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The activity of the Catholic Church during the election campaign

Keywords: the state, Catholic Church, election campaign, cleric, autonomy

Słowa kluczowe: państwo, Kościół Katolicki, kampania wyborcza, duchowny, autonomia

Abstract

The legal situation of the Catholic Church in the Third Republic of Poland allows the Church to operate in a public space on specific principles and within accepted boundaries, determined by developing a conciliatory position of all interested communities. It is important, however, to point out that, due to the continuous evolution of mutual relations between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities – caused by a number of social and political factors – doubts arise periodically about both the nature and the shape of mutual relations. One of the periods with the greatest significance for this type of reflection is the election campaign. The following article contains information on relations between the state and the Catholic Church in the aspect of the relations of communities, supplemented with an analysis of the provisions of secular and canon law regarding the possibilities of clerics' activity in the sphere of broadly understood political activity on the territory of the Third Republic of Poland.

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Streszczenie**Działalność Kościoła katolickiego podczas kampanii wyborczej**

Sytuacja prawna Kościoła Katolickiego na terytorium III Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej pozwala Kościołowi na funkcjonowanie w przestrzeni publicznej na zasadach i w przyjętych granicach, określonych dzięki wypracowaniu koncyliacyjnego stanowiska zainteresowanych środowisk. istotne jest jednak wskazanie, iż, ze względu na nieustanną ewolucję stosunków wzajemnych pomiędzy władzą świecką a kościelną – powodowaną szeregiem czynników społecznych i politycznych – cyklicznie pojawiają się wątpliwości dotyczące zarówno charakteru, jak i kształtu stosunków wzajemnych. Jednym z okresów o najdonioślejszym znaczeniu dla tego typu rozważań jest kampania wyborcza. Poniższy artykuł zawiera informacje na temat stosunków pomiędzy państwem i Kościołem Katolickim w wymiarze relacji wspólnotowych, uzupełnione o analizę przepisów prawa świeckiego i kanonicznego w zakresie możliwości działania duchownych w sferze szeroko pojętej aktywności politycznej na terenie III Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej.

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I. Introduction

The Catholic Church remains invariably present in the public space of the Third Republic of Poland not only as a passive commentator, but also involuntary participant, and sometimes even its active creator. The position of the Church is such an important element of social and political life in Poland that its statements are subjected to critical analysis by both its supporters and opponents.

This state of affairs is undoubtedly influenced by a number of factors of various nature, of which the historical and political context of shaping mutual relations between secular and ecclesiastical authorities remains one of the most considerable importance².

The election campaign is undoubtedly one of the periods in which the activity of the Church meets with a particular social interest. In this case,

² More: J. Stępień, *Zakres autonomii Kościoła katolickiego przy obsadzaniu urzędów kościelnych w III Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, „Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne” 2019, no 28.3, pp. 201–202.

it is about both: the behavior of individual priests – not only church hierarchs – but also the Church understood broadly as a certain institutional entity and the problem of qualifying a given pastoral undertaking to the category of activities falling within the constitutional scope of guaranteed freedom of conscience and religion as well as the autonomy of the state and the church.

The period of the election campaign is a unique time during which every word and behavior – intentionally or not – can be considered as a specific political manifesto and entail specific, various consequences. In the case of the Catholic Church's activity, this is a matter of particular importance, because a change in the nature of the relationship between the secular and spiritual authorities is on the agenda of every political party that has a chance of getting to Parliament in this year's elections.

The abovementioned issue is directly related to the influence the Church has on the members of the community of believers, both in the institutional and individual, moral and ethical dimensions. The second – undoubtedly more significant – influence is from the Church's point of view closely related to its mission of passing on a specific catalog of ethical and moral values that resonate practically every aspect of the life of the faithful, including their functioning in the current political life of the state. It is obvious that contacts between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities occur due to the parallel existence and functioning of the faithful – citizens in the two communities mentioned above³.

II. Autonomy of the state and the church in the III Republic of Poland⁴

Considerations in this regard should begin with the indication that, in accordance with the conciliar resolutions, the Catholic Church recognizes the autonomous nature of the political community existing for the common good, i.e. the value encompassing those conditions of social life, „thanks to which individuals, families and associations can more fully and easily achieve their

³ P. Szoltysik, *Wzajemne relacje między Kościołem a Państwem w nauczaniu społecznym Kościoła*, Katowice 2004, p. 182.

⁴ J. Stepień, *op.cit.*, pp. 196–198.

own perfection”⁵. What is important, however, the recognition of the state by the Church as an autonomous and independent entity does not mean, in the understanding of the Council’s teaching, the church’s limitation of accepting the separate existence of these two communities. On the contrary, the Church postulates the need to continue the so-called “healthy cooperation” with the political community authorities⁶. The cooperation should, however, be based on specific assumptions, which should first indicate the approach of the Church to a particular legal order not as an entity imposing or proposing a specific model of governance, but as an observer and assessing a given form of exercising power by the prism of the common good⁷.

In the case of the constitutional order of the Third Republic of Poland, the principles of relations between the Catholic Church and the state largely coincide with the conciliar resolutions. One of the constitutional principles is – resulting from the content of Art. 25 para. 1–3 of the Constitution⁸ – building mutual relations based on respect for the Church’s autonomy and independence in „its own range”⁹.

The interpretation of this principle indicates that, while respecting a separate system of values, moral and legal norms of the Catholic Church, the state recognizes the rejection of the concept of any authority over it and allows for independent decision-making in its internal affairs¹⁰.

It is worth pointing out that the recognition of the Church’s autonomy by the state is mutual – which means that the Church has no competence to interfere in the internal affairs of the state¹¹ – and limited – limitations of this principle can appear only in the event of a threat to the common good or the public order¹².

⁵ J. Krukowski, *Kościelne prawo publiczne. Prawo konkordatowe*, Lublin 2013, pp. 154–155.

⁶ P. Szoltyś, op.cit., p. 185.

⁷ J. Krukowski, op.cit., p. 155.

⁸ Article 25 the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (Dz.U.No. 78, item 483 as am.).

⁹ See: M. Olszówka, *Ustawy Wyznaniowe. Art. 25 ust. 5 Konstytucji RP – Próba interpretacji*, Warsaw 2010, pp. 38–39.

¹⁰ More: P. Stanisław, *Konstytucyjne zasady określające relacje państwa z kościołami i innymi związkami wyznaniowymi: autonomia i niezależność oraz współdziałanie*, [in:] *Katolickie zasady relacji Państwo – Kościół a prawo polskie*, eds. J. Krukowski; M. Sitarz; H. Stawniak, Lublin 2015, pp. 166–168.

¹¹ P. Szoltyś, op.cit., p. 183.

¹² J. Krukowski, *Kościół i państwo. Podstawy relacji prawnych*, Lublin 2000, pp. 134–135.

III. A clergyman as a member of the political community

The analysis of mutual contacts between secular and church authorities in the aspect of community leads directly to another, very important issue of the discussed topic, which is the scope of functioning of clergy in public space.

The current approach of church authorities to the participation of the Church in political life by limiting the possibilities of active political activity of the clergy with – among others – is explained by the strictly religious character of the mission which Christ set before the church community¹³. Identifying the Church with a particular political option or a specific system of government, as has happened more than once in the past, would thus limit the universal nature of the mission of the clergy¹⁴.

The real reflection of the attitude of separating clergy from the political activity in modern countries are the regulations of the Code of Canon Law currently in force, also effective in relation to the clergy operating in the territory of the Third Republic of Poland. The validity of these standards results indirectly from Art. 25 para. 3–5 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which specify the provisions of the Concordat between the Holy See and the Republic of Poland of 28 July 1993.

The constitutional guarantee of respecting the autonomy of the Catholic Church, including the establishment and observance of internal norms¹⁵ found its implementation in the Art. 5 of the Concordat of 1993. This article is a repetition of the guarantee of the Church's autonomy in the so-called in its own scope, manifesting itself in "... exercising jurisdiction and managing and administering its affairs under the canon law¹⁶".

As has already been indicated above, the Code of Canon Law contains a regulation that significantly limits the possibility of active participation of priests

¹³ See: *Constitution Gaudium et Spes*, [in:] *Sobór Watykański II. Konstytucje. Dekrety. Deklaracje. Tekst polski. Nowe tłumaczenie*, Poznań 2012, pp. 526–604.

¹⁴ See: <https://pl.aletia.org/2017/06/13/ksieza-i-polityka-co-wolno-a-czego-nie> (21.10.2019).

¹⁵ J. Krukowski, *Konstytucyjny model stosunków Między Państwem a Kościołem w III Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej*, [in:] *Prawo wyznaniowe w systemie prawa polskiego. Materiały I Ogólnopolskiego Sympozjum Prawa Wyznaniowego*, ed. A. Mezglewski, Lublin 2004, pp. 95–96.

¹⁶ See Art. 5 Concordat between the Holy See and the Republic of Poland signed in Warsaw on July 28, 1993. (Dz.U. 1998, No. 51, item 304).

in the field of real policy making. According to Can. 287 § 2 of the Code of Canon Law, clergy cannot take active part in political parties or the management of trade unions, unless it is required by the defense of the rights of the Church or the development of the common good in the opinion of the competent ecclesiastical authority¹⁷. In terms of the addressees of the norm, this restriction is absolute – the church legislator did not make any distinctions in the catalog of entities to which this prohibition applies¹⁸. It applies to both vicars and church hierarchs. What is more, the Code of Canon Law does not provide for any exceptions to the prohibition of accepting public offices “... with which participation in the exercise of secular power is associated” – which is expressed in canon 285 § 3¹⁹. Thus, the political activity of priests²⁰ considered as a personal commitment to the struggle for power, and then its possible exercising, is strictly prohibited.

At the root of this prohibition – apart from the Council’s teaching on ensuring autonomy between the political and religious community – lies the Church’s concern for the priests themselves, whose ministry should focus primarily on the realization of the vocation of guiding the faithful to salvation²¹.

In the context of the Church’s activity in the political space during the election campaign, the solutions presented above are clear and essentially unambiguous. However, real problems arise from the activities of clergy in the public sphere that remain outside the limits contained in the norms cited above, i.e. not directly related to the performance of a specific public office. It is primarily a matter of classifying the statements of individual priests during the election campaign as those that may be considered as a manifestation of the politicization of a given clergyman, and even of his undertaking of agitation activities.

This is still an important issue in Polish social and political life, because priests – especially in smaller towns – continue to act as specific moral com-

¹⁷ *Kodeks Prawa Kanonicznego. Przekład polski zatwierdzony przez Konferencję Episkopatu*, Poznań 1984, p. 141.

¹⁸ T. Gałkowski, *Zakaz przyjmowania publicznych urzędów przez kapłanów*, „Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne” 2017, No. 26, p. 120.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

²⁰ <https://pl.aleteia.org/2017/06/13/ksieza-i-polityka-co-wolno-a-czego-nie> (21.10.2019).

²¹ See: T. Gałkowski, *op.cit.*, p. 116.

passes, authorities of the community of the faithful, whose words are treated as an indicator of conduct and – in the context of the election campaign – may be of great importance for the final result of the election²². Considerations in this area should begin with the obvious statement that not every statement of a clergyman regarding the political situation in the country should be considered as electoral agitation or confirmation of the Church's aspirations to influence the creation of state policy. In accordance with the internal assumptions of the Church, it is not only the right but also the duty of a Catholic clergyman to act as a teacher in moral principles that may relate to various aspects of life, including political²³.

Therefore, clergy has the opportunity – resulting from the state's respect for the Church's autonomy – to influence the social attitude of the faithful – citizens of the state in a specific way by passing them specific social doctrine²⁴. It should be noted, therefore, that the involvement of the Church in matters of current state policy, understood as taking care of the aforementioned common good, people's life or social justice, is not only inscribed in the task of fulfilling the mission of the Church²⁵ but it was and – one could venture to say that it still remains – expected by society.

The Holy Mass celebrated by Archbishop Grzegorz Ryś for the peace of soul of the late President of Gdańsk Paweł Adamowicz and for the strong abandonment of violence in public life may be an example of such activity²⁶. Although celebrated on January 15, before the actual election campaign began, it appeared in the election year as a response to the actual state of the current political situation.

The behavior of the Archbishop of Lodz perfectly illustrates the matter raised above – the duty of the Church to speak out for the sake of specif-

²² See: A. Pyrżyńska, *Problem agitacji wyborczej w kościołach i innych miejscach kultu religijnego*, „Studia z zakresu nauk prawnoustrojowych. Miscellanea” 2017, t. VII, pp. 160–161.

²³ More: J. Węgrzecki; P. Burgoński; M. Gierycz; S. Sowiński; M. Kacprzak; K. Stępkowska, *Obecność Kościoła Katolickiego w sferze publicznej demokratycznego państwa prawa. Przykład współczesnej Polski*, Warszawa 2013, p. 24.; See: Kan. 747 § 2 [in:] *Kodeks Prawa Kanonicznego*, p. 327.

²⁴ J. Krukowski, *Konstytucyjny model stosunków...*, p. 97.

²⁵ Compare with: Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, pp. 526–604.

²⁶ <https://dzienniklodzki.pl/lodz-msza-za-zmarlego-prezydenta-gdanska-pawla-adamowicza-we-wtorek-w-lodzkiej-katedrze/ar/13807622> (21.10.2019).

ic values while not being accused of joining any side of the political dispute. Therefore, the clergy's involvement in political life should follow clearly defined boundaries that will allow to distinguish the pastoral mission and entering the sphere of non-religious activities²⁷.

However, it is not always possible not only to set those boundaries, but also to create and follow a specific pattern of behavior, especially in such sensitive periods of state life as the election campaign.

IV. The activity of the Catholic Church during the election campaign and the election agitation – selected issues

Therefore, the question should be asked whether the state law of the Third Republic of Poland provides for a ban or restriction on the participation of the Catholic Church in the election campaign, in particular the undertaking of its agitation activity for a specific political environment. The analysis of this issue should start with indicating what the „election agitation” is.

Although there is no legal definition of the election campaign itself in Polish electoral law²⁸, it should be emphasized that electoral agitation remains closely related to it. The reason for this is the fact that election agitation is carried out as part of the election campaign²⁹, constituting its integral element³⁰.

The Polish legislator introduced the definition of electoral agitation in Art. 105 § 1 of the Electoral Code. According to it, every public elicitation or encouragement to vote in a certain way or to vote for a candidate of a particu-

²⁷ R. Mojak, *Kościół a sprawy publiczne w demokratycznym państwie. Podstawy doktrynalne oraz zasady prawne współdziałania Kościoła i Państwa w sferze życia publicznego*, [in:] *Funkcje publiczne związków wyznaniowych: materiały III Ogólnopolskiego Sympozjum Prawa Wyznaniowego*, Lublin 2007, p. 60.

²⁸ More: M. Borski, *Agitacja wyborcza jako ważny element kampanii wyborczej – wybrane zagadnienia*, „Roczniki Administracji i Prawa” 2017, No. XVII, pp. 37–38.

²⁹ More: A. Rakowska-Trela, *Kampania wyborcza w regulacji prawnej i w praktyce (stan prawny na 15 lipca 2015 r.)*, Łódź 2015, pp. 177–180; D. Wąsik, *Dopuszczalne formy prowadzenia agitacji wyborczej*, <http://www.wspolnota.org.pl/aktualnosci/aktualnosc/dopuszczalne-formy-prowadzenia-agitacji-wyborczej> (21.10.2019).

³⁰ M. Borski, *op.cit.*, p. 42.

lar political committee should be considered electoral agitation³¹. It is important to point out that there is no finite catalog of activities falling within the definition range of agitation presented above in the Polish legal order, the legislator has only decided to indicate specific examples³². It is worth pointing out, however, that to be considered as electoral agitation, a given action must be of a “public” nature, which – according to the case law of the Supreme Court – can be attributed when “things happen in a place generally accessible to unspecified individuals in the conditions of direct possibility messages for those people³³”.

In this context, a specific Church activity may bear the hallmarks of agitation activities³⁴. This is primarily the case of ambiguous statements of priests operating in selected parishes following their preaching³⁵. They are not strictly agitation activities, but they can be considered as such in connection with the expressions used in them. For example, during two sermons delivered in Masses broadcasted by one of the radio stations, in the weeks preceding Easter, specific clerics interpreted the words of the Gospel in an unprecedented way. During the first one, the Pharisees who opposed Christ were considered to be a “total opposition,” while during the second, Judas’ attitude towards Christ was considered “extreme left.” Of course, in this case one cannot speak of agitation directly aimed at increasing the support of a given political group, however, it seems justified to believe that such connotations woven into the sermon bear traces of the so-called negative agitation, i.e. directed at discrediting a given candidate or even the entire political party in the eyes of voters³⁶.

³¹ See: Act of 5 January 2011, Electoral Code (Dz.U.No. 21, item. 112).

³² Due to the constant development of technology, it would simply be impossible to anticipate all possibilities of agitation activities; see: A. Rakowska-Trela, *op.cit.*, pp. 193–194.

³³ See: *the Sentence of the Supreme Court from February 18, 1947, K 2251/46*, [in:] M. Borski, *Agitacja Wyborcza...*, p. 40.

³⁴ According to the statement that “statements or other forms of electoral agitation may come from anyone, not necessarily from an election committee, as long as they can qualify as electoral agitation”, see Order of the Court of Appeal in Rzeszów of September 7, 2013, I Acz 775/13.

³⁵ A. Pyrzyńska, *op.cit.*, p. 154.

³⁶ Decision of the Regional Court, March 30, 2015 Ref. Act VI Ns 15/15.; A. Rakowska-Trela, *op.cit.*, pp. 185–186.

Although – as indicated above – there is no closed catalog of activities that can be considered as agitation activities, Art. 108 of the Electoral Code introduces a list of places where electoral agitation is unacceptable. However, it covers only secular places, so that agitation activities in church areas are not prohibited by Polish law *expressis verbis*³⁷. However, there are certain restrictions foreseen for parishes and other church units – as units whose legal personality is recognized under the applicable provisions of the state law³⁸ – regarding the possibility of sharing their spaces. According to Art. 132 par. 5 of the Electoral Code, parishes and other church units may not grant advertising space or rooms to election committees free of charge³⁹. Election committees are therefore obliged, under penalty of a fine, to conclude a contract and pay for the use of church space to promote certain candidates or political parties. Apart from that, however, there are no regulations in the area of the state law limiting the possibility of undertaking agitation activities by the clergy of the Catholic Church.

However, the question of respecting the constitutional principle of the autonomy of state and church as described above remains. In this case, the agitational activity of priests during the election campaign – and beyond – can be qualified as a violation of the abovementioned principle, among others, that the purpose of gathering in churches is by no means to participate in an election rally⁴⁰. What is more, insistent electoral agitation, manifesting itself by – for example – by the speeches of specific candidates in churches, may lead to a violation freedom of religion and conscience, guaranteed by the Article 53 of the Constitution⁴¹.

Therefore, one should agree with the statement that agitation activities for a given political party or candidate may lead to a violation of that freedom, for example by hindering or disorganizing the practice or practice of worship⁴². The church authorities themselves also refer to the issues presented above. This

³⁷ A. Poczyńska, *op.cit.*, p. 153.

³⁸ See: Concordat between the Holy See...

³⁹ See: Act of 5 January 2011, Electoral Code.

⁴⁰ A. Poczyńska, *op.cit.*, pp. 158–160.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 159. See more: M. Karpiuk, *Wolność sumienia i wyznania a przestępstwa przeciw tym wolnościom*, [in:] *Wolność sumienia i religii a bezpieczeństwo i porządek publiczny*, eds. J. Nikołajew, P. Sobczuk, K. Walczuk, Warsaw 2017, p. 52.

⁴² More: A. Poczyńska, *op.cit.*, pp. 160–161.

is particularly evident in the attitude of the Primate of Poland, Archbishop Wojciech Polak, who clearly indicates the threats arising from the church's connection with politics⁴³ and emphasizes that the Church's tasks are primarily related to the moral and ethical evaluation of conduct, not convincing the faithful to vote for a specific political party or candidate⁴⁴. This position is convergent with the announcements of individual diocesan curias, published in previous years in connection with incidents reported by the media⁴⁵. Although it would seem that the position of the Church is unambiguous in this respect, it should be pointed out that problems with interpretation are generated by individual attitudes of individual church hierarchies. An example of this could be the speech of one of the bishops who stated that the supporting the leader of the currently ruling political party in the implementation of his vision of the state and homeland is "something completely natural" and expressed gratitude for everything that this politician did for Poland⁴⁶.

Opponents of the negative assessment of this statement can immediately notice that the bishop, like every citizen, has the right to express his views, which he simply followed, without performing pastoral tasks at the same time – this statement was not presented in church, but during a conference at the Diocesan Museum. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the hierarch appeared in the official role of a diocesan bishop at the conference, and that his words, even if it was not intended, may give rise to a justified belief that the bishop speaks on behalf of the Church as the institution.

V. The activity of the church during the election silence

The activity of the Catholic Church in the scope presented above during the so-called „election silence” is another, separate issue. It is a concept related to the

⁴³ More: <https://www.deon.pl/kosciol/abp-polak-zwiazek-z-rzadzacyimi-nie-sluzy-kosciolowi-polityka-w-trakcie-kazan-to-duza-strata,488805> (21.10.2019).

⁴⁴ <https://www.deon.pl/kosciol/prymas-kosciol-nie-moze-wskazywac-na-kogo-glosowac,564911> (21.10.2019).

⁴⁵ <https://dzienniklodzki.pl/wybory-do-parlamentu-europejskiego-plakaty-wyborcze-kandydatek-pis-na-plocie-kosciola-w-konstantynowie-lodzkiem-film/ar/c1-14120305> (21.10.2019).

⁴⁶ <https://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/polityka/artykuly/596455,bp-mering-jaroslaw-kaczynskiego-panskie-sukcesy.html> (21.10.2019).

period covering – in accordance with Art. 107 § 1 of the Electoral Code – 24 hours preceding the day of voting and the day of voting itself, in which there is a total ban on election agitation⁴⁷. In the context of the activity of clergy, this is a particularly important aspect, because in the Polish legal system voting usually takes place on Sunday, and both; practice and life experience show that the majority of people voting and declaring themselves as believers follow a similar pattern – first they go to Sunday Mass and then – while returning home from church – they enter the proper polling station to vote. This approach raises the possibility for clergy to influence voters' decisions at the last minute. Of course, election agitation in this case is not only questionable from a moral point of view, but it is also constituted as a direct violation of the state law⁴⁸. In addition to the interpretative inaccuracies indicated above regarding the very activity of the Church during the election campaign, in the event of absolute prohibition of election agitation, three additional problems arise.

The first case concerns the so-called “ordering” Mass in the intention of specific candidate or by the candidate himself⁴⁹. Ordering intentions is a common practice among Catholics on a daily basis – Mass intentions can be both thankful and imploring. However, the functioning of the parish shows that mass intentions are ordered several months in advance. Extraordinary cases cannot be ruled out, but ad hoc orders at the last minute may indicate that the main intention is not so much to ask God's intercession for a particular candidate, but to remind the faithful that this person is running in elections and shares similar values. In the opinion of the National Electoral Commission, however, one cannot speak of running electoral agitation in such cases, unless during the celebration of the Holy Mass in the intention of a given person there is a suggestion regarding voting for the candidate or the name of the party⁵⁰.

Another problem worth pointing out is the fact that the candidates put articles or columns in Catholic newspapers, which are distributed in churches during the “election Sunday”, i.e. during election silence. However, it is important to take into account the fact that the data is issued in good time earlier, during the week, and that the agitation information published in the press

⁴⁷ M. Borski, *op.cit.*, p. 46.

⁴⁸ Art. 498 Act of 5 January 2011, Electoral Code; A. Rakowska-Trela, *op.cit.*, pp. 116–118.

⁴⁹ By: A. Pyrzyńska, *op.cit.*, p. 161.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

before the election silence is not considered as a violation of the ban on political agitation⁵¹.

The last issue, although it seems apparent and insignificant, has so far appeared twice during election campaigns in the Third Republic of Poland, sparking lively discussions in society⁵². Namely, the occurrence in the psalms sung during Mass, phrases indicating the God's love for a particular ruler. It is a practice known in the western cultural circle since the time of Charlemagne⁵³. At that time, in accordance with the entire ideology of exercising power, the Church was both a source of legitimacy and one of the instruments for strengthening the rule of the King of Franks, and then of the emperor of the entire Western Christian world.

Certainly, it can be stated that this was not the purpose of those involved in arranging the liturgical calendar, but the appearance in the responsorial psalms of the words "Lord loves Righteousness and Justice⁵⁴" on Sunday, October 21, 2018 and "Righteousness and justice make up the foundation of your throne" on August 6, 2015 should be treated as unfortunate coincidences, not a proof of cooperation between the Church and the mentioned political party. Both the texts of the psalms and the liturgical calendar were created long before the certain party was founded⁵⁵.

VI. Conclusion

Despite the decline in religiosity of society, the voice of the Church remains audible in public space so clearly that the position taken by the church au-

⁵¹ Compare: A. Rakowska-Trela, op.cit., pp. 126–128.; M. Borski, op.cit, p. 47.

⁵² See: <https://polskaniepodlegla.pl/opinie/item/18284-proroczy-psalm-czy-pan-miluje-prawo-i-sprawiedliwosc> (21.10.2010); <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/kraj/1768206,1,pan-miluje-prawo-i-sprawiedliwosc-psalm-w-wybory-sprzyja-pis.read> (21.10.2019); <http://wyborcza.pl/7,75398,24063604,pan-miluje-prawo-i-sprawiedliwosc-taki-psalm-uslysza-wiarni.html> (21.10.2019).

⁵³ See: W. Falkowski, *Wielki Król. Ideologiczne podstawy władzy Karola Wielkiego*, Warsaw 2011, p. 215.

⁵⁴ The polish translation of those words is the same as the name of a certain political party.

⁵⁵ <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/kraj/1768206,1,pan-miluje-prawo-i-sprawiedliwosc-psalm-w-wybory-sprzyja-pis.read> (21.10.2019).

thorities meets with commentary from various parties, causing certain political inclinations at the same time.

Therefore, it is important to realize how sensitive the activity of the Church remains during a time as important for the future of the state as the election campaign. It is not, however, a postulate to limit the pastoral activity of the Church during this period. On the contrary, it should be emphasized how great responsibility rests with both the entire institution of the Church and its individual priests, so that – in carrying out the mission to which they were called – they will not meet with allegations of politicization or departure from Christian ideals for the short-term benefits resulting from being associated with a particular political fraction. On the other hand, it should also be pointed out that analyzing the statements of the Church by the skeptical fractions towards it, needs to be done with a comprehensive consideration of all pastoral tasks of the Church before any possible formulation of the abovementioned allegations.

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