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A quarter-century-old publication of *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* in the context of Polish catechesis

The article undertakes the issue of the reception of a normative document such as *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* in the sphere of Polish catechesis during the last twenty five years since its publication. Therefore, it will be shown how this proven and exceptional tool of ecclesial communication became a catechetical instrument of the Church in the work of evangelisation. The article will include the facts on the basis of which the *Catechism* revived the catechesis of children, adolescents and adults, inspired academia to conduct new scientific research and awakened the consciousness of the Church in its mission in the world, becoming a tool of religious education. The attempt will also be made to demonstrate that the *Catechism* has really been popularised, not only promulgated. The article is concluded with postulates for even deeper use of the *Catechism* in the religious education of a catechetical community in the future.

Key words: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, catechesis, Polish conditionings.

The new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as a proven and exceptional tool of ecclesial communication was handed over a quarter of a century ago to the Catholic community throughout the world¹. Immediately prior to its publication, many important events took place

¹ E. Alberich, *Le fonti della catechesi e il ruolo dei catechismi*, [in:] *Andate e insegnate. Manuale di catechetica*, E. Alberich, U. Gianetto ed., Torino 2002, p. 100.

for the renewal of the Church² – most of all, the calling of the Second Vatican Council, pontificates of blessed Paul VI and St John Paul II as well as the announcement of important catechetical documents, which boosted the catechetical message³. In the period of various transformations taking place in the socio-cultural sphere of the world the publication of *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* constituted an event of great significance⁴. The previous one – *the Roman Catechism* of 1566 – served the Church for over four centuries and the one published a quarter century ago has become one of the fundamental instruments of the Church in the work of evangelisation of the world⁵. Its promulgation has led to the revision of catechetical objectives, the new planning of its content and improvement of the methods of its implementation⁶.

In the period of the last twenty five years, *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* has had all the chances to actually become what it was created for, i.e. the ‘official’ text of the Church⁷. However, has it fulfilled its strategic goal, i.e. awakened the awareness of the Church and its mission in the world, becoming a tool of religious education? Questions regarding its most important “functions and roles still remain open and generate a variety of discussions and opinions”⁸. After twenty five years since the date of its publication, several vital questions need to be urgently asked. Has the religious revival, projected in *Fidei depositum*⁹, really taken place at all stages of the adjustment of *the Catechism* to the reality of the local community of the Church in Poland? Has it only served to read or to become the basis for an in-depth reflection

² Cf. S. Pawłowski, *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego w ekumenicznej perspektywie dogmatycznoteologicznej*, Lublin 2012, p. 15.

³ See R. Czekalski, *Rozwój myśli katechetycznej w dokumentach Stolicy Apostolskiej po Vaticanum II*, Warszawa 2013, p. 20.

⁴ *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego*, Poznań 1994. It will hereinafter be referred to as *the Catechism* or CCC.

⁵ *Wprowadzenie do Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, A. Sujka ed., Warszawa 1994, p. 7.

⁶ W. Rzeszowski, *Odnowa katechezy*, Warszawa 2001, p. 10.

⁷ C. M. Martini, *Katechizm w Kościele i świecie współczesnym*, transl. J. Dembska, [in:] *Wprowadzenie do Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, p. 63-64.

⁸ Cf.. W. Osiał, *Historia katechizmu. Geneza i rozwój katechizmu w Kościele katolickim od I do XVI wieku*, Warszawa 2013, p.11.

⁹ Jan Paweł II, *Konstytucja apostolska Fidei depositum ogłoszona z okazji publikacji Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*. Polish text: „L'Osservatore Romano” 14(1993), no. 2. It will hereinafter be referred to as FD.

on the current state of catechesis? And has the popularization of the *Catechism* finally taken place or has it been merely promulgated?

Catechetics

The role of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in catechesis

On 7 December 1992 in Vatican, St John Paul II handed over the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* to the representatives of the faithful from around the world. “*The Catechism* was given to five bishops representing five continents, a married couple, two representatives of the young and two children. Thus, the truth that the new *Catechism* is intended for all- for people of all ages, nationalities and cultures who constitute the People of God- was expressed”¹⁰. It will soon be twenty five years since that moment, which is appropriate time to take stock of the suitability for catechetical activities in the Polish conditions of the document defined as a manual “containing the basic, synthetic and comprehensive exposition of the truths of faith and Christian morality norms, rooted in the Scripture, Tradition, history and human existence, used for teaching and shaping of the beliefs and attitudes of the faithful”¹¹.

The Catechism as a summary of the principal truths of faith was aimed to “present an organic and synthetic exposition of the essential and fundamental contents of the Catholic doctrine, including both faith and morality in the light of the Second Vatican Council and the whole Tradition of the Church” (CCC 11). The provision of such a synthesis constituting an organic entirety broke the disturbing trend of portraying the Catholic faith “in fragments reflecting only individual existential experiences”¹². C. Schönborn in charge of the coordination of works and the harmonisation of separate parts of *the Catechism* also argued that all this ultimately resulted not only from the loss of trust in that entirety but most of all “had the source in the crisis of faith, more precisely: of the common profession of faith with the Church of all times”¹³.

The new *Catechism*, awaited for four hundred years, did not reveal itself as a work of science and theology, but rather as a form of

¹⁰ M. Napieralski, *O nowym katechizmie*, Poznań 1994, p. 5.

¹¹ M. Rusecki, *Katechizm*, [in:] EK VIII, k. 1038-1039.

¹² C. Schönborn, *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego. Myśli przewodnie i główne tematy*, transl. B. Widła, [in:] *Wprowadzenie do Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, p. 34.

¹³ *Ibidem*.

catechesis¹⁴. It was a prediction, catechesis, a collection of the simplest awareness of the faith, because there was no controversy, anathemas and justifications. Fortunately for the systematic catechesis, it has a simplified and everyday character, aiming at the widest possible reception – both by educated people as well as those without theological education. In this case we can talk about “popular catechetical theology”¹⁵. It was prepared in order to be able to clearly present the doctrine of faith and at the same time to help live by it more deeply and bear testimony to it. It was to combine two objectives: the presentation of objective truth contained in the teaching of the Catholic Church with the possibility of its adoption in a personal act of faith¹⁶.

The basic difficulty while using *the Catechism* stemmed from several facts. Since the very beginning of the legislative work it was known that “the issue was not about some *catechismus minor*, some sort of a guidebook which could immediately be used during the religious education lessons”¹⁷. Enormous differences prevailing between the existing cultures made it impossible to develop a common manual of catechesis for the whole world. The *Roman Catechism* previously mentioned was addressed to pastors who knew Latin and were the main catechists. The new *Catechism* had to be addressed to bishops and their collaborators, responsible for the shape of catechesis in particular local churches, but it could not only be reserved for the chosen individuals¹⁸.

During the preparations of *the Catechism* there were two tendencies and concerns. If the document had a complicated scientific and theological layout, it would not be received by ordinary recipients. The second concern regarded the academia. It was thought that *the Catechism* in a simplified form might be neglected by it. Eventually it was decided that it would be published in a simplified form. But then there emerged two phenomena incompatible with each other. Academia made *the Catechism* the material of its own scientific activity. Already at the stage of academic consultations and subsequently after the release of the document, scientific circles recognised their own

¹⁴ Cf. W. Osiał, *Historia katechizmu. Geneza i rozwój katechizmu w Kościele katolickim*, p. 279.

¹⁵ Cz. Bartnik, *Wartości chrześcijaństwa*, [in:] *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego. Wprowadzenie*, M. Rusecki, E. Pudelko eds., Lublin 1995, p. 278.

¹⁶ J. Ratzinger, *Wprowadzenie do Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, [in:] *Wprowadzenie do Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, p. 33.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 12.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 13.

role in providing scientific explanations, creating studies and demonstrating relevant perspectives of believing and understanding the truths included in *the Catechism of the Catholic Church*¹⁹. After twenty five years, *the Catechism* is still a piece of work willingly analysed in academia and repeatedly quoted²⁰.

On the other hand, ordinary recipients, i.e. all believers- at least in the Polish reality- failed to respond with interest to this publication. Although *the Catechism* does not include complicated wording and is the presentation of the entire faith of the Church, displayed in a simple and harmonious way and directs the reader to the essence of Christianity, at the beginning it did not meet with interest in the Polish reality. One of the important reasons could be the fact that *the Catechism* was not intended for direct use in the catechesis of children and adolescents. It was mainly intended for the pastors of the Church on whom the responsibility for catechesis rested. Only through their ministry was it directed to the catechists, clergy and laity as well as to the authors of new local catechisms²¹. Such selection of a group of potential recipients resulted in a smaller than expected interest in the document among ordinary believers. It should not, however, be forgotten that the authors of *the Catechism* also wanted it to become a useful reading for all Christians wishing to familiarise themselves with the teaching of the Church.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church as a source document for catechetical education

In the face of rapid changes in the modern world one may hear an opinion that “the value of *the Catechism* requires a deep multi-faceted reflection and in the face of a rich reality of catechesis it should be perceived as one of the tools of catechetical message, which in no way may be absolutised”²². Despite the concerns, persons in charge of the development of catechisation in Poland initiated the activities aiming to popularise and expand the circle of direct recipients of *the*

¹⁹ M. Napieralski, *O nowym katechizmie*, p. 31.

²⁰ See R. Czekalski, *Bibliografia katechetyczna 1996-200*, Warszawa 2012, p. 11-15; Idem, *Bibliografia katechetyczna 2001-2010*, Warszawa 2012, p. 14-18.

²¹ Cf. P. Tomasik, *Katechetyka fundamentalna*, [in:] *Historia katechezy i katechetyka fundamentalna*, J. Stala ed., Tarnów 2003, p. 203.

²² W. Osiał, *Historia katechizmu. Geneza i rozwój katechizmu w Kościele katolickim*, p. 11.

*Catechism*²³. However, the reception of *the Catechism* took place with unexpected obstacles. One of the internal causes of little interest in *the Catechism* was connected with the language that it used. It was a very precise, concise, biblical and patristic language requiring a lot of concentration. Therefore, it was also unlike the one that believers used on a daily basis and that could be found in magazines or in mass media²⁴.

The lack of tradition of using such assistance constituted another barrier. In the last quarter-century in the face of threats from atheistic state, the reaction of Polish catechists was to provide ready-to-use catechismal formulations, kept in a polemical tone²⁵. They were supposed to counteract the wave of demoralisation. This method indirectly fulfilled its function, because it prevented the catechised from many dangers, but failed to prepare them to make independent religious choices, which might help to maintain the spiritual identity in current times. All undertaken attempts to popularise *the Catechism* and the adoption of its provisions to the religious lives of believers have aimed to show that this document deals with contemporary problems and sheds light on many issues troubling the modern man²⁶. It has also been pinpointed that it does not stop on the wording and definitions but it strengthens the dialogue with God²⁷.

In the context of the presentations of various issues, there arose the most important topic of the Christian message: the truth about the love of God the Father, the saving activity of the Christ, who is present in His Church through the Holy Spirit²⁸. Practical indications could only work when preceded by the spiritual strategy of *the Catechism* reception²⁹.

For twenty five years the presentation of *the Catechism* has abundantly taken place both in the scientific literature, popular science as

²³ See R. Murawski, *Katechizm a katechizacja w Polsce*, „Ateneum Kapłańskie” 515(1995), p. 23-32.

²⁴ Cf. J. Królikowski, *Mały przewodnik po Katechizmie Kościoła Katolickiego*, Poznań 1996, p. 29-30.

²⁵ Cf. E. Jarmoch, *Religijność indywidualna Polaków*, [in:] *Kościół i religijność Polaków 1945-1999*, W. Zdaniec, T. Zembrzusiński eds., Warszawa 2000, p. 394.

²⁶ See *W co wierzy Kościół i z czego żyje. W 10. rocznicę opublikowania Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, T. Panuś ed., Kraków 2004.

²⁷ Cf. J. Królikowski, *Wprowadzenie*, [in:] *Powstanie i znaczenie Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, J. Królikowski ed., Poznań 1994 p. 8.

²⁸ K. Jakubiec, *Aby lepiej poznać Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego*. „Katecheta” 38(1994), p. 197-200.

²⁹ Cf. K. Misiaszek, *Proponowany model wychowawczy współczesnego chrześcijanina w świetle Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, „Chrześcijanin w Świecie” 23(1993), no. 4, p. 88-101.

well as in the Catholic press³⁰. Also the Polish pulpit has become a place for the proclamation of the content of *the Catechism*³¹. However, most of the information has been passed through systematic catechisation³². *The Catechism*, next to the Bible, occupies a central place in over two hundred textbooks and methodological guides to religious education teaching³³. It is the actual adaptation of *the Catechism* to the usual conditions of religious education teaching.

In order to popularise *the Catechism*, a number of positions have been published which sought to accommodate the content included there to the perceptive abilities of Polish recipients. The publication prepared in the academia of Tarnów entitled “W duchu i prawdzie” [In spirit and in truth] was chronologically the first one³⁴. It was addressed to all the people who wished to make the main truths of *the Catechism* the subject of their reflection³⁵. The subsequent accommodations adopted the same manner of presentation of *the Catechism*. This group includes the Radom initiative entitled “Wyznawać wiarę dzisiaj. Katecheza dorosłych na podstawie Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego” [Professing faith today. Catechesis for adults based of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*]³⁶. Its main objective was to revive catechesis addressed to adults. The third position entitled “Katechizm dla dorosłych” [*Catechism for adults*]³⁷, prepared for the Polish Episcopal Commission on the Catholic Upbringing, is of special significance. On 20 June 1998 the Commission approved the work performed by 23 Polish catechetists and catechists. The work started with the incentive for

³⁰ K. Kantowski, *Symposium studentów ATKIKUL w Lublinie na temat Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, „Collectanea Theologica” 65(1995), f. 1, p. 134-138.

³¹ D. Zimoń, *Nowy Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego w służbie nowej ewangelizacji*, [in:] *Jezus Chrystus jedyny Zbawiciel świata, wczoraj, dziś i na wieki. Program duszpasterski na rok 1996/97*, Katowice 1996, p. 317-321.

³² Cf. R. Murawski, *Katechizm a katechizacja w Polsce*, p. 23-32.

³³ Cf. P. Tomasiak, *Polskie dokumenty dwudziestopięciolecia 1990-2015*, [in:] *XXV lat nauczania religii w polskiej szkole*, M. Zając ed., Lublin 2015, p. 57n.

³⁴ *W duchu i prawdzie. Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego w refleksji i w życiu*, C. Noworolnik, M. Zając eds., Tarnów 1997.

³⁵ J. Życiński, *Wstęp*, [in:] *W duchu i prawdzie*, p. 10.

³⁶ S. Łabendowicz, *Wyznawać wiarę dzisiaj. Katecheza dorosłych na podstawie Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, Sandomierz 1999.

³⁷ *Katechizm dla dorosłych. Polska adaptacja Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego opracowana na zlecenie Komisji Episkopatu polski ds. Wychowania katolickiego*, J. Charytański, A. Spławski eds., Kraków 1999.

all believers to reflect through prayer over the truths of faith included in *the Catechism*”³⁸.

The publication entitled “Taka jest wiara Kościoła. Katechizm dla dorosłych” [This is the faith of the Church. Catechism for adults] also became significant³⁹. It was prepared primarily for the Polish recipients- adult members of an ecclesial community in order to show the Christian faith in a full but at the same time synthetic manner as a reality which demands testimony to the contemporary world. Making a kind of a balance regarding the importance of the Catechism of 1992 for Polish catechetical conditions, the then Chairman of the Commission on Catholic Upbringing of the Polish Episcopal Conference, Cardinal K. Nycz stated: “This *Catechism* shows the faith of the Church in Poland in which Christ has lived and acted for over a thousand years [...]. It is about the confession of faith, the sacraments and the liturgy of the Church, about moral life, the commandment of love and the Ten Commandments, and finally about Christian prayer. Preserving this layout of *the Catechism* will enable the readers’ easier orientation in what the Church believes and how it lives”⁴⁰.

All these adaptations of *the Catechism* have aimed to present the new perspective on Christian life, the strengthening of faith, awakening of the will to follow Christ, who is the source of Christian hope in the light of the new *Catechism*. What remains today is the critical assessment of the effects of these efforts.

Assessment of how the indications of the Catechism of the Catholic Church for Polish catechesis were fulfilled

The sensible choice taking into account the integrity of Christian doctrine and the specific situation of a catechised person is the basic criterion to help determine the importance of *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* for the Polish catechesis and draw conclusions for the future. Today we are dealing with the situation in which according to P. Mąkosa the paths “of the Church and other religious institutions on the one hand and of the secular world on the other hand diverge faster and faster and in some circles these paths have already been

³⁸ Ibidem p. 5.

³⁹ *Taka jest wiara Kościoła. Katechizm dla dorosłych*, Z. Marek ed., Kraków 2009.

⁴⁰ K. Nycz, *Słowo wstępne*, [in:] *Taka jest wiara Kościoła. Katechizm dla dorosłych*, p. 8.

long apart”⁴¹. However, after 25 years of the validity of the document in question, apart from the content areas around which the discussion with the secularised world is conducted, *the Catechism* may play a vital role as a point of reference with regard to determining the forms of meetings and discussions with non-believers⁴². St John Paul II rightly stated that “It is hard to say what the role the new *Catechism* will play. However, thanks to the grace of God and good will of the pastors and the faithful, it will surely be able to become an effective tool for further development of knowledge and will result in genuine spiritual and moral revival”⁴³. Although today it is easier to meet with a modern man not in the course of studying *the Catechism* but rather on a path of searching for the good and beauty in the surrounding world, it must be assumed that this man will long for transcendence, because this dimension unites and explains everything in life⁴⁴.

From the perspective of a quarter-century-long validity of *the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the answers to the following questions are necessary: In what way has it been introduced to the catechesis? What have catechists done with it? What applications has it had in the Polish catechesis? One may risk claiming that the catechesis of the last 25 years has been in line with the spirit of *the Catechism*, because it represented the new style of teaching and theology associated with the Second Vatican Council. This was reflected in the references to the content of the Council documents and in the extension of responsibility for catechesis to all believers. The compliance of catechesis with the spirit of the new *Catechism* emphasises its Christocentrism and appreciation of the principle of Christian personalism⁴⁵. What is more, the above connections are further deepened by the scripturalism of catechetical message postulated by *the Catechism*, by faithfulness to centuries-old Tradition of the Church by means of referring to the Fathers of the Church and subsequent eminent Catholic theologians and the principle of “faithfulness to God and man” implemented in the Polish catechesis⁴⁶.

⁴¹ P. Mąkosa, *Materia i forma współczesnego „dziecińca pogan”*, [in:] *Catechetica Porta Fidei*, A. Kiciński ed., Lublin 2012, p. 63.

⁴² Ibidem.

⁴³ Jan Paweł II, *Nowy katechizm darem dla wszystkich*. „L’Osservatore Romano” 14: 1993 no. 7.

⁴⁴ Cf. R. Chałupniak, *Sztuka na katechezie. Korelacja lekcji religii z wychowaniem plastycznym*, „Katecheta” 47(2003), nos 7-8, p. 128.

⁴⁵ Cf. P. Goliszek, *Personalistyczny wymiar katechezy*. Lublin 2016, p. 46.

⁴⁶ T. Panuś, *Główne kierunki katechetyczne XX wieku*, Kraków 2001, p. 166.

Catechesis in line with the spirit of *the Catechism* reveals itself in the preparation and promulgation of documents essential for the Polish catechesis⁴⁷. Taking into consideration the indications of *the Catechism*, subsequently specified in *the General Directory for Catechesis*, the Commission on Catholic Upbringing of the Episcopal Conference led to the publication of three crucial catechetical documents. These are *the Catechetical Directory of the Catholic Church in Poland*⁴⁸, *the Core Curriculum for the Catechesis of the Catholic Church in Poland*⁴⁹, and *Religious education curriculum*⁵⁰. Year 2010 brought new documents that directed towards *the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and they were *the Core Curriculum for the Catechesis of the Catholic Church in Poland*⁵¹ and *the Curriculum for Roman Catholic Religious education in kindergartens and schools*⁵². This was the step to really build *the Catechism* into the local structures of the Church and the Polish catechesis.

In the considerations over the direct meaning of *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* for the Polish catechesis, R. Murawski maintained that “it does not intend to take into account the issues of adaptation of both the content as well as catechetical methods required by the diversity of cultures, age, spiritual maturity, social and ecclesial situation of catechesis recipients”⁵³. It is the task for the authors of local catechisms prepared for specific recipients⁵⁴.

It is not difficult to demonstrate the adaptation of *the Catechism* for the purpose of catechesis for young people at the level of junior and senior secondary schools⁵⁵. It is demanding to perform a thorough

⁴⁷ Cf. P. Tomasik, *Powstanie i ewolucja polskich dokumentów katechetycznych w latach 2001-2010*. „Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne” 1(2013), p. 148n.

⁴⁸ Konferencja Episkopatu Polski, *Dyrektorium katechetyczne Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, Kraków 2001.

⁴⁹ Konferencja Episkopatu Polski, *Podstawa programowa katechezy Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, Kraków 2001.

⁵⁰ Komisja Wychowania Katolickiego Konferencji Episkopatu Polski, *Program nauczania religii*, Kraków 2001.

⁵¹ Konferencja Episkopatu Polski, *Podstawa programowa katechezy Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, Kraków 2010.

⁵² Komisja Wychowania Katolickiego Konferencji Episkopatu Polski, *Program nauczania religii rzymskokatolickiej w przedszkolach i szkołach*, Kraków 2010.

⁵³ R. Murawski, *Katechizm a katechizacja w Polsce*, p. 27.

⁵⁴ Cf. M. Zając, *Ewaluacja w nauczaniu religii*, Lublin 2013, p. 209n.

⁵⁵ The youngest children a little more differently perceive the message of the *Catechism*, therefore in the period of time under analysis there were no attempts made to adapt the *Catechism* for young children., See T. Panuś, *O kondycji*

analysis of the use of *the Catechism* in all textbooks for religious education available on the market. One may, however, indicate that in the proposals for junior secondary school in the most popular and complete educational packages after year 2001 – a *Poznań series* edited by Rev. J. Szpet, a Jesuit series entitled *W drodze do Emaus* [On the way to Emaus] edited by Rev. Z. Marek and a series by Rev. P. Tomasik- *the Catechism* is a basic source and willingly used in catechesis⁵⁶. However, after year 2010 there have been over two hundred textbooks for religious education and methodological guides as well as worksheets which make extensive use of the content and methodological potential of *the Catechism*. Their specifications, authors and bibliographical references may be followed on a regular basis on the website of the Commission for the Catholic Upbringing of Polish Episcopal Conference in the “Numbers of curricula and textbooks” tab⁵⁷.

After twenty five years since the publication of *the Catechism* it can be clearly indicated that no significant attempts of its adaptation in the form of summaries, except for the diocesan initiative connected with the preparation for Confirmation, were made. Similar attempts undertaken with *the Roman Catechism* were unsuccessful and often even harmful. It was not a time for quantitative adaptation, but rather a qualitative one, i.e. “adaptation of this catechism to the needs, mentality, and culture of the catechised”⁵⁸.

It may not be excluded that some catechists took *the Catechism* to school in order to use it as a textbook. Such a situation may not be repeated. *The Catechism* may not be treated as a catechetical textbook. It is worth remembering that “the reception of *the Catechism* in the catechesis addressed to specific groups of believers does not necessarily mean the literal citation of individual parts of the document. Faithfulness to *the Catechism* is based on the faithfulness to its spirit and its main ideas”⁵⁹. It is the first postulate for the future so that all adaptations were subject to the spirit of *the Catechism*.

nauczania religii w polskiej szkole, [in:] *Integralny rozwój osoby*, P. Michowicz, A. Zajac eds., Kraków 2015, p. 117-136.

⁵⁶ Cf. A. Offmański, *W kierunku katechezy ewangelizacyjnej*, Szczecin 2000, p. 218-226.

⁵⁷ *Numery programów i podręczników*, [online][accessed on: 19.05.2016]. Available in the internet: <http://www.katecheza.episkopat.pl/index.php/menu/biuro-programowania-katechezy/10-biuro-programowania-katechezy/19-numery-programow-i-podrecznikow>.

⁵⁸ R. Murawski, *Katechizm a katechizacja w Polsce*, p. 28.

⁵⁹ P. Tomasik, *Katechetyka fundamentalna*, p. 224.

The second postulate regards an appeal to catechists so that they built among the catechised the conviction that God, who speaks to them in *the Catechism*, is different from the things of this world. He also uses a different economy and laws. If we are strengthening our contact with the world of matter so much, then – as counterbalance – we must also be interested in the world of the spirit, to which reading *the Catechism* may become the key. And here should arise the reflection: belonging to the world of matter, do I aspire to the world of God? What is the central value in my life and what has a peripheral meaning? A critical reflection on the message of *the Catechism* entails the attitude in which the obtained knowledge is not treated as accidentally obtained, not only as human wisdom, but the call of God, who demands saving action from every man through the teaching included on the pages of *the Catechism*.

Conclusions

The Catechism of the Catholic Church as an effect of the cooperation of the entire Episcopate of the Catholic Church together with theological and catechetical institutes is an extraordinary “symphony of faith”. In the past quarter-century it has become the basis for the development of new local catechisms, adapted to the Polish environment and culture, and at the same time taking care of faithfulness to the Catholic doctrine. Also catechesis of the period under analysis has been in line with the spirit of *the Catechism*, because it presented the new style of teaching, emphasised Christocentrism, Christian personalism and scripturalism of catechetical message as well as implemented the principle of “faithfulness to God and man.” The legacy of *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* has constantly been proclaimed, heard, celebrated, lived and commented in Polish catechesis.

The vision of catechesis postulated in *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* is always born by means of the renewal of its entire structure. Searching for traces of catechetical renewal after the publication of *the Catechism*, it has been shown that the individual elements of catechesis were transformed by the work of its adaptation to the Polish local conditions. In order to make the progress even more significant, the effort of circles related to catechesis will be required: they should make a major contribution to the ongoing work of adaptation of *the Catechism* to the Polish reality of religious education. Considerable deepening of the knowledge of *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* with respect to which no believer should feel reserved will be the

clearest expression of the fulfilment of the evangelisation duty of the whole Church.

Catechetics

Summary

The Catechism of the Catholic Church handed over to the Polish recipient has been influencing the shape of Polish catechesis for twenty five years now. This document has a normative character for the catechetical teaching. Radical connection of the catechesis with the content included in *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* in practice means that the catechesis of the last twenty-five years has been permeated with the thought and spirit of this document; it has highlighted the principle of Christocentrism and of ecclesiocentrism as well as “faithfulness to God and man.” This abundance of content of *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* has been a vital component of the catechetical message, both in the content as well as in methodical layers. It could be said that the adaptation of the contents of *the Catechism of the Catholic Church* to the reality of the local Church in Poland has successfully been completed.

ĆWIERĆWIECZE PUBLIKACJI KATECHIZMU KOŚCIOŁA KATOLICKIEGO W KONTEKŚCIE POLSKIEJ KATECHEZY

W artykule zostało podjęte zagadnienie recepcji typicznego dokumentu, jakim jest *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego* w polskiej przestrzeni katechetycznej w okresie ćwierćwiecza od jego opublikowania. Dlatego zostało ukazane, jak to sprawdzone i wyjątkowe narzędzie komunikacji eklezjalnej stawało się instrumentem katechetycznym Kościoła w dziele ewangelizacji. Zostały także zaprezentowane fakty, na podstawie których *Katechizm* ożywił katechezę dzieci, młodzieży i dorosłych, zainspirował środowiska akademickie do nowych poszukiwań naukowych oraz rozbudził świadomość Kościoła w jego posłannictwo w świecie, stając się narzędziem edukacji religijnej. Została także podjęta próba wykazania, że doszło do jego faktycznej popularyzacji, a nie tylko promulgacji. Artykuł kończą postulaty dotyczące jeszcze głębszego wykorzystania *Katechizmu* w edukacji religijnej wspólnoty katechetycznej w przyszłości.

Słowa kluczowe: *Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego*, katecheza, uwarunkowania polskie.

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