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AN ONTOLOGICAL RELATION BETWEEN PRIESTHOOD AND CELIBACY?

Abstract. For centuries, the nature of the Catholic priesthood has been and continues to be the subject of theological debate. Among other things, this article discusses the connection between celibacy and the sacrament of priesthood. Some theologians claim that there is an ontological connection between celibacy and ordination. This article examines such a claim, trying to answer the question: is celibacy really ontologically connected to priesthood and is there an ontological change in the person who receives this sacrament, which necessarily includes celibacy? Based on the analysis, the author concludes that priestly ordination cannot cause an ontological change in a person, and therefore, celibacy is not ontologically connected to ordination either.

Keywords: celibacy; priesthood; ontological relationship; Cardinal Robert Sarah; Jacques Maritain

LOSS OF THE ORIGINAL LOVE

Discussions about obligatory celibacy for Roman Catholic clergy repeat every now and then as if by amplitude, both in the Church and outside of it. No one really discusses the celibacy of monks in Hinduism or Buddhism, because of their distant culture and place where they live. On the other hand, celibacy in the Catholic Church is a certain calling, often a sign of opposition, and even a reason for anger and mockery. On the other hand, for many, clerical celibacy raises admiration and respect. In addition, sexual life or public renunciation of it has always arisen society's curiosity and special attention.

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The reasons for discussing the celibacy of Roman Catholic clergy vary in different times. At the beginning of the 21st century, the main reasons for such discussion are the lack of priestly vocations, various scandals in the Church, and quite often, cases of infidelity of clergy towards their vow of celibacy. These are “internal” reasons within the Roman Catholic Church’s structure. In addition, there are various external arguments, for example biblical or historical, such as married people called to belong to the group of Apostles, the lack of mandatory celibacy in the first centuries, as well as example of married priesthood that “functions great without mandatory celibacy.” Regarding the last belief, it is worth saying that the married priesthood is more or less as “great” as the celibate priesthood, which is also “great.” Yet, there are problems both here and there.

If celibate priests have problems of a personal nature, most often in the sexual sphere, or concerning how to cope with loneliness, then in the case of married priests these are family problems. Such problems are sometimes very difficult and most often concern material needs, forcing them, in addition to their priestly ministry, to earn a living somewhere else (usually at the expense of conducting proper pastoral ministry). They must work in order to support their family. The ideal life of a celibate priest or a priest in the married and family life most often remains a pious wish.

It should also be noted that the problem of priestly vocations statistically does not stem so much from obligatory celibacy as from a given cultural context, as well as the economic system of a given society. Simply speaking, the lack of vocations in the Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, or various traditional Protestant denominations is felt almost in the same way when it comes to the region that is collectively called the “Western world,” meaning the West plus countries into which Western consumer mentality has penetrated. Considering the global nature of the penetration of the Western way of thinking and living in a purely secular version, the problem concerns most regions of the world.

Today, something like virginity – both in men and women – appears to be an oddity. The same applies to premarital chastity. On the other hand, various perversions have become the “norm,” record as state laws, and consequently, these practices and behavior are systematically fought for by various activists who are pro-law. What was once a norm and virtue for society is today seen most often as a kind of defect and *vice versa*. The most serious matter is the described consumer mentality that has also penetrated the Churches. As Cardinal Gerhard Müller once said, it is not celibacy that is the cause of the crisis in the Church, but on the contrary – the crisis in the Church has caused the

depreciation of celibacy. One could add, this is also the fault of priests themselves. Many representatives of the Latin clergy have caused this crisis of fidelity to celibacy.

The question arises: what are we to do with the crisis described above? It is possible that the abolition of mandatory celibacy will slightly increase the number of vocations. However, it seems that this will not significantly fill the seminaries in the West as in the past. Until there is a renewal of the „original zeal” or „original love” (see Rev 2:4), and the “lukewarm” state (see Rev 3:15-16) continues to dominate, no external changes will renew the Church. If the deeper cause of the problem is not resolved, then external permutations will be the exchange of one problem for another. The actual and deeper problem is the lack of consistency of Christ’s disciples, especially pastors – whether married or celibate – in fulfilling the words of Christ. Jesus fervently prayed to the Father during his so-called high priestly prayer:

I do not pray that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Your Word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And for them I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth (Jn 17:15-19).

Christ’s disciples should be “not of this world” and “sanctified in truth.” In this way, they oppose hypocrisy, double lives, falsehood, lies, greed, vanity, selfishness, impurity, and lack of conversion.

CARDINAL SARAH AND THE “ONTOLOGICAL CONNECTION”

In reflecting on the theology of priestly celibacy, worth mentioning is one issue that has recently sparked lively discussion. It concerns the claim of Cardinal Robert Sarah, the Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, that celibacy is ontologically linked to priesthood. In other words, a priesthood without celibacy is not the true and full priesthood of Christ. In his latest book, “From the Depths of Our Hearts” (2020), (in which the chapter entitled “Catholic Priesthood” was written by retired Pope Benedict XVI), Cardinal Sarah reiterates several times the ontological connection between celibacy and ministerial priesthood, or, in other words, the ontological-sacramental connection between them.

Cardinal Sarah is not alone in his reflections on priesthood. He refers, among others, to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. In the first chapter of this book, the

Pope Emeritus writes: “One could say that functional continence (celibacy) transformed – by itself – into ontological continence.” Benedict XVI explains the reason for this transformation in the following way: “Starting from the fact of the daily celebration of the Eucharist, and also from the fact of the devotions that included such a celebration, the impossibility of the marital union arose by itself.”¹

Referring to this type of argument, the Pope Emeritus refers to the service of the priests of the Old Testament, to whom ritual purity was assigned and who were supposed to stand before the Lord in holiness and purity, “for the Lord your God has chosen him out of all your tribes to serve the name of the Lord” (Deut 18:5). In the New Testament times, the priest of Christ “stands before the Lord” every day, celebrating the Eucharist, hence the requirement of continuous and inseparable dedication to this service, which is expressed in permanent celibacy. In this case, the Pope Emeritus is simply passing on the Latin tradition, which in this way argued for the introduction of the obligation of celibacy for priests.

However, it is worth focusing on the “transformation” of celibacy into “ontological continence.” By using the term “ontological,” Benedict XVI is actually going beyond the area of theology and entering the area of philosophy. Ontology is a philosophical discipline that explains the existence of any being, also explaining what being is in itself or, as Kant would say, what it is for others. In short, ontology is a general theory about who or what someone or something is (or is not) in its essence.²

Thus, Benedict XVI states that the reception of the sacrament of priesthood causes a certain “ontological transformation” that is expressed in “ontological celibacy.” In other words, the priest essentially becomes celibate. In a certain sense, one could theologially justify this claim by pointing out that the priest is an “alter Christus,” that is, one who represents Christ, because he acts in the name of Christ when he teaches in the name of the Church, and also when administering the sacraments. Therefore, in his essence, he resembles Christ, he lives like Christ in celibacy, devoting himself completely and with all his being to the service of Christ in the Church.

¹ Benedetto XVI, Robert Sarah, *Dal profondo del nostro cuore* (Siena: Cantagalli, 2020), 38.

² For example, ontology states that bread is essentially bread, not metal, and, although there are some elements of iron in bread, this does not change the essence that it is bread. Bread in its essence gradually ceases to be bread when it is eaten and digested, or when it completely spoils and disappears, etc. In this case, an „ontological change” occurs, because the object changes its essence or disappears completely, transforming into something else.

This is the direction of Cardinal Robert Sarah's argument in another of his books, "It Is Nearly Evening and the Day Is Now Over."³ In it, he states:

For the priest is *ipse Christus*. He is Christ himself. In a sacramental way, he carries within himself Christ, the embodiment of God's love for man... By virtue of the consecration received in the sacrament of ordination, there is a specific ontological bond that unites the priest with Christ... He is taken into possession by Christ, immersed in Christ so personally and deeply that he must live and act in truth just as Christ did... Thanks to this consecration, the spiritual life of the priest is shaped by the behaviors proper to Christ, modeled on them and marked by them.⁴

The Apostle Paul also wrote about this, that all of us who have been baptized, and not only priests, should "put on Christ" (see Gal 3:27), that is, constantly feel His presence in our lives, constantly follow Him, and love Him with all our heart and soul. The same Paul wrote in another fragment of the Letter to the Galatians: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20a). Paul was referring to the life of the baptized person by faith in Christ, which is why he immediately adds after these words: "the life I now live is a life of faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20b).

The awareness of the close connection of the baptized with Christ, and even more so – of the ordained priest to Christ, gradually led the West to awareness of the need for functional celibacy for priests, which also became the tradition of the Latin part of the Universal Church, as confirmed by law. Where do the attempts to theologially justify transforming "functional celibacy" into *ontological celibacy* come from? Where do the efforts to extend the Latin legal tradition onto the entire Church and to other traditions come from?

THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH AND PRIESTLY HOLINESS

In the 20th century, many thinkers dealt with the issue of the holiness of the Church and the people of the Church. Here we will be most interested in Jacques Maritain, because his analyses will bring us closer to understanding the sources from which the view of the ontological connection between priesthood and celibacy originates. In one of his last books, published in Paris in 1970 under

³ Card. Robert Sarah, *Wieczór się zbliża i dzień już się chyli* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 2019).

⁴ *Ibidem*, 109–110.

the title “De l’Église du Christ. La personne de l’Église et son personnel,”⁵ Maritain distinguishes between a “Church Person” and the “people of the Church.”⁶ Especially in chapter XI entitled „The Person of the Church Unquestionably Holy – Persons in the Church Not”⁷ we can see in the subtitle itself the author’s idea that in the Church we should distinguish between people and the Church. Here we are not talking about ordinary believers. For Maritain, the “personnel de l’Église” is

a group of people who, by virtue of their membership in the secular or religious clergy, are officially appointed servants of the Church, and in particular those among them who, from the very top to the very bottom of the hierarchy, bear responsibility for authority over the Christian people.⁸

These Church “personnel,” like the laity, fulfill the mission entrusted to them both in the Church and in the world; nevertheless, the effects of original sin remain the same for everyone. Hence, one must distinguish teaching from behavior. Moreover, one must distinguish very clearly between infallible teaching and fallible teaching. Here, by the way, Maritain makes a great excursion into history, showing many examples of fallible decisions of Church people.⁹ Such teaching is one of the effects of original sin.

Solemn teaching is directed by the Holy Spirit, and actions depend on cooperation with grace, on human freedom, but also on the nature common to all people wounded by sin. What is more, according to Maritain, it is not Christ who chooses someone for a mission in the Church (this is commonly called a “vocation”), but it is the people of the Church who choose other people of the Church. The former, including the popes, often disregard the assistance of the

⁵ English translation: *On the Church of Christ: The Person of the Church and her Personnel* (Notre Dame (Ind.): University of Notre Dame Press, 1973).

⁶ Such terminology may arouse surprise, especially when it comes to the expression “Church Person.” Because the term “personnel,” meaning “cast, crew, staff” in reference to those responsible for the Church is sufficiently understandable, while “Person” in reference to the Church seems to sound unusual. However, this is Maritain’s specific language, and he explains what he means in the first part of the book. In short, according to Maritain, the Church must not be identified with the people of the Church, because the Church is more than its people, and it is not people who determine the essence of the Church or its holiness.

⁷ Chapitre XI. “La personne de l’Église est indéfectiblement sainte, son personnel ne l’est pas,” 229–256. The English version: *The Person of the Church is Indefectibly Holy; Her Personnel is Not* (Notre Dame (Ind.): University of Notre Dame Press, 1973), 135–151.

⁸ Jacques Maritain, *De l’Église du Christ. La personne de l’Église et son personnel* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1970), 237.

⁹ *Ibidem*, 257–400.

Holy Spirit during the election or the decision itself. In other words, according to Maritain, the people of the Church recruit themselves, but the Person of the Church is not involved in this.¹⁰ Maritain again wants to clearly distinguish the will of Christ from the will of the people of the Church.

The lack of this distinction led to the Church hiding the sins of the people of the Church, because these people were treated as the Church in the *strict sense*, which is holy and infallible, and not like all other people who are in the Church. Hence, there was greater concern for the “good of the Church,” which does not really need defense, than for detecting the errors of the people of the Church and talking about these errors and sins, and all this was done in the name of this “good.”¹¹

THEOLOGY AND THE CLOSE CONNECTION BETWEEN CELIBACY AND THE PRIESTHOOD

However, Jacques Maritain’s paper on priesthood, published in the *Revue Thomiste* and in a book entitled “Untrammelled Approaches” after the author’s death, deserves special attention.¹² The paper appeared at one of the summer meetings that Jacques Maritain led every year as part of the Studies in Meudon for his close friends, among whom was Charles Journet. Current philosophical and theological problems were discussed at the meetings. In the summer, after the publication of the book *De l’Église du Christ* in 1970, Maritain presented a paper on priesthood entitled “Apropos the French School” to his friends for their consideration. Here we come to the heart of the question about the sources of thinking about the ontological connection between priesthood and celibacy.

Maritain notes that considerations on the ontological connection between celibacy and priesthood appeared sometime in the 17th century thanks to the French Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle (1575–1629). He was a man who significantly renewed spiritual life in France in the 17th century, including priestly and religious life, by founding, among other things, Congregations for priests, or so-called oratories, that had already been founded in Italy by St. Philip Neri. This Congregation

¹⁰ Cf. *ibidem*, 239–242.

¹¹ Cf. *ibidem*, 413–414. For more on Maritain’s reflections on the Church and priesthood, see Bernard Doering, an expert on his work. Cf. “Jacques Maritain on the Church’s misbehaving clerics,” *CrossCurrents* 52, no. 2 (2002): 246–253, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24460543>, available: 25.05.2023.

¹² Jacques Maritain, *Untrammelled Approaches. Collected Works of Jacques Maritain* (Notre Dame (Ind.): University of Notre Dame Press, 1997).

received the name “Oratorians.”¹³ The term “French School” refers to the system of recruitment and education of diocesan priests by the congregation of Oratorians, founded by Cardinal de Berulle in the 17th century as a seedbed for priests who were to devote themselves to a sublime spiritual life and the pursuit of holiness. However, while Pierre Bérulle’s contribution to the renewal of priestly zeal is indisputable, his theology of priesthood no longer arouses such enthusiasm.

Maritain showed that Bérulle, in his reflection on priesthood, did not distinguish between the permanent sanctity of the priestly *function* as such (objective reality) and the sanctity of the priest’s life (subjective reality). That is why he claimed that this sanctity of *life* is transmitted to the priest by the very fact of ordination. Of course, ordination should further urge the priest to lead a holy life, but this sanctity is not something stable: it is dynamic, it can be developed through cooperation with God’s grace, or it can be lost completely. Therefore, Bérulle’s error, as Maritain writes, was that receiving ordination does not make one holy, and that priesthood is not a “holy state” if we are talking about the priestly life, because it (*priesthood*) is holy if we are talking about the sacrament in itself.

This indelible “character” is imprinted on the soul of the priest by the reception of ordination. It is a grace to act “in the person of Christ,” mainly for administering the sacraments and primarily for celebrating the Eucharist. Moreover, the validity of the Eucharist, according to Church teaching, does not depend on the personal holiness of the priest.¹⁴ Therefore, the life of a priest at the level of holiness does not differ from the holiness of other faithful people; their holiness may be better not because of the ordination received, but because they cooperate more closely with God’s grace. This is also the task of every Christian. Hence, a priest’s mediation, as Maritain says, is functional, not sacral. These functions are: preaching the Word of God to the faithful and the sacramental ministry. This type of mediation does not make the priest in any way a super-Christian.¹⁵

¹³ For more on the spiritual renewal in France in the 17th century, initiated by Pierre De Bérulle, see Keith Beaumont, “Pierre De Bérulle (1575–1629) and the renewal of Catholic spiritual life in France,” *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 17, no. 2 (2017): 73–92. Cf. also: Edward Howells, “Relationality and Difference in the Mysticism of Pierre de Bérulle,” *Harvard Theological Review* 102, no. 2 (April 2009): 225–243.

¹⁴ Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, III, q. 68, a. 8: „Sakrament urzeczywistnia się nie przez sprawiedliwość człowieka, który go udziela lub przyjmuje, lecz przez moc Bożą” [The sacrament is accomplished not by the justice of the man who administers or receives it, but by the power of God].

¹⁵ Maritain’s entire report is worth reading: *Revue Thomiste* nos. 2–3 (1971), or in the above English cited edition of *Untrammelled Approaches*.

As Maritain states: Bérulle himself and the 17th century French school did much to draw attention to the need for holiness of the clergy, who are to be an example to the rest of the faithful. Yet, on the other hand, they presented the source of this holiness in a false way. In the presented concept, the priest appears as an incarnate instrument of salvation, who merges in a way with the Person of the Savior himself through the fact of ordination, and so all his actions and words are the words of Christ himself. Moreover, a similar idea of the French school is repeated by Cardinal Robert Sarah when he says:

Christ, God who became man, was sent into the world and is the mediator between heaven and earth, between God the Father and the human race... The perfect purity of the priest means not only this imitation, this likeness to Christ, but also the intense presence of Christ in each priest. Priestly celibacy precedes what we will be in God in the fullness of life in the kingdom of heaven.¹⁶

By the way, in the meditations of Cardinal Sarah, we can trace a certain “divinization” and “deification” of clergy due to their “sacred” position thanks to their ordination. We see a similar thought in the “Roman Catechism,” published after the Council of Trent in the 16th century, where it is said about priests, among other things: “The priestly office is very serious... Therefore, they are rightly called not only Angels, but also Gods, because they have in themselves the power and authority of the immortal God himself among us.”¹⁷

The thoughts about the “sacrality of the priest’s person” developed by Bérulle, became even more radical over time. If a priest is a „holy man” thanks to ordination, then all his actions and words are sacred, even everyday or ordinary conversations. This is because it is not he who does or says something, but it is “Christ who does and speaks.” In the cited theological concept, there is a clear lack of distinction between function and person; the person, on the other hand, becomes ontologically not himself, but Someone else. In other words, it was nothing more than an abuse or overinterpretation of calling priests “alter Christus.” On the other hand, it was an attempt to instill greater respect and love for the clergy among the faithful.

However, if the faithful are to love and respect priests, it is certainly not because of false theology and anthropology in relation to their person. It is no wonder then that, due to this “sacrality” of the priest’s person, when a scandal arises, whether it concerns pedophilia, non-observance of celibacy, or another

¹⁶ Card. Robert Sarah, *Wieczór się zbliża i dzień już się chyli*, 109.

¹⁷ *Katechizm Rzymski*, vol. II: *O Sakramentach*, rozdział VII: O Sakramencie Kapłaństwa, 2 (Jasło: [s.n.], 1866), 303.

aspect, such information about the scandal hardly reaches the knowledge and awareness of the faithful, so as not to break the stereotype about the clergy's "sacrality." The priest's greatness, as Maritain says, results from the greatness of his service in celebrating the Eucharist, and not for any other reason.

In reference to the concept of Bérulle and his school, Maritain's conclusion is: the claim that priestly celibacy is something inseparable from priesthood, or – as contemporaries claim – ontologically linked to priesthood, is undoubtedly a false and erroneous claim from the point of view of theology as well as from the point of view of history. Here, Maritain refers to the experience of the Eastern Churches. Celibacy was established in the Latin tradition for a priest to better perform their function, meaning for his "accessibility," freer mobility, in a word, for the greater good of the faithful. Celibacy does not result from the essence of the sacrament of priesthood. Although the removal of mandatory celibacy would not solve all problems, it is necessary to reflect on this general principle and look more at the good of the Church as a whole, as the People of God, and not only seek the the good for part of the Church, meaning the hierarchy.

That is why, Maritain concludes, the tradition of the obligation of celibacy should be preserved as a principle. However, if in some place or under some special circumstances the marriage of clerics contributed to their better functioning as priests and to the greater good of the faithful, then an exception could be made in the Latin Church with regard to celibacy. It is worth noting that Maritain personally valued celibacy highly, and in fact, with his wife Raïssa, he made a promise of "conjugal chastity" understood as sexual abstinence while still young, and after his wife's death, he moved to a monastery.

GOD'S GRACE AND HUMAN NATURE

Finally, a few words about whether and how God's grace transforms a person who has received the sacrament of ordination. There is no doubt that God's grace renews a person, giving them new spiritual strength, often such that they are unable to overcome spiritual weakness or sin in themselves. God's grace also gives strength for conversion, strength to persevere in a state of holiness, to love one's enemies, forgive them, and pray for them. Such a person, while remaining a person in the ontological sense without any changes, is at the same time spiritually reborn, renewed and becomes, as the Apostle Paul says, a "new creation": "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Cor 5:17, cf. Gal 6:15). However, this "new creation" is participation in the very grace operating in a weak

and sinful person. This is not an “ontological change.” To better understand this, St. Thomas Aquinas’ classic formula should be recalled: “*Gratia supponit naturam et perficit eam*,”¹⁸ or – to put it descriptively: God’s grace works in man, not changing human nature as such, but perfecting it.

Of course, Thomas Aquinas, following Paul the Apostle, calls the sacrament of baptism a “new creation,” and the baptized person is, accordingly, a “new man,” of course not in the ontological sense, but in the spiritual sense. Thanks to God’s grace, especially that which is poured out on him through the sacraments, man enters into the divine life and achieves divinization. Yet, this “life in God” does not mean an ontological change, and it has a theological dimension, not a philosophical one, that is, it does not anticipate any existential or ontological change.

In general, according to classical metaphysical thinking, ontological change as such is only possible in three cases: 1) *creatio ex nihilo*, that is, when some being appears that did not exist before; 2) *destructio*, that is, the destruction of some being, its death, or as the classicists would say – the separation of its matter from its form; 3) *transubstantiatio*, that is, the “transubstantiation” of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ during the Eucharist. This last point is of course added to the previous two by Christian thinkers. In short, thanks to grace, change does not occur in man’s nature, but only in the relationship between man and God, and this is such a great change that it can be called a “new creation.”¹⁹

CONCLUSION

To sum up: everything that has been said about the action of God’s grace in man, including the grace granted along with ordination, does not mean that an ontological change is taking place in man in connection with the action of this grace. Accordingly, it is wrong to believe that “functional celibacy” is transformed into some kind of “ontological celibacy” with the reception of priestly ordination.

We must also mention that the universal Church teaches about the sole and sacraments, not about their different categories and labeling them as better or worse. If there is one sacrament of baptism, regardless of the denomination,

¹⁸ *Summa Theologiae*, I, I, 8 ad 2.

¹⁹ For more specific information, see: Tomasz Gałuszka OP, *Odnova w łasce* (Kraków: Esprit, 2018), 49–57.

and if there is one Eucharist regardless of the rite, then there is also one sacrament of ordination, regardless of tradition, whether Latin with obligatory celibacy, or Eastern, in which priestly celibacy does not apply. Therefore, it is wrong to say that the faithful who are ministered by married priests have among them priests of a „worse category.”²⁰

There is one priesthood of Jesus Christ and therefore all the priests of Jesus Christ, meaning all those who are rightly ordained by the successors of the Apostles – the bishops, fulfill the same function of ministerial priesthood. They administer to the faithful the same sacraments, whose effectiveness depends primarily on Christ and not on the personal qualities of the priest.

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²⁰ Cf. Card. Robert Sarah, *Wieczór się zbliża i dzień już się chyli*, 103.

Sarah Kard. Robert, *Wieczór się zbliża i dzień już się chyli*. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretańek, 2019.

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ONTOLOGICZNY ZWIĄZEK POMIĘDZY KAPŁAŃSTWEM A CELIBATEM?

Streszczenie

Natura kapłaństwa katolickiego była i jest przedmiotem dyskusji teologicznych od wieków. Rozważa się między innymi związek celibatu z sakramentem kapłaństwa. Niektórzy teologowie mówią o ontologicznym związku celibatu ze święceniemi. Dany artykuł analizuje takie twierdzenie, próbując odpowiedzieć na pytanie: czy rzeczywiście celibat powiązany jest z kapłaństwem ontologicznie oraz czy dokonuje się ontologiczna zmiana w osobie przyjmującej ten sakrament, między innymi w postaci koniecznej bezżenności? Na podstawie przeprowadzonej analizy autor dochodzi do wniosku, że święcenia kapłańskie nie mogą wywoływać zmiany ontologicznej na człowieku, a więc celibat również nie jest ontologicznie ze święceniemi połączony.

Słowa kluczowe: celibat; kapłaństwo; ontologiczny związek; kardynał Robert Sarah; Jacques Maritain