



REV. MAREK KLUZ

THE PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY OF JOHN PAUL II IN CRACOW

MKLUZ@OP.PL

ORCID 0000-0002-2255-1431

## THE CONCEPT OF RENEWAL OF THE MORAL AND SOCIAL LIFE IN THE TEACHING OF THE POPE BENEDICT XVI

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12775/TiCz.2020.023>

**Abstract.** In the modern world it is easy to notice numerous alarming threats to social life in all its dimensions. These threats cause moral disintegration of the person and, consequently, lead to destruction of the society. Pope Benedict XVI was aware of this and – as a result – in his teaching he presented directions for solving specific socio-moral dilemmas. He translated them into the language of the concrete, suggesting practical principles for implementing the social teaching of the Church. Trying to overcome evil, he pointed to Christ, who strengthens human hearts to overcome the threats, inspired by action of the evil spirit. He made us realize that the person who followed the teachings of Christ is the hope for solving urgent global problems.

**Key words:** social life; threats; moral renewal; man; Jesus Christ; teaching of Benedict XVI.

**Streszczenie.** **Koncepcja odnowy życia moralno-społecznego w nauczaniu papieża Benedykta XVI.** We współczesnym świecie daje się łatwo zauważyć wiele niepokojących zagrożeń życia społecznego i to we wszystkich jego wymiarach. Zagrożenia te powodują dezintegrację moralną osoby, a w konsekwencji prowadzą do destrukcji społeczeństwa. Miał tego świadomość papież Benedykt XVI, dlatego w swoim nauczaniu ukazywał kierunki rozwiązań określonych dylematów społeczno-moralnych. Przekładał

je na język konkretny, proponując praktyczne zasady realizowania społecznego nauczania Kościoła. Starając się zaradzić złu, wskazywał na Chrystusa, który umacnia ludzkie serca do przezwyciężenia zagrożeń, inspirowanych działaniem złego ducha. Uświadamiał, że człowiek postępujący zgodnie z nauką Chrystusa jest nadzieją na doprowadzenie do rozwikłania naglących problemów społecznych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** życie społeczne; zagrożenia; odnowa moralna; człowiek; Jezus Chrystus; nauczanie Benedykta XVI.

## INTRODUCTION

Social reality is an indispensable context of human life. Man is by nature a social being. This means, among other things, the necessity of broadly understood social life that is essential for proper functioning and development of the man. However, it must be a social life “created” for greatness and dignity of the human being. However, in reality, numerous disturbing threats to social life can easily be seen in all its dimensions. These threats cause moral disintegration of the person and, consequently, lead to destruction of the society. In the perspective of many dangerous threats, the need for pastoral accompaniment of the human being in his/her social life becomes evident, through the Church that by virtue of the mandate received from Christ, feels obliged to this kind of the mission.

In this spirit, social teaching of Pope Benedict XVI must be read. His pastoral sensitivity allowed him to discern numerous disturbing threats in the social life. While describing them, the Pope did not only signal the problems, however, he pointed to their deeper causes, development and negative consequences. Being aware of the numerous dilemmas of the social life, Benedict XVI tried to address the perceived evil with his teaching. “Great news – he wrote – in the encyclical *Caritas in veritate* – which presents the image of the development of nations today, in many cases require new solutions”.<sup>1</sup> In all of the issues he raised, Pope Benedict presented directions for solving particular socio-moral dilemmas. He translated them into the language of the concrete, suggesting practical principles for implementing the social teaching of the Church.

---

<sup>1</sup> Benedykt XVI, Encyklika *Caritas in Veritate*, Kraków 2009, No. 32 (hereinafter: CiV).

## 1. BASIC THREATS TO MORAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

While analysing the social teaching of Benedict XVI, it is possible to see a papal list of the moral problems of the modern world. It seems that as the most important cause of contemporary suffering of the mankind, the Pope recognizes the fact that people have lost their own identity and are unable to see the real purpose of their lives. The source of this state is loss of faith in God who guarantees genuine human development.<sup>2</sup> It must be said with complete conviction that it is religion, and in particular the Christian religion which is necessary for human development, politics and the whole public life. Christian and other religions may contribute to development if God finds his place in the sphere of the cultural, social, economic and political life. Without religion, public life is devoid of motivation.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, in the teaching of Benedict XVI, there is a strong fear of attacks on religious freedom that threaten peace in the society. Marginalization of religion in the social life, intolerance or violence against people or religious symbols often confirm emerging anxiety.<sup>4</sup>

Pope Benedict XVI emphasizing the list of the social plagues tormenting humanity pointed to the fact of the current financial and economic crisis. In *Caritas in veritate* he writes:

While some parts of the planet that have been affected by poverty for a long time have experienced significant changes in the form of economic growth and participation in world production, other areas are still in a misery comparable to the one existing during the times of Pope Paul VI, and even in some cases we can speak of deterioration.<sup>5</sup>

In this context, Benedict XVI highlights the disturbing phenomenon of dialectics of development. Apart from large underdeveloped areas that are unacceptable, there are areas of overdevelopment that cannot be tolerated, either. Both states have an extremely strong impact

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., No. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. K. Gózdź, *Teologia społeczno-polityczna Benedykta XVI w encyklice „Caritas in veritate”*, „Roczniki Teologii Dogmatycznej” 57 (2016), vol. 2, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Benedict XVI, „*Ściany nośne wolnego społeczeństwa*”. *Przemówienie do członków korpusu dyplomatycznego* (Watykan – 7 stycznia 2013), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 350 (2013), No. 2, pp. 35–36.

<sup>5</sup> CiV 33.

on formation of the society. Overdevelopment often means situations where specific groups manage all material goods, becoming slaves to possession, focusing only on their mere accumulation. This turns into consumerism – civilization of consumption, with a simultaneous lack of satisfaction of the deepest spiritual needs of each person. On the other hand, underdevelopment due to the lack of necessary goods, makes it impossible to meet basic human needs. It should be emphasized here that many new forms of poverty that emerge in the society, numerous social and political situations in which basic rights to religious freedom or respect for life are denied.<sup>6</sup>

It should be noted that deterioration of the economic condition also has a negative influence on the family, becoming – at the same time – one of the sources of its crisis. The situation of the economic and financial crisis disrupts fulfilment of the basic functions by families. One of the basic symptoms of this crisis is the increase in the unemployment rate, which introduces a lack of financial stability in the family and makes it difficult to meet the basic material needs. The issue of labour migration is strongly related to this problem.<sup>7</sup> As Pope Benedict observes, analysing the relationship between rich societies and those affected by deep poverty, it can be presented as “the relationship between demanding the right to what is unnecessary or even the right to the offence and sin in the rich societies and the lack of food, drinking water, basic education or primary health care in some regions of the world lagging behind in development as well as in the periphery of large metropolises”<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Cf. M. Antoniewicz, *Integralny rozwój człowieka w ujęciu „Caritas in veritate” Benedykta XVI*, „Studia Gnesnensia” 26 (2010), p. 268.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. D. Lubiński, *Przyczyny rozpadu małżeństwa i rodziny w nauczaniu Benedykta XVI*, „Teologia i Moralność” 16 (2014), No 2, pp. 184–186.

<sup>8</sup> CiV 43. Pope: Benedict XVI during the plenary assembly of the Pontifical Council of Culture said: “There is a general climate of instability prevailing in the cultural environment as well as political and economic – this is also recently marked by the difficulties of young people in finding a job – which primarily affects the sphere psychological and relationship. Uncertainty and weakness characterize so many young people, often inducing them to marginalize, they make them almost invisible and absent in the historical and cultural processes of societies. And increasingly, weakness and a marginalized life lead to phenomena such as drug addiction, degeneration, and violence”. Benedykt XVI, *„Kiedy młodzi ludzie nie mają nadziei, społeczeństwo nie ma przyszłości”*. *Przemówienie*

According to Benedict XVI, relativism constitutes the basic threat to moral and social life. In the speech to young people at the St. Joseph seminary in New York, the Pope used these words to express relativism is:

In some environments, speaking about the truth is controversial and is seen as a cause of divisions, and therefore suggestions are made to limit them to the private sphere. And the place of truth – or rather the lack of it – was taken by the thought that giving value to everything without exception guarantees freedom and liberates conscience. This is what we call relativism.<sup>9</sup>

The increasing significance of relativism in the social life is influenced by laicisation and secularization, which – as Pope Benedict emphasizes – are interpenetrating phenomena. It would seem that relativism is a derivative of the process of secularization, however, this philosophical view has spread so much in the Western society that it has become a separate phenomenon. Secularization detaches the Christian truths, values and principles from their foundation, which is a supernatural Revelation, which is God manifesting himself in Jesus Christ who is a guarantor as well as transcendent and indisputable foundation. Since secularism detaches these values from their foundation and is based on human reasoning, then it leads to their relativization. Relying on relativism leads to distortion of freedom and improper understanding of the principles of coexistence in the society.<sup>10</sup>

The second phenomenon leading to relativization is secularization, which was discussed by Pope Benedict XVI in a synthetic way in the homily during the Mass at Piłsudski Square in Warsaw. He highlighted existence of people or circles that, disregarding the tradition, want to falsify the words of Jesus and detach the truth from the Gospel, which is uncomfortable for a contemporary man. It can be seen that efforts are made to give the impression that everything is relative – including the

---

*do uczestników zgromadzenia plenarnego Papieskiej Rady Kultury (Watykan – 7 lutego 2013), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 351 (2013), No. 3–4, p. 22.*

<sup>9</sup> Benedykt XVI, *„Wy jesteście uczniami Chrystusa w dzisiejszym świecie”. Przemówienie podczas spotkania z młodzieżą w Seminarium św. Józefa (Nowy Jork – 19 kwietnia 2008), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 304 (2008), No. 6, p. 23.*

<sup>10</sup> Cf. J. Warzeszak, *«Dyktatura» relatywizmu w ujęciu Benedykta XVI*, *„Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne”* 24 (2011), No. 1, p. 294.

truths of faith that should be confronted in the light of the Gospel and Church tradition.<sup>11</sup>

The basic plane that relativism influences is truth. It is questioned and it diminishes or rejects its meaning. Relativism does not allow the fact that the Church possesses and transfers the truth. As Pope Benedict XVI notes, “modern society is experiencing fragmentation due to its mindset which is by nature short-sighted since it bypasses the complete horizon of truth, truth about God and us”.<sup>12</sup> By rejecting these truths, relativism is unable to embrace and get to know the whole area of reality, which means that it ignores the principles making humanity capable of living and growing in harmony. “If there is a «crisis of truth» today, it is because it is rooted in a «crisis of faith». Only through faith can a human being freely give consent to God’s testimony and recognize him as a transcendent guarantor of the truth he reveals. For this reason, the Church is involved in the struggle that humanity is waging to achieve the truth”.<sup>13</sup> And as Pope Benedict XVI notes, in the political, cultural or social media, the sense of disrespect, sometimes hostility and even contempt for religion, in particular the Christian religion, is spreading. It happens this way as relativism is considered to be an important constitutive factor of democracy, and laicism is understood only as an element of rejecting the social significance of the religious fact. However, this attitude unleashes opposition and divisions, hurting peace between people.<sup>14</sup>

Freedom is a space that suffers greatly from relativizing the truth, as Benedict XVI emphasizes. Meanwhile, freedom without truth does not allow to distinguish between good and bad. What is more, as experience shows, many young people who, in the name of unfettered freedom, tried

---

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Benedykt XVI, „Zachowujcie i pogłębiajcie waszą wiarę”. *Homilia wygłoszona podczas Mszy św. na placu Piłsudskiego* (Warszawa – 26 maja 2006), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 284 (2006), No. 6–7, pp. 22–23.

<sup>12</sup> Idem, „Otwierajcie serca na dary Ducha Świętego”. *Przemówienie podczas czuwania młodzieży na hipodromie w Randwick* (Sydney – 19 lipca 2008), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 306 (2008), No. 9, pp. 25.

<sup>13</sup> J. Warzeszak, «Dyktatura» relatywizmu w ujęciu Benedykta XVI, p. 297.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Benedykt XVI, „Kto chce budować pokój, musi chronić środowisko naturalne i ludzkie życie”. *Przemówienie do korpusu dyplomatycznego* (Watykan – 11 stycznia 2010), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 320 (2010), No. 2, p. 43.

to experience everything, even the bad, fell into addictions that led them to moral confusion and loss of respect for themselves and for other people.<sup>15</sup>

Other moral and social threats that Benedict XVI draws attention to in his teaching are cultural eclecticism and cultural equality. In *Caritas in veritate*, the Pope writes:

We observe often uncritically accepted cultural eclecticism: cultures are simply brought together and considered essentially equivalent and interchangeable with each other. This favours succumbing to relativism which is not conducive to a true intercultural dialogue. In the social dimension, cultural relativism leads to the situation where cultural groups approach each other or coexist, but in isolation, without an authentic dialogue, and thus without genuine integration. In the second place, there is the opposite danger, that is cultural equalization and unification of behaviour and lifestyles. This way, deep significance of the culture of various nations, traditions of different peoples, within which a person faces fundamental existential questions, is lost.<sup>16</sup>

What is more, these dangers separate culture from human nature. This means that culture reduces man only to the fact that exposes humanity to the danger of enslavement or manipulation.<sup>17</sup> Spreading relativism closes culture to God and His moral law. Therefore, as Benedict XVI points out, culture must be developed and opened to lasting values through the dialogue with Catholics.<sup>18</sup>

Morality constitutes a considerably relativized space. This fact was already emphasized in 1992 by Pope John Paul II during his speech to the bishops of the East Central region of France:

Contemporary society is tempted by relativism, which makes many people sceptical. Cultural changes and scientific progress seem to make a revolution in the sphere of discrimination criteria in the moral life. Values and objective standards of conduct are hardly recognized. Individualism and subjectivity become the dominant signposts for ethical considerations and

---

<sup>15</sup> Idem, „Wy jesteście uczniami Chrystusa w dzisiejszym świecie”, p. 23.

<sup>16</sup> CiV 26.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. CiV 26. Cf. also: Benedykt XVI, „Dawajcie świadectwo o Bogu w świecie współczesnym. Rozmowa z młodzieżą Rzymu i Lacjum na placu św. Piotra (Watykan – 6 kwietnia 2006), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 284 (2006), No 6–7, pp. 48–49.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Benedykt XVI, „Rozwijajcie dialog ze współczesną kulturą”. Przemówienie do autorów i redaktorów czasopisma «La Civiltà Cattolica» (Watykan – 17 lutego 2006), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 284 (2006), No. 6–7, p. 53.

decisions. Sometimes, it seems that manners of conduct are considered normal and moral only because a large number of people follow them. There is also confusion since we are forced to believe that what is a civil right meets the requirements of morality. In many contemporary people who have not opened up to the hope of salvation and awareness of sin, there appear new forms of fear that can lead to existential pessimism.<sup>19</sup>

Continuing the teaching of his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI, in the speech to the new Australian ambassador to the Holy See, described moral relativism as ‘the one that does not recognize anything as definitive and final. It is against human nature. This is confirmed by the fact that young people discover the need to search for good and truth in themselves and in fact they seek the transcendent order that ensures a lifelong walk in authentic freedom and happiness.’<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, he strongly emphasized that

relativism, giving virtually greater value to everything blindly, gives experience more weight than everything else. In fact, experiences, detached from all contemplation of what is good or true, can lead not to authentic freedom, but even to moral or intellectual confusion, weakening of principles, loss of self-respect and even desperation.<sup>21</sup>

The relativistic mentality removing God from the horizons of human life is not conducive to accepting values that are clear points of reference which help to distinguish good from evil and develop the sense of sin in man.<sup>22</sup> This rejection of God from the public sphere wreaks havoc on the authentic sense of faith, relativizing moral principles, which at

---

<sup>19</sup> Quote after: J. Warzeszak, *«Dyktatura» relatywizmu w ujęciu Benedykta XVI*, p. 299.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, p. 299. Cf. also: J. Mariański, *Permisywizm i relatywizm moralny młodzieży maturalnej*, „Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska Lublin-Polonia” 35 (2010), p. 102.

<sup>21</sup> Benedykt XVI, *„Życie jest poszukiwaniem prawdy, dobra i piękna”*. Przemówienie podczas spotkania z młodzieżą na nadbrzeżu Barangaroo (Sydney – 17 lipca 2008), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 306 (2008), No. 9, p. 15.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. idem, *„«Kryzys» sakramentu pokuty jest wyzwaniem przede wszystkim dla kapłanów”*. Przemówienie do uczestników kursu dla spowiedników zorganizowanego przez Penitencjarię Apostolską (Watykan – 11 marca 2010), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 322 (2010), No. 5, p. 34.



the same time leads to the situation that the categories of good and evil become empty and disappear with individual responsibility. Rejection of the fact of sin that is an integral part of the truth about man, leads to rejection of the necessity to seek forgiveness and readiness to present it. Instead, there comes the culture of criticism and dispute.

In the speech to the participants of the plenary session of the International Theological Commission, Pope Benedict XVI stated that

as a result of the influence of cultural and ideological factors in the secular society today, there is confusion and loss: the primeval obviousness of the foundations of human existence and his/her ethical conduct has disappeared, and the science of natural moral law clashes with other concepts that constitute its direct negation. All this has great and serious consequences for the civil and social order.<sup>23</sup>

Building a society that is devoid of genuine respect for dignity of human existence results in the fact it does not do good to anyone. As Benedict XVI emphasizes, defence of human life has become more difficult since mentality that diminishes its value, which is to be decided by individuals, has developed.<sup>24</sup> The Pope clearly indicates that laws of the countries allowing abortion, euthanasia or relativizing marriage between a woman and a man do not comply with universal natural law as they violate the essence of man.<sup>25</sup>

Ethical relativism that is followed by other threats to moral and social values, constitutes a kind of storm at sea for families (cf. Mk 4, 37). The nature of the family as the basic social unit has been relativized. Legislation aims at adapting customs and demands to the claims of individuals or groups, without taking into account the common good of society. Furthermore, disintegration of the family is affected by negating, through the political option, its natural nature of the relationship of a woman and

---

<sup>23</sup> Idem, „Niezbywalna wartość naturalnego prawa moralnego”. *Przemówienie do uczestników sesji plenarnej Międzynarodowej Komisji Teologicznej* (Watykan – 5 października 2007), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 298 (2007), No. 12, p. 19.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. idem, „Aborcja nie rozwiązuje problemów społecznych”. *Przemówienie do włoskiego Ruchu Obrony Życia* (Watykan – 12 maja 2008), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 304 (2008), No. 6, p. 41. See also: CiV 28.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. idem, „Jan z Salisbury”. *Audiencja generalna* (Watykan – 16 grudnia 2009), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 320 (2010), No. 2, p. 52.

a man, trying to define marriage as a partnership and giving it the same rights as the family.<sup>26</sup> An attack is also made on inseparability of the marital community, showing it as a utopia or a pious dream.<sup>27</sup>

Today, various forms of marriage, such as free relationships and “trial marriage” up to pseud-marriage of the people of the same sex<sup>28</sup>, are expressions of anarchic freedom that is detrimental to true liberation. This pseudo-liberty is based on trivialisation of the body that inevitably also includes trivialisation of man. It assumes that the human being may do what he/she wants with himself/herself: his/her body becomes something secondary, susceptible to manipulation from the human point of view, to use according to his/her will.<sup>29</sup>

According to Benedict XVI, upbringing constitutes another area threatened by relativism. In the encyclical *Caritas in veritate*, the Pope writes:

To educate, it is necessary to know who the human person is, know his/her measure. The spread of the relativistic vision of this nature poses serious problems for upbringing, particularly moral education, preventing its dissemination in the universal dimension. Submission to this relativism means that everyone becomes poorer, which negatively affects effectiveness of assistance to the poorest people who do not only need economic or technical resources, but also pedagogical methods supporting people in implementation of their humanity in full.<sup>30</sup>

Pope Benedict devoted much attention to the issue of relativism in education during his pontificate. In one of the lectures during the Congress of the Roman Diocese in 2005, warning against the threat of moral relativism, he said: “In such a relativistic attitude, real upbringing

---

<sup>26</sup> Cf. D. Lubiński, *Przyczyny rozpadu małżeństwa i rodziny w nauczaniu Benedykta XVI*, p. 187.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Benedykt XVI, „Piękno prawdy o małżeństwie objawionej przez Chrystusa”. *Przemówienie do pracowników Trybunału Roty Rzymskiej* (Watykan – 27 stycznia 2007), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 293 (2007), No. 5, p. 31.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. idem, „Otwórzmy się na Boga, by zapanował pokój”. *Przemówienie podczas spotkania z kardynałami, biskupami i pracownikami Kurii Rzymskiej* (Watykan – 22 grudnia 2006), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 290 (2007), No. 2, p. 42.

<sup>29</sup> A. Proniewski, *Promocja rodziny w nauczaniu Benedykta XVI*, „Studia nad Rodziną” 16 (2012), No 1–2, p. 26.

<sup>30</sup> CiV 61.

is not possible; without the light of truth, sooner or later everyone will doubt the value of their lives and relationships that make up them, the sense of the efforts they make with them to build something”.<sup>31</sup>

Benedict XVI also includes technology as the basic threat to moral and social life. As the Pope emphasizes, technology “is a deeply human fact related to autonomy and freedom of the human being [...]. It allows to control the matter, reduce risk, save hardship and improve living conditions”.<sup>32</sup> However, absolutization of technology leads to dehumanization of the human being, demoralization and practical atheism. Anti-humanism of technology is expressed in rejection of bioethics that constitutes a battlefield between absolutism of technology and moral responsibility. It finds its highest expression in biotechnology of in vitro fertilization, in embryo research, cloning and hybridization, abortion, human destruction and euthanasia.<sup>33</sup>

Trying to indicate synthetically the threats to moral and social life that Pope Benedict XVI pointed to during his pontificate, it should be emphasized that globalization may become one of them. As the Pope emphasizes in *Caritas in veritate*, “without the direction of love in truth, this planetary stimulus can contribute to the risk of hitherto unknown damage and new divisions in the human family”.<sup>34</sup>

Globalization has placed humanity between two poles. On the one hand, there is a growing sense of interconnections and interdependence between nations, also when they are distant from each other taking into consideration geographical and cultural aspects. This new situation creates the opportunity to strengthen the sense of global solidarity and joint responsibility for the good of humanity. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the rapid changes taking place in the world pose alarming signs of breaking up and escaping into individualism.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Benedykt XVI, „Rodzina chrześcijańska wspólnotą wychowania i wiary”. Przemówienie do uczestników Kongresu Diecezji Rzymskiej (Watykan – 6 czerwca 2005), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 276 (2005), No. 9, p. 33.

<sup>32</sup> CiV 69.

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem also, Nos. 74–75. Cf. also: K. Góźdz, *Teologia społeczno-polityczna Benedykta XVI w encyklice 'Caritas in veritate'*, p. 47.

<sup>34</sup> CiV 33.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Benedykt XVI, „Gościnność, solidarność i praworządność”. Przemówienie do władz regionu Lacjum oraz gminy i prowincji rzymskiej (Watykan – 12 stycznia

Therefore, globalization becomes a threat when it is deprived of Christian love, truth, social justice and personalism.

## 2. WAYS OF IMPROVING THE MORAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

Pope Benedict XVI, analysing the numerous threats to moral and social life during his pontificate, gave numerous guidelines regarding the proper transformation of the social life. Apart from presenting the fundamental principles according to which the world should be arranged, he formulated many directives defining the manner of implementation of these principles.<sup>36</sup>

Love constitutes one of the main principles whose task is to organize the lives of individuals and groups. Benedict XVI continues and develops the thought of the Vatican Council that makes us aware that Christ

reveals to us that “God is love” (1 Jn 4, 8) and at the same time teaches us that the fundamental law of human perfection and consequently transformation of the world is a new commandment of love. Therefore, those who believe in God’s love are ensured that the path of love is open to all people and that the attempt at creating universal brotherhood is not in vain. Furthermore, he admonishes that this love should not be sought only in great things but, above all, in ordinary living conditions.<sup>37</sup>

Listening to the voice of the social teaching of the Church whose main strength and principle is love will allow to shape the process of integral human development, change hearts and lead to humanization of society on

---

2012), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 341 (2012), No. 3, p. 12. Cf. also: idem, „Chrześcijaninie winni dawać wierne świadectwo Ewangelii”. *Przemówienie podczas spotkania ekumenicznego w kościele św. Józefa* (Nowy Jork – 18 kwietnia 2008), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 304 (2008), No. 6, p. 15.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. B. Hordecki, *Nauczanie społeczne Benedykta XVI wobec współczesnych problemów globalnych*, „Środkowoeuropejskie Studia Polityczne” 2 (2010), p. 87.

<sup>37</sup> Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucja duszpasterska o Kościele w świecie współczesnym “Gaudium et spes”*, in: Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucje. Dekrety. Deklaracje*, Poznań 2002, No. 38 (hereinafter: KDK).

a larger scale in a proper way.<sup>38</sup> The answer to this extensive and complex crisis is a process leading to building a civilization of love whose seed is sown by God in each nation and culture.<sup>39</sup> For the Church, “caritas is not ... a type of social protection that could also be entrusted to someone else, but it belongs to its nature, it is an inalienable expression of its essence”.<sup>40</sup>

Benedict XVI in the encyclical *Deus caritas est* highlights that “people, being the addressees of God’s love, have become subjects of love and they are called to become instruments of grace, to spread God’s love and create bonds of love”.<sup>41</sup> At the same time, these words confirm the teaching of the pastoral Constitution on the Church in the modern world, *Gaudium et spes*, which emphasizes that the human being is a person who finds himself/herself fully only through a selfless gift of himself/herself.<sup>42</sup> In his teaching, Pope Benedict emphasizes that to love truly is to share what the human being has the most precious – his/her humanity with others. An example of such an attitude for the human being is the person of Jesus Christ since he reveals the project of true love and life before the man in full.<sup>43</sup>

In order to understand what Benedict XVI suggests, it is necessary to recall the basic truths of the Christian faith that speak about God-Love, human sin and gratuitousness of redemption in Christ which is to touch each person.<sup>44</sup> The above-mentioned logic of the gift, on which the proper development of the person depends, is to permeate his/her whole life.

---

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Benedykt XVI, Posynodalna adhortacja apostolska *Sacramentum caritatis*, Tarnów 2007, No. 91.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. idem, „Trzeba wychować nowe pokolenia w duchu służby”. Przemówienie podczas spotkania z członkami organizacji zajmujących się duszpasterstwem społecznym (Fatima – 13 maja 2010), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 324 (2010), No. 7, pp. 23–24.

<sup>40</sup> Idem, Encyklika *Deus caritas est*, Kraków 2006, No. 25 (hereinafter: DCE).

<sup>41</sup> Ibidem, No. 5.

<sup>42</sup> KDK 24.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. M. Kluz, *Orędzie o miłości bliźniego w świetle encyklik ‘Deus caritas est’ i ‘Caritas in veritate’ papieża Benedykta XVI*, „Perspectiva” 26 (2015), No. 1, p. 86. See also: W. Przygoda, *Chrześcijanin świadkiem miłości w świecie. Refleksja pastoralna na podstawie encyklik papieża Benedykta XVI*, „Roczniki Pastoralno-Katechetyczne” 58 (2011), vol. 3, p. 342.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Benedykt XVI, Encyklika *Spe salvi*, Tarnów 2007, No. 26.

As the Pope highlights, civil society should be its basic place of implementation.<sup>45</sup> Love understood as a selfless gift of oneself is the essence of love for a neighbour, as Benedict XVI writes in the encyclical *Deus caritas est* in the following words: “Now love becomes care of the human being and service to the other. It is no longer looking for itself, immersion in happiness; looking for the good of the loved one: it becomes austerity, it is ready to sacrifice, moreover, it is looking for sacrifices”.<sup>46</sup> The lack of the proper perspective which takes into account the final goal of the human being, causes that the proper human progress is disturbed. Without this perspective, the person closes in himself/herself and cannot accept this gift himself/herself as well as the person loses the ability to join in the initiatives arising from universal love. Therefore, it is necessary to accept the logic of the gift and combine the principle of selflessness with it in the integral development of the man.<sup>47</sup> As Benedict XVI points out in the speech during an audience for representatives of the Italian Catholic laity, “through service in culture, through solidarity in action for those who are in need, and through work”<sup>48</sup> practical implementation of the principle of self-giving is conducted.

Benedict XVI combines the logic of the selfless gift with specific solutions in the sphere of practice, which are to constitute a kind of area for its implementation for the Catholics. In his teaching – the Pope clearly does this in the encyclical *Caritas in veritate* – he emphasizes the need to develop various forms of entrepreneurship that can treat their profit as a tool for humanization of the market and society.<sup>49</sup> The words of Benedict XVI in *Deus caritas est* say that “Jesus identifies with those

---

<sup>45</sup> Cf. A. Wysocki, *Bezinteresowność jako nowa zasada społeczna*, „Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne” 23 (2010), No. 2, p. 284.

<sup>46</sup> DCE 6.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. A. Wysocki, *Bezinteresowność jako nowa zasada społeczna...*, p. 287.

<sup>48</sup> Benedykt XVI, „Ewangelia daru i bezinteresowności”. *Przemówienie podczas audiencji dla przedstawicieli trzech włoskich ruchów katolickiego laikatu* (Watykan – 19 maja 2012), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 345 (2012), No. 7–8, p. 27.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Bańka, *Misja katolików w świecie współczesnym według encykliki Benedykta XVI ‘Caritas in veritate’*. *Studium analityczne*, „Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Teologiczne” 48 (2015), no 2, p. 333.

in need: hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, prisoners”.<sup>50</sup> All this indicates the necessity to devote oneself completely for the benefit of the most needy. This attitude, characterized by sensitivity to both material and spiritual needs, cannot be limited only to expressing compassion, however, it should be expressed in active love.

While analysing the ways of repairing the moral and social life that Benedict XVI shows in his teaching, it is easy to notice that love is the value that regulates and develops society. The Pope emphasizes that it should be implemented in the spirit of truth and justice. Love “only in truth shines with splendour and can be experienced genuinely”.<sup>51</sup> Truth and love are closely connected as they have their common source in God who is eternal Love and absolute Truth. The human being testifying of love, authenticates the truth in the specific social life.<sup>52</sup> As the Pope states, in the culture without truth, love becomes “a prey of emotions and accidental opinions of individuals, a word abused and distorted to the opposite meaning. Truth frees love from narrow emotional pathways that deprive it of relational and social content and from fideism depriving it of the human and universal view”.<sup>53</sup> When love is illuminated with splendour of truth, it manifests itself as true love, at the same time constituting an authentic expression of humanity and the foundation for building good human relations.<sup>54</sup>

According to Pope Benedict XVI, as the human being can create a small or large indefinite community by himself/herself, he/she is not able to create a truly fraternal community with universal reach. Only God who is Love can create such a unity. The logic of God’s gift of love does not reject justice since it is inseparable from love.<sup>55</sup> Love always

---

<sup>50</sup> DCE 15.

<sup>51</sup> CiV 3.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. W. Przygoda, *Chrześcijanin świadkiem miłości w świecie*, p. 339.

<sup>53</sup> CiV 3. Cf. Benedykt XVI, „Trzeba budować pokój oparty na prawdzie”. *Przemówienie do korpusu dyplomatycznego akredytowanego przy Stolicy Apostolskiej* (Watykan – 9 stycznia 2006), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 282 (2006), No. 4, p. 22.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. M. Antoniewicz, *Integralny rozwój człowieka w ujęciu ‘Caritas in veritate’ Benedykta XVI*, p. 273.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. M. Kluz, *Wymagania miłości w życiu społecznym w świetle encyklik ‘Deus caritas est’ i ‘Caritas in veritate’ papieża Benedykta XVI*, „Studia Nauk Teologicznych PAN” 12 (2017), p. 197.



demands justice as one cannot give the gift of self to others, giving the other what is due to him/her in accordance with justice. In this spirit, Benedict XVI indicates specific directives for the Church that is supposed to make society more just, where all the rights of individuals and peoples are respected. The task of the Church is to testify of Christ's love expressed in works of justice, peace and development. Many lay people conduct economic, social, legislative and cultural activities within this scope, striving for development of the common good. They are witnesses contributing to building the just social order.<sup>56</sup>

Pope Benedict XVI in his teaching, in the context of the problem of globalization, indicates other two extremely important ways of repairing the moral and social life which are the attitude of subsidiarity and solidarity. However, it should be noted that for the pope, globalization related to the Christian idea of the unity of the human race, infused with Christian love, truth, social justice and personalism is not a threat, however, it is a chance to improve the social life. "The truth of globalization as a process and its fundamental ethical criterion come from unity of the human family and its development in the sphere of good. Therefore, it is necessary to engage to support the personalistic and community cultural direction of the planetary integration process, open to transcendence, in a constant way".<sup>57</sup> Seeing the opportunity in globalization, Benedict XVI highlights its particularly effective redistribution of goods, provided that a good management model has been developed. As a result, globalization demands power based on the principle of subsidiarity.<sup>58</sup> In the speech to representatives of the National Association of the Italian Municipalities, Benedict XVI emphasizes that the principle of subsidiarity is recognized as

"the expression of inalienable human freedom". Subsidiarity is – above all – assistance for a person through autonomy of intermediaries. "This assistance is provided when the person and social actors do not cope

---

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Benedykt XVI, „Sprawiedliwość społeczna i ewangelizacja”. *Przemówienie do uczestników sesji plenarnej Papieskiej Rady «Cor Unum»* (Watykan – 13 grudnia 2009), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 320 (2010), No. 2, p. 26. See also: idem, *Adhortacja apostołska Verbum Domini*, Kraków 2010, No. 100–101 (hereinafter: VD).

<sup>57</sup> CiV 42.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. A. Bańka, *Misja katolików w świecie współczesnym według encykliki Benedykta XVI 'Caritas in veritate*, p. 336.



on their own and it is always aimed at emancipation since it promotes freedom and participation by taking responsibility” (CV 57). “Therefore, it concerns the principle that is particularly adequate in managing globalization and directing it towards true human development” (CV 57).<sup>59</sup>

Furthermore, the Pope specifies that “the principle of subsidiarity must be closely linked to the principle of solidarity and vice versa as subsidiarity without solidarity leads to social particularism and solidarity without subsidiarity turns into a degrading protection of the person in need”.<sup>60</sup>

Solidarity cannot be interpreted as assistance that should be given to the needy or the poor. Rather, it indicates mutual responsibility since everyone is dependent on each other. Solidarity, constituting the social principle, requires shared responsibility of the state and all citizens for the good of the society.<sup>61</sup> As Pope Benedict explains,

justice and solidarity order that international community should watch over distribution of resources, while paying attention to providing the right conditions for development to countries that need it most. It is equally necessary – apart from striving for justice – to strengthen fraternity to build societies living in harmony where there is harmony and peace, and to solve emerging problems through dialogue and negotiation, and not by using various forms of violence whose victims are only the weakest and poorest people. Solidarity and brotherhood are ultimately an expression of the deep love that should be demonstrated towards our neighbours.<sup>62</sup>

In the face of numerous attacks on human life, Pope Benedict XVI gives some specific indications on the path to improving the moral and social life. Dignity constitutes a fundamental value that no one can deprive the human being of. It is the foundation and source of universal and inviolable rights that are the supreme value on the scale of the social

---

<sup>59</sup> Benedykt XVI, „*Bądźcie promotorami współpracy, solidarności i humanizmu*”. *Przemówienie do przedstawicieli Krajowego Stowarzyszenia Gmin Włoskich* (Watykan – 12 marca 2011), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 333 (2011), No. 5, p. 18.

<sup>60</sup> CiV 58.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. J. Gocko, *Od 'Sollicitudo rei socialis' do 'Caritas in veritate'. Solidarność kluczem do kwestii społecznej?*, „*Roczniki Teologii Moralnej*” 59 (2012), No 4, p. 36.

<sup>62</sup> Benedykt XVI, „*Każdy człowiek musi mieć godziwe warunki życia*”. *Przemówienie do nowych ambasadorów* (Watykan – 29 maja 2008), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 305 (2008), No. 7–8, p. 12.

life. Furthermore, it should be noted that human rights are absolute since each person is entitled to them and they are integral, which means that all rights are essentially about unity, continuity and validity despite the differences that exist between them.<sup>63</sup>

Benedict XVI, who always puts the human person at the centre of broadly understood development or social activity, also emphasizes the importance of dignity of the family which is the basic social unit. In the interest of the family, the Pope points to the direction of actions for the defence of family values and at the same time highlights that it is extremely important for the family to maintain its identity and dignity. The basic task for the benefit of the family is to recognize and support it.<sup>64</sup> Pope Benedict clearly teaches that

it is necessary to support the family by all legal means – its formation and educational work in the difficult social context today. This basic area of social life, which is the protection of life, with courage and love, in all its phases, always remains a current, urgent and necessary field for apostolic activity and evangelical witness for Christians [...] It is necessary to give clear testimony that respect for life constitutes the first condition of justice that should be fulfilled.<sup>65</sup>

## SUMMARY

From the above considerations it follows that the concept of renewal of the social life in the teaching of Benedict XVI is very specific and realistic. As the Pope responsible for forming and strengthening the moral life of Christians, he gave clear instructions on what to do to overcome evil in the social life. He bravely faced all what the world of his time carried, this way wanting to contribute to the proper formation

<sup>63</sup> Cf. idem, „Bez fundamentu etycznego prawom człowieka brak oparcia”. *Przemówienie po koncercie z okazji 60-lecia Powszechnej Deklaracji Praw Człowieka* (Watykan – 10 grudnia 2008), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 310 (2009), No. 2, p. 19. Cf. also: idem, „Bioetyka i naturalne prawo moralne”. *Przemówienie do uczestników zgromadzenia ogólnego Papieskiej Akademii «Pro Vita»* (Watykan – 13 lutego 2010), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 322 (2010), No. 5, pp. 19–20; Cf. VD 101.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. A. Proniewski, *Promocja rodziny w nauczaniu Benedykta XVI*, p. 23.

<sup>65</sup> Benedict XVI, „Aborcja nie rozwiązuje problemów społecznych”, p. 41.

of the moral life. Striving so strongly for the renewal of the social life, the Pope desired the morally healthy society not only to be a guarantee of the proper human development, but also to shape people guided by justice, solidarity, responsibility and sensitivity to the needs of others.

It should be stated that Benedict XVI in his teaching did not only signal the moral and social dilemmas, however, he demonstrated the means and ways to be followed in order to build the social order. He clearly emphasized that “there is no intelligent, complete and reasonable individual, social and human life without love, truth, God, morality and without the Church”.<sup>66</sup> Pope Benedict proclaimed the values that can change the heart and wrong, sinful attitudes. His objective was to shape the moral consciousness of the human being and appeal to his/her conscience in a constant way. He strived for the social order to be permeated by the spirit of the Gospel. Trying to overcome evil, he pointed to Christ, who strengthens human hearts to overcome threats, inspired by action of the evil spirit. He made us realize that the person who followed the teachings of Christ is the hope for solving urgent global problems.<sup>67</sup> In his reflection, the Pope did not focus on moral theorizing, but strongly emphasized practical significance of his mission, which flowed from the evangelizing mission of the Church. That is why his teaching is a valuable contribution to solving numerous significant current social problems.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Antoniewicz M., *Integralny rozwój człowieka w ujęciu „Caritas in veritate” Benedykta XVI*, „Studia Gnesnensia” 26 (2010), pp. 265–277.
- Bańka A., *Misja katolików w świecie współczesnym według encykliki Benedykta XVI „Caritas in veritate”*. Studium analityczne, „Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Teologiczne” 48 (2015), no 2, pp. 330–342.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Aborcja nie rozwiązuje problemów społecznych*”. Przemówienie do włoskiego Ruchu Obrony Życia (Vatican – 12 May 2008), „L’Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 304 (2008), no 6, pp. 41–42.

---

<sup>66</sup> K. Gózdź, *Teologia społeczno-polityczna Benedykta XVI w encyklice „Caritas in veritate”*, p. 47.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. B. Hordecki, *Nauczanie społeczne Benedykta XVI wobec współczesnych problemów globalnych*, p. 88.

- Benedykt XVI, Adhortacja apostolska *Verbum Domini*, Cracow 2010.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Bądźcie promotorami współpracy, solidarności i humanizmu*”. Przemówienie do przedstawicieli Krajowego Stowarzyszenia Gmin Włoskich (Vatican – 12 March 2011), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 333 (2011), no 5, pp. 18–19.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Bez fundamentu etycznego prawom człowieka brak oparcia*”. Przemówienie po koncercie z okazji 60-lecia Powszechnej Deklaracji Praw Człowieka (Vatican – 10 December 2008), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 310 (2009), no 2, pp. 18–19.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Bioetyka i naturalne prawo moralne*”. Przemówienie do uczestników zgromadzenia ogólnego Papieskiej Akademii «Pro Vita» (Vatican – 13 February 2010), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 322 (2010), no 5, pp. 19–20.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Chrześcijananie winni dawać wierne świadectwo Ewangelii*”. Przemówienie podczas spotkania ekumenicznego w kościele św. Józefa (New York – 18 April 2008), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 304 (2008), no 6, pp. 15–16.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Dawajcie świadectwo o Bogu w świecie współczesnym*”. Rozmowa z młodzieżą Rzymu i Lacjum na placu św. Piotra (Vatican – 6 April 2006), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 284 (2006), no 6–7, pp. 47–51.
- Benedykt XVI, Encyklika *Caritas in veritate*, Kraków 2009.
- Benedykt XVI, Encyklika *Deus caritas est*, Kraków 2006.
- Benedykt XVI, Encyklika *Spe salvi*, Tarnów 2007.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Ewangelia daru i bezinteresowności*”. Przemówienie podczas audiencji dla przedstawicieli trzech włoskich ruchów katolickiego laikatu (Vatican – 19 May 2012), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 345 (2012), no 7–8, pp. 27–28.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Gościnność, solidarność i praworządność*”. Przemówienie do władz regionu Lacjum oraz gminy i prowincji rzymskiej (Vatican – 12 January 2012), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 341 (2012), no 3, pp. 12–13.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Jan z Salisburys*”. Audiencja generalna (Vatican – 16 December 2009), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 320 (2010), no 2, pp. 51–52.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Każdy człowiek musi mieć godziwe warunki życia*”. Przemówienie do nowych ambasadorów (Vatican – 29 May 2008), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 305 (2008), no 7–8, pp. 11–12.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Kiedy młodzi ludzie nie mają nadziei, społeczeństwo nie ma przyszłości*”. Przemówienie do uczestników zgromadzenia plenarnego Papieskiej Rady Kultury (Vatican – 7 February 2013), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 351 (2013), no 3–4, pp. 21–23.
- Benedykt XVI, „*«Kryzys» sakramentu pokuty jest wyzwaniem przede wszystkim dla kapłanów*”. Przemówienie do uczestników kursu dla spowiedników zorganizowanego przez Penitencjarię Apostolską (Vatican – 11 March 2010), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 322 (2010), no 5, pp. 33–34.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Kto chce budować pokój, musi chronić środowisko naturalne i ludzkie życie*”. Przemówienie do korpusu dyplomatycznego (Vatican – 11 January 2010), „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition) 320 (2010), no 2, pp. 41–44.

- Benedykt XVI, „*Niezbywalna wartość naturalnego prawa moralnego*”. Przemówienie do uczestników sesji plenarnej Międzynarodowej Komisji Teologicznej (Vatican – 5 October 2007), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 298 (2007), no 12, pp. 18–19.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Otwierajcie serca na dary Ducha Świętego*”. Przemówienie podczas czuwania młodzieży na hipodromie w Randwick (Sydney – 19 July 2008), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 306 (2008), no 9, pp. 25–29.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Otwórzmy się na Boga, by zapanował pokój*”. Przemówienie podczas spotkania z kardynałami, biskupami i pracownikami Kurii Rzymskiej (Vatican – 22 December 2006), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 290 (2007), no 2, pp. 40–44.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Piękno prawdy o małżeństwie objawionej przez Chrystusa*”. Przemówienie do pracowników Trybunału Roty Rzymskiej (Vatican – 27 January 2007), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 293 (2007), no 5, pp. 31–33.
- Benedykt XVI, Posynodalna adhortacja apostołska *Sacramentum caritatis*, Tarnów 2007.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Rodzina chrześcijańska wspólnotą wychowania i wiary*”. Przemówienie do uczestników Kongresu Diecezji Rzymskiej (Vatican – 6 June 2005), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 276 (2005), no 9, pp. 30–33.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Rozwijajcie dialog ze współczesną kulturą*”. Przemówienie do autorów i redaktorów czasopisma «*La Civiltà Cattolica*» (Vatican – 17 February 2006), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 284 (2006), no 6–7, pp. 52–53.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Sprawiedliwość społeczna i ewangelizacja*”. Przemówienie do uczestników sesji plenarnej Papieskiej Rady «*Cor Unum*» (Vatican – 13 December 2009), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 320 (2010), no 2, pp. 26–27.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Ściany nośne wolnego społeczeństwa*”. Przemówienie do członków korpusu dyplomatycznego (Vatican – 7 January 2013), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 350 (2013), no 2, pp. 34–37.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Trzeba budować pokój oparty na prawdzie*”. Przemówienie do korpusu dyplomatycznego akredytowanego przy Stolicy Apostolskiej (Vatican – 9 January 2006), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 282 (2006), no 4, pp. 20–23.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Trzeba wychować nowe pokolenia w duchu służby*”. Przemówienie podczas spotkania z członkami organizacji zajmujących się duszpasterstwem społecznym (Fatima – 13 May 2010), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 324 (2010), no 7, pp. 23–24.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Wy jesteście uczniami Chrystusa w dzisiejszym świecie*”. Przemówienie podczas spotkania z młodzieżą w Seminarium św. Józefa (New York – 19 April 2008), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 304 (2008), no 6, pp. 21–26.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Zachowujcie i pogłębiajcie waszą wiarę*”. Homilia wygłoszona podczas Mszy św. na placu Piłsudskiego (Warsaw – 26 May 2006), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 284 (2006), no 6–7, pp. 22–24.
- Benedykt XVI, „*Życie jest poszukiwaniem prawdy, dobra i piękna*”. Przemówienie podczas spotkania z młodzieżą na nadbrzeżu Barangaroo (Sydney – 17 July 2008), „*L'Osservatore Romano*” (Polish edition) 306 (2008), no 9, pp. 13–16.

- Gocko J., *Od "Sollicitudo rei socialis" do "Caritas in veritate". Solidarność kluczem do kwestii społecznej?*, „Roczniki Teologii Moralnej” 59 (2012), no 4, pp. 31–43.
- Gózdź K., *Teologia społeczno-polityczna Benedykta XVI w encyklice „Caritas in veritate”*, „Roczniki Teologii Dogmatycznej” 57 (2016), vol. 2, pp. 39–48.
- Hordecki B., *Nauczanie społeczne Benedykta XVI wobec współczesnych problemów globalnych*, „Środkowoeuropejskie Studia Polityczne” 2 (2010), pp. 81–92.
- Kluz M., *Orędzie o miłości bliźniego w świetle encyklik „Deus caritas est” i „Caritas in veritate” papieża Benedykta XVI*, „Perspectiva” 26 (2015), no 1, pp. 78–92.
- Kluz M., *Wymagania miłości w życiu społecznym w świetle encyklik „Deus caritas est” i „Caritas in veritate” papieża Benedykta XVI*, „Studia Nauk Teologicznych PAN” 12 (2017), pp. 191–210.
- Lubiński D., *Przyczyny rozpadu małżeństwa i rodziny w nauczaniu Benedykta XVI*, „Teologia i Moralność” 16 (2014), no 2, pp. 183–200.
- Mariański J., *Permisywizm i relatywizm moralny młodzieży maturalnej*, „Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska Lublin-Polonia” 35 (2010), pp. 97–120.
- Proniewski A., *Promocja rodziny w nauczaniu Benedykta XVI*, „Studia nad Rodziną” 16 (2012), no 1–2, p. 26.
- Przygoda W., *Chrześcijanin świadkiem miłości w świecie. Refleksja pastoralna na podstawie encyklik papieża Benedykta XVI*, „Roczniki Pastoralno-Katechetyczne” 58 (2011), vol. 3, pp. 335–348.
- Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucja duszpasterska o Kościele w świecie współczesnym „Gaudium et spes”*, in: Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucje. Dekrety. Deklaracje*, Poznań 2002, pp. 526–606.
- Warzeszak J., *«Dyktatura» relatywizmu w ujęciu Benedykta XVI*, „Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne” 24 (2011), no 1, pp. 291–322.
- Wysocki A., *Bezinteresowność jako nowa zasada społeczna*, „Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne” 23 (2010), no 2, pp. 283–294.