

Dear Readers

The teaching of Pope Francis differs from the apostolic activity of his predecessors - also in the understanding of the missionary dimension of the Church. In the exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Francis does not define mission *ad gentes*, but clearly confirms the relevance of the proclamation of the Word in the world: "let us be in all regions of the earth in a permanent state of mission [...] capable of transforming everything" (no. 25, 27).

Does the identification of missionary activity with the visible presence of the Church in the world undermine what constitutes the missionary and missionary identity of *ad gentes*? Are the "unbaptised" and the "needy" becoming synonymous with participants in "missionary communion"? How, then, do we promote new forms of preaching in response to the specific context of proclamation? These are the questions that open the 154th volume of the "Nurt SVD".

F. Korban attempts to define the "identity of the missionary in the teaching of Pope Francis". Exploring Francis' specific understanding of the concepts: missionary, missionary vocation, missionary tasks and others, the author discovers in the papal message "to all baptized" the elements of the message "to the missionary *ad gentes*".

This original analysis of the missionary vision of the Church according to Francis will be continued in the first part of the volume in subsequent articles. Their authors, Z. Sobolewski and K. Szymczycha, define the "place of mission *ad gentes*" in the teaching of Bishop J. Mazur SVD - chairman of the Polish Episcopal Commission for Missions (2011-2022).

The second part of the volume dives into the drama of individual mission contexts: evangelization in the Arabic-speaking environment in the Middle East (I. Nockiewicz), ordination of homosexuals to serve in the Evangelical Methodist Church (W. Ostrowski), the blessing of the God of Israel for a foreign woman and pagans in the Old Testament book of Ruth (A. Nalewaj), or the influence of Jean Price-Mars on the indigenes movement in Haiti (E.M. Mączka).

The article devoted to the mutual relations between the liberal-democratic state and religion attracts particular attention. K. Jasiński analyses issues related to the worldview and axiological neutrality of the state and the presence of religion within civil society.

Enjoy your reading!

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