

Summary

1. Title of doctoral dissertation

The influence of preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation on religiosity. A catechetical-sociological study based on research on young people in the diocese of Rzeszów.

2. Summary of dissertation

The topic of religiosity is widely discussed in contemporary scientific and social discourse. Discussing this issue is popular because of the dynamic social and religious processes currently taking place in every society in the world. Pseudo-values promoted on a large scale, such as secularisation, secularisation, hedonism, consumerism, utilitarianism or materialism, intensify the phenomena of questioning the notion of religiosity and even the negation of all forms of transcendence and the supernatural. Consequently, the phenomenon of rejection of God is transforming the model of society based on Christian faith and European culture. The negative phenomena of departure from God and faith particularly affect the young generation standing on the threshold of adulthood. For this reason, the Church places particular emphasis on the Christian education and formation of young people.

The Church's concern for young people is a particular dimension of her pastoral activity. It is expressed in numerous documents of the Church's Magisterium, especially after the Second Vatican Council, in statements of the Polish Episcopal Conference, numerous indications of diocesan bishops or in the developed synodal documents in individual Polish dioceses. This teaching constitutes a wealth of content and theological reflection, and indicates the great variety of formation programmes implemented, as well as of content, methods and catechetical forms. It goes on in formation and catechesis, but also in the accompaniment of young people aimed at the Christian and religious upbringing of the young generation. One form of this care for the development of the faith of young people is the preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation undertaken by young people through the ministry of pastors and catechists.

The main subject of the considerations undertaken in this dissertation was to answer the question: What is the impact of the process of preparation for Confirmation on the religiosity of young people in the Diocese of Rzeszów? In solving the research problem formulated in this way, a method specific to pastoral theology was used, which is the paradigm of the three stages of the theological-pastoral analysis. The main sources of the work were the results of a survey conducted among candidates for Confirmation in the Diocese of Rzeszów, the documents of the universal Church, the Church in Poland and the Diocese of Rzeszów, as well as catechetical and pastoral aids used during the formation process. The research on the indicated issues had an interdisciplinary character. The results of the scientific reflection are presented in five chapters.

The first chapter of the dissertation presents the theological understanding of Confirmation and the ecclesial norms for catechesis before receiving this sacrament. The importance of the sacrament of Confirmation was emphasised by the Second Vatican Council. This teaching was continued by subsequent statements of the Church's Magisterium, also in Poland. The document defining the current shape of formation for the sacrament of

Confirmation is the 2017 Guidelines of the Polish Bishops' Conference on Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The guidelines of the Church in Poland are discussed in the second part of the chapter. In turn, the third paragraph presents the detailed guidelines of the documents of the Diocese of Rzeszów, primarily with regard to specific content, methods and forms, as well as organisational issues.

The second chapter was the methodological part of the work. Firstly, the characteristics of the age of adolescence were presented, with particular regard to physical, psychological, social and worldview development, as well as changes in the adopted moral values. This allowed a synthetic presentation of the developmental period in which the candidates for Confirmation find themselves and the whole range of transformations occurring at this stage of human life. This was followed by a characterisation of the Diocese of Rzeszów. A fundamental aspect of these analyses was the religiosity of young people living in this region of Poland and the factors influencing the level of individual components. In turn, the third part of the chapter concerned the research procedure applied by the author. The main question and specific questions were identified. On the basis of these, specific problems were identified and, in relation to them, research hypotheses were defined. Heuristic diagrams containing groups of variables, relationships and methodological assumptions of the work were also presented. Research tools and the method of measurement were also described. It was also important to present sociological methods of data interpretation and analysis, hypothesis verification and praxeological inference. The second chapter concluded with a description of the research environment on the basis of the answers to the metric questions of both the first and second measurements. This allowed for a characterisation of the young people surveyed.

The third chapter dealt with the sociological measurements carried out. It included a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the collected empirical material, both in the first and second study. It made it possible to illustrate the religiosity of young people at the beginning of the preparation process and after its completion. To this end, the parameters of declaration of faith, level of knowledge, frequency of religious practices undertaken (both public and private), attitudes and moral values adopted, as well as attitudes towards the Church and the parish were presented. Graphs, tables and, above all, the included indexes compiling and correlating the results of the research in relation to particular aspects with a description of the relevant issues were used to help present the data.

The collected empirical data included in the fourth chapter of the dissertation concerned school religion lessons and catechesis before Confirmation. The methodological conceptualisation made it possible to evaluate the different dimensions of catechesis on the basis of the candidates' answers and statements concerning them. In addition, the content was enriched by an analysis of open-ended responses in which candidates expressed their opinions on selected elements of religious education, highlighting both positive and negative aspects. The numerous answers given were categorised and then practical postulates were presented on the basis of these.

The fifth chapter of the thesis was a logical consequence of the research conducted. It mainly concerned the verification of research problems and hypotheses on the basis of statistical analyses. On their basis, the dynamics of changes in religiosity and the elements of the preparation process that influenced it were shown. This was followed by an analysis of the methods and forms of preparation that appear to be effective and efficient and are used in the

Diocese of Rzeszów. The last part of the chapter was crowned by the presentation of praxeological postulates in the light of the conducted research and concerning the preparation process.

The conducted catechetical study gave an answer to the question about the shape of catechesis preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation and, above all, showed its influence on the religiousness of the candidates. Formation prior to the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is a concrete expression of the Church's concern for young people. Consequently, it seems important to undertake further scholarly reflection on this topic.

3. Keywords: religiosity, confirmation, catechesis, youth, evangelization

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