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Moral Upbringing in Families Based on a Mixed Marriage: the Catholic-Lutheran perspective

Abstract

This article presents the issue of moral upbringing in families based on a mixed Catholic-Lutheran marriage in a synthetic way. In the time of the crisis of upbringing as such, it becomes essential to pay attention to moral upbringing, which is the foundation of all education, and should be passed on by parents, as the first educators. They take actions that, despite a difference in religion, guide children to form a moral conscience, proper interpersonal relations, and educate them about love, that should be based on truth. In mixed denominational families, the transmission of moral upbringing takes place in the spirit of ecumenism, which means that, despite the threats that may arise, the testimony of Christian love and unity speaks out even stronger.

Keywords

moral upbringing, mixed marriages, Lutherans, Roman Catholic Church, moral theology.

1. Introduction

Human education is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that can apply to all spheres of life, and includes shaping the morality of children by their parents. Pope Francis emphasises that parents, as educators, influence the moral development of their children, shaping what is both good and bad in them. The Pope also calls on parents to undertake the task of upbringing with great responsibility and enthusiasm, to educate their children in the right way, at a time when it becomes more and more complicated.¹

In the entirety of modern education, it becomes indispensable to pay more attention to the moral upbringing that is passed on to the children in the family. Nowadays, the recommended trend is that moral upbringing should be transferred in a neutral way, presenting only specific moral systems, and parents are expected not to present their position.² It is necessary to intensify actions aimed at ensuring that, in Christian families, the moral heritage is unambiguous and based not only on theory, but on a clear testimony of faith.

This article deals with the issue of moral upbringing in families, based on mixed marriages. Mixed marriage is understood here in the strict sense, which concerns a Catholic-Evangelical (Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland) marriage, that is, two baptised individuals, one of whom is non-Catholic. In order to achieve the intended research goal, it is necessary to demonstrate the essence of moral education, then the relationship that exists between the moral upbringing that is passed on and the confession of the parents. Once the above-mentioned goal is attained, the tasks of parents in transmitting moral upbringing will be presented.

¹ Cf. Franciszek, *Posynodalna adhortacja apostolska "Amoris laetitia". O miłości w rodzinie*, Kraków 2016, wyd. M, 259.

² Cf. L. Zarzecki, *Teoretyczne podstawy wychowania. Teoria i praktyka w zarysie*, Jelenia Góra 2021, wyd. KPSW, pp. 113–115.

2. The essence of moral upbringing

In the process of raising a human being, which involves a set of deliberate and conscious interactions aimed at making significant and permanent changes in the personality of the charge, moral upbringing is extremely important.³

According to Adolf Ernest Szołtysek, moral upbringing “is carried out on the basis of parental love and is a laborious extraction of humanity and natural rights, as well as spiritual values and moral norms, enabling the formation of a person in a person, that is, the formation of human spirituality, including character and virtues.”⁴

Therefore, it becomes the foundation for the entire education received by man. It is the basis for physical, social, and mental education and it leads to such a state that a person is able to shape every dimension of his life in moral terms.⁵

Thus, the aim of moral upbringing is the moral development of man, which includes the acquisition of knowledge about moral issues and the ability to distinguish good from evil, what is morally righteous from what is not. It concerns the cognitive, emotional and behavioural spheres. In this type of upbringing, special attention is paid to the proper assessment of one’s own and other people’s behaviour.⁶

This process is aimed at shaping not only one’s ability to learn and apply moral norms to their life, but also their ability to experience the world based on their values. The difference between incorporating moral norms and values into one’s life comes down to experiences. Moral norms (moral law) determine what an individual considers to be proper behaviour; values; on the other hand, these determine the goal of their life, which, in Christianity, is present on the way and leads to union with God.

In Christian circles, the key is to rely upon the Decalogue, as well as on the moral principles of the New Testament, which are summarised in the commandment of love. While developing one’s morals, it is important not only to refer

³ Cf. W. Okoń, *Słownik Pedagogiczny*, Warszawa 2001, wyd. Akademickie Żak, p. 445.

⁴ A. E. Szołtysek, *Filozofia wychowania moralnego*, Kraków 2009, wyd. IMPULS, pp. 274–275.

⁵ Cf. Z. Marek, *Wychowanie religijno – moralne*, in: A. Rynio, K. Braun, A. Lendzion, D. Opozda (eds.), *Religijno – moralny wymiar rozwoju i wychowania*, Lublin 2012, wyd. KUL, p. 34.

⁶ Cf. M. Łabocki, *Wychowanie moralne*, Kraków 2007, wyd. Impuls, pp. 12–13.

to the principles offered in the Bible, but also to live by the requirements of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, from which the principle of “novum esse” is derived and which leads to “novum agree”. This includes specific moral requirements that should be recognised in the Church in which one has been baptised, and in accordance with the teachings of this specific community.⁷

3. Moral upbringing and the confession of parents

For a moral upbringing to be effective, it is important to refer to a specific religious system or denomination. In families built on a mixed-denominational marriage, this choice is guided by two principles. The first principle concerns the joint obligation when it comes to raising religious children. It points to the fact that each Church wants children borne out of mixed marriages to be brought up in each parent’s own traditions. Moreover, the principle indicates that the responsibility for upbringing is also a moral one and rests on both parents who, as Christians, refer to all their educational activities and confirm with their testimony of faith. The second principle concerns confessionals during the child’s upbringing. It stipulates that “the Churches do not see the possibility of a cross-confessional education of children. Building a Christian identity always requires rooting in a specific tradition, which at the same time should be accompanied by ecumenical sensitivity.”⁸

The principle of raising a child in a specific denomination, is stated in the Code of Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church, which first draws attention to the fact that parents have the right and obligation to raise their own child. The area of moral education is also distinguished.⁹ In the case of mixed-denominational marriages, when entering into marriage in the Catholic Church, the spouses submit appropriate declarations (*cautelae*¹⁰) before the wedding,

⁷ Cf. Z. Marek, *Podstawy wychowania moralnego*, Kraków 2005, wyd. WAM, pp. 64–65.

⁸ Cf. *Małżeństwo chrześcijańskie osób o różnej przynależności wyznaniowej. Deklaracja Kościołów w Polsce na początku Trzeciego Tysiąclecia* (projekt dokumentu z 10 maja 2011 r.), <https://ekumenia.pl/czytelnia/dokumenty-ekumeniczne/malzenstwo-chrzcijanski-osob-o-roznej%20przynalezności-wyznaniowej/> (12.10.2021).

⁹ *Kodeks Prawa Kanonicznego*, Poznań 2022, wyd. Pallottinum, 1136.

¹⁰ The issue of the declarations (*cautelae*) has been a topic of constant considerations of canonists and theologians. The Canon Law Code of 1917 demanded moral certainty concerning meeting these obligations produced in writing. The issue has evolved in time,

in which the Catholic party undertakes to do everything in order to ensure that the children are baptised and brought up in the Catholic faith. The other party acknowledges and accepts this declaration.¹¹

In the legislation of the Catholic Church, the obligation to bring up children in Catholic terms also applies to moral education, together with the promise of avoiding the danger of losing the faith. While the promise of preserving faith results from God's law, without exception, the obligation to raise children is no longer so radical. It is therefore worth emphasising that this obligation is guided by specific circumstances. Firstly, the Catholic side cannot be compelled to make a commitment it cannot meet. Secondly, the promise must be sincere, otherwise it would be a simulation and defect of marriage consent, thus constituting a moral offence. Finally, the Catholic party is entitled not to meet the obligation if factors arise beyond its control.¹²

The recommendation to raise a child in "their own" religion also rests on the Lutheran faithful who intend to enter into marriage in the Catholic tradition. However, it does not take the form of a promise or formal commitment. The evangelical priest is responsible for educating the couple who intend to get married that, "Lutherans who decide to live in marriage of different religion or worldview, are obliged not only to remain faithful to God and the Church in their personal lives, but also with all respect for their spouse, to give the house an evangelical character, and especially to bring up children in the Lutheran Church of Augsburg denomination."¹³

In many mixed marriages, therefore, a conflict may arise over the decision on how to raise their children. This decision could lead to a moral conflict, since both spouses are, to a certain extent, obliged to bring up the child in their own religion. There are various attempts to overcome the said conflicts, including

which currently can be seen in the attitude of the Catholic Church. Although *cauteleae* is still binding for the Catholic side, its interpretation and requirements differ from those of 1917, see: Z. J. Kijas, *Kwestia małżeństw mieszanych we współczesnym dialogu ekumenicznym*, in: Z. J. Kijas (red.), *Małżeństwa mieszane*, Kraków 2000, wyd. PAT, pp. 22–23.

¹¹ Cf. *Kodeks Prawa Kanonicznego* 1125.

¹² Cf. A. Dąbrowski, *Zawieranie małżeństw mieszanych pomiędzy wiernymi Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego i Kościoła polskokatolickiego w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, "Kościół i Prawo" 7(20) 2018 nr 2, pp. 101–102.

¹³ *Pragmatyka Służbowa Kościoła Ewangelicko-Augsburskiego w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z 1 maja 2021 r. zatwierdzona na 4. Sesji Synodu X Kadencji ze zmianami dokonanymi do 10. Sesji Synodu XIV Kadencji włącznie*, <https://bik.luteranie.pl/files/Prawo/2021-05-01PragmatykaSubowa-tekstujednoliczony.pdf> (12.10. 2021).

those that are contrary to the requirements of the communities. In some regions of Cieszyn Silesia, an attempt is made to apply a certain principle that is becoming a custom, or even a law of some sort, according to which the wedding ceremony is organised in the church to which the bride belongs, and then the spouses practice and raise their children in the community of the husband.¹⁴ Moreover, a practice is adopted according to which the daughter of a given married couple is baptised and brought up in the Church to which the mother belongs, and the son in the community of his father.

The engaged couples or spouses are aware that both of these principles violate Roman Catholic law¹⁵, but it is often believed that such an argument is insufficient. It seems that there is a need for appropriate pastoral care and mutual dialogue in this respect. As Z. J. Kijas comments, “The contemporary teaching of the Catholic Church seems to pay attention to spouses, their difficulties, concerns and hopes, rather than to the rights to the Catholic side. Mutual love and the durability of relationship of the spouses, their dignity and freedom of dialogue with God seem to precede the demands of the warranty. In this way, mixed marriages may become not a threat to the unity of the Churches, but the first locus of true ecumenism.”¹⁶

4. Tasks of Christian parents in the implementation of moral upbringing

Both Lutherans and Catholics agree that Christian parents have the right and duty to raise their children.¹⁷ The entire process of upbringing also includes moral upbringing, in which the role of parents is extremely important because, as contemporary pedagogical thought emphasises, family education

¹⁴ Cf. M. Gwóźdź, *Religijne wychowanie potomstwa w małżeństwach mieszanych*, Katowice 2015, wyd. UŚ, p. 83.

¹⁵ Cf. M. Gwóźdź, *Religijne wychowanie potomstwa w małżeństwach mieszanych*, Katowice 2015, wyd. UŚ, p. 83.

¹⁶ Z. J. Kijas, *Kwestia małżeństw mieszanych we współczesnym dialogu ekumenicznym*, pp. 26–27.

¹⁷ Cf. Sobór Watykański II, *Deklaracja o wychowaniu chrześcijańskim “Gravissimum educationis”*, in: *Sobór Watykański II, Konstytucje, dekryty, deklaracje*, Poznań 2002, wyd. Pallottinum, pp. 315–316; *Pragmatyka Służbowa Kościoła Ewangelicko-Augsburskiego w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej...*, § 110 – 111§.

is indispensable for young people to develop beliefs that arise from “a sense of security in a small circle of relatives, in which there are reliable emotional ties, a common hierarchy of values, good examples, unambiguous ethical requirements and multiple possibilities of action.”¹⁸

Under such conditions, the evaluation methods and norms that influence specific moral choices during adolescence and later on in adulthood are internalised. Educational influence of the parents, therefore, creates a kind of atmosphere of moral life, which makes the education complementary and allows for shaping the child in such a way that it develops a moral sensitivity that will be based on a specific system of values. In Catholic and Lutheran families, these are Christian values.¹⁹

Nowadays, the key to achieving the intended goal of moral upbringing in dual-confessional families seems to be a) shaping moral conscience, b) education about love, and c) education about proper interpersonal relations²⁰.

A) Formation of moral conscience

The subjective norm of morality guiding man is conscience, which according to Tadeusz Ślipko is, “in the light of the general assessment or norm, man’s formed judgment about the moral good/evil of his intended specific act, the realisation of which becomes a source of internal approval or a sense of guilt and being a good or a bad person.”²¹

In the moral practice of life of individuals, conscience has the task of directly grasping the normative relationship between the general moral principle and the concrete action of man. The conscience formed in this way is supposed to indicate good and follow it, because a given act complies with the proper standard of conduct, rejecting the one that is contrary to the norm.²²

Parents, as the first educators of their child, are responsible for supporting the child in the development of conscience. This formation of conscience

¹⁸ W. Brzezinka, *Wychowanie i pedagogika w dobie przemian kulturowych*, Kraków 2005, wyd. WAM, p. 33.

¹⁹ Cf. W. Brzezinka, *Wychowanie i pedagogika w dobie przemian kulturowych*, Kraków 2005, wyd. WAM, p. 33.

²⁰ A similar categorisation is provided by S. Jesionek, *Wychowanie moralne*, Kraków 2004, wyd. WAM.

²¹ T. Ślipko, *Zarys etyki ogólnej*, Kraków 2004, wyd. WAM, p. 377.

²² Cf. T. Ślipko, *Zarys etyki ogólnej*, Kraków 2004, wyd. WAM, p. 388.

is already taking place in the pre-natal phase, as indicated by psychology, paying attention to the existence of an unconscious phase of spiritual life, in which it is relevant whether the mother is a religious person or lives in an atmosphere of peace and serenity.²³

In the perinatal phase, the development of conscience takes place in four stages: moral anomy, moral heteronomy, moral socionomy, and moral autonomy.²⁴ At all stages of the development of conscience, parents have a great role to play, which results from the integrity of an upbringing that touches not only on the external, but on the entire depth of humanity.

In the stage of moral anomy, the child is oriented towards the reality that surrounds him/her in a pleasurable and hedonistic way. He/she does not distinguish between good and evil, but rather, what is pleasant or unpleasant for him/her. What is pleasant becomes good. At this stage of development, the parents' task is to help their child move from a conscience of coercion to a conscience of duty. Skilful guidelines that are to act as a trigger for the child's own judgments should be introduced gradually, without being imposed. It is worth emphasising that it is only from the age of two that a child is able to accept certain norms and principles from people who are close to him/her.²⁵

In the phase of moral heteronomy, a child begins to be guided by the authority and judgment of their elders. Most often, it is the parents who indicate to their child what is good and what is wrong, expressing disapproval or accepting a given action. Undoubtedly, this stage requires patience on the part of parents, as shaping a judgment on an issue requires them to constantly renew their approval or disapproval. At this stage, a child is able to develop a structure of judgments and assessments that help him/her tell right from wrong.²⁶

When it comes to conscience development at the stage of socionomy, it is important that the source of the norms of behaviour is not the individual, but the community to which the child belongs. Therefore, shaping the conscience

²³ Cf. M. Filipczuk, *Być człowiekiem sumienia. Sumienie widziane od strony procesu rozwoju*, "Studia Theologica Varsaviensia" 2 (2016), p. 180.

²⁴ Cf. S. Olejnik, *Teologia moralna fundamentalna*, Włocławek 1998, wyd. Włocławskie Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne, p. 263.

²⁵ Cf. M. Filipczuk, *Być człowiekiem sumienia. Sumienie widziane od strony procesu rozwoju*, p. 181.

²⁶ Cf. S. Olejnik, *Teologia moralna fundamentalna*, p. 263.

does not take place as a set of conscious actions, but is the result of the influence of the environment in which the child resides.²⁷

This stage requires appropriate action on the part of parents who, on the one hand, are to protect the child from being in a toxic environment in which norms and morals will be indifferent. On the other hand, the child should be offered the choice of groups and communities that will have a positive impact on him/her. It is essential that the parents properly guide the child and that their suggestions are not dictated in the form of a mandate, but involve a proposal that the child can freely respond to.

The final stage of conscience development is moral autonomy, which begins to form around the age of 12 and matures until the age of 20. It allows for the evaluation of deeds according to one's own acquired moral rules. Although man shapes his actions according to his conscience, at this stage, parents may also help in choosing the right or, on the contrary, become those who will inhibit moral nobility. In order to support a child in moral development, noble role models are necessary at this stage. Parents who are such a role model help their children remain faithful to their conscience which guides them towards the good. On the other hand, if the parents are an anti-example, then there may be a clear conflict between the child and the parents, and the parents who should be the source of support, become those who hinder development and prevent proper moral education.²⁸

Parents play an important role in the development of a child's moral conscience. Their influence fosters the development of moral attitudes and allows a chance for the human conscience to develop and is, as the Second Vatican Council emphasizes, "the most secret centre and sanctuary of man, where he is alone with God, whose voice resounds inside him."²⁹

B) Education for love

A component of moral upbringing is also aimed at nurturing love, which, as Stanisław Jasionek emphasises, is tantamount to being truly human; expressed in kindness to other people, the desire to give to others, and looking for true

²⁷ Cf. M. Filipczuk, *Być człowiekiem sumienia. Sumienie widziane od strony procesu rozwoju*, p. 183.

²⁸ Cf. S. Olejnik, *Teologia moralna fundamentalna*, p. 264.

²⁹ *Konstytucja duszpasterska o Kościele w świecie współczesnym "Gaudium et spes"*, in: *Sobór Watykański II, Konstytucje, dekryty, deklaracje*, Poznań 2002, wyd. Pallottinum, pp. 536–537.

good in others. The essence of true human love is, its close relationship with God, who is love Himself and is constantly giving Himself to man. Human love, rooted in God's love, recognises that its object is other people, not only those who live within the same community of faith, but also those who are unbelievers, the unbaptised, and those who are sunk in moral failures.³⁰

John Paul II points out that love, as the goal of upbringing and, at the same time, a task for parents, emphasises that, “paternal and maternal love finds fulfilment in the educational work of perfect service to life: from the very beginning, parental love becomes the soul and thus the norm which inspires and gives direction to all specific educational activities.”³¹

The love lived in the family, is meant to be the love that parents teach their children. This aspect of experiencing love is emphasised by Pope Francis, who points out that the family community is a place to learn true love. No matter what its condition or what difficulties it is going through, the family can develop starting from love, which guarantees unity and the durability of this community.³²

This pedagogical aspect of love is important in the present day, because our times, as Marek Kluz writes, cause a tendency to falsify the true and complete concept of love. This is related to a rational-utilitarian attitude that does not appreciate the true meaning of love, and evaluates the human being in technical-rational terms. In this way, the dimension of love that concerns selflessness, sacrifice, and a kind of heroism that is inscribed in true love, is blurred.³³

In moral upbringing, therefore, we need to overcome this modern mentality and strengthen values that exhibit love in its entirety. The key one is truth. The relationship between love and truth is emphasised by Benedict XVI, who points out the complementarity between the two. Love should always be shown in the light of truth, as it really is, not only in its positive aspect, but with all hardships and requirements. Showing love in all its truth also makes the truth more credible and emphasises its authenticity. The lack of this complementarity, and therefore the deprivation of the love of the truth, renders love as mere sentimentality, an empty word that can be interpreted in many ways. In a culture

³⁰ Cf. S. Jasionek, *Wychowanie moralne*, pp. 43–44.

³¹ Jan Paweł II, *Adhortacja apostołska o zadaniach rodziny chrześcijańskiej w świecie współczesnym “Familiaris consortio”*, Wrocław 2000, wyd. TUM, no. 36.

³² Cf. *Amoris laetitia* 53.

³³ Cf. M. Kluz, *Problem wychowania moralnego wyzwaniem dla współczesnej rodziny*, in: J. Stala (ed.), *Nauki o rodzinie w służbie rodziny*, Kraków 2014, wyd. UPJPII, p. 343.

without truth, which modern times are trying to create, love is exposed to being reduced to pure emotionality. Love, without truth, deprives relationships that form the right content, which is extremely dangerous for modern families and makes love a caricature, often reduced to words without meaning.³⁴

Christian moral upbringing should have a clear Christo-centric character. Christ is the one who has most fully revealed God's love. A child in a family does not learn this love only through the words of his parents, but through the experiences he/she is passing through. The Christian family is to be a family of grace, that is, a community in which grace is experienced, through which problems and difficulties are overcome.³⁵

True love, revealed in Christ, should penetrate all areas of family life and become a moral imperative. It is supposed to be a criterion of conduct in the realisation of life with another individual as well as sexual life. It should touch upon respect for the new life that should be welcomed and protected within the family. Realised in this way, love becomes the way to form the fullness of humanity for which the Christian family should be an example.

C) Interpersonal relations

Building appropriate interpersonal relationships is indispensable in moral upbringing. They reveal not only love for one's neighbour, but also the testimony of one's own humanity. Interpersonal relationships include attitudes such as kindness, acceptance, courtesy, the ability to help, as well as respect for human dignity of every human being, regardless of race, social origin, or cultural affiliation.³⁶

In the case of families based on mixed marriage, it is also important to emphasise two attitudes that affect the whole of interpersonal formation: concern for the common good and tolerance.

By the common good we understand, "the sum of the conditions of social life which allow either groups or its individual members to achieve their own perfection. The common good includes: respecting and promoting the fundamental

³⁴ Cf. Benedykt XVI, *Encyklika Caritas in veritate*, Tarnów 2009, wyd. Biblos, no. 2–3.

³⁵ Cf. *Sprawozdanie końcowe Komisji naukowej Kościołów rzymskokatolickiego, luterańskiego i kalwińskiego za rok 1976, Teologia małżeństwa a problem małżeństw międzywyznaniowych*, in: Z. J. Kijas (ed.), *Małżeństwa mieszane*, Kraków 2000, wyd. PAT, pp. 179–180.

³⁶ Cf. S. Jasionek, *Wychowanie moralne*, p. 69.

rights of the human person; prosperity, that is, the growth of spiritual and earthly goods of individual people and communities; peace and security of all.”³⁷

The family as a community has the task of implementing the common good, and thus educating future generations to implement it. The activities of the family include, therefore, first of all, respect for and promotion of the fundamental rights of the human person. It is an extraordinary ecumenical task, not only in the international arena, but also in mixed denominational families, because today we need a clear witness of the churches in the fight for human rights and striving for equality of all people.³⁸

Striving for the development of the common good also regards concern for the growth of spiritual and earthly goods of individual people and communities. In a religiously-diverse family, the ecumenical aspect of such activity is emphasised, which allows for the comprehensive development of all its members.”A manifestation of the right approach and implementation of the chosen path of life in the ecumenical spirit may be participation in church ceremonies, consent to separate forms of piety, contacts with the clergy of both faiths and getting to know the religious literature of the other party. Such attitudes should also be passed on to children from an early age.”³⁹

The family also has the task of presenting and promoting peace. It is therefore up to the parents to strive for the family to become a community in which one experiences peace. Benedict XVI notes that “living in a [healthy] family, you get to know some basic components of peace: justice and love between brothers and sisters, the authority exercised by parents, loving service to the weakest members – the little, the sick or the elderly, mutual help in life needs, readiness to accept another person and, when necessary, to forgive. That is why the family is the first and irreplaceable educator to live in peace.”⁴⁰

Moral upbringing in two-faith families should shape an attitude of tolerance in a child. On the moral level, as noted by Konrad Glombik, it is a virtue understood as the attitude of a person who accepts others in their different beliefs or views, allowing the necessary space for development, without prejudice

³⁷ *Kompendium Katechizmu Kościoła Katolickiego*, Kielce 2005, wyd. Jedność, no. 407–408.

³⁸ Cf. *Wspólna Grupa Robocza Kościoła Rzymskokatolickiego i Światowej Rady Kościołów, Dialog ekumeniczny na temat kwestii moralnych. Potencjalne źródła wspólnego świadectwa lub podziału* (1995), “*Studia i Dokumenty Ekumeniczne*” 12 (1996) No. 2, pp. 134–135.

³⁹ G. Pyżlak, *Troska o rodziny w sytuacjach trudnych*, Lublin 2020, wyd. bonusliber, p. 168.

⁴⁰ Benedykt XVI, *Rodzina wspólnota pokoju, Orędzie na Światowy Dzień Pokoju 1 stycznia 2008*, “*L’Osservatore Romano*” (wyd. pol.) 29 (2008) no. 1, pp. 25–28.

to their beliefs. Tolerance, understood in this way, goes far beyond the area of confession, religion or denomination, and although, nowadays, it aims at the social level, it does not exclude this aspect.⁴¹

In classical terms, a distinction is made between negative and positive tolerance. The first type implies a certain passivity and consists of patiently putting up with different, unacceptable, and unfair views. Positive tolerance implies a respectful relationship with a person who holds different views, that is expressed in love.⁴² There is no doubt, therefore, that the task of parents is to shape the child in such a way that on the religious level, it is able to display positive tolerance towards others.

Tolerance lived in this way leads to ecumenical dialogue. Above all, it is supposed to lead to the truth. Together, tolerance and truth are what unite us and what divide us. It has nothing to do with negotiating a common position, but it leads to seeking the truth and looking at it through the eyes of a partner in this dialogue. In this sense, it can contribute to establishing even deeper family ties and shape the belief that true dialogue can only take place in love.⁴³

6. Conclusions

At the core of human upbringing is moral upbringing, which applies to all spheres of one's life and is necessary to shape the choices made in moral terms.

It is passed on by parents, who are the first educators of children and are to lead them to full humanity. Considering ecclesial principles, in a mixed denominational marriage, both parents have the task of raising their children. They should do it in accordance with a specific denomination, so as not to propagate religious indifference, because there is no possibility of non-denominational upbringing of their children.

In the course of moral upbringing, the tasks of parents include helping their children to form a moral conscience, educating them for love, and building appropriate interpersonal relationships based on care for the common good and

⁴¹ Cf. K. Glombik, *Tolerancja jako postawa moralna*, "Studia Oecumenica" 13 (2013), pp. 113–114.

⁴² Cf. S. Nowosad, *Tolerancja*, in: *Jan Paweł II. Encyklopedia Nauczania Moralnego*, Radom 2005, wyd. Polwen, p. 548.

⁴³ Cf. P. Kantyka, *Dialog ekumeniczny*, "Studia Nauk Teologicznych" 5 (2010), p. 188.

tolerance. Through their endeavours, an atmosphere of moral life is created in the family, which allows the child to grow in the realisation of the Christian ideal.

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