pp. 83–85.

⁴²⁵ Cf. E. Weron, *Teologiczne podstawy duchowości Wcielenia*, „Collectanea Theologica” 1971, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 107–108; S. Urbański, *Mistyczny wymiar świętości*, op. cit., pp. 392–399; cf. Albino dell B.G., *Compendio di teologia spirituale*, Tautini 1966, pp. 303–304.

⁴²⁶ Cf. E. Weron, *Teologiczne podstawy*, op. cit., pp. 107–108.

⁴²⁷ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴²⁸ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Zasady wierności charyzmatowi Założyciela, Studium z teologii życia konsekrowanego w świetle dokumentów Kościoła od Vaticanum II po Vita consecrata na przykładzie charyzmatu terezińskiego*, Kraków 2000, p. 13.

⁴²⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴³⁰ Cf. M. Stapor, *Obraz Jezusa Chrystusa w pismach Sługi Bożego Arcybiskupa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, (tscp, MA, ARMW) Poznań 1998, p. 34.

Another manifestation of fidelity to the Church is accepting the teaching of the Church because it is inspired by the Holy Spirit⁴³¹. He places special emphasis on fidelity to the teaching of the successors of the Apostles, who were endowed with the power to bind and loose. In the Church, in the name of Christ, they impart God's mercy to repentant sinners in the sacrament of penance, believing in their promises of improvement⁴³². Elsewhere, it recalls the privilege that the Church has, which is the infallibility of judgment. Keeping in mind this special gift of the Church, he invites consecrated persons to present their new undertakings first to their confessors and then to the relevant Church authority for judgment. At the same time, Gogola notices that sometimes to test the humility of his servants, God allows, even in matters consistent with his will, obstacles created by church authority. In such situations, he recommends remembering that God is always with the authority of the Church and watches over the decisions of His superiors. In assessing the decisions of the Church, trust is required that the opinion of the Church is consistent with God's will⁴³³.

Another manifestation of fidelity to the Church is the observance of the laws established by the Church. Spiritual theologians note that man often blames the Law-giver, that is, the Church, for failing to comply with the Law, explaining that it is inappropriate⁴³⁴. The fulfillment of the Law established by the Church is as important a duty as the fulfillment of natural law. The teach-

⁴³¹ Cf. C. Schönborn, *Milować Kościół*, trans. E. Kożuchowska, Częstochowa 2000, p. 97.

⁴³² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 97; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 353–354.

⁴³³ Cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Ogólne wprowadzenie do formacji zakonnej*, in: *Formacja Zakonna*, vol. 1, ed. J.W. Gogola OCD, Kraków 1997, p. 68; W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., p. 223; cf. A. Pigna, *La vita religiosa*, op. cit., p. 37.

⁴³⁴ Cf. *ibid.*; W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 108.

ing of the Catholic Church teaches that “established” law is second only to natural law. The established law includes the law established by Christ and the law established by His Church, which is binding on believers under grave or light sin, according to the will of the legislator, and should be fulfilled in such an order⁴³⁵. He also claims that the law of God and the Church helps to follow the Divine Master because it contains the will of God himself⁴³⁶.

The role of the Church, emphasized by theologians of spirituality, is to support man, to admonish when he does not follow the teachings of Christ. It is up to man to accept the admonitions and instructions of the Church⁴³⁷. Fidelity to the Church is therefore manifested in accepting the confessor’s instructions. The Savior left in the Church the power to forgive sins that only priests had. They are not only judges but also doctors of souls. They only have the right to judge people’s consciences. A Christian should exercise that judgment gratefully⁴³⁸. Faithfulness to the Church is also the establishment of reparation for sins and indulgences⁴³⁹.

Fidelity to the Church is manifested in the love of the Church. According to Przybylski, people of religious life should reciprocate the love that God has bestowed on man – with the love to the Church. In him and through him they became God’s children, in him, they are nourished by the *bread of life*⁴⁴⁰, that is, the Word of God and the Body of Christ, in him they receive forgiveness of sins,

⁴³⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 98, 108.

⁴³⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 98.

⁴³⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 151, 196; cf. F. Ruiz Salvador, *Le vie dello Spirito. Sintesi di teologia spirituale*, Bologna 1999, pp. 132–133.

⁴³⁸ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dziecięctwo duchowe....*, op. cit., p. 196.

⁴³⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 98, 108, 151, 196.

⁴⁴⁰ Cf. B. Przybylski, *Pokuta w Magisterium Posoborowym*, AK 1997, vol. 89, no. 1, p. 92.

grace, and help in sanctification. Because the Church inspires monastery to the spiritual life and makes it possible to live the heroic virtues of virginity, obedience, and poverty, they must reciprocate the Church's loving love for them⁴⁴¹. Consecrated persons can do this with work for the Church, especially through missionary and apostolic work. And above all, by faithfully fulfilling one's vocation and the tasks it entails, caring in a specific way for the salvation of others⁴⁴². S. Urbański makes religious person also aware of another possibility of showing fidelity to the Church. It is work on oneself, leading to one's sanctification, love of God and neighbor, acquiring virtues with which they adorn their hearts⁴⁴³.

A very important way of showing fidelity to the Church, as indicated by Urbański, is by undertaking mortifications resulting from the order of the Church. Therefore, consecrated persons, faithful to the spirit of mortification, should avoid any arbitrariness, and value most those mortifications which are obligatory under the order of the Church, that is, mortifications due to the commandments, duties of the state, orders or permissions of Providence. God's will is contained in mortifications. The sisters should put the mortification of natural drives first, because it is a necessary condition for the faithful fulfillment of God's will expressed in God's and ecclesiastical commandments, and in the duties arising from vocation, especially in three religious vows. In this respect, the sisters should not ignore even the slightest infidelity, but rather – like the martyrs – endure suffering in order not to go voluntarily against God's

⁴⁴¹ Cf. E. Weron, *Apostolstwo i życie wewnętrzne*, „Communio” 12, 1992, no. 5, p. 99; S. Zarzycki, *Apostolski charakter życia zakonnego*, in: *Vita consecrata. Adhortacja. Tekst i komentarze*, ed. A.J. Nowak, Lublin 1998, p. 383–406.

⁴⁴² Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁴³ Cf. S. Urbański, *Mistyka życia konsekrowanego w świetle Vita consecrata*, „Życie Konsekrowane” 1998, vol. 2, p. 72; cf. B. Goya, *Formazione alla vita consacrata*, op. cit., p. 55.

requirements contained in the teaching of the Church⁴⁴⁴. Therefore, Neumann emphasizes that the first step on the path of Christian perfection, from which it must begin, is to fight the passions, mortify the senses, tame all-natural urges, avoid the opportunity to sin, compensate for wrongs, and to repairing the depravity⁴⁴⁵.

On the other hand, the mortifications ordered by the Church are to be fulfilled by religious people because of the honor for the authority of the Church and because of giving an example of obedience to the children entrusted to their care. To this group of mortifications, Ł. Buzun includes attending the Holy Mass on Sundays and holidays, regardless of the weather, refraining from work on those days, strict observance of fasts ordered by the Church⁴⁴⁶. Since consecrated persons should fulfill the prescribed fasts as diligently as possible, they should not benefit from the general dispensation of fasting provided in some dioceses⁴⁴⁷.

As proof of their fidelity to the Church, the sisters are to accept with docility all the crosses sent by God's providence: diseases, poverty, persecution, internal afflictions, dryness, temptations, and trials that may meet them without the participation of their own will. Wejman emphasizes that every trial, even the hardest one, should be accepted, linking one's suffering to the Passion of Christ. Then the sisters will remain faithful to the spirit of the Church⁴⁴⁸.

⁴⁴⁴ Cf. S. Urbański, *Mistyka życia konsekrowanego w świetle Vita consecrata*, op. cit., p. 72; W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., p. 251; G. Thils, *Santità cristiana. Compendio di teologia ascetica*, Alba 1970, p. 855.

⁴⁴⁵ Cf. J. Neumann, *Chryzologiczny charakter życia chrześcijańskiego w świetle pism św. Klary z Asyżu*, Częstochowa 2002, p. 167; cf. C. Molari, *Mezzi per lo sviluppo spirituale*, in: *Corso di spiritualità. Esperienza, Sistematica, Proiezioni*, Queriniana 1989, pp. 503–508; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, op. cit., p. 125.

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. *ibid.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., pp. 232–234.

⁴⁴⁷ Cf. Ł. Buzun, *Chrystus – centrum życia duchowego. Studium z teologii duchowości na podstawie pism św. Józefa Sebastiana Pelczara*, series: *Mistyka Polska* 109, Warszawa 2011, pp. 236–237.

⁴⁴⁸ Cf. H. Wejman, *Osiem błogosławieństw ewangelicznych. Nowe perspektywy duchowości*, Poznań 2000, p. 173.

6. Apostolate

Witnessing is the vocation of every Christian. Thanks to them, the believer in his environment has the opportunity to be a Christian in the full sense⁴⁴⁹. Apostolic activity, which is inscribed in the spirit of active congregations, is also the essence of the spirituality of those times. In his teaching, Gogola draws attention to the concept of the apostolate and discusses its specific types.

6.1. The concept of the apostolate

Gogola reminds that the Church, under the loss of salvation, prescribes the apostolate, i.e. the duty to serve others. It emphasizes that everyone called to the exclusive service of God should fulfill it in a specific way, helping others according to their means

⁴⁴⁹ Cf. J. Bochenek, *Zarys ascetyki*, op. cit., p. 77–78; A. Tanquerey, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 303–304; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, op. cit., p. 49.

and strength. The apostolate is one of the aims of the Congregation, which flows from the duty to love one's neighbor⁴⁵⁰.

Gogol argues that any congregation that faithfully discharges its apostolate gives society a real and immeasurable service, irrespective of its activities. Because all congregations draw strength for the apostolate in the same source of love for God and neighbor. They implement it in the Church in various ways, according to the essence of their congregation⁴⁵¹. At the same time, he emphasizes that it is natural that every religious congregation does not deal with all the ministries, because it is simply impossible. Yet there is no such need of the faithful that the congregation does not take care of⁴⁵².

The content of the apostolate of the congregation flows from the mission of the Savior. It is sacrifice, prayer, and mercy, both for the soul and for the body⁴⁵³. This division, according to spiritual theologians, is most clearly manifested in all religious institutions and religious congregations, which are the main tools of the Church's activity⁴⁵⁴. In all congregations these three elements of the apostolate are present, but in each of them, there is one unique feature. Penitential orders, choosing as their main goal the duty of internal and external mortification, do not renounce prayer and concern for the needs of others, similarly, contemplative orders do not neglect mortification and mercy. On the other hand, active and apostolic

⁴⁵⁰ Cf. S. Bisignano, *Quale futuro per la vita religiosa?*, in: A. Vari, *Consacrata Dio dono alle Chiesa e al mondo. Approfondimenti sull'Esortazione. Via consecrata*, Roma 1997, pp. 454–455; cf. J.W. Gogola OCD, *Zasady wierności charyzmatowi założyciela*, op. cit., pp. 272–273.

⁴⁵¹ Cf. *ibid.*; W. Gałazka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., pp. 181–188, cf. J.M. De la Torre García, *Ordini religiosi, Dizionario teologico della vita consacrata*, ed. A. Rodriguez, J.M. Canals Casas, Trento 1994, pp. 1187–1199.

⁴⁵² Cf. R. Forycki, *Z praksetologii apostołstwa czyli o niektórych warunkach i metodach skutecznego apostołowania*, in: *Powołanie do apostołstwa*, ed. L. Balter, Poznań 1975, p. 407.

⁴⁵³ Cf. Jan Paweł II, *List apostołski, Ad omnes personas consecratas*, in: *Życie konsekrowane w dokumentach Kościoła*, ed. B. Hylla, Kraków 1988, p. 15; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Od objawienia do zjednoczenia*, op. cit., pp. 144–146.

⁴⁵⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

assemblies proclaim the Word of God, celebrate the sacraments, or bring help to those in need without neglecting repentance and prayer⁴⁵⁵. Smoczyński pays particular attention in the apostolic work of each congregation to the concern for the salvation of souls⁴⁵⁶. The author also emphasizes that the most important thing in the apostolate is cooperation with Christ in fulfilling his mission. This dedication to the fulfillment of the Bridegroom's mission transforms a person from a selfish one into an apostle of faith who is no longer concerned only with the good performance of the work and duties entrusted to him. Forycki points out that every daily work performed by God's will spreads through word and example the glory of Jesus, His Kingdom on earth⁴⁵⁷.

6.2. Types of apostolate

When discussing the ways of achieving the apostolic goal of religious congregations existing in Poland in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, theologians of spirituality pay attention to upbringing, saving the poor, redress and rewarding prayer, and spreading the Kingdom of God.

⁴⁵⁵ Cf. Kongregacja Zakonów i Instytutów Świeckich, *Życie konsekrowane w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II*, ed. C. Drażek, Kraków 1996, p. 75; Kongregacja Instytutów Życia Konsekrowanego i Stowarzyszeń Życia Apostolskiego, *Instrukcja, Rozpocząć na nowo od Chrystusa. Odnowienie zaangażowania Życia Konsekrowanego w trzecim tysiącleciu*, Poznań 2002, p. 51; W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., pp. 182–188; S. Urbański, *Formacja życia duchowego w ujęciu głównych przedstawicieli szkoły zmartwychwstańskiej*, op. cit., p. 195.

⁴⁵⁶ Cf. W. Smoczyński, *Ksiądz Zygmunt Szczęsny Feliński, arcybiskup metropolita warszawski*, [dated by him on V 1890], Kraków 1896, s. 52.

⁴⁵⁷ Cf. R. Forycki, *Z praksetologii apostołstwa*, op. cit., p. 406.

6.2.1. Upbringing

An important way of realizing the apostolic goal of the Congregation indicated by Forycki is an educational activity involving not only children and adolescents but also the sick and the elderly⁴⁵⁸. The goal of education set for the Congregation is to make every effort and means to turn the souls under his care into apostles through whom God will act himself. The aim of education, therefore, relates to spreading the faith, instilling and strengthening morality, awakening love and fear of God, as well as encouraging to virtue and striving for eternal life⁴⁵⁹.

Souls most in danger, in particular, should be educated. Theologians of spirituality to this group of people include children deprived of vigilant and godly care, who are most easily scandalized due to inexperience and sensitivity, and people suffering great suffering due to disability or terminal disease. The most endangered include the severely ill, who are at risk of death and who have little time to reconcile with God. Hartung teaches that when it would be impossible to fulfill the tasks for these three categories of people, children have priority⁴⁶⁰.

Raising children is about bringing them to a good confession and to love life. In these children, it is necessary, in a way, *to give birth to Christ*⁴⁶¹, and therefore women are disposed to the work of education because their hearts are animated by maternal love⁴⁶².

⁴⁵⁸ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁵⁹ Cf. M. Rokosz, *Osobowość katechetyczna Sługi Bożego Arcybiskupa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego*, (mps, MA, ARMW), Kraków 1989, p. 46; K. Górski, *Studia i materiały z dziejów duchowości*, Warszawa 1980, p. 386.

⁴⁶⁰ Cf. T.H. Hartung, *Duchowość Siostry Zakonnej w świetle pism Sługi Bożego Abpa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego (1822–1895)*, (tscp, MA, ARMW), Warszawa 1997, p. 169.

⁴⁶¹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁶² Cf. *ibid.*

The teaching of the Catholic Church points out that only education by example is complete and effective⁴⁶³. Examples speak more effectively than words to children, youth, and the poor. Children left in the care of religious people, looking at their peace and satisfaction, despite poverty and inconvenience, will not complain about their condition, but they love it, without envying the rich⁴⁶⁴.

Consecrated persons belonging to selected religious congregations, professing poverty, are called to educate poor children, who in the future will live from the work of their hands. In their educational work, therefore, they are to lead these children, through following the diligence of St. Paul, to deploy to work⁴⁶⁵. They should therefore instill in these still unspoiled souls a love of poverty and work, so that the “bad examples and false rules” they will encounter later will not be able to infect them. The love of poverty and work, as Parzyszek claims, can only be the fruit of grace. Therefore, sisters should continue to set an example and inflame in children’s hearts the desire to follow the Holy Family during their stay in Nazareth, because in it children can find an example and encouragement. He also claims that even the installation of any religious house according to the model of the Holy Family house can contribute to the education of children in this direction⁴⁶⁶. Since most of the children brought up by the sisters come from farming families, they should prepare their wards for farm work⁴⁶⁷.

⁴⁶³ Cf. R. Czajkowska, *Duchowość zakonna*, op. cit., p. 54–55; W. Gałązka, *Charyzmat zakonny*, op. cit., p. 71.

⁴⁶⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁶⁵ Cf. C. Parzyszek, *Życie konsekrowane*, op. cit., p. 282; J. Bakalarz, *Psychologiczne aspekty wspólnoty zakonnej*, in: *Formacja Zakonna*, vol. 7, ed. J.W. Gogola OCD, Kraków 2002, pp. 256–257; cf. A. Pagina, *La povertà evangelica*, op. cit., p. 80, J.W. Gogola OCD, *Rady ewangeliczne*, op. cit., pp. 158–173.

⁴⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 256–257.

⁴⁶⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 256–257.

6.2.2. Saving the poor

A manifestation of the apostolic activity of active congregations existing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is the service to the needy. Particular attention is paid by religious people to help the poor⁴⁶⁸. The creators of Polish schools of spirituality recommend unlimited dedication to this duty, which they call almsgiving entrusted to them by Jesus himself. However, he warns us not to lose sight of the most important goal, namely, to win every soul entrusted to them to God⁴⁶⁹. The founders of religious congregations also emphasize that the very rule of a particular congregation prescribes to serve its neighbors, especially the poor, by assisting in their various needs. In addition to general zeal and concern for the good of all others, it is a special reminder of the love of the poor entrusted to the care of consecrated persons. They are meant to help them, not only because they are in a difficult time of need, but above all because of the demands of God in their vocation⁴⁷⁰.

The founders of Polish religious congregations, showing the direction of apostolic service to the poor, first of all recommend that their material needs be satisfied. They states that this is often not possible, and therefore shows a second measure. It is to lead the poor to love what they currently abhor. According to the theologians of spirituality, it is only with the help of God's grace that

⁴⁶⁸ Cf. Konstytucje SKDzJ, op. cit., p. 59; John Paul II emphasises the apostolic mission to the most vulnerable; Jan Paweł II, *Żywy depozyt charyzmatu założycieli: Przemówienie do zakonników w sanktuarium Serca Jezusowego, Guatemala. 7 III 1983*, in: idem, *O życiu zakonnym*, op. cit., pp. 242–248; idem, *Jesteście świadkami miłości. Przemówienie do zakonnic, Manila, 17 II 1981*, in: idem, *O życiu zakonnym*, op. cit., p. 157; cf. C. Parzyszek, *Życie konsekrowane...*, op. cit., pp. 555–556; W. Przybyło, *Duchowość zakonna*, Legnica 2008, p. 186.

⁴⁶⁹ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. A. Vanhoye, *Carisma*, in: *Dizionario di Teologia Boblica*, Ed. Paoline 1988, s. 246.

⁴⁷⁰ Cf. N. Rokosz, *Realizacja Ducha Zgromadzenia Sióstr Franciszkanek Rodziny Maryi przez Katechizację*, (tscp, diploma, ARMW), Kraków 1981, p. 17; por. A. Pigna, *I consigli evangelici. Virt' e voti*, Roma 1990, s. 129.

this ministry can be fruitful⁴⁷¹. He teaches that the sisters will manage to achieve the goal of their work when they voluntarily share it by setting an example of how they should endure poverty and humiliation⁴⁷². Poor people can only be reached by example, testifying to the words of science with concrete actions. On the other hand, poor children and young people, looking at the apostolic work of the sisters and seeing the sacrifice, their daily life, learn to distinguish between the meaning of religious and secular life and see in the first one the life of sacrifice⁴⁷³.

Spiritual theologians put the apostolate of ministry to the poor on a par with the duty of prayer. They teach that if necessary, each sister should willingly give up the consolation of a longer prayer, and devote this time to the care of the poor child. They claim that in this way he is changing one good deed into another because poor children cannot be left on their own. Therefore, every religious person should in such cases devote time of prayer to the fulfillment of the deed of mercy, so that the obligations assumed by this Congregation would be fulfilled⁴⁷⁴.

⁴⁷¹ Cf. K. Jasik, *Siostry Franciszkanki Rodziny Maryi. Powstanie zgromadzenia i działalność*, "Przewodnik Katolicki" 1926, no. 50, p. 698-700. The author states that the Congregation of the Family of Mary emerged from the needs of the society most in need of help and care. Poles living in the capital of Russia were at risk of losing their faith and nationality. The elderly, orphans and the sick were in a difficult financial situation. It was impossible to realize religious life within the Russian state after the closure of the novitiates. In order to give help to those most in need and an opportunity to realize the evangelical counsels, a Congregation of the Family of Mary was established for this purpose. It was important for the congregation to take care of a Polish soldier, who was enlisted in Russian regiments for several years. The seed thrown in St. Petersburg grew. The sisters came after the Archbishop to Warsaw from where they expanded throughout Poland, then in Russia, Ukraine and America (Brazil). Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 698-699. "The Sisters of the Family of Mary became guardian angels not only for orphans and children of the poor, but for all the suffering and needy whose fates they threw away from their homeland", *ibid.*, p. 699. The author states that "the necessary lever of moral and cultural revival was created by Fr. Archbishop Feliński", *ibid.*, p. 700; cf. S. Miecznikowski, *Apostolate – Apostolstwo – istotna cecha życia zakonnego*, AK 1967, no. 59, vol. 70 (5-6) (352-353), pp. 305-314.

⁴⁷² Cf. A. Kowalczyk, *Życie i działalność M. Teresy Stępowny (1882-1977)*, (tscp, MA, ARMW), Kraków 2001, p. 39.

⁴⁷³ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 133, 352.

⁴⁷⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

Selected theologians of spirituality also pay attention to the fruits of this service to the poor. They are visible through the kindness and gratitude of the poor, the appreciation shown by the people who benefit from this service, the good reputation, and the development of a given congregation or religious house⁴⁷⁵. And the fruit of this apostolic activity is, above all, the inflammation of love in the hearts of the guests. For this to happen, however, it is necessary to love one's vocation, manifesting itself in peace and the joy of the spirit⁴⁷⁶.

John Paul II also gives concrete ways of obtaining material resources to help the poor. He speaks about earning money for the needs of the poor in the care of the Family of Mary⁴⁷⁷. To save abandoned poor people or in case of some public disaster, spreading hunger and orphanage, Mother Superior together with the Council can sell the collected valuables to use the funds received from this to save the poor⁴⁷⁸.

6.2.3. The reparation and rewarding prayer

In all their efforts towards neighbors, sisters should remark on, above all, *to clean the obliterated and disfigured image of man*⁴⁷⁹. So with great love, they should serve the spiritual needs of others. Thus, the next manifestation of the apostolic activity of religious

⁴⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*; cf. A. Pigna, *Consigli evangelici*, op. cit., p. 144.

⁴⁷⁶ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁷⁷ Cf. John Paul II emphasises the apostolic mission to the most vulnerable; *ibid.*, *Żywy depozyt charyzmatu założycieli. Przemówienie do zakonników w sanktuarium Serca Jezusowego, Guatemala. 7 III 1983*, in: Jan Paweł II, *O życiu zakonnym*, op. cit., pp. 242–248; *idem, Jesteście świadkami miłości. Przemówienie do zakonnice. Manilla, 17 II 1981*, in: Jan Paweł II, *O życiu zakonnym*, op. cit., p. 157; cf. C. Parzyszek, *Życie konsekrowane...*, op. cit., pp. 555–556; W. Przybyło, *Duchowość zakonna*, op. cit., p. 186.

⁴⁷⁸ Cf. C. Parzyszek, *Życie konsekrowane...*, op. cit., s. 555–556; W. Przybyło, *Duchowość zakonna*, op. cit., p. 186.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

congregations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, resulting from the Savior's mission, is to make satisfaction to God for the sins of people and to bring out salvation⁴⁸⁰. Through this ministry, the desperate sinner, plunged into the darkness of error and sin, finds the light, and is endowed with peace and trust. Sister participating in the unbreakable sacrifice of Jesus Christ, constantly offered by the hands of a priest, should offer himself with Christ for the sins of the world. Recalling the teachings of St. Paul in his Letter to the Colossians, he encourages us to bear the sufferings and tribulations and to offer them for the Body of Christ, which is the Church, *to complete in the own body what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ (Col 1:24)*⁴⁸¹. Parzyszek teaches that through this eager participation in the Savior's sufferings, sisters gain a future share in His glory, not only for themselves, but for all faithful souls⁴⁸². Therefore all mortifications are to be penitential and rewarding for their sins and those of the whole human race, and they are to come primarily from the concern for salvation. The congregation, by offering its mortifications for the sins of the whole human race in union with the merits of the Passion of the Savior, fulfills on behalf of its neighbors the obligation to make reparation for their offenses⁴⁸³.

Sisters can also do this by rewarding prayer for sins, begging God with faith and trust for grace and mercy for all members of the Church⁴⁸⁴. The rewarding prayer that is propitiation prayer refers to the evil for which we apologize and for which we do

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁸¹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁸² Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁸³ Cf. A. Gądek, *Traktat o dziecięctwie duchowym. Praktyka dziecięctwa duchowego według św. Teresy od Dzieciątka Jezus*, Łódź 2003, pp. 31–32; cf. E. Płaskonka, *op. cit.*, p. 59; cf. P. Góralczyk, *Ubóstwo duchowe a ubóstwo materialne*, *op. cit.*; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

⁴⁸⁴ Cf. *ibid.*; F. Ruiz Salvador, *Caminos del Espíritu. Compendio de Teología espiritual*, Madrid 1987, p. 303.

penance. Every evil must not only be acknowledged but confessed, repent, and atoned for. That is why the theologians of spirituality encourage and even talk about the obligation to do rewarding prayers. They claim that sin demands a perfect repair. To meet this rewarding for sins, the prayer of retribution is to include the humble confession of guilt, sincere repentance, acceptance, and endurance in all the experiences God sends and the sacrifice of himself in a spirit of repentance and communion with the sacrifice of Christ. Only then rewarding prayer will bring joy to the heart⁴⁸⁵.

6.2.4. Spreading the Kingdom of God

Izdepska emphasizes that the primary goal, task, and vocation of religious congregations is to spread the Kingdom of God on earth⁴⁸⁶. This task is consistent with the will of God himself, who began building the Kingdom of God on earth and perpetuated it forever through Christ's sacrifice for the salvation of souls⁴⁸⁷. For this reason, the care of spreading the kingdom of God on earth should become the care of temporal affairs, and the sisters are to spare no effort to contribute to its building and spreading of the kingdom of God among the people⁴⁸⁸.

The teaching of the Catholic Church explains that building the Body of Christ on earth is about sanctifying souls and making

⁴⁸⁵ In presenting the issue of spiritual renewal Fr. Founder uses two terms: penance and reconciliation. The first was used as the only one term up to the Second Vatican Council. The second was used as a term equivalent to penance during and after the Council; W. Gałązka, *Sacrum i miłość*, op. cit., p. 78.

⁴⁸⁶ Cf. G. Izdepska, *Charyzmat karmelitanek Dzieciątka Jezus na podstawie wybranych pism o. Anzelmia Gądka, Założyciela Zgromadzenia*, tscp of md, arch., Łódź. p. 53; cf. J. Aubry, *La fondamentale dimensione carismatica della vita consacrata*, in: J. Aubry, F. Ciardis, S. Bisignano, M. Farina, P. G. Cabra, B. Maggioni, *Vita Consacrata un dono del Signore alla sua Chiesa*, Torino 1993, pp. 137–138.

⁴⁸⁷ Cf. G. Izdepska, *Charyzmat karmelitanek Dzieciątka Jezus...*, op. cit., p. 53.

⁴⁸⁸ Cf. W. Gałązka, *Dzieciństwo duchowe...*, op. cit., p. 36.

them a living Church on earth. The building is to be done with zeal and patient perseverance to bring about the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God. And he teaches that God Himself chooses the tools from among people of goodwill, appoints to everybody kind of ministry, and granting the necessary graces for it⁴⁸⁹. Gałązka highlights the active participation of women in building the Kingdom of God on earth. Pointing out mothers as the first apostles to their children then shows the role of women called to God's service in religious life, who through the many services entrusted to them, including running an orphanage, educational institutions, schools, shelters, educate or awaken *sleepy consciences and foster love*⁴⁹⁰.

Spiritual theologians show concrete ways of spreading the Kingdom of God on earth and thus fulfilling the fundamental goal of the Congregation. In the first place, they recommend that we start spreading the Kingdom of God from our soul, from our own heart. Therefore, he recommends internal work towards perfection, union with God through religious vows, to create a wider field of God's reign in a soul dedicated to him⁴⁹¹. In it, Christ should reign first, and dwell in it as the only Lord and Spouse. For His kingdom, the sisters should keep their hearts pure, faithful, devoted, subject and humble⁴⁹². They are to open them out of love and honor for the Creator and Redeemer⁴⁹³. The necessary condition for the desire to expand the Kingdom of God on earth is a heart full of love, for

⁴⁸⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹¹ Cf. T.H. Hartung, *Duchowość Siostry Zakonnej w świetle pism Sługi Bożego Arcbpa Zygmunta Szczęsnego Felińskiego (1822–1895)*, (MA) Warszawa 1998, p. 117; D. Wider, *Dar życia zakonnego*, Kraków 1982, p. 41.

⁴⁹² Cf. A. Marchetti, *Zarys teologii życia duchowego*, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 41.

⁴⁹³ Cf. *ibid.*

only in such a heart does God instill zeal for the salvation of souls⁴⁹⁴. Only then will Christ work through them on other people and find a home in their hearts⁴⁹⁵.

The doctrine of the Catholic Church states that no one can spread the Kingdom of God on earth without working out the virtues of mercy for the soul and the body. Particular attention is paid to developing the ability to easily forgive, forgive everyone for any guilt, forgive the injury, and harm. He explains this by saying that only virtue and love glorify God, sin offends Him, so by sin man removes God from His reign in this heart that hides resentment towards his neighbor⁴⁹⁶.

Another way of spreading the Kingdom of God on earth is to praise God in spirit and truth and to show his immeasurable love until he gives his life for the brethren⁴⁹⁷. It teaches that the sisters are to spread the kingdom of God through prayer, for it is like two “wings” that raise to God and help to fill the service of their calling⁴⁹⁸.

According to Urbański, a very important way of spreading the Kingdom of Heaven on earth is to do merciful deeds⁴⁹⁹ and work⁵⁰⁰, because they deserve eternal life⁵⁰¹. The sisters also realize the fundamental goal of the Congregation, which is to spread the Kingdom of God through useful work, i.e., ministry. This

⁴⁹⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁶ Cf. John Paul II writes that Eucharistic worship educates the Christian to love of neighbour; Jan Paweł II, *List Dominicae coenae o tajemnicy i kulcie Eucharystii*, op. cit., pp. 102–104; J.W. Gogola OCD, *Mistyka Karmelu*, op. cit., pp. 181–183.

⁴⁹⁷ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Bóg jest blisko nas*, op. cit., p. 113.

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. S. Urbański, *Teologia modlitwy*, Warszawa 1999, p. 29; J. Woroniecki, *Pełnia modlitwy*, Poznań 1982, p. 162.

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵⁰⁰ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵⁰¹ Cf. *ibid.*

is a ministry in the kitchen, laundry, sewing, embroidery, cleaning, work in the garden, field, and farm. Gałązka writes that through their conscientious, zealous, lovingly done work, they spread the Kingdom of God on earth, including those sisters who raise children or nurse the sick⁵⁰².

According to the author, the sisters spread the Kingdom of God on earth in a threefold way. First of all, they give the Bride their soul to dwell in and let see the hardship of their work. They show God that they are fulfilling this duty for the good of people and the Congregation. Secondly, they spread the Kingdom of God on earth as a good example of selfless work done with dedication and sacrifice. Thirdly, they spread the Kingdom of God on earth, helping to improve the lives of children, the sick, the elderly, and helping parents in their religious and moral education. It is important to perform your ministry conscientiously and with full dedication⁵⁰³. A special way of spreading the Kingdom of God on earth, although requiring a sacrifice of parting with family and homeland, is missionary work. That is why the Gałązka encourages us to look for sisters who are ready to undertake such an effort, which can even be paid for by martyrdom⁵⁰⁴. He emphasizes that by spreading the teachings of Christ, sisters can usefully work for their nation, family and congregation. And he defines missionary work as the best sacrifice in the work of spreading the Kingdom of God on earth⁵⁰⁵.

⁵⁰² Cf. M. Candida del'Eucaristia, *Nella sanza del mio cuore. Scritti autobiografici*, Roma 2004, p. 76; W. Gałązka, *Zjednoczenie z Bogiem jako cel życia kaptana i osoby konsekrowanej w ujęciu Sługi Bożego o. Anzelma Gądkę OCD*, in: *Sługa Boży o. Anzelm Gądek OCD w służbie życia konsekrowanego*, op. cit., p. 214.

⁵⁰³ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵⁰⁴ Cf. *ibid.*

⁵⁰⁵ Cf. *ibid.*

Summary

The analysis of the writings of selected co-founders of Polish spirituality schools in the 19th and 20th centuries as Jański, Łubieński, Feliński, Semenienka, Dymman, Darowska and Koniieczka, made it possible to learn about their teaching on monastic spirituality. This analysis showed that the indicated authors often referred to the Bible as a source from which they drew basic content for shaping the spiritual life of the called. It can be seen that the texts of the New Testament are cited more often than fragments of the Old Testament, which can be seen especially in the analysis of ascetic sources. For the Authors, the Gospels are the etiology of Jesus' spirituality (cf. Lk 23.34; Mt 3.16-4.1; 11.29; 12.13; 16.24; 26.39) and God's Family (cf. Lk 14.48-49). Most often reach for the Gospel according to St. Matthew (cf. Mt 3.9; 5.3. 13-16; 6.19-34; 7.11; 13.31-32; 18.4; 28.20) and the Gospel according to St. John (cf. J 15.5; 16; 23). They equally often use the Apostolic Letters. Here, the Letters of Saint Paul deserve

special attention (cf. 1 Cor; Ga; Rom; 2 Thes), whose teaching becomes an exponent of content regarding of the following the of Christ. First of all, they recall the First Letter to the Corinthians, they bring closer the essence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in the life of its members (cf. 1 Cor 3:16; 6.11; 6.19).

The foundation of the science of the creators of Polish schools of spirituality in the 19th and 20th centuries is the love of God's Providence. The love of Providence results from the creative act because God created man so that he would know and love Him. However, knowing and loving God was hampered by sin. Love for God as Creator is intimately connected to the revelation of God's plan in the world. The founders mentioned above make it clear to the readers of their writings that God is almighty and wise, he is the Father who is present and active in the world. He is also present in the history of his creatures so that each of them – especially the consecrated person – can realize his life on the path of truth and love leading to eternal life in union with God forever. The love of God's Providence arises from the creative act in which the ultimate destiny of man is to be happy in God. These authors also note that on the one hand man is willing to love God's Providence and to submit to its action, and on the other, he is full of fear of God's Majesty and Omnipotence. They claim that weakness and a tendency to the sin are causing fear in man which make the man to be pre-occupied with the world and things that move him away from God. A result is that a man entering into suffering, loneliness and even arbitrary rejection of love. This, in turn, is a sign of doubting God's love and His goodness.

The priority in the teaching of the Founders about the love of God's providence is setting by them a border between hope

and despair caused by sin and abandoning God's love. God, who accompanies man on a pilgrimage to heaven, wants to strengthen the virtue of hope for a new life in Him. The source that reveals this hope is the Word of God, always showing its message, especially when It contains a call to conversion. The presence of God was most fully revealed in His Son – Jesus Christ, who leads man to love God's Providence. Jesus indicates the hope that man, by making a choice, can rediscover the meaning of his life, and then despair will be strengthened by the joy of the cross. The cross contains the truth of God's love for man and the call to participate in Christ's plan of salvation.

Jański, Łubieński, Feliński, Semenenko, Dymman, Darowska and Kończa emphasize that God came with the initiative of helping to know Him and love Him through His Son. By this, they point to the means of facilitating God's providence. They include prayer and Eucharist. They teach about the qualities of God's love, among which are patience, kindness, humble love and trust. Particular attention is paid to the manifestations of this love, that is, to the love of God's omnipotence and the love of God's goodness and His mercy.

Man loves God's omnipotence if he recognizes his powerlessness and God as the Source of all power. The consequence of this attitude is total devotion to Him. Further manifestations are expressed in the love of neighbour, which is the implementation of the basic commandment. The duty of love of neighbour arising from God's love is an expression of concern for his salvation. The realization of neighbour's love must embrace the whole person, and therefore all his spiritual and bodily nature. The love of others should be fulfilled in two aspects: towards the family, both

domestic and religious, and towards the Homeland and the Church. Each of them is equally important.

Trust is the answer to the love of Providence. According to the founders of Polish schools of spirituality in the 19th and 20th centuries, it is a source of personal inspiration for holiness and shaping a religious lifestyle. However, it should be emphasized that trust in God's providence must be based on knowing and doing God's will. Knowing God's will is done through faith.

In discussing the tools of this cognition and functioning, they point to the role of God's commandments. They also draw attention to the relationship of the knowledge of God's will to the commandments, which is based on freedom. However, in this situation, they warn against the actions of satan who is trying to break God's plan. The breaking of the commandments awakens in man the fear of losing his salvation. Only the way of metanoia restores the peace of the soul wishing to know God to love Him.

True love of God's Providence, according to the teachings of the above-cited authors, requires above all submission to God's will, i.e. its fulfilment in close union with it.

Following Christ is another feature of the spirituality of Congregations founded in the 19th and 20th centuries in Poland. The adoption of the concept of religious life anchored in the mystery of Christ, as well as the desire for becoming like Him, indicates the choice of the paschal path. The Christological direction in their religious spirituality gives a new spirit. This is why the writings of the Founders recognise the need to know the Son of God in order to unite with Him in suffering and to give oneself completely to Him. Knowing Christ enables to get acquainted with God. To faithfully follow Christ, one must first know his life

and understand the relationship between Christ's suffering and human suffering. In the suffering of Jesus, the authors draw attention to the fulfilment of his mission, that is, the redemptive love of God. They see the strength of the spiritual life of those called. Therefore, the essence of human suffering is to be total surrender to it. Openness to the Holy Spirit is also a feature of religious life. He gives participation in the life of Christ, and therefore in His glory. Jański, Łubieński, Feliński, Semenenko, Dymman, Darowska and Kończa are sensitizing for the dependence of the spiritual life of the sisters on their openness to the Holy Spirit, who is constantly active in the Church. Because religious life is based on unity, they see the need to cooperate with grace to build the unity of the religious community. Cooperation with the Holy Spirit results in a life of truth and love.

An important feature of the spirituality of the Congregations established in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the Polish lands was the following of God's Family in Nazareth. This feature draws special attention to Mary, as a model of humility, trust, readiness to do God's will, but also suffering with the Son. The founders note that the basis for this behaviour of the Mother of God was love for God and people. An important element of following St. Family is poverty and physical labour.

In religious spirituality, Jański, Łubieński, Feliński, Semenenko, Dymman, Darowska and Kończa direct the attention of their charges to the necessity of fidelity to the Church, which is God's Kingdom on earth. They understand loyalty to the Church as receiving the Church's teachings inspired by the Holy Spirit and observing the laws established by Him from the will of Christ.

From the analysis of the above characteristics of religious spirituality, a picture emerges of the apostolic activity of the called persons. The undertaking of the apostolic work by the Polish Congregations at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries was very current. First, it was to contribute to the sanctification of the sisters and their charges through work. The Second Vatican Council states that every Christian is called to the apostolate⁵⁰⁶. Hence is arising the need that the duty of evangelising would contribute for a deeper recognition of the message of human salvation. All the more so because the situation in contemporary times for authors demanded the religious restoration and new forms of the apostolate. One of them was the implementation of the education of children and youth and saving the poor.

Apostolic work of consecrated persons for Mary is a service about new character of the monastic apostolate, of which bringing up the younger generations of Catholics and good Poles is a crucial objective. With their apostolate, the sisters embrace not only children and youth but also the sick, the elderly and the poor. According to the founders, the sisters' goal of this activity is to spread faith, strengthen morality, awaken God's fear and encourage care for eternal life. Special care should be given to suffering persons and souls in danger, e.g. through depravities.

In the apostolic activity, Jański, Łubieński, Feliński, Semenenko, Dymman, Darowska and Kończa emphasized above all upbringing through love for those under their care and the example of their own lives. They emphasized the role of good words, self-sacrificing service, selfless work and the need to make sacrifices for human

⁵⁰⁶ Cf. Dekret o apostołstwie świeckich „*Apostolicam actuositatem*”, in: *Sobór Watykański II, Konstytucje, Dekrety, Deklaracje*, Poznań 1968, p. 381.

salvation. They also noticed that prayer is a necessary measure in the life of a religious who is taking care of the poor or took care of the youth. It gives the power to persist among daily duties in the presence of God.

In the concept of the apostolate, the task of the discussed religion congregations is setting the awareness of the charges the meeting with God. That is why the founders emphasize the service of the spiritual needs of others. The manifestation of this apostolic activity of the congregations is to make amends to God for the sins of men and to reconcile salvation. Sisters can do it through the rewarding prayer and enduring the suffering, offering it as appeasing for sins.

The authors put God's glory, its perception and realization in the love of neighbour as the motive of the apostolate. Another determinant of the apostolate is the spread of God's Kingdom on earth, especially amongst the people who were entrusted to the care of the sisters. An indication to undertake the work of the apostolate is found in the Gospel. Therefore, daily work should be praise to God for the things he has done – through Mary, the Holy Family and the saints. Such work is timeless because it goes beyond the structures of the religious congregation. Hence, the charism of individual congregations seen in the mirror of God's Word takes on a supernatural value in the love of God's providence.

The spirituality of the people called at that time is expressed in the work they do as tutors, nurses, teachers preparing for the profession, craft or farming. The variety of projects for children and young people indicates the wide scope of activities of the Congregations. It also confirms the Benedictine principle that by work and prayer one can sanctify mortal life.

The founders devote much space to the formation of monastic life. They recommend retreats for aspirants, postulants, professed nun, for a master of novices and superiors. They indicate the need for good preparation for religious life, for temporary weddings, and the profession of perpetual weddings. First of all, they teach the implementation of evangelical counsels.

In the proper formation of consecrated persons, spiritual development means are helpful. Sacraments should be practised in constant work on oneself at particular stages of religious life. Jański, Łubieński, Feliński, Semenenko, Dymman, Darowska and Kończa emphasize the special role of penance and the Eucharist. In formation, they take into account the role of the Mother, who teaches silence, mortification and prayer. For the foundation of religious life is personal holiness, which requires sanctifying oneself to become an authentic witness of life. The worship of the Blessed Sacrament and Blessed Virgin Mary is strengthening and shaping of the religious charism.

The religious spirituality of the sisters of the Family of Mary, Resurrectionists or the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception is the result of cooperation with the grace of God in the work of not only personal sanctification but mainly the sanctification of others. For each of the called persons to fulfil this task, it becomes necessary to move away from worldly things, move away from the world, and the attitude of humility to live in the community.

While writing the thesis, barriers appeared in the analysis of sources. The authors did not leave the systematized lecture or textbook on religious spirituality. Their writings contain a variety of issues that are often repeated. Hence, it was first necessary to select those that are essential to the religious life of the sisters and brothers.

The Founders' teaching is still valid because it conveys the values that characterise their charism of religious life also today. Values such as moving away from worldly goods, loving for humility, community life, contemplative life, desire for personal perfection and union with God are always valid in the spirituality of these Congregations. They are to mobilise people called to constantly work on themselves, to die for themselves and the world, to remain in union with God. Warning against threats in the relation of the unification with God, springing from outside conditioning, the authors encourage to actively fulfil the commandment to love God and neighbour.

This work can be a help for those who are called to solve contemporary problems related to fidelity to the spirit of vocation and charism. Faithfulness to the spirit of the Congregation will be maintained when the spiritual values of the founders remain in their original thought. It is to be creative fidelity, which is not about repeating history, but about constant effort to search for new ways and means of realizing the charism. It will contribute to the permanent building of monastic spirituality, thanks to which the called person will rise higher in this vocation to which God called her, for the sake of holiness for the Church, for the greater glory of the one and indivisible Trinity, which in Christ and through Christ is a source and a beginning of the great holiness.

Faithfulness to the spirit of the Congregation is to lead to a renewal of religious life, that is for confirming in the fidelity to the charism of the founders. This renewal may not concern a change in the purpose and nature of the Congregations. The charism of the Congregation is a gift of the Holy Spirit for the Church and His life. Nowadays, religious congregations reach to recognise the spirituality of their

founder. It is caused by the change in historical conditions. Therefore, one should look for the values pointed out by the founder to separate them from the influence of time, economic, cultural and social conditions. Therefore, there is a need for further research that can help discover the nature of one's congregation. The charism of these congregations, as Polish schools of spirituality, was embedded in the specific social and historical conditions in which the congregations operated. That is why it is necessary to refer to the writings of Jański, Łubieński, Feliński, Semenka, Dymman, Darowska and Kończa to see the spirituality of the founders and the religious communities they founded. The motivation for this is the contemporary needs of society. In the light of these conditions, the message of the founders encourages a deepening of the charism, because it affects the durability of the community and its fruitful apostolic activity in the Church.

Their call to spread the Kingdom of God on earth by working for the children, the abandoned, the sick and the poor, all in need of spiritual support, is still valid. The implementation of this task is the current need of the Church. However, it requires new methods of evangelization.

The writings cited in the publication constitute source material from the history of Polish spirituality. This work may contribute to deepening monastic spirituality and to undertaking further research on the spirituality of Feliński, Jański, Łubieński, Dymman, Semenka, Darowska and Kończa and the congregations they founded.

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Redaktor prowadzący / Lead editor

Piotr Maroński

Korekta / Proofreading

Małgorzata Izdebska-Młot

Projekt graficzny / Graphic design

Natalia Roszkowska

Promocja / Promotion

Dorota Panowek

ISBN 978-83-66640-58-0

Realizacja poligraficzna / Printed by

Fundacja im. Władysława Orkana

Władysław Orkan Foundation

Nakład 200 egz. / Circulation of 200 copies

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NIEPODLEGŁOŚCI
ISBN 978-83-66640-58-0