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THEOLOGY OF THE FAMILY IN THE FINAL DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL LATIN AMERICAN EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES

Summary: The final documents from the General Conferences of the Latin American Bishops (CELAM) held in Medellín (1968), Puebla (1979), Santo Domingo (1992) and in Aparecida (2007) present the fruits of reflecting on the situation of the family in South America, Central America and the Caribbean, as well as its role in the Church and its importance in shaping social life. Consequently, one can speak of a Latin American theology of the family, which draws its impetus from the teaching of the universal Church, and at the same time has specific features. It is distinguished by the emphasis placed on the subjectivity of families in the saving mission of the Church and treating them as a “theological key”, opening the way to getting to know God’s mysteries. It is a practice-oriented theology that gives concrete guidelines to families and their pastors. The character of Latin American theology of the family is influenced by the pastoral context and theological trends, born in South and Central America (liberation theology, indigenous theology and theology of the people). Latin American theology of the family is therefore not a repetition of the contents of the Magisterium of the universal Church, but their original interpretation, taking into account the social situation and the needs of people living in it.

Keywords: pastoral care, education, Church, society, evangelization, domestic church.

After the Second Vatican Council, Catholics living in Latin America waited for the adaptation of the Council’s teaching to the situation prevailing on their continent. This task was undertaken by bishops gathered at the General Conferences of the Latin American Episcopate (CELAM) in Medellín (1968), Puebla (1979), Santo Domingo (1992) and Aparecida (2007). Comments and suggestions about the family appear in each CELAM final document. They describe its socioeconomic condition, its glories and shadows of everyday life, as well as the mission of the Catholic family in the modern world.

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There are comments and suggestions about the family in each CELAM final document. They talk about its socioeconomic position and the light and shadow of everyday life of Latin American families, as well as the mission of the Catholic family in the contemporary world. There are also elements that make up the theology of the family, referring to the teaching of the universal Church, and at the same time having its own specificity resulting from the specific approach of the authors of the documents to family issues.

To take a closer look at the Latin American theology of the family, teaching about the family in individual CELAM documents will first be outlined very briefly. Then, the characteristic features of Latin American theology of the family will be presented, as well as its references to theological currents that were born in the post-conciliar period and are still popular on this continent today. These include liberation theology, indigenous theology and theology of the people whose prominent follower, interpreter and promoter is Pope Francis – Jorge Mario Bergoglio. (Scannone, 2018, pp. 11–48) The teaching of the Pope from Argentina on the family also reflects the Latin American theological thought contained in the documents of the Latin American Bishops' Conference.

1. Latin American Bishops' Conference on the family and its main focus

Statements of the Latin American Bishops' Conference on the family take into account both social changes taking place in the world outlook and culture, as well as the Magisterium of the Church based on the Gospel and Christian Tradition. Latin American bishops realize that the family is a place where basic social problems are concentrated, and at the same time it is a space where pastoral challenges essential for the Church emerge and from which the renewal of social life can begin. (EiA No. 46) The fruit of their reflection is a look at the family both in the perspective of political and economic changes and its tasks resulting from the call received from God to proclaim the Gospel to the human person and to fulfill God's plan in concrete reality. (FC No. 4)

1.1. The family in the context of socio-economic problems (Medellín)

Bishops gathered in Medellín considered the situation of the family in Latin America, first turning their attention to demographic issues. (CELAM, 1968 – Medellín No. 3, 2; Sánchez, 2015, p. 14) The Bishops recognized the enormous variety of realities in which Latin American families live and their difficult situation resulting from socio-economic problems, especially a low standard of living, unemployment and lack of adequate sanitation.

The authors of the document approach the role of the family in three aspects: human formation, education in faith and promotion of development. (CELAM, 1968 – Medellín No. 3, 4–7) The family helps its people achieve full personal development, which is supported by the presence of the father and mother (man and woman) and strengthened by the impact of complementary personal models, mutual attachment of family members, confidence, closeness, respect and freedom, an example of social life, which takes into account its typical natural hierarchy.

The family plays an important role in the work of evangelization, which goes beyond the mere catechetical message, as the Second Vatican Council teaches. (AA No. 11, LG No. 41, GS No. 48) In practice, however, it turns out that many families in Latin America may not be the proper space for education in faith, because their incomplete structure (e.g. as a result of divorce) does not allow it, or parents do not have sufficient insight as to what Christianity and its doctrine is combined with elements taken from myths and superstitions. Therefore, the bishops emphasize the need to provide today's family with pastoral support, thanks to which it will regain the ability to evangelize, conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the Church. (CELAM, 1968 – Medellín No. 3, 21; Sánchez, 2015, p. 16)

The third aspect of the reflection undertaken by Latin American bishops is the family as the promoter of development. (CELAM, 1968 – Medellín No. 3, 7) In this case, the bishops propose to look at the family in terms of its social function. They have regard to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, which shows the truth about the human person and the way leading to the achievement of fullness of humanity. The bishops also emphasize that pastoral care for the good of the marriage and family community is not only in the interest of the Church, but also contributes to the proper and comprehensive development of man and society as a whole. (GS No. 47)

The Medellín Conference Final Document approaches the family issue from a pastoral perspective and reminds of how to follow the principles of marriage ethics and the Christian education of the young generation. (CELAM, 1968 – Medellín No. 3, 13–19) The Bishops indicated the directions of pastoral care of families, which should be considered a priority among the efforts undertaken by the Church. The realities in which people live should be taken into account in pastoral activity. That is why the Medellín document pays so much attention to social problems that need to be resolved so that the family can properly fulfill its obligations. (Sánchez, 2015, p. 17)

1.2. The family in the light of anthropology and ecclesiology (Puebla)

In Puebla, the bishops look on the Catholic family in the perspective of evangelization in which the Christians should actively participate. (CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 569) It is the subject and object of evangelization, as well as a center for building communion and a school of participation in the life of the Church. As it cannot free itself from the influence of culture and modern society, it is subject of some transformations. The position and existence of modern families are very diverse, as each family is influenced by various sociological factors (mainly social injustice), cultural (quality of life), political (domination and manipulation), economic (wages, unemployment, wealth) and religious (secularism) factors. (CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 572)

Family theology in the document from Puebla first refers to theological anthropology, showing man as *Imago Dei*. This view of the human person reveals the importance of communion, participation and a marital relationship based on the mutual covenant of two people. The paschal mystery of Christ and the covenant in the body of the Son of God gives shape to human love, which is the basis of the family. The four basic relationships established by the human person find their full realization in the life of the family: fatherhood, sonship, brotherhood and marriage. The same relationships appear in the life of the Church: the experience of God as Father, the experience of Christ as a brother, the experience of children in the Son and through the Son, the experience of Christ as the spouse of the Church. (CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 583)

The redemption that Christ brought to man radiates on the family, permeating it with joys and sorrows that flow from the paschal mystery. Receiving the risen Christ in faith enables people to experience mercy, to forgive others, and to convert personally. The important role of the Eucharist as the celebration of the paschal Mystery in the life of the family should not be forgotten, because in her it finds full communion and participation in the life of the Church. In order to live the Eucharist, one must receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and share them with others. Living the Eucharist means letting ourselves be loved by others and welcoming them with love. Thanks to her, God's Spirit permeates human life and enables man to fulfill God's will. Christ, the great and gentle Lord, sacrificing himself on the cross and risen, is then present in family life. (CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 588)

The Eucharist is the root from which grows the Christian identity of the family. It is strengthened by sharing the word of God and bearing witness, so that the Christian spirit penetrates all dimensions of human existence. A family's life becomes missionary when its members look at reality and act in her according to the example set for it by God Himself. Its desire is to seek ever

greater fidelity to the Lord, so as not to worship idols, but only the living God of love. Moreover, one of the essential elements of the teaching of the Latin American bishops gathered in Puebla is the invitation to enrich and systematize the theology of the family in order to better understand its character as “domestic church” (LG No. 11) and to look at the situation of Latin American families in that light. (CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 601)

1.3. The family in the work of the new evangelization (Santo Domingo)

At Santo Domingo, the Latin American bishops reflected on the family in the context of calling Christians to actively participate in the life of the Church and the world. The Catholic family is the ‘domestic church’ and the first evangelizing community. The new evangelization is to be based on it, and in fulfilling this work the family has the right to expect the support of the diocesan bishop and pastors for whom family pastoral care should become a basic, authentic, real and living pastoral priority. (CELAM, 1992 – Santo Domingo No. 64)

The document from Santo Domingo links the matter of the family with the development of the human person. (Sánchez, 2015, p. 21) The true meaning of the family and its image are fully revealed in the light of the Gospel, which shows people the way to human perfection. The theology of the family has her source in God’s plan, which has been revealed to men, and it concerns their salvation and vocation. In this plan, marriage and the family are divinely appointed institutions, not products of human wisdom. When Jesus says that “from the beginning it was not so” (Mt 18: 8), he is referring to the truth about marriage which, according to God’s plan, rules out divorce. (CELAM, 1992 – Santo Domingo No. 211) In the hearts of men and women, God inscribes a vocation to live in love and conjugal communion, which includes both the corporeal and the spiritual dimension. (CELAM, 1992 – Santo Domingo No. 212) This relationship is the basis of the family which finds its true identity in the light of the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God. (CELAM, 1992 – Santo Domingo No. 213) Jesus Christ descends to earth to fulfill his saving mission. The family too has a mission to fulfill in the world, which encompasses four dimensions: to be community, to be the servant of life, to be the foundation of society and to be “domestic church”. (Sánchez, 2015, p. 23)

The Latin American bishops are aware that Christian families may have difficulty fulfilling their apostolic tasks, because their zeal and ability to evangelize are weakened by factors such as a secularized mentality, confusion in axiology, controversial political decisions, and patterns promoted by the mass media. All this not only undermines the traditional image of the family, but also

hinders or even prevents it from being the witness of the Gospel and “the school of deeper humanity.” (GS No. 52, CELAM, 1992 – Santo Domingo No. 216)

1.4. The family as a sign of God’s presence in the world (Aparecida)

In the Aparecida document, the Latin American bishops highlight the place of the family in the mission of the Church, called to proclaim the message of salvation in Jesus Christ. A family that lives according to the Gospel becomes good news for its surroundings. It plays an important role in the preparation of missionaries to proclaim the Gospel directly. It has a special mission as a space where people called to be disciples of Christ and missionaries are formed. The family is also seen as an environment conducive to the achievement of full personal, and therefore Christian, development. (CELAM, 2007 – Aparecida No. 114; Sánchez, 2015, 24)

In the light of Christian revelation, the family appears as an image of the inner life of God who is love and whose life is a “personal mystery of love”. It is a community of life that God transforms into a “domestic church”. (CELAM, 2007 – Aparecida No. 115) The family is “good news” for society because it reminds us of the creation of human beings as man and woman, brought to life in a reciprocal and complementary relationship. The “good news” transmitted by the Christian families is that the law of the family is the law of love. Human love is fully realized when it shares in God’s love, in the love of Jesus who offers himself completely to people, showing them love to the end (cf. Jn 13: 1; 15: 9). Conjugal love is essentially a mutual gift of a man and a woman as spouses. It is a love that is faithful and exclusive until death, and it is fruitful, open to the new life and education of children, reminiscent of the fruitful love of the Holy Trinity. Conjugal love is the foundation of the sacrament of marriage as a sign of Christ’s union with his Church; therefore, in the grace of Jesus Christ it finds its purification, nourishment and fulfilment. (cf. Eph 5: 25–33, CELAM, 2007 – Aparecida No. 117)

When referring to the family as a place to live an authentic Christian life, the Aparecida Document refers to the teachings of the Latin American bishops at the Puebla Conference. It was shown by them as “the image of God, who in his deepest mystery is not loneliness but family”. (CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 582, CELAM, 2007 – Aparecida No. 435) The task of Christian parents is to prepare the young generation for a life in accordance with the Christian truth and to bear witness to their belonging to Christ. In this way, parents contribute to the fact that the Gospel radiates to the whole environment and to other families. (CELAM, 2007 – Aparecida No. 204)

2. Special features of Latin American family theology

Looking at the teaching of the Latin American bishops contained in the final documents of Medellín, Puebla, Santo Domingo and Aparecida, one can notice a clear transition from pastoral to theological vision, from the sociological to theological perspective, i.e. from the situation in which the family is located, to what a family is. This is done by gradually discovering the family not only as a basic social cell, but as a space in which God's plan for man is revealed. What seemingly is only a social reality on which to focus in the pastoral activity of the Church is increasingly seen as a theological reality. The family becomes the "theological key", opening the way to recognizing God's truth.

According to Cipriano Sánchez, the "theological key" is not the same as theological perspective. (Sánchez, 2015, p. 26) The "theological key" can be considered a reality that allows us to better understand the mystery of God and His plan for man. The theological perspective is that one looks at reality in the light of revelation, and – in some sense – in the light of various theological disciplines such as Christology, ecclesiology, sacramentology and theological anthropology, to discover the truth of reality. The family as the "theological key" reveals the mystery of God: God is a relational being, God is a spirit, God is the Lord of all creation, God is the one who gives life to people and shapes them, God is fruitful, God is faithful even when a person succumbs to his weakness and commits sins.

In the documents of the Latin American Episcopal Conference, family theology is associated with other theological disciplines. (Sánchez, 2015, p. 20) In family theology, there is a clear reference to Christology and soteriology when it comes to reviving family life with mercy and forgiveness, which are a gift of Christ offering himself on the cross and risen for our redemption. In family theology contained in the documents of the Latin American bishops, there appear references to the theology of creation, trinitology and theological anthropology; this can be seen in the teaching about the family as communion and about man created in God's image. Another reference point for Latin American family theology is ecclesiology, which shows Christ's relationship to the Church and sees the analogy between God's people and the family as the "domestic church". The final documents also speak about the family in the context of sacramentology, which reveals the importance of baptism and the Eucharist for building unity between spouses, parents and children, as well as for reviving love in family relationships. Recalling the need to respect the principles of marital ethics, the authors of the documents make references to Catholic moral theology and because of the place and importance of the family in public life – to Catholic social teaching.

The final documents from the proceedings of the Latin American Episcopal Conference devote a lot of attention to practical issues. Of these, the task of conducting evangelization on the South American continent comes to the fore. In this context, the question of the family arises, which is to be not only the addressee of the Gospel, but also an active subject of evangelization. The Church's salvific mission is largely accomplished through Christian families who, living the Gospel, become „good news” for their environment, centers of selfless service for the good of others, and a place of formation for disciples and preachers of the Christian truth in the world.

In their teachings, the Latin American bishops not only show what the family is or what is to become, but also formulate specific guidelines for the formation of Christian attitudes. In doing so, they take into account both family members and the entire community of the Church, and in it, in particular, the priests involved in the service of families. Thus, the pastors of the Church contribute to the development of the pastoral care of families, providing it with new impulses for action, and pastoral theology – inspiration to reflect on its shape and tasks. This kind of pastoral approach to marriage and family issues is often equated with doing (practical) family theology. (Majdański, 2007, p. 59–71; Hanlon Rubio, 2003, p. 89–200)

The way family issues are treated in CELAM documents confirms this observation. They include analysis of the situation, Christian teaching relating to the family, and pastoral challenges. This is similar to the steps in the method of pastoral theology. The first one consists in discovering problems essential for people's lives in the current reality. The next step is to evaluate the social and religious situation in the light of Christian truth, in order to develop, in the last phase, a concept of pastoral activity that meets human needs and the Church's saving mission. (EG No. 265; Mastantuono, 1994, p. 526; Prüller-Jagenteufel, 2005, p. 188–189) It is characteristic that in the teaching of the Latin American episcopate, Catholic families are treated as subjects of the Church's pastoral activity because practical guidelines concern not only pastoral care focused on their needs, but also their internal life, involvement in the transmission of faith and impact on the social environment.

3. Three main currents of Latin American theology and their approaches to theology of family

In the post-conciliar times, three popular theological currents have developed in Latin America. It is about the interrelated liberation theology, indigenous theology and people's theology. All these trends refer to the teaching

of the Second Vatican Council and the General Conferences of the Latin American Bishops, which re-shapes the Church's approach to the world, incorporating social reality with its economic, political and cultural dimensions into the theological reflection. The Council not only deals with issues essential to the spiritual life of Catholics, but also deals with problems that plague all people, including the oppressed and the poor. The Church cannot be indifferent to their fate, therefore she accepts with understanding the efforts to implement reforms in economic and social life, which would help people to improve living and working conditions unworthy of a human being. (GS No. 63)

Through the bishops gathered in Medellín and Puebla, Latin American theologians draw inspiration from the doctrine of the Council for the development of liberation theology. At the conferences in 1968 and 1979, topics related to the nature of the Church and her saving mission in the world were discussed, as well as such issues as anthropology, culture, missiology and the responsibility of lay faithful for the evangelization. (Silva, 2009, p. 94–95; Müller, 2013, p. 84; Schweizer, 2013, pp. 31–32) Many bishops and theologians reflected on the role of the Church and the way of performing pastoral ministry in the face of social and religious challenges. In the context of economic oppression and poverty affecting large masses of the population, the theology of liberation was born, which on the one hand wants to answer the question of how God reveals himself to the poor, and on the other hand tries to explain how God frees his people from oppression in the current socio-political situation. It is therefore a theology that draws from the experience of the people and leads to a change in their situation, referring to the humanizing power of the Gospel. (Floristán, 2002, p. 158–159; Schloesser, 2007, p. 138)

In the teaching of the Latin American bishops on the family, contained in the Medellín document, one finds a typical liberation theology approach to reality, which requires proper perception (facilitated by sociological data) and discernment in accordance with the methodology used in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes*, calling for the reading of the “signs of the times”. In this way, issues such as peace, justice, poverty etc. took on particular importance during the discussion and in the final document. (Scannone, 1982, p. 4; Trillos, 2019, p. 36; Köss, 2003, p. 194) In this context, there is also a family and the related problems it encounters in society, i.e. divorce, hedonism, eroticism, low wages or unfair distribution of goods. In the spirit of liberation theology, it is also seen as an extremely important factor in social development, as it allows its members to realize their humanity despite existential, social and political limitations. (CELAM, 1968 – Medellín No. 3, 7; CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 571–581; Boff, 1975, pp. 79–80; Trigo, 2005, pp. 51–52) The task of the Church is to provide all

families with a pastoral care which is to be evangelizing, prophetic and liberating. (CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 391)

Another current of theology developing in Latin America is the indigenous theology that emerged there in the mid-1980s. (Ruiz Arenas, 2003, p. 113; Madrigal Sánchez, 2012, p. 131) The factors that contributed to the initiation of this theological movement included the reflection on the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Europeans on the South American continent, the resistance of the indigenous peoples to the attack on their cultures and their focus on the fight to preserve their specific identity and respect for their dignity. Its appearance was also influenced by the Second Vatican Council, prompting the entire Church to become interested in inculturated evangelization and dialogue with other religions.

Recognizing the influence of European models on the Latin American family, indigenous theology also finds as a value differentiation among traditional indigenous families that nurture their tribal traditions. (Niño, 1996, p. 334) The Latin American bishops also recognize the importance of local culture, which for centuries has shaped family life and made people open to Transcendence. (CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 389; CELAM, 1992 – Santo Domingo No. 17; CELAM, 2007 – Aparecida No. 4) The final documents contain postulates typical of indigenous theology, which emphasize the importance of taking care of peoples and their families so that they can live in their cultural context and that they are guaranteed the right to exist in accordance with their identity, respect for their language and traditional customs. (CELAM, 1992 – Santo Domingo No. 251; Cosse, 2018, p. 68) Particularly noteworthy is their relationship to the earth, which is their life, a sacred place and a center that integrates their families and social communities. For them, the earth is a mother that teaches them the right approach to life, including the role of mother and father, and allows them to experience unity with their ancestors and exist in harmony with God. (CELAM, 1992 – Santo Domingo No. 172; Sarmiento Tupayupanqui, 2000, p. 70; Bascopé Caero, 2015, p. 179–180)

The third important trend in Latin American theological thought is the theology of the people (*teología del pueblo*), which was born in Argentina after the Second Vatican Council. Its promoters postulate that the Church should enter into a dialogue with the peoples of the world, and that her theological reflection should focus on the culture of the poor, their needs and future, and their concerns and hopes. (GS No. 1; Luciani, 2016, p. 21) Theology cultivated in this way is to be a source of inspiration for the Church's evangelizing activity in South and Central America, and its first point of reference should be the ordinary people who are both the addressee and the subject of evangelization. The theology of the people pays special attention to its wisdom, which is

expressed in the way of living the faith and in the forms of popular piety and is an important impetus for reflection on Christian revelation. (Dietlein, 2016, p. 39; Forcat, 2017, p. 213)

In the theology of the family, present in the documents of the Latin American bishops, one can notice the approach to reality characteristic of theology of the people, where the value of social relations at all levels and the contribution of families to social life and culture are emphasized. (CELAM, 1979 – Puebla No. 336) In its teaching, the Latin American Episcopate also draws attention to popular religiosity, which is a privileged expression of the inculturation of faith. It is not only about the religious practices themselves, but also about the values, criteria, behaviors and attitudes that flow from Christian truth, shape the life of families and communities, and constitute a treasury of wisdom for the peoples of Latin America. In this perspective, it is the duty of the Church to make efforts to discover more and more fully the spiritual values of the indigenous peoples of America and the riches hidden in popular piety, and to cleanse them of possible limitations and distortions. (CELAM, 1992 – Santo Domingo No. 36 i 169; CELAM, 2007 – Aparecida No. 258)

Faithful to his Argentine roots, Pope Francis refers to the teachings of the Latin American Episcopate on the family in his documents, not only in their contents, but he also adopts their approach to the issues of family. Like the Latin American bishops, he attaches great importance to the situation in which modern people live, because by discovering God's will in phenomena and historical events, the Church can penetrate deeper into the mystery of marriage and family. (AL No. 31) The Pope not only notices the economic, social and moral problems faced by modern families, but also their irreplaceable role in the life of the Church, their participation in the evangelization of the world, their influence on social life and contribution to the development of cultural richness. (EG No. 66; AL No. 32–49; QA No. 39) In Francis' teaching, too, the family is the subject of pastoral activity and a milieu for the proclamation and actualization of the Gospel, thanks to which people can discover its beauty and experience the joy of receiving it. (AL No. 200) The Pope from Argentina – like the pastors of the Church in Latin America – appreciates the role of the pastoral care of families, and the clergy and lay faithful involved in them make them aware of the challenges they face and how they are to support people so that marriages and families strengthened by the experience of God's love are “both domestic churches and a leaven of evangelization in society.” (AL No. 290)

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From the Medellín conference to the meeting in Aparecida, the teaching of the Latin American bishops is clearly filled with concern for the family – for its material well-being, its rightful place in society, its human and spiritual development, and respect for its role in the Church and the world as a space for the realization of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, addressed to all people. The Latin American Episcopate is not only interested in the life and work of families, but also feels obliged to teach the faithful of Latin America the theology of the family. However, this is not a mere repetition of the content of the universal Church's Magisterium, but the fruit of reflection on the situation and vocation of the family in South and Central America. The family acts as a kind of “theological key” that helps to discover the truth about God and his plans for the world and the whole of humanity.

The family theology presented in the CELAM final documents has a clear practical orientation. Such a point of view brings it closer to the Latin American approach to theology, which as liberation theology, indigenous theology or theology of the people takes into account the action of the Church and its members in a specific time-space context. Latin American bishops do not reduce their reflection to the essence and structure of the family, but constantly look at it from the perspective of socio-economic and cultural conditions. They discover not only the shortcomings and needs of modern people, but also the challenges faced by Catholic families, called to actively participate in the saving mission of the Church, which has the task of engaging in “a more missionary evangelization conducted in dialogue with all Christians and at the service of all people” (Aparecida No. 13). This responsibility also rests on Latin American families, whose task is to bear witness to the Gospel radiating “the beauty of the saving love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ who died and rose from the dead” (EG No. 36).

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Teologia rodziny w dokumentach końcowych Konferencji Generalnych Episkopatu Latinoamerykańskiego

Streszczenie: Dokumenty końcowe z Konferencji Generalnych Episkopatu Latinoamerykańskiego (CELAM) obradującego w Medellín (1968), Puebla (1979), Santo Domingo (1992) oraz w Aparecidzie (2007) prezentują owoce refleksji nad sytuacją rodziny w Ameryce Południowej, Środkowej i na Karaibach, a także jej rolę w Kościele oraz znaczenie w kształtowaniu życia społecznego. Można zatem mówić o latinoamerykańskiej teologii rodziny, która czerpie impulsy z nauczania Kościoła powszechnego, a równocześnie ma cechy specyficzne. Wyróżnia ją akcent położony na podmiotowość rodzin w zbawczej misji Kościoła i traktowanie ich jako „klucza teologicznego”, otwierającego drogę do poznania Bożych tajemnic. Jest to teologia ukierunkowana na praktykę, udzielająca konkretnych wskazań tak rodzinom, jak i towarzyszącym im duszpasterzom. Na charakter latinoamerykańskiej teologii rodziny wywierają wpływ kontekst pastoralny oraz nurty teologiczne, zrodzone w Ameryce Południowej i Środkowej (teologia wyzwolenia, teologia indygenistyczna oraz teologia ludu). Latinoamerykańska teologia rodziny nie jest zatem powtórzeniem treści zawartych w Magisterium Kościoła powszechnego, lecz ich oryginalną interpretacją, uwzględniającą sytuację społeczną i potrzeby żyjących w niej ludzi.

Słowa kluczowe: duszpasterstwo, wychowanie, Kościół, społeczeństwo, ewangelizacja, Kościół domowy.

Abbreviations

- AA – II Vatican Council, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, Decree On the Apostolate of the Laity, Rome 1965.
- AL – Francis, *Amoris laetitia*, Apostolic Exhortation, Rome 2016.
- CELAM – Episcopal Conference of Latin America.
- EG – Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Apostolic Exhortation, Rome 2013.
- EiA – John Paul II, *Ecclesia in America*, Apostolic Exhortation, Mexico City 1999.
- FC – John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, Apostolic Exhortation, Rome 1981.
- GS – II Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, Pastoral Constitution On the Church in the Modern World, Rome 1965.
- LG – II Vatican Council, *Lumen gentium*, Dogmatic Constitution On the Church, Rome 1964.
- QA – Francis, *Querida Amazonia*, Apostolic Exhortation, Rome 2020.