

Cultural Model of Marriage and Family, as Shown in Selected Polish TV Series

A Pastoral Challenge for the Catholic Church

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The analyses conducted in this paper aimed at presenting the standard for the marriage and family, which is created in Polish TV series, and subsequently noting the pastoral challenges arising from them. The quantitative analysis method was applied to stress the issues presented in the TV series. The moral issues dealt with in the series and their popularity in various social groups in Poland were the criteria for choosing the TV series. The qualitative analysis has shown that Polish TV series promotes alternative forms of marriage and family life. They are very different from the Catholic model of marriage and family. This provided grounds for the conclusions. It was observed that the Church is obliged to take up new pastoral challenges as a result of the TV series' impact of Poles' views and beliefs. Preparing young people to the sacrament of marriage and education for life in the family should be a priority. The Church should become involved in creating TV series which promote the Christian model of the marriage and family.

Keywords: *Catholic Church, family, marriage, media, pastoral work, Poland, society, TV series.*

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Introduction

Soap operas and TV series are an indispensable part of everyday life of many Poles. They provide the foundation which is the basis for viewers' beliefs and attitudes, which is reflected in everyday life – in expressed opinions and behaviour. They are a phenomenon of contemporary culture.¹ For many viewers, TV series have been an indispensable part of everyday life.

This paper analyses the image of marriage and family in several popular Polish TV series. Because of the limited size of the paper, only Polish TV series which are often also broadcast abroad were analysed.² On this basis, the challenges facing pastoral practice will be presented. The signs of the contemporary marital crisis in Europe and Poland are visible in the growing number of failed marriages and in the breakdown of both marriage and family ties. A deep reflection on the social and cultural situation and the practice of the sacrament of preparation for marriage is needed.

TV series are one of the most popular forms of contemporary film art. According to many researchers, the audience of television series in Poland is increasing.³ The audience includes not only senior citizens but also middle-aged people and youth.⁴ Increasingly often, children – together with their parents – also like to watch TV series.⁵ According to the latest research, some young people watch TV series for entertainment.⁶ Presumably, regardless of their motives, moral issues presented in such series have a great impact on the viewers' opinions and beliefs regarding marriage and family. They reduce the sense of guilt, shame and eliminate internal anxiety. They often contribute to changing

¹ See e.g. Mirosław FILICIAK, Barbara GIZA (eds.), *Post-soap: nowa generacja seriali telewizyjnych a polska widownia*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2011.

² See e.g. Artur ZAWADZKI, *Polskie seriale odnoszą sukcesy za granicą!*, (03.06.2019) <https://swiatseriali.interia.pl/multimedia/seriale/ranczo-266/zdjecie,iId,2702664,iAId,330868> (27.04.2020).

³ See more: Daria BRUSZEWSKA-PRZYTUŁA, Alina NARUSZEWICZ-DUCHLIŃSKA (eds.), *Seriale w kontekście kulturowym: gatunki, motywy, mutacje*, Olsztyn, Instytut Polonistyki i Logopedii Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego w Olsztynie, 2016; Alicja KISIELEWSKA, *Seriale telewizyjne jako wspólnoty symboliczne. Studia nad strukturą i rozwojem pojęć filozoficznych*, 28 (2016) 2, 91-106; Michał KURDUPSKI, *Polsat liderem oglądalności w czerwcu. Duży spadek TVP Sport i TVP1, rośnie TVP Info*; <https://www.wirtualnemedia.pl/artukul/ogladalnosc-telewizji-czerwiec-2019-polsat-liderem-m-jak-milosc> (10.10.2019); Agata LIPIŃSKA, *Fenomen współczesnych seriali. O społecznym oddziaływaniu seriali telewizyjnych*, *Konteksty Kultury*, 13 (2017) 3, 297-310.

⁴ Cf. e.g. Kisiełewska, *Seriale telewizyjne...*, 91-93; Anna ZELLMAN, *Wizerunek małżeństwa i rodziny w popularnych polskich serialach telewizyjnych wyzwaniem dla szkolnych lekcji religii*, *Katecheta*, 57 (2013) 9, 6-16.

⁵ Cf. e.g. Paulina JANUSZEWSKA, *Ja seriale zmieniają nasze życie?* <https://www.newsweek.pl/kultura/filmy-i-seriale/jak-seriale-zmieniaja-nasze-zycie/4xb16y2> (11.10.2019).

⁶ Cf. e.g. Grzegorz Ułan, *Tak źle jeszcze nie było... Prawie 10% Polaków ogląda telewizję dla "beki"*; <https://antyweb.pl/tak-ze-jeszcze-nie-bylo-prawie-10-polakow-oglada-telewizje-dla-beki/> (27.04.2020).

lifestyles.⁷ Young social media users often discuss their favourite series and form fan groups.⁸ Consequently, the behavioural patterns presented in a series have a significant impact, not only educational, but also pastoral.⁹ The Church cannot be indifferent to the cultural standard of the marriage and family which is presented in TV series. Therefore, the question arises, what pastoral challenges result from the image of the marriage and family created in TV series?

The above-mentioned topic can be analysed from different points of view. In this paper, it is important to search for an answer to the question about the behaviour and the way of thinking of a given community (film characters) about marriage and family presented in the series. A qualitative analysis was carried out for audio-visual material presented in randomly selected episodes of the following series: »Na dobre i na złe« [For better and for worse] (1999-),¹⁰ »M jak miłość« [M for love] (2000-), »Na Wspólnej« [At Wspólna Street] (2003-), »Pierwsza miłość« [First love] (2004-), »Barwy szczęścia« [Colours of happiness] (2007-), »Rodzinka.pl« (2011-), »Przyjaciółki« [Girlfriends] (2012-).¹¹ One hundred randomly selected episodes from each series were analysed. The selection criteria for the above-mentioned series were their long-term presence on the Polish television screen, high ratings and main themes concerning marriage and family.¹² Such a targeted analysis will make it possible to show the resulting challenges for the pastoral care of families. The analysis is preceded by an introduction to the essential properties of the TV series as a film genre.

Understanding the term »TV series«

The term »television series« is increasingly common not only in everyday life but also in scientific studies.¹³ It denotes a series of films broadcast on tele-

⁷ See more: Łukasz SOKOŁOWSKI, Serial jako element praktyk społecznych, *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, 55 (2011) 2-3, 187-208.

⁸ Press Service Monitoring Mediów, Raporty medialne; <https://psmm.pl/oferta/raporty-medialne> (11.10.2019).

⁹ Cf. e.g. Anna WIŚNIEWSKA, Serial telewizyjny i jego bohaterowie w przestrzeni edukacyjnej, *Przegląd Pedagogiczny*, 1 (2009) 180-191.

¹⁰ The year in which the serial started to be broadcast on Polish TV is provided in parentheses.

¹¹ See the official websites of the analysed series, where information about the series, synopses of individual episodes, photos, whole episodes, backstage info and announcements are provided. Cf. <http://nadobre.vod.tvp.pl/> (10.01.2020); <http://mjakmilosc.vod.tvp.pl/> (10.01.2020); <https://nawspolnej.tvn.pl/> (10.01.2020); <https://www.polsat.pl/serial/pierwsza-milosc/> (10.01.2020); <http://barwyszczescia.vod.tvp.pl/> (10.01.2020); <http://rodzinka.vod.tvp.pl/>; <https://www.polsat.pl/serial/przyjaciolki/> (10.01.2020).

¹² See and cf. e.g. Kurdupski, *Polsat liderem oglądalności w czerwcu...*, 1-2; Zellma, *Wizerunek małżeństwa i rodziny...*, 6-7.

¹³ See and cf. e.g. Kisiełewska, *Seriale telewizyjne...*, 91-102; Agnieszka PAWLAK, Rodzina w polskich serialach telewizyjnych, *Media. Kultura. Społeczeństwo*, (2010) 1, 169-185; Piotr K. PIOTROWSKI, *Kulturowe serial*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Prószyński i S-Ka, 2011.

vision, consisting of at least several episodes, with the same characters, background and the nature of the plot.¹⁴ The continuity of characters, backgrounds and threads in films of this kind is preserved, with a uniform plot. The plot in the series is multithreaded and it is frequently suspended without a final solution.¹⁵ Frequently, since a plot is based on the fate of a particular family or group of people working in one place or in the same profession, one does not have to watch every episode to understand the plot.¹⁶

TV series are high-budget productions, which are distinguished by a refined script, good acting, properly selected soundtracks and good editing.¹⁷ They are usually rated negatively¹⁸ and are regarded as kitsch. The researchers identify, among others, soap operas, tele-sagas and documentary soap operas.¹⁹ This classification is based on the show genre. As a separate category, they distinguish a tranche series,²⁰ which is a combination of the above-mentioned species. It is characterized by the continuity of threads, characters and plot backgrounds, while the number of episodes is fixed in advance.²¹

In this paper, it is important to understand a television series as a systematic film production with a fast narrative and frequent changes in the plot, in which controversial social issues are addressed. They comprise episodes with narrative links between them. Viewers should watch each episode to understand the narrative. Characters can change. The subject matter of series that appear on Polish television several times a week has an impact on society. Television audiences identify themselves with the series characters, they change their views and beliefs and learn to evaluate and imitate the series message.²²

Social issues in TV series

An analysis of the narrative patterns in popular Polish TV series (e.g. »M jak miłość«, »Na dobre i na złe«, »Na Wspólnej«, »Barwy szczęścia«, »Rodzinka.pl«, »Pierwsza miłość«, »Przyjaciółki«) shows that emphasis in these series is

¹⁴ See more: Kamil ŁUCZAJ, *Zmieniająca się rodzina w zmieniającym się serialu*, http://interalia.org.pl/media/2013_08/luczaj.pdf, 1-13 (12.10.2019); Bogumiła MATEJA, *Dyskretna uwodzicielska moc seriali*, *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, 54 (2010) 2, 37-52.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. Lipińska, *Fenomen współczesnych seriali...*, 299-301.

¹⁶ Cf. e.g. Zellma, *Wizerunek małżeństwa i rodziny...*, 6-7.

¹⁷ See more: Anna KACZMAREK, *Między operą mydlaną a serią fabularną – serial transzowy*; <https://docplayer.pl/69774714-Interpretacje-anna-kaczmarek.html> (12.10.2019).

¹⁸ See e.g. Małgorzata LISOWSKA-MAGDZIARZ, *Seriale – nowa jakość, czy stare w nowej odsłonie?*, *Zeszyty Prasoznawcze*, 1 (2016) 1-15.

¹⁹ See e.g. Kaczmarek, *Między operą mydlaną a serią fabularną...*, 3-8.

²⁰ See more: Ewa KAJA, *Amerykańskie seriale typu »post-soap opera« – nowa generacja seriali telewizyjnych, lecz nie tylko w telewizji*, *Kultura i edukacja*, 102 (2014) 2, 64-82, 68.

²¹ Cf. e.g. Lisowska-Magdziarz, *Seriale – nowa jakość, czy stare...*, 3-11.

²² See more: Zellma, *Wizerunek małżeństwa i rodziny...*, 7-14.

placed on types of behaviour typical of post-modernity. They are a consequence of liberalism, hedonism, consumerism and double standards.²³ Christian values are questioned. At the same time, the importance of the Decalogue is refuted to propagate a wrongly understood freedom and tolerance.²⁴

There seem to be no references to traditional Christian values in everyday lives of the characters (e.g. the families of Mostowiak, Boski, their friends living in Wspólna street in Warsaw, the staff and patients of the hospital in the fictitious town of Leśna Góra not far from Warsaw, people living in Zaciszna Street in Warsaw, young people in Wrocław and the surrounding areas). In the joys, struggles with adversities, successes and failures of personal and professional nature of the characters representing various generations it is difficult to see the choices, attitudes consistent with Christian morality.²⁵ On the contrary, they are often opposite to the Decalogue and the teaching of the Catholic Church. Even the older generation (grandparents, parents) accept the decisions and behaviours of young people that are inconsistent with the teaching of the Catholic Church (e.g. subsequent non-sacramental marriage, partnership, sex before marriage, betrayal). The protagonists of the analysed TV series are usually tolerant towards behaviour which negates the indissolubility of marriage and marital fidelity.²⁶ Importantly, religious beliefs and practices occasionally appear in the lives of the characters (including seniors), mainly in extreme situations (e.g. death, threats to the life or health of children or grandchildren). There is no clear presentation of religious practices (e.g. Christian celebration of a Sunday in the family, prayer, children attending lessons of religion, celebration of liturgical holidays in the family). The life of the protagonists presented in the shows is marked by permissiveness, moral chaos, freedom in the sphere of human sexuality, hedonism and care for temporal goods.²⁷ Marriage is often non-sacramental and sporadically sacramental. In addition, such celebrations as baptism, First Communion and the sacrament of Confirmation are practically absent from the lives of the characters in the TV series analysed.

Almost every serial couple experience crisis and often betrayals. Often these are not just single betrayals, but affairs based on lies and dishonesty, which lead to long-term separation and sometimes even divorce.²⁸ A nuclear family based on a traditional marriage (not always concluded as a sacramental union)

²³ Cf. e.g. Pawlak, *Rodzina w polskich serialach...*, 169-178.

²⁴ Cf. e.g. Andrzej BACZYŃSKI, *Współczesna telewizja jako nośnik antywartości*, *Biuletyn Edukacji Medialnej*, 1 (2006) 25-39; Dariusz H. PATER, *Współczesne media a relacje rodzinne*, *Kultura – Media – Teologia*, 21 (2015) 23-38; Małgorzata WYŻLIC, *Popularność telenoweli w Polsce a model »przeciętnej rodziny«*, *Roczniki Teologiczne*, 53 (2006) 10, 187-196.

²⁵ Cf. Pawlak, *Rodzina w polskich serialach...*, 179-182.

²⁶ Cf. Zellma, *Wizerunek małżeństwa i rodziny...*, 7-15.

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸ See more and cf. Krzysztof ARCIMOWICZ, *Dyskursy o płci i rodzinie w polskich telesagach: analiza seriali obyczajowych najpopularniejszych na początku XXI wieku*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Akademickie Żak, 2013.

is rarely shown in the TV series under analysis. On the contrary, they promote cohabiting couples or fleeting affairs. Young couples living together before marriage are promoted, as well as the lives of single people and couples living apart together (LAT), in a long-distance relationship. The plots of the series include unstable relationships of cohabiting people.²⁹ In addition, a significant number of informal relationships are, sooner or later, formalised, first as a civil marriage, then in a church wedding or only in a civil wedding. Cohabitation lasts between a few months and a few years. Partners form a lasting partnership over a long period, with children being born in it. No moral dilemmas of the characters who live in informal relationships are presented. There is no clear statement that cohabitation is a sin. Situations are shown in which betrayal or a long-term extramarital affair takes place. Sometimes the protagonists decide to save their marriage and to take part in therapy.³⁰

Women, even if they are not married, usually dream of having a child and when they get pregnant, decide to give birth to the child, contrary to medical indications. They try to combine marital and family life with work, experiencing resulting dilemmas.³¹ On the other hand, fathers are portrayed both in their traditional and modern role. The latter manifests itself in devoting much attention to the child, in care and time spent together, and sometimes also in taking over the duties of the wife and mother.³² Fathers are also shown who, after the death of the mother, take care of the child, struggle with the problems of single fatherhood and receive support and help from friends. In addition, the problems of fathers are presented whose wives have abandoned their children and gone to live with another man. Usually, a stress-free upbringing and happy childhood are promoted. It is typical that nothing is required of children and there is no consistency in their upbringing; rather, consumption among children and young people is promoted.³³

The TV series under analysis also presents characters who do not have a permanent partner. The life of singles is promoted.³⁴ Problems are also shown that are encountered during the period of engagement (e.g. drug addiction, betrayal and financial problems), which are sometimes overcome.³⁵

²⁹ Cf. e.g. Krzysztof ARCIMOWICZ, *Modele nienormatywnych rodzin w dyskursie polskich telesag*; http://interalia.org.pl/media/2013_08/arcimowicz.pdf (14.10.2019).

³⁰ C.f. Zellma, *Wizerunek małżeństwa i rodziny...*, 7-16.

³¹ See more: Krzysztof ARCIMOWICZ, *Rodzina w dyskursie polskich telesag*, in: D. BRUSZEWSKA-PRZYTUŁA, M. CICHMIŃSKA, P. PRZYTUŁA (eds.), *Seriale w kontekście kulturowym Sfery życia – z życia sfer*, Olsztyn, Instytut Polonistyki i Logopedii Uniwersytetu Warmińskiego-Mazurskiego w Olsztynie, 2016, 7-8.

³² See more: Marta BIERCA, »Szklana« rzeczywistość a Kowalscy wokół nas – seriale a przemiany męskości we współczesnej Polsce, *Dyskurs Młodych Andragogów*, 16 (2015), 327-335.

³³ Cf. e.g. Arcimowicz, *Rodzina w dyskursie polskich telesag...*, 7-8; Lipińska, *Fenomen współczesnych seriali...*, 297-310.

³⁴ Cf. Arcimowicz, *Dyskursy o płci i rodzinie w polskich telesagach...*, 5-7.

³⁵ Cf. e.g. Pawlak, *Rodzina w polskich serialach...*, 169-182; Zellma, *Wizerunek małżeństwa i rodziny...*, 7-17.

More importantly, lesbian and homosexual relationships, as well as transgender families, are presented. For example, there is the issue of a lasting relationship between two men who live together, run a shared household and have a homosexual relationship. Initially, parents and friends do not accept the relationship, but gradually they change their minds. Thus, the change in attitudes from homophobic to tolerant is shown.³⁶

There are also issues related to raising children from various relationships, born out of wedlock, and sometimes adopted.³⁷ Usually, a liberal style of raising children is preferred. Children enjoy a lot of freedom; they decide on many issues (e.g. in the movie entitled *Rodzinka.pl*). The parents do not set too many boundaries, and when they do, they are not too consistent in observing them. There is also a married couple in which one of the spouses is focused on professional work and does not want to have children. But she changes her mind over time as she starts to see value in motherhood. Financial problems are presented in the context of divorce and couples living in cohabitation.³⁸

TV series also present various topics: violence perpetrated by a husband against his wife, children being abandoned by their mother who goes to live with another man, fostering a child by a man from the woman's earlier relationship, efforts made to adopt a child, partnership in a relationship, combining work with looking after children, problems of a single mother raising her son, who declares that he is a transsexual and wants to change his sex. There is also the issue of bisexuality. It is reminded that education and professional position do not protect against aggression and violence.³⁹

These threads concerning marriage and family usually contain no reference to the objective moral order, Christian values or the teachings of the Catholic Church. Moral chaos is typical. At the same time, the lack of responsibility, fidelity, honesty, restraint and chastity is evident. Free relationships, sexual freedom, betrayal and divorce are promoted. Human freedom is shown without connection to love and responsibility. The values of pre-marital chastity, the sacramentality of marriage, fidelity and responsibility are ignored. Happiness is shown in connection with sexual pleasure.⁴⁰

³⁶ Cf. Arcimowicz, *Dyskursy o płci i rodzinie w polskich telesagach...*, 8-11.

³⁷ See more: Ewelina PIECIUCH, *Obraz dziecka w polskich serialach telewizyjnych*, *Wychowanie w Rodzinie*, 8 (2013) 2, 123-136.

³⁸ See more and cf. Arcimowicz, *Dyskursy o płci i rodzinie w polskich telesagach...*, 9-18; Pawlak, *Rodzina w polskich serialach...*, 169-185.

³⁹ See and cf. Beata ŁACIAK, *Obraz rodziny w polskich serialach obyczajowych*, in: Jadwiga IZDEBSKA (ed.), *Media elektroniczne kreujące obraz rodziny i dziecka*, Białystok, Trans Humana. Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie 2007, 115-131; Beata ŁACIAK, *Kwestie społeczne w polskich serialach obyczajowych – prezentacje i odbiór. Analiza socjologiczna*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Akademickie Żak, 2013.

⁴⁰ Cf. e.g. Arcimowicz, *Dyskursy o płci i rodzinie w polskich telesagach...*, 9-21; Łaciak, *Obraz rodziny w polskich serialach...*, 115-131; Pawlak, *Rodzina w polskich serialach...*, 174-183; Zella, *Wizerunek małżeństwa i rodziny...*, 5-16.

The TV series under analysis point to the economic activity of both men and women.⁴¹ Each partner participates to a similar extent in childcare and housekeeping. In this context, it is pointed out that women and men may have different expectations and needs regarding cohabitation. This difference often breeds conflicts and leads to the break-up of a relationship. Importantly, divorced women do not want to get married again. They are clearly sceptical about the possibility of building relationships with men.⁴²

The scriptwriters show clearly – using non-verbal codes – a picture of different marriages and families that reflect the real world to some extent. Importantly, they point to a change in the mentality of Polish society and customs, as well as changes in marital and family life forms. This image often goes against the principles of Christian morality. The lives of TV series characters contain no reference to faith or religious practices. The role of authorities is also diminished. The emphasis is placed on divorce, betrayal, marriage breakdown, cohabitation and stress-free upbringing. The authority of the Catholic Church is invisible. A one-sided image of marriage and family, based on principles defined by partners, is promoted and preserved. There is no reference to the Decalogue or the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Thus, through television series, the viewer gradually becomes accustomed to the disappearance of Christian values. Betrayals, romances, divorces, cohabitation relationships, stress-free upbringing are shown as phenomena that fit into the social order. Thus, alternative forms of marriage and family, as well as liberalism in upbringing, are popularized.

Generally, it can be claimed that the values promoted in Polish TV series concerning marriage and family differ from the Catholic model of marriage and family. Alternative forms of family structures are not questioned or negatively evaluated. On the contrary, they are perceived as equal to the traditional nuclear family. They are presented as a natural form of marital-family life. In this way, the media reality shapes social models.

Challenges to pastoral care of the family

The need to treat a television series as a pastoral challenge stems from the fact that the Church is called upon to identify carefully the signs of the times, to penetrate the cultural sphere and to enter into dialogue with Christians who have lost a sense of faith or who have moved away from the Church and may

⁴¹ See more: Joanna ANIOŁ, *Kobieta – matka w roli zawodowej. Obrazy pracujących matek w polskich i amerykańskich serialach telewizyjnych*, *Kultura – Społeczeństwo – Edukacja*, 1 (2014) 135-156.

⁴² Cf. e.g. Łaciak, *Obraz rodziny w polskich serialach...*, 115-131; Łaciak, *Kwestie społeczne w polskich serialach obyczajowych...*, 9-18; Zellma, *Wizerunek małżeństwa i rodziny...*, 5-16.

not even consider themselves members of the Church.⁴³ When preaching the Gospel, the Church is obliged to take into account the level of knowledge, interests, attitudes and views of the addressees, as well as their culture of being and ways of evaluation.⁴⁴ Contemporary Christians belong to the generation that watches TV series.⁴⁵ Their views and beliefs are shaped, among other things, by the behaviour system of the characters in the series.⁴⁶ This results in expressing opinions and attitudes towards the teachings of the Catholic Church.⁴⁷

The Church in its pastoral ministry is to accompany married couples and families - not ideal ones, but such as they are.⁴⁸ Man and concern for his salvation is the starting point here. This task is a priority. In this area, arranging professional marriage counselling is still an ongoing challenge.⁴⁹ It must be considered important that the Word of God should be preached properly (first kerygma, then parenthesis) and that teaching of religion at school should be evangelisation-oriented.⁵⁰ However, this is not enough. The catechumenate in its broader sense, addressed to baptized adults who need a fuller and more thorough introduction to Christianity, personal conversion, Christian experience and support in building a personal relationship with God, also plays an important role.⁵¹

⁴³ Cf. e.g. Papież FRANCISZEK, *Adhortacja apostolska o głoszeniu Ewangelii we współczesnym świecie »Evangelium gaudium«* (23.11.2013), Kraków, Wydawnictwo M, 2013; Leszek SZEWCZYK, *Głoszenie słowa Bożego w środowisku zsekularyzowanym*, Katowice, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2019.

⁴⁴ See and cf. e.g. Kongregacja ds. Kultu Bożego i Dyscypliny Sakramentów, Poznań, *Dyrektorium homiletyczne*, Pallottinum, 2015.

⁴⁵ See e.g. sociological studies on perception of social issues by viewers of TV series: Łaciak, *Kwestie społeczne w polskich serialach obyczajowych – prezentacje i odbiór...*, 253-379; Joanna MARTEKLAS, *10 najpopularniejszych seriali telewizyjnych wśród Polaków*, <https://whatnext.pl/10-najpopularniejszych-seriali-telewizyjnych-wsrod-polakow/> (27.04.2020); Wiktor UHLIG, *Miejska dominacja na popegeerowskiej wsi. Seriale typu soap I post-soap oczami kobiet, Przegląd Humanistyczny* (2015) 3, 199-202.

⁴⁶ See e.g. Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, *Komunikat z badań preferowane i realizowane modele życia rodzinnego*, https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2019/K_046_19.PDF (27.04.2020).

⁴⁷ See results of empirical research: Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, *Komunikat z badań oceny sytuacji Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2019/K_101_19.PDF (27.04.2020).

⁴⁸ Cf. e.g. Wojciech POLAK, *Prymas: Kościół ma towarzyszyć rodzinie rzeczywistej, a nie idealnej*; <https://info.wiara.pl/doc/5947410.Prymas-Kosciol-ma-towarzyszc-rodzinie-rzeczywistej-anie> (14.10.2019); Marek DZIEWIECKI, *Kierownictwo duchowe narzeczonych i małżonków*, in: Józef AUGUSTYN, Jakub KOŁACZ (ed.), *Sztuka kierownictwa duchowego – poradnik*, Kraków, WAM, 549-558.

⁴⁹ See and cf. e.g. Paweł LANDWÓJTOWICZ, *Duszpasterskie poradnictwo małżeńskie w Polsce. Studium pastoralne*, Opole, Redakcja Wydawnictw WT UO, 2010.

⁵⁰ Cf. e.g. Marek STEPNIAK, *Duszpasterstwo i nowa ewangelizacja jako dwa kierunki misji Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce. Perspektywa teologiczno-socjologiczna, Łódzkie Studia Teologiczne*, 24 (2015) 1, 91-101; Szewczyk, *Głoszenie słowa Bożego...*, 10-24

⁵¹ See and cf. e.g. Roman BUCHTA, *Mistagogia w polskiej refleksji i praktyce katechetyczno-duszpasterskiej po II Soborze Watykańskim*, Katowice, Księgarnia św. Jacka, 2017; Jacek GOLEŃ,

It seems right to abandon the traditional pastoral activity (the so-called pastoral activity of maintaining the existing model) and to appreciate evangelisation.⁵² An evangelisation retreat in the parish can be helpful. It is the starting point for a gradual change in the parish model, in which information, organisation and action for the benefit of the parish (understood as a community of communities, in which the faithful are an active subject) are essential.⁵³ This, in turn, also requires an appreciation of the role of lay people in the life of the parish (also in liturgy and services) and in the apostolic mission of the Church. At the same time, the importance of formation of children, youth and adults in religious movements and systematic catechesis of adults should be considered important.⁵⁴ The appreciation of the community level in the life of the parish is associated with the resignation from the vision of the Church as the authority exercised by the clergy. The parish should be understood as a community of communities.⁵⁵ It also allows us to emphasize the importance of the pastoral care of the elite. Small ecclesial groups are an opportunity for the revival of the parish community.⁵⁶

The challenges resulting from the model of marriage and family promoted in TV series are positively responded to by proper preparation of engaged couples for marriage, which still seems to be an under-used pastoral opportunity.⁵⁷ It should include both psychological and interpersonal communication issues, as well as Christian formation.⁵⁸ Candidates for marriage need better psychological preparation than is offered now. It may be useful to them to take part in workshops which allow them to get to know themselves and their partner better and to develop constructive interpersonal relationships.⁵⁹ It would be particularly valuable to pay attention to other – apart from the emotional – di-

Motywy zawarcia małżeństwa sakramentalnego. Studium z duszpasterstwa rodzin światła badań narzeczonych, Lublin, Wydawnictwo KUL, 2013.

⁵² Cf. Stepniak, *Duszpasterstwo i nowa ewangelizacja...*, 92-101.

⁵³ Cf. Wiesław PRZYGODA, Parafia wspólnotą miłości i służby braterskiej w ujęciu ks. Ryszarda Kamińskiego, *Roczniki Teologiczne*, 61 (2014) 6, 193-209.

⁵⁴ Cf. Wojślaw CZUPRYŃSKI, *Odnowa parafii i duszpasterstwa. Deuterokatechumenalna koncepcja chrześcijańskiej formacji w myśli i dziele ks. Franciszka Blachnickiego*, Olsztyn, Wydział Teologii Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie, 2011, 165-223.

⁵⁵ Cf. Waldemar ADAMOWICZ, *Model współczesnej parafii, czyli jaka parafia – taki Kościół. Ku »wspólnocie wspólnot«*; https://opoka.org.pl/biblioteka/T/TA/TAP/jakapar_takikl.html (15.10.2019).

⁵⁶ Marian Z. STEPULAK, Znaczenie małych grup religijnych w życiu wspólnot parafialnych, *Teologia Praktyczna*, 4 (2003) 127-148.

⁵⁷ See more and cf. Grzegorz PYŻLAK, *Recepcja przygotowania do małżeństwa w świetle badań narzeczonych*, Lublin, Polihymnia, 2007.

⁵⁸ Cf. e.g. Papież FRANCISZEK, *Posynodalna adhortacja apostolska Amoris laetitia do biskupów, do kapłanów i diakonów, do osób konsekrowanych, do małżonków chrześcijańskich i do wszystkich wiernych świeckich »O miłości w rodzinie«*, Kraków, Wydawnictwo św. Stanisława BM, 2016.

⁵⁹ Cf. Wojślaw CZUPRYŃSKI, Przygotowanie do małżeństwa w obliczu współczesnych wyzwań kulturowych, *Studia Warmińskie*, 52 (2015) 215-225.

mensions of the relationship, such as mutual understanding, trust and the ability to work together⁶⁰. The multi-faceted approach to the relationship between a man and a woman who love each other contributes to a true understanding of love, which in TV series is commonly identified with emotional ecstasy, combined with affection and sexual desire.⁶¹

It is important to develop communication skills within the engaged couple. It is difficult to imagine a happy marriage without unity at the level of thoughts and feelings and without the spouses' ability to have an inner dialogue with themselves in conscience and with God. The participation of engaged couples in psychological activities could both provide valuable support in building mutual bonds and reveal communication and personality barriers that may hinder future marriage and family life.⁶² In preparing engaged couples, attention should be paid to developing men's ability to share their own experiences, while helping women to develop dimensions of interpersonal relationships other than emotional and supportive ones. It is related to the need for practical learning and development of dialogue attitudes.⁶³

When preparing for marriage, it is worth paying more attention to the evangelisation of engaged couples. A very helpful form are retreats for such couples who do not appreciate the religious bond. Pre-marital catechesis should be a time of intense evangelisation and a path to faith and catechumenate. At the same time, an important function of this catechesis is to help to adopt the Christian model of marriage and family, especially by those couples who ask for a Church wedding only because of the tradition.⁶⁴

It seems that an invaluable role in the evangelisation of marriages and families can be played by Christian spouses affiliated with various religious communities and movements. The contents of the evangelisation could be confirmed by their own testimony. It is precisely the testimony of spouses who share their experience of living in sacramental marriage that makes the Church's teaching on marriage and family alive and authentic, encourages reflection and, in the long term, it can contribute to changing beliefs and attitudes.

⁶⁰ Cf. Papież Franciszek, *Posynodalna adhortacja apostolska Amoris Laetitia...*, No. 52-156.

⁶¹ Cf. Ibidem; Czupryński, *Przygotowanie do małżeństwa w obliczu...*, 215-225.

⁶² Cf. Czupryński, *Przygotowanie do małżeństwa w obliczu...*, 215-225; Andrzej DERDZIUK, Komunikacja w służbie komunii, *Roczniki Teologii Moralnej*, 58 (2011) 3, 199-208.

⁶³ See more and cf. e.g. Mieczysław OZOROWSKI, Piękno miłości małżeńskiej w świetle »Amoris Laetitia«, *Symposium*, 32 (2017) 1, 12-28; Dariusz PIÓRKOWSKI, Jak przygotować młodych do małżeństwa, <http://mateusz.pl/mt/dp/dariusz-piorkowski-sj-jak-przygotowywac-młodych-do-malzenstwa.htm> (16.10.2019).

⁶⁴ Cf. Czupryński, *Przygotowanie do małżeństwa w obliczu...*, 217-223.

Conclusions

The analyses conducted in this paper have shown that the image of the marriage and the family presented in Polish TV series differs from the Christian model and presents specific pastoral challenges. It requires that the issue of the marriage and family should be emphasised in religious education. Conveying the Church's teaching should be accompanied by education for family life. The Church should be more involved in the promotion of marriage and family in the media. And it is not only about the Catholic media, but also state-owned ones. It is equally important that the Church should be involved in the production of TV series and movies which promote the Christian model of the marriage and family.

A special place in pastoral practice is occupied by the direct preparation of fiancées for the marriage sacrament. Such postulates concern various aspects: psychology, interpersonal communication, Christian formation, uniformity of requirements and principles. The most important requirements for the preparation for marriage include: (1) Psychological preparation – workshops that allow a better understanding of oneself and one's partner and the creation of constructive relationships between people. It would be particularly valuable to draw attention to other – apart from the emotional – dimensions of mutual bonds, such as: mutual understanding, trust, ability to cooperate. (2) Developing communication skills. An important element of a happy marriage is unity at the level of thoughts and feelings. A conflict is bred not only by divergent opinions but, above all, by the way they are expressed. Practical learning and dialogue development are essential. (3) Religious preparation. It is important in preparation for marriage to show the importance of choosing spouses based on the criterion of faith. Pre-marital catechesis should be a time of intense evangelisation, a path to faith. An invaluable role in this respect could be played by Christian spouses affiliated with different religious communities and movements, who could confirm the message with their own testimony.

These analyses do not embrace all issues. Further, detailed analyses are needed. They are worth taking up in the context of other TV series (e.g. American, Turkish ones) and in association with media education and education for family life.

Anna Zellma* – Wojsław Czupryński**

*Kulturalni model braka i obitelji u odabranim poljskim televizijskim serijama.
Pastoralni izazov Katoličkoj crkvi*

Sažetak

Provedena analiza u ovome članku imala je za cilj predstaviti okvir braka i obitelji u poljskim televizijskim serijama te ukazati na pastoralne izazove koji proizlaze iz njih. Primijenjena je metoda kvantitativne analize da bi se naglasile problematike koje se prikazuju u televizijskim serijama. Kriteriji za izbor televizijskih serija bili su moralna pitanja koja serije obrađuju te njihova popularnost među različitim društvenim skupinama u Poljskoj. Kvalitativna analiza pokazala je da poljske televizijske serije promoviraju alternativne oblike braka i obitelji. Oni su veoma udaljeni od katoličkoga modela braka i obitelji. To je omogućilo temelje za donošenje zaključka. Uočeno je tako da se Katolička crkva nalazi pred novim pastoralnim izazovima, a što je posljedica utjecaja koje televizijske serije imaju na stavove i vjerovanja među Poljacima. Prioritet bi stoga morala biti priprema mladih za sakrament braka i odgoj za kršćanski život. Katolička crkva bi trebala biti uključena u stvaranje televizijskih serija koje promiču kršćanski model braka i obitelji.

Ključne riječi: brak, Katolička crkva, mediji, obitelj, pastoralni rad, Poljska, televizijske serije.

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