

»Sanctity of life« as a familiological issue in the statements of Pope Francis

Katarzyna Parzych-Blakiewicz*

kaparz@uwm.edu.pl

<https://0000-0002-7965-9064>

<https://doi.org/10.31192/np.19.2.4>

UDK / UDC: 179.7

27-45

272-732.2(044)

Pregledni članak / Review

Primljeno / Received: 27. studenog 2020. / Nov 27, 2020

Prihvaćeno / Accepted: 13. siječnja 2021. / Jan 13, 2021

The article presents a theological analysis of Pope Francis' statements on the sanctity of life with reference to familiological issues. The aim of the research undertaken is to show the value of human life resulting from the relationship between the elements that create the created reality and with God. According to Francis, holiness is closeness to God and the 'divine space' in which all creation exists and functions. The sanctity of »life« is shown by the Pope in the following aspects: 1) theological – as an expression of the integration of creation with God, 2) social – as the principle of existence and relations, and 3) defensive – as an imperative to defend the life of every human being. The family is presented by the Pope as a sanctuary of life, a place of sanctifying love and a school of holiness. The conclusions resulting from the theological analysis of papal statements indicate the need for a 'familiological turn' encompassing the space of culture and civilization of the contemporary world. Such a turn is necessary for the good of the man for whom the family is the first social circle. The sanctity of life in the familiological area is the principle that defines the sacredness of the family and the determinant of intra-family relationships that develop love.

Key words: *family, Amoris Laetitia, Francis, Gaudete et Exsultate, holiness, Laudato Si, sanctity of life.*

* Katarzyna Parzych-Blakiewicz, PhD, Prof. hab., University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (Poland), Faculty of Theology; Address: ul. Hozjusza 15, PL 11-041 Olsztyn.

Introduction¹

Pope Francis repeatedly expresses his conviction in the sanctity of human life in his statements. He defines it as the principle on which to base the organization of social life. It shows as an indisputable value, which the family is called to protect, that this status of family is a sanctuary. What is the correlation between the hagiological (concerning sanctity) and the familiological (concerning the family) aspects in the thought of Pope Francis? The answer to this question aims to formulate a theological justification for the thesis on the inviolability of human life from conception to natural death. It is based on the assumption of the relationship of the human person with other elements of the created reality, and with God. The development of the topic of the sanctity of life in the hagiological and familiological perspective will determine the direction in which philosophical and theological reflection should be developed in relation to the understanding of the value of human life by contemporary and future generations. The theological responsibility to provide logical, credible and strong arguments for the protection of life is obvious here. The research goal is implemented in the course of analysing papal statements on the sanctity of life and arranging them according to the papal concept of ecological theology (based on the encyclical letter *Laudato Si*), the theology of sanctity (based on the exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*) and the theology of family (based on the exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*).

1. Sanctity according to Francis

The question of holiness in the statements of Pope Francis has a twofold approach. The first is shown in the apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* – on the call to holiness in the modern world; here sanctity is the goal of human life and means closeness to God. The second is highlighted in the encyclical *Laudato Si*, which discusses the ecological integration of all the elements of creation, where sanctity is the foundation of the inviolability of the existence of individual creatures. Both approaches are developed in other statements by Francis, especially with regards to the sanctity and integrity of human life.

a) *The first approach: Christological – according to the concept of Gaudete et Exsultate, i.e.: sanctity as ‘closeness to God’*

In *Gaudete et Exsultate*, the problem of the sanctity of life is related to the research question of man's closeness to God. God calls every human being to

¹ Native speaker correction: Dominic G. P. Sheridan.

become a saint.² In his exhortation, the Pope focuses on the paths of sanctification. He explains what the lifestyle of the saint is and encourages them to make decisions about enduring in the face of various life difficulties – such as humiliation, or persecution for the cause of faithfulness to Christ – because the fruit of this perseverance is the joy of blessing. The Pope discusses the Eight Beatitudes, presenting them as guidelines for the holy life that Jesus Himself gives from the Mount. These Beatitudes outline the Christian way of life. In them, Jesus points out eight painful experiences that are difficult to accept, because they are basically aimed against human dignity. The Nazorean teacher, however, recommends perseverance and patience, because such an attitude ultimately leads to the blessed state of happiness. What Jesus teaches in the Eight Beatitudes means giving yourself completely to Him, trusting Him, connecting with Him – that is, living with Him and being ‘spotless’. The Pope says that for all this, Jesus offers »true life.«³ The sanctity of human life develops in community.

»God draws us to himself, taking into account the complex fabric of interpersonal relationships present in a human community. God wanted to enter into the life and history of a people. God draws us to himself, taking into account the complex fabric of interpersonal relationships present in a human community. God wanted to enter into the life and history of a people.«⁴

The family here is the first community circle in which man experiences these drawing, or sanctifying, relationships.

The Christological aspect of holiness is also developed by Francis in the community aspect in the apostolic exhortation *Christus Vivit* and the encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*. According to the Pope, the sanctity of human life is life in God’s presence, in front of God.⁵ The Pope points out that man is called to holiness, which means a call to intimacy and friendship with Jesus Christ.⁶ Man grows in holiness by maintaining a relationship with Jesus and conforming to Him.⁷

The sanctity of human life is related to the Messianic function of Christ, the fulfilment of which means the fulfilment of the call to a state of perfection in God – according to the biblical call »consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy« (Lev 11:44; 1Pt 1:16).⁸ The life of a believer is therefore a striv-

² Cf. FRANCIS, *Apostolic Exhortation Gaudete et Exsultate*, (19.III.2018), <http://www.vatican.va> (13.07.2020), 1 (=GE).

³ GE 1.

⁴ GE 6.

⁵ Cf. FRANCIS, *Apostolic Exhortation Christus Vivit* (25.III.2019), <http://www.vatican.va> (19.02.2020), 248 (=ChV).

⁶ Cf. ChV 248.

⁷ Cf. ChV 158.

⁸ Cf. GE 10.

ing for holiness, linked to a commitment to the Church and the human life.⁹ In this context, holiness is revealed in human behaviour in ordinary actions through which the individual vocation is realized.¹⁰ At the same time, Francis emphasizes that the life path of holiness is individual for every person.¹¹

*b) The second approach: integral and ecological – according to the concept in *Laudato Si*, that is, sanctity as ‘God’s space’*

In *Laudato Si*, the Pope presents his vision of the world, together with man, as an intrinsically integrated creation of God. »Everything is connected«¹² – merged (the Pope repeats this many times), the individual elements that make up the world are interdependent, participating in the Trinitarian dynamics, imprinted in creation.¹³ The foundation that binds and brings about this unification is the creative activity of God the Father.¹⁴ The elements of creation are interconnected in their inner structure and with God. In this sense, the Pope calls the Earth the mother and sister of men, the Sun – the brother, etc. – just as Francis of Assisi prayed in his *Canticle of the Creature*.¹⁵ It is significant in the papal statement to link sacredness to the earth. The Pope points to the Amazon as a land that gives an example of care for the environment and the sanctity of human life.¹⁶ He says about Colombia that the local Church guards the sense of God and His transcendence, the sanctity of life, respect for creation, bonds of solidarity, joy in life, and the ability to be unconditionally happy.¹⁷ He states that the people – pointing to the indigenous peoples of the Amazon and the Arctic – remind us of the holiness of the whole earth, which is an important – apart from a commitment to the balance in the biosphere – message for the secularized world.¹⁸

Coming from God gives man and each thing in the world its dignity, the essence of which is expressed in holiness. Here we should distinguish three

⁹ Cf. ChV 246.

¹⁰ Cf. GE 7,14.

¹¹ Cf. GE 11; ChV 162.

¹² FRANCIS, *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si*, (25.V.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (13.07.2020), 91, 92 and other 16, 42, 70, 111, 120, 137, 138, 213 (=LS).

¹³ Cf. LS 240.

¹⁴ Cf. LS 220.

¹⁵ Cf. LS 1; Martín CARBAJO NÚÑEZ, *Sister – Mother – Earth. Franciscan Roots of the Laudato Si*, Phoenix, Tau Publishing, 2017.

¹⁶ FRANCIS, *Meeting with the Colombian Bishops*, (7.IX.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

¹⁷ Cf. FRANCIS, *Meeting with the Executive Committee CELAM*, (7.IX.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); cf. FRANCIS, *Homily*, (12.XII.2018), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

¹⁸ Cf. LS 146; FRANCIS, *Address to participants at the conference on »Religions and the sustainable development goals (SDGS): Listening to the cry of the Earth and of the Poor«*, (8.III.2019), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

centres of sanctity that Francis emphasizes: the sacredness and inviolability of human life, the family and the earth. All creation belongs to God, who loves creation and calls it to life. All creatures remain in the communion introduced by the Creator, therefore, all elements of the human situation and the environment demand »sacred, affectionate and humble respect.«¹⁹ These three elements: the world, man, and holiness are related by the Pope.²⁰

2. Francis on the sanctity of life

The issue of the sanctity of life is developed by Pope Francis in an integral-ecological approach; that is, overcoming the »areligious« nature of ecology.²¹ In this approach, holiness appears as 'divine space' or 'divine atmosphere' filling created reality. In many statements, the Pope expresses the conviction that human life is inviolable and holy from conception to natural death. These statements are short and unambiguous.²² The Pope does not dwell on this subject, does not explain much. He most often refers to John Paul II and the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*. Papal statements are stating, not explaining, how the Pope understands the sanctity of life. They do not develop this thread, and their deeper meaning can be read only in the broader context of Francis' teaching. The teaching of the Catholic Church defines the sanctity and inviolability of human life from conception to natural death, and this truth is finally confirmed by John Paul II.²³ The rhetoric of many of Francis' statements about the sanctity of life highlights the dogmatic value of this declaration by John Paul II.

The sanctity of life in the thought of Pope Francis should be seen in the following aspects:

- the theological aspect – that is the sanctity of life as an expression of the integration of creation with God the Creator,
- the social aspect – that is the sanctity of life as a fundamental principle of the creation and functioning of societies – cultures – civilizations,
- defensive aspect – that is the sanctity of life as an imperative to undertake global and solidary actions to protect human life – from conception to natural death, and of every human being, regardless of their social status, origin, wealth and religiosity.

¹⁹ LS 89.

²⁰ Cf. LS 85.

²¹ Cf. Marek KARCZEWSKI, Creation and integral ecology. A biblical-theological perspective, *Studia Elbląskie*, 18 (2017) 311.

²² Cf. FRANCIS, *Address to Participants in the Conference »Yes to Life!«*, (25.V.2019), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

²³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Encyclical Letter Evangelium Vitae*, (25.III.1995), <http://www.vatican.va> (21.01.2020), 5.

a) The holiness of life as an expression of the integration of creation with God (theological aspect)

Francis affirms that human life is a gift of God, therefore it has an inestimable value and should be treated as such. In this aspect, he refers to the issue of »human ecology« and »ecological conversion«. ²⁴ Man lives in an environment on which his development depends, therefore the environment and care for it is important due to the human factor, but also the divine – theological. The new life is also called by the Pope, God's sign which sanctifies the earth – the creature. ²⁵

According to Francis, disrespecting creation, from a theological perspective, is an opposition to the Creator and an attack on life. ²⁶ The Pope refers in this respect to the statement of John Paul II that any violence inflicted on the personal dignity of a human being calls for vengeance in God's sight and is an offense against the Creator of the human person. ²⁷ According to Francis, piety is integrated with the attitude of defending the holiness of every person and every human life. ²⁸

b) The sanctity of life as a principle (social aspect)

Francis calls sanctity of life a principle that applies to the life of every human being, in different spheres and at different levels. The Pope speaks of the sanctity of human life as well as the sanctity of every human person ²⁹ or the sacred mystery of another ³⁰. In light of this principle, the Magisterium Ecclesiae explains the Church's right and duty to engage in activities related to the defence of the human right to a dignified life from conception to natural death. ³¹

²⁴ LS 5.

²⁵ Cf. FRANCIS, *Address. Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate*, (28.IV.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020): »Thus, the great signs that God had once worked in Egypt and at the Red Sea (cf. Ps 106:21-22) were followed by the miracle of a new life that made the desert blossom with sanctity«.

²⁶ Cf. Jarosław BABIŃSKI, *Ekoteologia jako odpowiedź na współczesny kryzys ekologiczny*, *Teologia w Polsce* 5 (2011) 2, 289-298.

²⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Apostolic Exhortation Christifideles Laici* (30.12.1988), <http://www.vatican.va> (21.02.2020), 37; FRANCIS, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, (24.XI.2013), <http://www.vatican.va> (19.02.2020), 213 (=EG).

²⁸ Cf. FRANCIS, *Interreligious Meeting. Address*, (4.II.2019), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

²⁹ Cf. FRANCIS, *Meeting with the World of Labour. Address*, (10.XI.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

³⁰ Cf. FRANCIS, *Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti*, (3.X.2020), <http://www.vatican.va>, (04.10.2020), 277. (=FT)

³¹ Cf. *Synod of Bishops XIV Ordinary General Assembly the Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and the Contemporary World. Instrumentum laboris*, Vatican City 2015, <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020), 41.

The obligation to protect every life – the unborn, the disabled, the infirm – must be protected, and this is due to Christ's teachings about the value of human life and its holiness. This imperative of Christ's love should be accepted by people of science, so that their efforts are motivated by the holiness of every human person.³²

The Pope gives priority to the recognition of the sanctity of life resulting from the fact that the world is the common home of all people, therefore, it must be built on the basis of a principle that indicates holiness that guarantees the inviolability of created nature.³³ This principle results in an orderly program of integral human development.³⁴

Francis states that a just society recognizes as a fundamental right, the right to life from conception to a natural end.³⁵ He sees the sanctity of life as permeating social structures and imparting a servant sense to their functions.³⁶ He believes that the level of social development is measured by the ability to protect life, especially the weakest.³⁷ Anti-humanism is an attack on the sanctity of life, primarily in the form of the scourge of abortion, euthanasia, poor working conditions, terrorism and wars.³⁸ Evil spreading in various environments contributes to the dehumanization of societies, which is why the Church calls on all Christians to join efforts to expose evil and stimulate the need to appreciate humanistic values, which will result in moral attitudes supporting the implementation of peace and the defence of the sanctity of human life.³⁹

In his speeches to various social groups, the Pope addresses the issue of sanctity of life in a way that suggests what a given social – professional group should adopt towards the sanctity of life. It addresses families,⁴⁰ politicians,⁴¹

³² Cf. FRANCIS, *Address to participants in the meeting sponsored by the Science and Life Association*, (30.V.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (21.01.2020) (=SLA).

³³ Cf. FRANCIS, *Meeting with the Members of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization. Address* (25.IX.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); FRANCIS, *Homily* (10.IX.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

³⁴ Cf. Francis, *Meeting with the World of Labour...*

³⁵ Cf. SLA; Lluís OVIEDO, Churches concern for environmental issues: making sense of a new Christian diakonia, *Forum Teologiczne*, 18 (2017) 163-179, 167; Martín CARBAJO NÚÑEZ, *A free and Fraternal Economy. The Franciscan Perspective*, Phoenix, Tau Publishing, 2017, 9-38; Ángel CORDOVILLA PÉREZ, La alegría del evangelio y la reforma de la Iglesia. Líneas fundamentales de la exhortación apostólica *Evangelii gaudium*, *Studia Nauk Teologicznych PAN*, 8 (2013) 77-93, 88-90.

³⁶ Cf. FRANCIS, *Meditation* (27.I.2014), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

³⁷ Cf. SLA.

³⁸ Cf. SLA.

³⁹ Cf. PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, *Message to Buddhists*, (2.V.2013), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020), 5.

⁴⁰ Cf. SLA.

⁴¹ Cf. FRANCIS, *Address to the European Parliament*, (25.XI.2014), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); FRANCIS, *Address to the head of State and Government of the European Union in Italy*, (24.III.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); Paul GALLAGHER, *Statement* (5.III.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

consecrated persons,⁴² health workers⁴³ and religious communities.⁴⁴ Draws attention to the need to care for the peace and the dignity of every human being – combining these two issues in one principle – the sanctity of human life.⁴⁵

c) Protection of the life of every human being (defensive aspect)

Francis points to the teaching of the sanctity of life as fundamental in showing the value of the life of every human being, including the unborn, disabled, sick and the weakest. The Pope emphasizes that the protection of human life undertaken by the Church is based on the assumption of permanent holiness and inviolability of the human being in any situation and in every phase of its development.⁴⁶

Francis develops the narrative about the sanctity of life starting from the problem of abortion, which he sees as a social plague or a tragedy.⁴⁷ He perceives a lack of respect for the sanctity of life, like all forms of discrimination, hatred and violence, as a result of a lack of genuine worship of God.⁴⁸ He believes that sincere piety leads to respect for the sanctity of life.⁴⁹ The Pope notices that the modern generation has lost the sense of the sacred, people do not recognize their own or others' sanctity, and this results in evil deeds, especially harm done to other people.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, God's love makes man capable of perceiving the holiness in other people – »seeing the sacred grandeur of our neighbour,«⁵¹ therefore, the Church feels obliged to proclaim the doctrine of the sacredness of life.⁵² According to Francis, religious faith reveals to man the

⁴² Cf. FRANCIS, *Address to the Delegation of the »Emouna Fraternité Alumni« Association*, (23.VI.2018), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁴³ Pope points *Evangelium vitae* 89 – FRANCIS, *Address to the National Federation of the Orders of Doctors and Dental Surgeons*, (20.IX.2019), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); cf. *Intervention of the Delegation of the Holy See at the 70th World Health Assembly (Geneva, Switzerland - 22-27 May 2017). Intervention of Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič, permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, Geneva*, (23.V.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); Francis, *Address to Participants in the Conference »Yes to Life!«...*

⁴⁴ Cf. FRANCIS, *Address to Participants at the World Conference on »Xenophobia, Racism and Populist Nationalism in the context of Global Migration«*, (20.IX.2018), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁴⁵ Cf. FRANCIS, *Letter for the International Meeting »Paths Of Peace«*, (28.VIII.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); FRANCIS, *Angelus* (1.III.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁴⁶ Cf. EG 213.

⁴⁷ Cf. *Synod of Bishops...*

⁴⁸ Cf. FRANCIS, *Homily* (14.I.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁴⁹ Cf. FT 283.

⁵⁰ Cf. FRANCIS, *Good Friday* (19.IV.2019), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁵¹ EG 92.

⁵² Cf. FRANCIS, *Address to the Participants in the International Peace Conference*, (28.IV.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

meaning of the moral law.⁵³ Francis expresses his concern for the sanctity of life in a prayer of dedication to the Family of Nazareth, dedicated to the Synod on the Family in 2014.⁵⁴

3. *What is the familiology question?*

The familiology question is a research question, set in the intention of expanding knowledge about the family. This area of knowledge about the family includes a set of concepts that indicate various aspects of human life, directly or indirectly related to the community of people, who are linked by the ties of living together, covering all levels of relationships, including the most intimate ones.

The family is one of the main research topics of contemporary theology. The attention of the last few popes, especially John Paul II and Francis, has focused on it. Undoubtedly, it is also a topic important from the point of view of the needs of the modern world, to which the Church can respond. Human life begins in the family, and also upbringing is acquired in the family: the level of personal maturity, the human and religious ethos as well as social and community awareness. All educational, social and political institutions are only an aid element, as they support the family in bringing up a new generation. The global crisis of the family should be seen as a challenge for theologians and pastors – who are more aware that the Gospel is based on a humanism of the highest order⁵⁵ – to promote Christian values that foster the creation of lasting communities, including family ones.

In the teaching of Pope Francis, the issue of familiology can be presented in three thematic areas: sacred (family as the sanctuary of life), love (family as a place of sanctifying love), and martyrology (family as a school of holiness).

a) The family as a sanctuary of life

Popes John Paul II and Francis present the family as a sanctuary.⁵⁶ In Francis' statements, this is related to the fact that the family has an ecclesial dimension. Through her, the Church evangelizes, passing on the kerygma to the present and future generations, and it is also the place for salvation. That is

⁵³ Cf. Francis, *Address to Participants at the World Conference on »Xenophobia«*...

⁵⁴ Cf. III Extraordinary General Assembly the Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization, *Instrumentum Laboris*, (26.VI.2014), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁵⁵ According to Benedict XVI – cf. Katarzyna PARZYCH-BŁAKIEWICZ, Personalistyczne podstawy humanizmu chrześcijańskiego, *Teologia w Polsce*, 5 (2011) 2, 299-309, 303.

⁵⁶ Cf. FRANCIS, *Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia*, (19.III.2016), <http://www.vatican.va> (13.07.2020), 83 (=AL).

why the Pope sees the institution of the family as sacred.⁵⁷ Human life begins in the family, and therefore, the family has the characteristics of a sanctuary focused on respecting life and proclaiming the sanctity of every human life from conception until natural death.⁵⁸ The family, built on the sacrament of marriage, is called to proclaim the Gospel of life by creating space for the action of sanctifying charity. The sanctity of the family results from the fact that it is the natural environment for the protection of the sanctity of life and the community responsible for its promotion as an evangelical value.

The Church sanctifies Christian families through the sacramental ministry and teaching, enabling the faithful to carry out fundamental ecclesial tasks.⁵⁹ It provides a place in the temple as a space for prayer,⁶⁰ helping to lead a holy life.⁶¹ Through preaching and liturgical formation, she prepares the faithful to organize life in the world in accordance with the Creator's will.

b) The family as a place for sanctifying love

The Church is called to teach love⁶² and prepare the faithful to build relationships in marriage and family based on love that is drawn from God (the sacrament of marriage guarantees constant access to this love, through the person of the spouse).⁶³ Hence, according to Francis, the ministry of the word is more hagiologically valuable when the preacher is personally characterized by a high degree of holiness.⁶⁴

Through the institution of sacramentally concluded marriage, the Church defends the sanctity of every life, and also the unity and indissolubility of the marriage bond as a sign of God's grace and the human capacity to love seriously.⁶⁵ The Pope affirms that love of another means caring for their good and

⁵⁷ Cf. FRANCIS, *Address to the Officials of the Tribunal of the Roman Rota for the Inauguration of the Judicary Year*, (29.I.2019), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); FRANCIS, *Address to Participants in the Course Promoted by the Tribunal of the Roman Rota*, (25.XI.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁵⁸ Cf. FRANCIS, *Meeting with Authorities and the diplomatic corps*, (16.I.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); FRANCIS, *Conclusion of the Synod of Bishops*, (24.X.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020); FRANCIS, *Homily* (4.X.2015), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁵⁹ Cf. GE 104; FRANCIS, *Apostolic Exhortation Querida Amazonia* (2.II.2020), <http://www.vatican.va> (10.02.2020), 87, 93.

⁶⁰ Cf. FRANCIS, *Meditation* (22.XI.2013), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁶¹ Cf. FRANCIS, *Encyclical Letter Lumen Fidei* (29.VI.2013), <http://www.vatican.va> (13.07.2020), 40.

⁶² Cf. Hubert TRYK, Ecclesiastic love in evangelisation, *Forum Teologiczne*, 20 (2019) 127-138.

⁶³ Cf. Francis, *Conclusion of the Synod of Bishops...*

⁶⁴ Cf. GE 149; Ryszard HAJDUK, Miłosierdzie duszpasterskie w Tradycji kościelnej i w Amoris laetitia papieża Franciszka, *Forum Teologiczne*, 18 (2017) 187-190; Sławomir ZATWARDNIC-KI, A theologian today. Identity and spirituality of a theologian in Pope Francis' statements, *Teologia w Polsce*, 13 (2019) 1, 37-57, DOI: 10.31743/twp.2019.13.1.03.

⁶⁵ Cf. Francis, *Conclusion of the Synod of Bishops...*

respecting their dignity, which results from the relation of the human person to transcendence.⁶⁶ He indicates the Christian family as a place of such love. In marriage, love gives happiness, alleviates suffering, and community life is a form of sanctifying a spouse.⁶⁷ »A positive experience of family communion is a true path to daily sanctification and mystical growth, a means for deeper union with God.«⁶⁸ The life of the sacramental spouses is a participation in the paschal mystery of Christ, which means that life's difficulties are transformed by the love of the Saviour, and therefore, the faithful are liberated from them; for the sacrament brings about the fullness of life in the resurrection.⁶⁹

c) Family as a school of sacredness of life

Pope Francis draws attention to the sanctity of those who live close, that they »reflect God's presence.«⁷⁰ Because of their love, he calls them »the saints 'next door'«. The grace of baptism bears fruit in holy life,⁷¹ and Christian holiness is a life full of love.⁷² The Pope emphasizes the value of intergenerational ties in imparting wisdom on the sanctity of human life and service to life. In the family, a person learns to respect every life: people despised by society, abandoned, lonely and also the unborn. The Pope points to the need to cultivate a bond with the wisdom of past generations, which is distinguished by respect for humanistic values and the environment, and by cultivating a sense of the sacredness of life. This attitude is necessary because it allows access to the source of God's grace.⁷³

The family is presented by the Holy Father as a divine sign for the world. For this reason, he encourages individual families to enter into a dialogue that enables the dissemination of wisdom and knowledge gained through life, which is necessary to multiply the common good.⁷⁴

⁶⁶ Cf. SLA.

⁶⁷ Cf. AL 228.

⁶⁸ AL 316.

⁶⁹ Cf. AL 317.

⁷⁰ GE 7.

⁷¹ Cf. GE 15.

⁷² Cf. GE 21.

⁷³ Cf. FRANCIS, *Meeting with the Bishops of Mexico*, (13.II.2016), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

⁷⁴ Cf. FRANCIS, *Address to the participants in the meeting promoted by the FAFCE*, (1.VI.2017), <http://www.vatican.va> (20.01.2020).

4. *A theological look towards the 'familiological turn'*

What is sanctity of life as a familiological question in Francis' statements? The answer to this question is based on an assumption drawn from papal thought. According to Francis, holiness in creation is closeness to God and it penetrates the foundations of the world and man – for this reason it is a priority, a primary value, above others.

The analysis of papal statements allows us to conclude that:

1. The sanctity of life – in the area of familiological research – is the principle that determines the specificity of the sacred family. The sanctity of life defines the function of the family as a sanctuary. That is, the sanctity of the family is defined by the sanctity of life that arises and develops in the family.
2. The sanctity of life determines the model of intra-family relations. Love becomes an imperative (command) here. The Gospel is a challenge to explore and implement God's wisdom, especially at the level of educating the young generation and witnessing to Christian values towards other families.

In such an approach, the sanctity of life as a familiological issue indicates the necessity of a 'familiological turn' – both in theological thinking and research, as well as in politics, economy and in society. The modern world is characterized by a highly developed technical and urban civilization, but these achievements have suffered from the harm suffered by families.⁷⁵ Business, professional work in various sectors of the economy, is now so organized and conditioned that a person faces a choice: either work or family – if he chooses the family, he has nothing to support it; if he chooses to work, he has no time for family. The professional work of a contemporary inhabitant of a highly developed civilization and economic environments is characterized by a high degree of possessiveness – it obscures the rights of spouses and children to the presence and attention of professionally engaged spouses and parents. Families are falling apart, or are not established, intra-family ties are not permanent, there is a reluctance to introduce new life – new people into the world. It is not a promising state for the development of future generations. The work ethos of the contemporary inhabitant of highly economically developed civilizations is distorted, because it absorbs life energy, leaving no space for man to develop individual humanity. The sanctity of life according to Francis' concept, as a familiological issue, shifts the spotlight of attention on influential circles in the contemporary world to human priority; it is an element of the promotion of humanism reaching beyond the strategic projects of economic and commercial development.

⁷⁵ Cf. Carbajo Núñez, *A free and Fraternal...*, 35-36.

Conclusion

The answer to the question posed in the introduction – *what is the correlation of the hagiological and familiological aspects in the thought of Pope Francis?* – includes a synthesis of information on the sanctity of life, scattered in many different papal statements. The theological summary of papal teaching allows us to state that the issue of the sanctity of life is embedded by Pope Francis in an integral ecology. The sanctity of life as a familiological issue shows the need to recognize human dignity, not because of the origin or endowment of particular environments, but because of the presence of God – His loving presence and permeating all creatures. The sanctity of life is not only a theological matter, not only a matter for the Church. In the light of Francis' teachings, the sanctity of life is an essential and fundamental matter, irrespective of religious affiliation or subjective beliefs or religious sentiments.

Katarzyna Parzych-Blakiewicz*

»Svetost života« kao obiteljsko pitanje u izjavama pape Franje

Sažetak

Članak je teološka analiza izjava pape Franje o svetosti života s osvrtom na familiološka pitanja. Cilj provedenog istraživanja je pokazati vrijednost ljudskog života koji proizlazi iz odnosa između elemenata koji čine stvorenu stvarnost i odnosa s Bogom. Prema papi Franji, svetost je blizina Bogu i »božanskom prostoru« u kojem sve stvorenje postoji i funkcionira. »Svetost života« papa Franjo pokazuje u sljedećim aspektima: 1) teološki – kao izraz integracije stvaranja s Bogom, 2) socijalni – kao načelo postojanja i odnosa i 3) obrambeni – kao imperativ obrane života svakog čovjeka. Obitelj je Papa predstavio kao utočište života, mjesto posvećenja ljubavi i školu svetosti. Zaključci proizašli iz teološke analize Papinih izjava ukazuju na potrebu za »familiološkim zaokretom« koji obuhvaća prostor kulture i civilizacije suvremenog svijeta. Takav je zaokret nužan za dobro muškarca kojem je obitelj prvi društveni krug. Svetost života na familiološkom području načelo je koje definira svetost obitelji i odrednicu unutarobiteljskih odnosa koji razvijaju ljubav.

Ključne riječi: Amoris Laetitia, Franjo, Gaudete et exsultate, Laudato si, obitelj, svetost života.

* Prof. dr. sc. Katarzyna Parzych-Blakiewicz, Varmijsko i mazurijsko sveučilište u Olsztynu, Teološki fakultet; ul. Hozjusza 15, PL-11-041 Olsztyn, Poljska; E-mail: kaparzh@uwm.edu.pl.