

## SUMMARY

**Author of the dissertation:** Agata Płachecka, Master of International Relations

**Dissertation title:** The Polish Catholic Church and the problem of pedophilia at the turn of the twenty and twenty-first century.

**Supervisor:** dr hab. Michał Strzelecki, prof. UMK

The essence of the problem studied is to show the peculiarities of the phenomenon of pedophilia in the Polish Church as a systemic problem, which, due to the special type of legal personality of the institution in question, remains an unresolved issue to this day. This should be understood not only as the lack of appropriate tools to effectively enforce the knowledge of perpetrators of pedophilia in the clergy, but also the difficulties in bringing to criminal responsibility those heads of the Polish Church who, despite the relevant knowledge, did not take a reaction allowing them to persist in the crime.

The research area highlighted focuses attention on the legal aspects exposing the peculiarities of the clergy person as a subject simultaneously subject to two legal systems: state law and canon law. Particular attention in the research process was paid to the role of the media, which were deliberately juxtaposed in two opposing categories. The division into left-wing and right-wing media narratives illustrated not only the evolution of Polish society's awareness of the problem of pedophilia in the Polish Church. The introduced categorization also showed the use of the studied phenomenon as an element of the struggle for electorate.

The very wording of the topic indicates the temporal scope of this dissertation. It covers the period of the last 3 pontificates, taking into account the continuing supremacy of Pope Francis to the present day. The characterization of the cultural conditions of the Catholic Church in Poland deliberately goes beyond the accepted time horizon. This is because it is impossible to understand its privileged social, legal and political position without an appropriate historical context. Omitting the context of the aforementioned conditions would also not allow for a proper understanding of the peculiarities of the position in which those experiencing sexual violence by Polish clergy find themselves. The research problem is mainly concentrated in the area of the Polish Catholic Church environment.

The specifics of the problem in question required systematization of activities, which was made possible by the selection of appropriate research methods. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the phenomenon under study, systemic analysis played a key role in this case, making it possible to verify all factors affecting the complex matter of the problem under study. When

studying the cultural determinants of the position of the Catholic Church in Poland, the historical method was used, while in the context of the analysis of the legal system of both the state and the Catholic Church, it became necessary to use the institutional-legal method. This method was also used in the dissertation when studying the statutes of organizations for the benefit of pedophilia victims and the drafts of state commissions.

The technique of critical content analysis, the application of which can be found within the social sciences and humanities, played an important role in the research process. In this dissertation, it was used in accordance with the categorization key adopted earlier, in order to narrow the area of the research conducted to issues centered solely around the phenomenon under study. Due to the hierarchical nature of the Catholic Church's institutions, a comparative method was used to examine the actual consistency in the approach to the problem of pedophilia by Polish clergy with the position presented on this issue by the Holy See. Its use proved equally useful in the search for press materials devoted to the problem of pedophilia in the Polish Catholic Church.

One of the main motives for using the "case study" method, or so-called "case study", is the atypicality of the phenomenon under study. The indicated research method brought special cognitive value to this dissertation due to the possibility of choosing the best perspective to show the specifics of pedophilia occurring in the environment of the Polish Church. What should be emphasized, this method was based not only on the technique of analyzing the published testimonies of those affected by sexual abuse by Polish clergy, but also on the author's direct involvement in activities on behalf of victims of pedophilia in the Polish Church. The aforementioned activism, especially in the context of studying social phenomena, plays a key role in the process of creating innovative solutions or proposing directions for change.

The presented dissertation consists of an introduction, 5 chapters having a problem-based structure, and a conclusion. Adoption of the above scheme of work was conducive to both the realization of the stated research objectives and reliable verification of the hypotheses formulated in the introduction.