



INSTYTUT PRAWA USTROJOWEGO

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*The concept of marriage from the perspective of the theory of imperative requirement*

Title of the study:

*The Institution of Marriage in the Teaching of Blessed Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński  
(expert opinion)*

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## Contents

Introduction.....	3
The sacramental nature of marriage.....	5
The social aspect of marriage.....	7
The rights and obligations of the spouses.....	8
Mutual aid ( <i>mutuum adiutorium</i> ).....	8
The transmission of life .....	9
Raising offspring .....	10
Threats to the institution of marriage.....	14
Conclusions.....	16
References.....	18



## Introduction

The institution of sacramental marriage, from which the Christian family is derived, was the object of exceptional care and special attention of S. Wyszyński<sup>1</sup> during his priestly ministry (1924-1946),<sup>2</sup> then his episcopal ministry (1946-1948), and finally his Primate's ministry (1948-1981).<sup>3</sup>

Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński stated: [...] *considering the attitude of our Nation towards the institution of marriage*, [marked in bold by A.R.] *we can see that it is deeply convinced of the validity of the Church's teaching on marriage. In spite of many gaps in awareness, we display the Catholic mindset, and this makes us acknowledge the Church, makes us accept all the demands that the Church makes of young Catholic spouses. [...] marriage in its very foundation has a sacred nature, since this was the nature given to marriage by God himself before any civil community came into being; when later public authorities dealt with the rights of married couples and determined their legal status, they could no longer change the essential nature of marriage – its sacredness. And marriage is sacred because of its origin and because of its purpose, its rights, and its deep spiritual meaning. This original sanctity of marriage as a divine institution cannot be obliterated.*<sup>4</sup>

In view of the above, the following questions should be raised:

- 1) How did Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński define marriage?

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<sup>1</sup> This is evidenced by the fact that he intended to examine this issue extensively in the doctoral thesis he was preparing on the right of the family, the Church, and the state to school. Ultimately, however, he made chapter two on the right of the Church to school the subject of the dissertation (S. Wyszyński, *Prawa rodziny, Kościoła i państwa do szkoły*, Lublin 1929, mps KUL, p. 162). See M. Sitarz, *Lata studenckie Księdza Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Lublinie*, “Biuletyn Stowarzyszenia Absolwentów i Przyjaciół Wydziału Prawa Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego” Vol. XII, Issue 14 (1) 2017, pp. 88-89; see more in W. Gałązka, *Małżeństwo i rodzina w nauczaniu kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, “Studia Prymasowskie” 4 (2010), pp. 127-141.

<sup>2</sup> Between 1924 and 1946, Rev. Wyszyński was active as an editor and journalist, using these opportunities (...) to expound the teachings of the Church, to correct erroneous views, to listen to doubts and accusations, to clarify and evaluate them (...). See S. Wyszyński, *Zamachy na małżeństwo katolickie a egzamin przedślubny*, “Ateneum Kapłańskie” 29 (1932), Issue 4, p. 376. In 1945, he founded the weekly magazine ‘Ład Boży’ (Order of God), where he published articles that were intended to reach every Polish family experiencing the effects of World War II.

<sup>3</sup> The topic of marriage is discussed in a work consisting of 21 volumes: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane*, which includes Wyszyński's publications dating from 1949 to 1968, i.e. from the beginning of the Primate's ministry, and in *Listy pasterskie Prymasa Polski oraz Episkopatu. 1975-1981*, Éditions du Dialogue. Société d'Éditions Internationales, Paris 1988.

<sup>4</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Małżeństwo katolickie potężną więzią Narodu*. ([A sermon] for the second Sunday after the Epiphany [1957]). Komańcza, before 22 September 1956, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom II. 1953-1956*, Wydawnictwo im. Stefana Kardynała Wyszyńskiego Soli Deo, Warsaw 1995, pp. 67-68.



- 2) Why did the Primate of the Millennium so strongly emphasise the sacramentality and indissolubility of marriage?
- 3) What did Cardinal Wyszyński see as the beginning of marriage?
- 4) Is marriage a private matter between the spouses or is it of social nature?
- 5) Why did the Primate address the institution of marriage and the family together? Why is the family derived from the sacrament of marriage?
- 6) What rights and obligations did he oblige Catholic spouses to respect?
- 7) What entities should support Catholic spouses in exercising their rights and responsibilities?
- 8) What threat did the Primate of the Millennium recognise and what solutions did he propose?

In order to answer the above questions, the following will be further analysed: (1) the sacramental nature of marriage; (2) the social aspect of marriage; (3) the rights and obligations of the spouses; (4) the dangers that harm the institution of marriage.



## The sacramental nature of marriage

The Primate of the Millennium pointed to the high dignity of marriage, which is of divine and not human origin. The law of marriage was *proclaimed [...] by the mouth of God himself: 'That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh' (Genesis 2:24).*<sup>5</sup> Marriage has been sustained by the grace of the holy sacrament. Therefore, the Church, faithful to the teachings of Christ, *neither dares nor can change a single letter in the Lord's Law* in the area in question.<sup>6</sup>

When defining marriage, Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński stressed that it is not just a contract between a man and a woman but also a sacrament.<sup>7</sup> It has an *eminently religious, supernatural nature, even though it is a legal and social union.*<sup>8</sup> Marriage was a universal value before it was elevated to the dignity of a sacrament and remains as such. It is love that leads people into community, which is confirmed by the marital communion of life and love.<sup>9</sup> The Primate explained that Christ made marriage a sacrament and, as a consequence, marriage was elevated to an *unparalleled dignity*, and the *Church of Christ was given legislative and judicial authority*<sup>10</sup> regarding the marital bond, while canon law guards the indissolubility of the marital bond.<sup>11</sup>

*Christ's sanctification of marriage went so far that Christ instituted a separate sacrament for the family community. No other state, apart from the priesthood, has received this honour.*<sup>12</sup> The

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 68. See also: S. Wyszyński, *Wypełniamy Jasnogórskie Śluby Narodu. Czytania na maj. „Rodzina pod opieką Królowej Polski”*. 12 May 1957, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom II*, pp. 116-118.

<sup>6</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Pokój Boży rodzinie polskiej*. A sermon for the first Sunday after the Epiphany [1957]. Komańcza, before 22 September 1956, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom II*, p. 60.

<sup>7</sup> S. Wyszyński, „*Rodzice, nadeszła wasza godzina*”. *Do Małżonków katolickich*. 15 August 1961, in: *Stefan kardynał Wyszyński. Głos z Jasnej Góry*, Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, Warsaw 1986, p. 133.

<sup>8</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Małżeństwo katolickie...*, p. 68.

<sup>9</sup> Letter of the Polish Episcopal Conference, *Do rodziców katolickich na uroczystość Świętej Rodziny*. Warsaw, 18 November 1976, in: *Listy pasterskie Prymasa Polski oraz Episkopatu. 1975-1981*, Éditions du Dialogue. Société d'Éditions Internationales, Paris 1988, p. 277.

<sup>10</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Pouczenie pasterskie o sakramencie małżeństwa na Dzień Świętej Rodziny*. Warsaw, 14 December 1949, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom I. 1949-1953*, Wydawnictwo im. Stefana Kardynała Wyszyńskiego Soli Deo, Warsaw 1991, p. 66.

<sup>11</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Piąty tydzień miłosierdzia – na rzecz macierzyństwa*. Warsaw, 22 August 1949, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom I*, p. 44.

<sup>12</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Małżeństwo katolickie...*, p. 69. In the Year of the Millennium of the Polish State, Cardinal Wyszyński explained: (...) *we know that the honourable vocation of husband and wife is perhaps the most difficult vocation. Only this vocation and the other one – the vocation to the priesthood – are strengthened by a sacrament. There are no other states, professions, vocations that are strengthened by a sacrament by the will of Christ himself, only the priesthood and*



sacramental grace ensures that marriage is modelled on Christ's relationship with the Church.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, in pointing out the most urgent issues in the work of the Polish Episcopal Conference in 1960, Wyszyński placed a *firm and fundamental emphasis on the place of Christian marriage in the supernatural and social organism of the Holy Church*.<sup>14</sup>

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*marriage, because these are difficult and honourable vocations. There are clergy fathers and there are fathers of the domestic cradle. And both are shaping God's children. Both share the strength taken from the Heavenly Father in the gift of life and the gift of grace.* See S. Wyszyński, *Wśród ziomków Świętych Odrowążów*. During the millennium celebrations in the Diocese of Opole. Kamień Śląski, 14 August of the Millennium Year 1966, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom XVII. Maj-sierpień 1966*, Wydawnictwo im. Stefana Kardynała Wyszyńskiego Soli Deo, Warsaw 2016, pp. 387-388.

<sup>13</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Wypełniamy Jasnogórskie Śluby Narodu. Czytania na maj. „Rodzina pod opieką Królowej Polski”*, p. 118.

<sup>14</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Do kapłanów w czwartym roku Wielkiej Nowenny w roku małżeństwa*. During a pastoral course [at the Catholic University of Lublin]. Lublin, 23 August 1960, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom VI. 1960*, Instytut Papieża Jana Pawła II in Warsaw, Wydawnictwo im. Stefana Kardynała Wyszyńskiego Soli Deo, Warsaw 2007, p. 305.



## The social aspect of marriage

The sacrament of marriage occupies a social place in the Church and has its own tasks. However, S. Wyszyński noted that moral and religious individualism may overshadow the social aspect of marriage.<sup>15</sup> For marriage is [...] *not only the sanctification of natural duties. [...] it is, moreover, a matter for the Church as a supernatural community, a perfect and visible community, which has its own supernatural system, a social structure which it is obliged to preserve and maintain until the end of the world.*<sup>16</sup>

The Church provides protection for the spouses, because sacramental marriage is the beginning not only of the Christian family but also of the Church and the Nation.<sup>17</sup> The family is the fundamental unit of the community of the Church and the Nation. Wyszyński urged and reminded Catholic parents that [...] *they give birth not only for earth but also for heaven; what is conceived of them will not cease to exist but has eternal life.*<sup>18</sup> They participate in the building of the supernatural community through the sacrament of marriage. Consequently, marriage becomes a *Little Church* in which the parents fulfil the fundamental mission of giving birth to and bringing up their offspring.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 305.

<sup>16</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Małżeństwo katolickie...*, p. 70.

<sup>17</sup> An example given by S. Wyszyński was that the prayers of the Church accompany the couple from the solemn blessing at the Mass for the newlyweds. The church blesses the young mother with her baby. See S. Wyszyński, *Piąty tydzień miłosierdzia...*, p. 44.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Małżeństwo katolickie...*, p. 70.



## The rights and obligations of the spouses

Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński stressed that a husband and a wife are called by the sacrament of marriage to create a community for the transmission of life, the upbringing of the young generation and, as a result, the sanctification of the family. *The sacramental grace of marriage is linked to this task*, the Primate insisted.<sup>20</sup> From that point on, the spouses should carry out God's plan together.<sup>21</sup>

Marriage is a sacrament that has a social task, in addition to the personal one.<sup>22</sup> S. Wyszyński pointed out that the Church, in its teaching on marriage, defined the following tasks of the family: (1) own tasks (mutual aid) and (2) social tasks (transmission of life and upbringing).<sup>23</sup>

### Mutual aid (*mutuum adiutorium*)

The Primate of Poland said: *The primary duty and, as it were, the summary of all the others, is mutual love.*<sup>24</sup> He appealed to the spouses to remain faithful to the grace of the state of the sacrament of marriage, given that they are called to family life.<sup>25</sup> The cooperation of the spouses with this grace, in turn, implies *mutuum adiutorium* – mutual assistance – i.e. a force to unite the spouses very comprehensively. In addition to this grace, the spouses receive the *gift of marital unity and*

<sup>20</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Jak trzeba patrzeć na Kościół i na parafię*. For the Parish's silver jubilee. Warsaw, Saska Kępa, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, 17 April 1963, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom X. Styczeń-czerwiec 1963*, Wydawnictwo im. Stefana Kardynała Wyszyńskiego Soli Deo, Warsaw 2012, pp. 362-363.

<sup>21</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Rodzina wzorem dla rodziny rodzin*. For the Feast of the Holy Family. Warsaw, St. Charles Borromeo Parish, 9 January 1966, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom XVI. Styczeń-kwiecień 1966*, Wydawnictwo im. Stefana Kardynała Wyszyńskiego Soli Deo, Warsaw 2016, p. 82.

<sup>22</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Jak trzeba patrzeć na Kościół...*, pp. 362-363. See also: S. Wyszyński, *Chrystus, Kościół i ja*. To the academic youth at the end of the retreat. Warsaw, St. Anne's Church, 3 April 1963, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom X*, p. 270.

<sup>23</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Dążenie do rodziny, rodzinności, wspólnoty – właściwością natury ludzkiej*. The Feast of the Holy Family. Warsaw, Miodowa, chapel, 9 January 1966, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom XVI. Styczeń-kwiecień 1966*, p. 79. Cf.: *The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring, has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament between the baptized* (*Codex Iuris Canonici auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus* (25/01/1983), AAS 75 (1983), pars II, p. 1-317; Polish version: *Kodeks Prawa Kanonicznego promulgowany przez papieża Jana Pawła II w dniu 25 stycznia 1983 roku*. Legal status as of 18 May 2022. Updated translation into Polish, Pallottinum, Poznań 2022, c. 1055 § 1).

<sup>24</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Pouczenie pasterskie o sakramencie małżeństwa...*, p. 69.

<sup>25</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Wezwanie Prymasa Polski do pracy wielkopostnej w duchu Ślubowań Jasnogórskich*. Pastoral Letter. Gniezno-Warsaw, before 23 February 1958, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom IV. 1958*, Wydawnictwo im. Stefana Kardynała Wyszyńskiego Soli Deo, Warsaw 2002, p. 34.





*indissolubility*.<sup>26</sup>

In the context of the institution of marriage, Cardinal S. Wyszyński repeatedly referred to the obligations assumed in the Jasna Góra Vows:<sup>27</sup> *We pledge to you to uphold the indissolubility of marriage [...]*.<sup>28</sup> The declaration by the Primate of the Millennium that it is the indissoluble family that best safeguards the peace and security of the family remains valid. So do the words that [...] *the Catholic Polish Nation, in its healthy and overwhelming majority, recognises that the teaching of the Church on indissolubility is correct. And yet, we stray far from this spiritual attitude in everyday life. And to such an extent that we loudly condemn others who wreck family bonds and make children unhappy but always find some justification and rationale for ourselves.*<sup>29</sup>

The transmission of life

Primate Wyszyński advocated that marriage is a *life-giving vocation*.<sup>30</sup> When addressing Catholic spouses, he said: *The greatest dignity of your vocation, your participation in the mission of God himself, is expressed in the fact that as God is the Father of all life, so he has called you to transmit life to the children of God. This is the great sacramental dignity of marriage, the dignity of your life-giving vocation, that is, the vocation giving life.*<sup>31</sup> The first mission and task of the spouses is to pass on life. Wyszyński warned against the *criminal limitation of offspring*, against *infanticide*, which cannot in any way be justified by temporary advantage or poverty. The danger was to affect not only the woman but also the man.<sup>32</sup>

When addressing married couples directly, Cardinal Wyszyński added, however, that alongside

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<sup>26</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Przez wodę i krew do Tysiąclecia Chrztu Polski*. A sermon delivered at the Gniezno Basilica on the feast of St. Adalbert. Gniezno, 28 April 1957, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom III. 1956-1957*, Wydawnictwo im. Stefana Kardynała Wyszyńskiego Soli Deo, Warsaw 1999, p. 217.

<sup>27</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Odnowienie Ślubów Narodu na Jasnej Górze*. 26 August 1956, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom II*, pp. 9-12.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>29</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Pokój Boży rodzinie...*, p. 60.

<sup>30</sup> S. Wyszyński, „Rodzice, nadeszła wasza godzina”..., p. 133.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it’ (Genesis 1:28) – this is the great and beautiful task of participating in the creative act of the Creator God and the command given to parents to pass on life to future generations for the preservation of the human race. Whoever, man or woman, in any way opposes this goal, sins gravely and often brings God’s punishments upon himself or herself already here on earth, in the form of illnesses, including insanity, and brings misunderstandings and always a guilty conscience to the family. See S. Wyszyński, *Pouczenie pasterskie o sakramencie małżeństwa...*, p. 69-70.



the transmission of life there is a second duty, that of transmitting a healthy life, (...) *so that the life that springs from you may be able to overcome the miseries of this earth, so that it may continue, so that it may not prematurely die out like a flame that is too weak.*<sup>33</sup> So it is not so much about the life of the body, which develops through ‘bodily birth’, but about the life of the spirit, or spiritual rebirth<sup>34</sup>

### Raising offspring

Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński constantly reminded married couples that they had a duty to nurture the life they passed on, both in terms of the body and the soul. This duty cannot be postponed. This responsibility for children to raise a *healthy body* and a *healthy soul* lasts for many years.<sup>35</sup> The Primate remarked that *parents fulfil their primary divine mission towards their children. From divine and canon law [...], they derive the right and duty to provide the children in their family with the religious practices they lead [...]. As members of the Church, bound together in the sacrament of marriage, parents carry out these religious duties in the family, somewhat under the authority of the Church. The sacramental grace works so powerfully in a Christian marriage that is faithful to this grace that religious parents are able to instil the spirit of faith into the souls of their baptised children.*<sup>36</sup> As S. Wyszyński claimed, Catholic upbringing begins in the environment of the Christian home.<sup>37</sup>

The fact that the Primate of the Millennium attached great importance to the quality of upbringing of the young generation is evidenced by his pointing to three entities that are obliged to educate, i.e. the family, the Church and the state – each of them in its own way.

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<sup>33</sup> S. Wyszyński, „Rodzice, nadeszła wasza godzina”..., p. 133.

<sup>34</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Małżeństwo katolickie...*, p. 69.

<sup>35</sup> S. Wyszyński, „Rodzice, nadeszła wasza godzina”..., p. 134: *Avoid the misconception that your personal spiritual and moral life does not affect your little one. From the beginning of your relationship with your child, Mother, you have influenced them and not only through your blood but also through your soul. Whatever soul you have, Mother, that is largely the spiritual value your child will represent. Especially if, having given birth to them in spiritual connection with God, you raise them in connection with God. This is your great task, Catholic Parents: to educate the soul! And further, the child must be taught a noble way of life, be prepared for life. It is not enough to push them out into the world and say: do your best! No, Parents, your duty towards and responsibility for your children lasts for many years. It is your obligation to mould and shape your child, to get them used to practical life in such a way that they already know how to manage easily when they are independent.*

<sup>36</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Małżeństwo katolickie...*, pp. 70-71.

<sup>37</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Pouczenie pasterskie o sakramencie małżeństwa...*, p. 70.



### *The family in the service of marriage*

Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński appealed: *And the family should come first! It will be the task of the state, in its own interest, to prevent the breakdown of family life, which is, after all, a unit of social life; to legislate on family life, children's rights, the social duties of citizens and working conditions, so that parents will be able to devote themselves adequately to family life and the upbringing of their children. The family must provide upbringing, and if it fails to do so 'it violates the rights of the child, rights which are all the more sacred, because the injured party cannot exercise them personally'; the right to provide upbringing is inherent in the parents and therefore they cannot neglect this right, or give it up altogether, without detriment to society.*<sup>38</sup> State legislation should enable spouses-parents to devote themselves to family life and raising children to an appropriate extent. Upbringing is not only the right but also the duty of parents, who are the first teachers, while the family is the first school. The upbringing process initiated in the family continues at school. However, Wyszyński stressed that the school cannot completely replace the primary upbringing in the family.<sup>39</sup> The school should guarantee both, the parents' right to upbringing and the children's right to receive it.<sup>40</sup>

### *The Church in the service of marriage*

The fourth year of the Great Novena (lasting from 3 May 1960 to 3 May 1961) was dedicated to issues related to the Christian family, including the sacramentality and indissolubility of marriage. S. Wyszyński noticed a pattern of marriages breaking up and actions which were aimed at weakening the Church and the Christian nation by negating the religious character of marriage and the family.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Prawa rodziny, Kościoła i państwa do szkoły*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *The school may be a widespread phenomenon and is necessary today, but it is always a complement, an agent of the family; hence the school must take into account the legitimate demands of the family, maintain constant contact with it (...). The family must also cooperate with the school by strengthening the authority of the school, educators and teachers, and by taking the closest possible interest in the direction and state of upbringing.* See S. Wyszyński, *Prawa rodziny, Kościoła i państwa do szkoły*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>41</sup> Cz. S. Bartnik, *Chrześcijańska pedagogia narodowa według Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, in: *Polska teologia Narodu*, ed. Cz. S. Bartnik, Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, Lublin 1986, p. 225.



The Church's authority to educate is rooted in its mission as outlined by Christ: *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations* (Matthew 28:19).<sup>42</sup> For this reason, the Church has the right and duty to teach the principles of faith and morals in accordance with the requirements of Christ. Wyszyński underscored that *the Church acts as a co-worker with parents, complementing their upbringing, whether by itself, by founding Catholic schools and directing them, or through others, but always, when it comes to the teaching of religion, it has the right to demand that all the agents of the Church work together under the guidance and supervision of the Church to ensure that sound teaching, free from error, is given to young people.*<sup>43</sup>

Cardinal Wyszyński distinguished between direct and indirect rights of the Church to the school. Among the direct rights, he listed the following: (1) the right to determine the religious education curriculum; (2) the right to approve school textbooks for religious education; (3) the right to decide on the training, approval and removal of teachers of religion; (4) the right to visit schools. As for the Church's indirect rights in relation to upbringing and teaching, Wyszyński specified: (1) the right to intervene when young people are being taught based on textbooks that are harmful to faith and morality; and (2) the right to intervene when teachers express views that are harmful to faith and morality.<sup>44</sup>

On 23 August 1960, when addressing priests during a pastoral course, Stefan Cardinal

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<sup>42</sup> Wyszyński argued that the Church's right and duty to educate came from the supernatural order: *God's supernatural intervention in the world called man to higher purposes, providing him with the revealed truths of faith and the moral principles derived from them as the basis of his life. Founded by Christ the Lord, the Church has been entrusted with the duty of ensuring that the truths of faith and morality are preserved unadulterated and, through the proper upbringing of people, to help them move towards the ultimate goal. Thus, the Church joined the ranks of educational institutions, alongside the family and the state, with its own proper domain – religious upbringing and the moral upbringing that relies on it.* See S. Wyszyński, *Prawa rodziny, Kościoła i państwa do szkoły*, p. 21.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>44</sup> *The Church's direct rights to teach religion in schools are generally recognised, especially where the educational value of religion is appreciated; the situation is different when it comes to the Church's indirect rights: even in Catholic societies, influenced by a one-sided view of religion, their social importance is not recognised. (...) by their very nature, secular teachings are not subject to the authority of the Church, incidentally, however, in many respects they do concern it. This is the outcome not only of man's nature, of the close connection between his powers, but, as a result of the previous characteristics, of the intrinsic and necessary connection between science and religion, of the subordination, the completion of the natural order with the supernatural one. If, therefore, the Church wishes to completely achieve the goal assigned to men by God, it must use not only all means directly or indirectly leading to the goal, but also remove everything that could bring harm to faith and morals. Moreover, as the supreme institution in its order, with the distinct aim of helping people in the pursuit of eternal happiness, the Church has the right to demand that in Catholic society all influences harmful to faith and morals be removed from public teaching; for each person, whatever their social position, will only attain their ultimate goal if they follow the line of the truths of faith proclaimed by the Church and the moral duties arising from them.* See S. Wyszyński, *Prawa rodziny, Kościoła i państwa do szkoły*, pp. 122-124.



Wyszyński argued that both the pastoral care of marriages and the pastoral care of families should be dealt with in practice. The spouses have a mandate from God and the Church towards their children and family. Wyszyński stressed that the spouses are united not only in material matters but also in faith and morals. The pastoral care of families was understood, on the other hand, as the pastoral care of groups with their own specific meaning and place in the Church.<sup>45</sup>

#### *The state in the service of marriage*

With regard to the third entity involved in the upbringing process, Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński stated: *Finally, the state! 'It cannot be indifferent to the proper upbringing and education of members of the civilian community; it has rights and duties of care and supervision in the field of education.'* *As a sovereign community with its own objectives – to secure the social well-being of its members – it may succeed if it convinces people to respect the laws that facilitate coexistence. That is why it needs to gain insight into upbringing efforts to define the conditions of upbringing more precisely. The state cares about proper upbringing in the family and at school, it cares about religious upbringing and therefore it must work in cooperation to harmonise all the factors of upbringing.*<sup>46</sup> The above tasks of the political community originated from the state's goal of ensuring the social well-being of its citizens. Consequently, the state cannot be indifferent to the full upbringing of every human being and citizen. Given that marriage and the family are the anchor of the state, state legislation should be directed towards the welfare of families. The state's authority in this regard is rooted in the task relating to the common and temporal good.<sup>47</sup>

#### *The need to work together for marriage*

The main reason for the lack of moral order in society, according to Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, is the discrepancy between: the family, which has its source in sacramental marriage, and the school; the school and the Church; and the Church and the state. Consequently, in carrying out the

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<sup>45</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Do kapłanów w czwartym roku Wielkiej Nowenny...*, p 305.

<sup>46</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Prawa rodziny, Kościoła i państwa do szkoły*, p 19.

<sup>47</sup> Cz. S. Bartnik, *Chrześcijańska pedagogia narodowa...*, p 227.





upbringing and teaching functions,<sup>48</sup> one cannot overlook religious education, which consists of individual and collective upbringing.<sup>49</sup>

Upbringing is not a matter for individual people. It belongs to the Church and the state communities. S. Wyszyński defined cooperation for the benefit of upbringing as a principle which states that [...] *if it is to correspond to contemporary needs, the upbringing of the youth must involve all factors, not only the school: family, religious, moral, state, cultural, social, professional.*<sup>50</sup>

### Threats to the institution of marriage

In the context of the institution of sacramental marriage and the family associated with it, as well as the efforts being made to eradicate Christian teaching in this regard, Cardinal S. Wyszyński argued that the most important truths concerning sacramental marriage should be raised.<sup>51</sup> In 1958, he exhorted young academics to defend life: (...) *so that the Polish family is a family of the living and not of the dead. So that it gives birth to living children, not corpses. So that it is a place of life, not death. (...) so that it is inseparable, strongly united. [...] today there are so many complaints that young people do not appreciate the value of family life, especially marital fidelity. That perhaps they prematurely [...] enter into married life, or family life, and then cannot bear the burdens and*

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<sup>48</sup> S. Wyszyński distinguished between 'education' and 'upbringing'. He believed that these concepts referred to different abilities of the student. Education is primarily intended to train the cognitive abilities, i.e. memory, cognitive functions of reason, and to provide a certain level of knowledge and the means to use these abilities. In contrast, upbringing refers to the will and the emotions, and deals only with those cognitive abilities through which the reason directs the actions. There can be no upbringing without education, nor education without upbringing. As pointed out by Wyszyński: *Under the influence of social relations, particularly in the cities, family upbringing is increasingly losing out to school upbringing: not only do parents rarely have the ability and adequate means to make their children independent, as well as the time to do so, but even their financial resources do not usually permit individual education and, moreover, such education is not free of defects. Such difficulties, multiplied over many days, in addition to other causes, have produced a form of upbringing combining, to some extent, individual upbringing with collective upbringing received in school, which is a common phenomenon nowadays. As this phenomenon becomes more widespread, the duty to provide upbringing shifts from the parents to the school, so that the school assumes this duty as the family is unable to meet it; this shows a direct causal relationship between the duties of the family and the school. In taking on the duty to educate, the modern school should become an increasingly pedagogical institution; hence the concept of the modern school comprises: the combined education and upbringing of young people under the guidance of persons qualified to do so with the aim of equipping them with the ability to fulfil the individual and social duties inherent in human destiny.* See S. Wyszyński, *Przewodnie myśli encykliki o chrześcijańskim wychowaniu młodzieży*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>49</sup> S. WYSZYŃSKI, *Rec.: J. Burret, L'éducation religieuse de l'enfant. – str. 188. c. 6 fr. Bonne presse. Paris. – bez daty*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie" 23 (1929), Issue 1, p. 99.

<sup>50</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Spółczesność i prasa a wychowanie młodzieży*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie" 32 (1933), Issue 2, p. 176.

<sup>51</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Pouczenie pasterskie o sakramencie małżeństwa...*, p. 67.



*responsibilities; they prematurely leave, just as they prematurely started. This is an extremely significant issue, because families make up the family of families – the Nation.*<sup>52</sup>

At Jasna Góra in 1961, the Primate appealed to married couples: [...] *remember! Your time has come in Poland! We are in such a difficult position that we often do not know how to secure our national existence, what forces to seek, what rock to lean on. [...] Our national identity and Christian culture will find no other support than a healthy family. [...] We will be saved by a healthy Catholic family!*<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Akademicy przed Milenium*. To male academic youth. Warsaw, St. Jacob's Church, 7 May 1958, in: *Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski. Dzieła zebrane. Tom IV*, pp. 117-118.

<sup>53</sup> S. Wyszyński, „Rodzice, nadeszła wasza godzina”..., p. 137.



## Conclusions

Answering the questions posed in the introduction, after the analysis of the institution of marriage in the view of Blessed Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, it should be stated that:

- 1) Marriage is religious and supernatural in nature. Despite being a legal and social contract, marriage is a sacrament;
- 2) The indissolubility of marriage stems from its sacramental nature. The sacramentality is the source of sanctification of the spouses through the birth and upbringing of offspring, mutual love, mutual respect, and mutual patience. The indissolubility implies the survival and permanence of the Nation;
- 3) Marriage is a work of God, it is a *holy world*. God made marriage a sacrament before there was a *civil community*;
- 4) Marriage is not just a private matter between the spouses but has a social dimension. The family, built on the sacramental union of a man and a woman, is the basic unit of the church and the state communities;
- 5) The Christian family originates from the sacrament of marriage and is founded on this sacrament;
- 6) Catholic spouses have personal tasks (helping each other) and social tasks (bearing and raising offspring);
- 7) The family is the primary nurturer. The entities that are supposed to support Catholic spouses in the exercise of their rights and duties towards their children include the Church and the state, which should cooperate with each other for the benefit of the family;
- 8) In the context of the perceived threats to the institution of marriage and the family, in his Jasna Góra Vows, the Primate of the Millennium indicated three commitments: (1) to uphold the indissolubility of marriage; (2) to defend the dignity of women and mothers; (3) to keep vigil at the threshold of the hearth of the home in the spirit of Christ's command;





INSTYTUT PRAWA USTROJOWEGO





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