

REV. FREDERICK OMOLLO

THE THEANDRIC ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN THE LIFE
OF THE WORLD DURING, BEFORE
AND AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A b s t r a c t. The “earthly” Church is on pilgrimage and has the task of making disciples of all peoples (cf. Mt 28:19–20). She has her transcendental dignity, proportional to its representative (sacramental) essence and function as the universal sacrament of salvation. In the Christological perspective, the “earthly” Church carries out the redemptive and salvific work of Christ. On the part of the Church, this saving work is still relevant, polymorphic and incomplete, and sometimes also tainted by sin. For the Church is not identical with the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the current question remains how to realize the theandric nature of the Church in her mission in the current historical, social and cultural context? A particular drama in the implementation of the Church’s mission is added today by the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic, which on the one hand contributes to hindering the exercise of a particularly liturgical function and, on the other hand, intensifies the process of impoverishment of people in many countries of the world. The new poor become an additional challenge for the Church in her charitable mission. The article has a dogmatic-pastoral character, and its main sources are post-conciliar documents and the latest statements of Pope Francis. According to the author, the Church, as a community of Christ’s disciples, must learn from her Master to build interpersonal relationships in search of harmony with the world and at the service of humanity. Remembering the theandric nature of the Church can be very helpful in this task.

Keywords: Church; theandric nature of the Church; Covid-19; Pope Francis.

INTRODUCTION

Principle of Theandricity is Christological. Mainstream Christology going back to the Patristic tradition has highlighted that the human nature of Christ

Rev. dr FREDERICK OMOLLO, the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Tangaza University College, School of Theology, P.O. Box 15055, 00509, Nairobi, Kenya; e-mail: fomollo@tangaza.ac.ke; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8133-6064>.

is Theandric (divine-human). This thread emerges from Patristic Greek tradition. For Maximus the Confessor “The human nature of God’s Son, *not by itself but by its union with the Word*, knew and showed forth in itself everything that pertains to God.”¹ The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (hereafter referred to as *CCC*) teaches that “By its union to the divine wisdom in the person of the Word Incarnate, Christ enjoyed in his human knowledge the fullness of understanding of the eternal plans he had come to reveal” (*CCC* no. 474). The theandric nature of Christ is buttressed by the Christological principle of *communicatio idiomatum* (communication of idioms). The term *idioma* (ἰδίωμα) is from Greek word meaning a set of specific elements or properties characterizing a person or thing. A communication of idioms consists in attributing to Christ the man those things that belong to God, and to God are attributed what belong to Christ the man, and to one and the same Christ are attributed human and divine properties: this man Christ is God; God is man; Christ is God and man. This derives from the unity of the divine Person in two natures. Likewise; actions and passions are attributed to the person. The Christological doctrine, preaching and life-witness is actualized in the consciousness of the Church, under the direction of the Holy Spirit.²

The expression *communicatio idiomatum* is not explicitly found in the Scripture. However we have the gist of the reality of this expression in the Scripture. Most outstandingly the prologue of the gospel of John situates Jesus Christ as the pre-existent Word who became man and kept his intimacy with the Father for our salvation (cf. John 1:1–14). St. Thomas Aquinas discusses *communicatio idiomatum* (or what may be said of Christ) after treating hypostatic union according to the Nicene and Chalcedonian teachings.³

1. LEARNING FROM THE TRADITION

In his encyclical Letter *Fratelli tutti* Pope Francis envisages a less selfish world in the post-COVID. He writes: “The Church has been present for cen-

¹ St. Maximus the Confessor, *Qu. et dub.* 66: PG 90, 840A. Cited in *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)*, no. 473.

² Cf. International Theological Commission, *Select Questions on Christology*, Chapter III, no. 6 (Rome, 1979).

³ Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *ST* III. 16. The Council of Nicea (325 AD) affirmed the divinity of the Son of God, the “only begotten one.” Christ, the Son of God made man is consubstantial with the Father and the Council of Chalcedon (451) clarified that Jesus Christ has two complete natures, divine and human but he is one divine person.

turies throughout the world, [...]. She can thus understand, from her own experience of grace and sin, the beauty of the invitation to universal love” (*FT*, 278). Her experience of grace and sin is a theandric experience. God has wrought our salvation by sending the eternal Son into our history as the incarnate Son; and the Father and the Son together pour out the eternal Spirit as the Holy Spirit of Pentecost. The mission *ad extra* are the temporal enactments of the two eternal processions.⁴

Chalcedon taught that Christ is true God and true man. The humanity of Jesus Christ is *anhypostatic* (non-personal). The man Christ is not a human person, but his humanity is *enhypostatic* in the *Logos* (that is, it becomes personal in the very person of the *Logos* himself). Christ the man was/is a person, not with a human personality, but with a divine personality; thus it would be heretical to hold that in Christ there were/are two subjects. However since in Christ there are two natures it is an open inquiry whether he had human existence or otherwise.

The Church has its origin in Christ and the preeminent locus of its development is the Pentecost Mystery and the ensuing activities on the part of the apostles. There is analogy between the theandric aspect of Christ and the Church (cf. *LG*, 8). The Church of Christ, a mystery as a sacrament of communion subsists in the Catholic Church. The Church is, speaking analogically, the prolongation of Christ. The Word made flesh as the head of the Church, nourishes her.

The requirement for membership in the Church is faith and Baptism which initiate into the Lord’s paschal mystery of death and resurrection (cf. Rom 6:1–11). The Church not only hands over the confession of faith to those to be baptized, but also announces the Good News of God’s saving acts including the breaking of bread and prayer (cf. Acts 2:42) and serving Christ in the poor. The Church’s theandric actions can be described by the terms priestly, prophetic and royal (cf. *CCC* 871).

The Threefold Mission of the Church

My main interest in this sub-section is to present a larger canvas and not to substantially develop all the aspects of the Church’s evangelizing mission. I will limit myself to some Scriptural passages from the Acts of the Apostles,

⁴ A distinction is made between Immanent Trinity (Ontological Trinity) and Economic Trinity (Functional Trinity). The Immanent Trinity refers to the relationships between the Father, Son and Spirit within their oneness of divinity and tripersonal identity from all eternity; whereas the Economic Trinity refers to the saving work of God in the world having as its starting point, creation. The Economic Trinity requires the Immanent Trinity and not vice versa.

Vatican Council II, *Lumen Gentium*, Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* and Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*. From the witness of Scripture particularly the Acts of the Apostles and Apostolic Tradition we find that the apostles and their would-be successors are tasked with the proclamation of the message of salvation through word and ministration of sacraments; and that the early Church was devoted to the instructions of the apostles, communal life; to the breaking of bread and to the prayers (cf. Acts 2:42):

Those who accepted the message were baptized (cf. Acts 2: 41). Their sins are remitted (cf. Acts 2:38), they belong to the Church, and are able to receive the Spirit (cf. Acts 8:12–17). Closely associated with baptism, is the laying on of hands to give the Holy Spirit, the ‘Baptism of the Spirit’ (cf. Acts 1:5; 11:16). Eucharist or the breaking of bread completes the sacraments of Christian initiation. The laying on of hands is used not only to give the Holy Spirit, but also to confer authority and spiritual powers, within the Church, in the case of the seven deacons and Paul and Barnabas (cf. Acts 6:1–6; 13:3).

Prayer and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit go hand in hand (cf. Acts 4:31). For instance Cornelius, though a non-Christian, always entreating God, received the grace of being the first fruits of the Gentiles; and Peter is praying when he has the vision which compels him to take his very important step (cf. Acts 10: 1-49). The aforementioned selection of Scriptural passages represent the encounter model of sacramental evangelization.

Sacramental presence is always person to person. In sacramental encounters, Christ as the primary minister encounters personally the person or persons in question. William J. Bausch writes: “Sacraments are not isolated signs, performed by an isolated individual for an isolated individual.”⁵ Worshiping community is a sign of the body of Christ in union with Christ as the head represented by the liturgical leader.

Within the broad gamut of Catholic theology and in the centre of varied circumstances, theological reflections have been undertaken with precision of research and creativity of imagination in many theological branches. In this regard, the Church explained about her own nature and universal mission in the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)* (cf. *LG*, 1). The Church is a theandric reality in that it is a universal sacrament of salvation. By its own nature the ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium* (Christ the Light of Nations) situates the Church’s self-understanding through the light of Christ.

⁵ William J. Bausch, *A New Look at the Sacraments* (Notre Dame: Fides/Claretian, 1977), 227.

Other ecclesiological principles, such as the people of God (cf. *LG*, 9), eschatological community (cf. *LG*, 7) as well bolster the aforementioned nature and mission of the Church. The fundamental theme of communion is utilized by Vatican Council II to reflect on the mystery of the Church. The Church understands herself through relationships. The most ultimate vertical and social communion is with the Trinity, who established the Church, through the missions of the incarnate Son and the outpouring of the Spirit (cf. *LG*, 2–4). The Church as people of God is commissioned to continue Christ's mission by participating in his threefold ministry of priest, prophet and king. The threefold ministry of Christ is shared according to differences among God's people owing to varied gifts. Therefore the boundaries demarcating lay and clerical responsibility must not be blurred.

Lumen Gentium explains that Jesus Christ is priest since he is the supreme high priest who offered and continuously offers himself through the hands of ordained priests the once and for all saving sacrifice; he is prophet as the fullness of God's revelation and he is the chief shepherd who leads his flock. The Council retrieved the concept of the collective priesthood of the entire people of God. The ordained priesthood is at the service of baptismal priesthood (cf. *LG*, 10–13 and 34–36). It can be said that the Council in so doing wanted to apply the Christological principle of *communicatio idiomatum* to the nature of the Church as people of God. Christ is the eternal high priest, prophet par excellence as the exegete of the Father and the one who makes us participate in the life of God through the action of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads the Church, animates the Church to continue the theandric activities of Christ. The theandric action of the Church is manifested in her threefold mission. Vatican Council II clarifies the threefold task of the Church as priestly, prophetic and royal. However, Benedict XVI called this threefold mission as proclaiming the word of God (*kerygma-martyria*), celebrating the sacraments (*leitourgia*), and executing the ministry of charity (*diakonia*). According to him these tasks are reciprocally inclusive and are not separable. For the Church, charity is an essential manifestation of her being (cf. *DCE*, 25). For Benedict XVI, pastoral charity is the integrating ingredient of the mission of the Church.

Francis further highlights the significance of practical charity for the Church's mission. He reminds us that liturgy must be understood within the broader experience of the Christian faith and life. Francis writes:

An evangelizing community gets involved by word and deed in people's daily lives. [...]. Evangelizers thus take on the 'smell of the sheep' and the sheep are

willing to hear their voice. An evangelizing community is also supportive, standing by people at every step of the way, no matter how difficult or lengthy this may prove to be. It is familiar with patient expectation and apostolic endurance. [...]. The disciple is ready to put his or her whole life on the line, even to accepting martyrdom, in bearing witness to Jesus Christ, yet the goal is not to make enemies but to see God's word accepted and its capacity for liberation and renewal revealed. Finally an evangelizing community is filled with joy; it knows how to rejoice always; it celebrates at every small victory, every step forward in the work of evangelization. Evangelization with joy becomes beauty in the liturgy, as part of our daily concern to spread goodness. The church evangelizes and is herself evangelized through the beauty of the liturgy, which is both a celebration of the task of evangelization and the source of renewed self-giving (EG, 24).

Francis accentuates that the disciple's willingness to witness to the revealed word (that is the *kerigma-martyria* aspect of the Church) is for liberation. Benedict emphasizes that the motivation and goal of such a witness is charity (*diakonia*). Thus, Benedict XVI insists that ecclesial charity is not a pure private affair but institutional and communion with a focus to the members of the household while not excluding the rest (cf. DCE, 25).

Sacrosanctum Concilium was the first constitution among all the documents of Vatican Council II that was discussed. A breakthrough as it was; it had its limitations in that what it expounded must be understood in the further developments. It suffices to put in the fore that relation between the Church and the world must be adaptation, renewal at its various levels and threefold activities as portrayed in the Pentecost event; the *official* birth of the Church.

Pentecost: The Beginning of the Church's Universal Mission

John D. Zizioulas writes: "The identification of the Church's ministry with that of Christ is possible only if we let our *Christology* be *conditioned pneumatologically*."⁶ The term identification thereof is to be analogously understood. The mystery of the Incarnation is an initiative of the Father sending the Son so as to accomplish the eternal project of the Holy Spirit to draw man and cosmic creation to participation in the divine life. It is this understanding of Christology that Christ cannot be isolated from the Holy Spirit.⁷

⁶ John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1985), 210. For Eastern theology, Christology is, as it were, not a self-explained domain of theology.

⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, 211.

The Spirit establishes the body of Christ (the Church) here and now. The ministry of the Church actualizes here and now the very saving work of Christ involving the personal presence of Christ as the one who saves through the ministration of the Church. This presupposes a concrete and only as a remote instance, a virtual community.

The Church's theandric mission has the Spirit as the driving power that overcomes human hindrances. The Church has a connection with the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God does not progress along purely anthropological models of evolution. Therefore, nobody can categorize and compartmentalize in what way it will come in its completeness. Meanwhile a constant struggle between good and the drama of evil including human suffering becomes a phenomenological conundrum. The Church as a sacrament of salvation implies that inasmuch as it is not identifiable with the Kingdom of God, it makes Christ present and perceptible up to its eschatological fulfilment. The next section is intended to be a brief exploration of the Church's activity of making Christ present in the world via the proclamation of the Good News of salvation, celebration of the liturgy (particularly liturgy of the Eucharist), and pastoral charity.

2. RECLAIMING THE CHURCH'S THEANDRIC ACTIVITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PANDEMIC PROSPECT

Biblical revelation teaches that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son as a gift in the Incarnation for salvation of all who all who believe in him (cf. John 3:16). In his Apostolic Exhortation, *Gaudete et Exsultate* (Rejoice and be Glad), 2018, Francis writes: "The Father's plan is Christ, and ourselves in him" (*GE*, 21). The Church continues this reality and is therefore tasked to offer the gift of salvation in the liturgy, proclamation and diaconal service.

For Francis the COVID pandemic significantly encircled humanity to a virtual drama. He clarifies that we had been rendered as hostages of a virtual reality and we misplaced the savour of the truly real (cf. *FT*, 33). Physical presence and personal participation in the celebration of the Mass is very significant. Nonetheless Christ has given all the baptized the dignity of baptismal priesthood. The ugly underbelly of digital worship is its virtuality; thus portraying the aberrant worldview, as it were, of the quintessential detached self-contained individual. It does not satisfy the full, conscious and active

(actual) participation condition.⁸ The Church in its full realization is eschatological but the here and now concrete realization of the Church is important for the life of the Church.

The Church fails in her mission if she does not proclaim and witness to, in season and out of season, the mystery of Christ as the solution of the riddles of human existence. Vatican Council II, *Gaudium et spes* shows that man's ultimate vocation is one and supernatural; thus it is through Christ and in Christ that the riddles of sorrow and death grow more meaningful (cf. *GS*, 18 and 22). Apart from his Gospel of the Kingdom, the puzzles of life overwhelm us. Since Christ came to establish the Kingdom of God, he cannot be understood separately from it. The Church's commitment to build the Kingdom together with Christ cannot be overrated, if she is faithful to her mission, that Kingdom of love, justice and world-wide peace (cf. *GE*, 25). Even though the grounds to remain faithful at times may be weak, not only morally but also because of bedevilment of evils such as COVID-19 pandemic, the Church's loyalty to her mission is life giving.

People of all walks of life have been and are being crucified on a cross by coronavirus. The most vulnerable in terms of the necessities of life are crucified on the additional cross. These sufferings can be salvific if borne together with Christ and become a participation in the paschal mystery. Yet, as Benedict XVI indicates: "The parable of the Good Samaritan remains as a standard which imposes universal love towards the needy" (*DCE*, 25b; cf. Lk 10:31).

From the snapshot of the foremost enquiry of this topic, it is representative to point that the Church's mission of pastoral charity is fundamentally mercy.⁹ Christian charity both intensively and extensively includes first of all and above all but not limited to an active, compassionate encounter with the poor, marginalized, vulnerable and suffering. Christian charity is both intensive and extensive. Intensive, because the Church has to have preferential option for the most vulnerable; extensive, because the Church is a univer-

⁸ Cf. Vatican Council II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 14.

⁹ The Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2447 teaches that: "The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbour in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting, are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God."

sal means of charity. To further adduce a picture of the Theandricity of the Church, a range of the Church's varied commitment in her pilgrimage condition is put in a brief trajectory below.

The Church and the Phenomenology of Human Suffering

The history of the Church from its initial stages and its missionary growth, is characterized by its concern towards the suffering and the most vulnerable members of the society. Christ himself was concerned for all and especially the suffering; and the marginalized (cf. CCC 2444 and 2447). The time and intervals of COVID-19 pandemic has remained one of weighty suffering and considerable sacrifice. It suffices to name but a few including: the high number of people who became infected and the corresponding statistical oddity — the autocracy of numbers, bereavements, isolation, suspension of public Mass, indecisiveness and fear of the unknown which became a pathology.

In a letter Pope Francis wrote to the priests of the diocese of Rome in his capacity as the bishop of the same and owing to the fact that he could not celebrate Holy Thursday [physically] with those priests; he emphasized the much needed sense of belonging and mission. A question can be put thus: Can the disciples really be of beneficial help when they are rendered immobile? Francis answers that question. His words are: “The first apostolic community, [...] also lived through moments of confinement, isolation, fear and uncertainty. Fifty days passed between immobility, closure and the incipient announcement that would change their lives forever.”¹⁰

The Church must always be bold enough to address before the eyes of the world her 'limits' which can be possibly experienced as something natural; undeterred hope and intimacy. *Gaudium et spes* (the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) of the Vatican Council II, notes that: “The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well” (GS, 1). The path of the Church is the path of authentic humanity. Humanity must learn from the past how to cross thresholds, clasp the cross of anguish and suffering so to retrieve the treasures of age-old wisdom and live forwards in proclaiming the gospel of life; celebrating the faith and practising charity.

¹⁰ Pope Francis, Letter to the Priests of the Diocese of Rome, “When the Disciples were Together with the Doors Locked for Fear” (Vatican, May 30, 2020).

John Paul II in his apostolic letter, *Salvifici Doloris* (On the Saving Value of Human Suffering) clarifies that besides human weakness, suffering apparently belongs to human transcendentality (*SD*, 2). The Christological import of that assertion is strong and it is not opposed to authentic human liberation. Anthropologically as persons and Christians, suffering incidentally offers opportunities for personal growth and for demonstrating pragmatic charity for others. More importantly sufferings, because of the principle of Incarnation and paschal event, must be transmuted into conveying a saving love (cf. *SD*, 27).

The Church's Theandricity, therefore is to make life fuller, more human and divine (cf. John 10:10). She achieves this by *kerygma* (proposing to the world the mystical and moral significance of Christian faith), *leitourgia* (celebrating the sacraments), and *diakonia* (pastoral service).

Just like the Church is a sacrament, human body must not be understood only biologically, but a sacrament of union with God. The perfection of the Church is an eschatological reality. Meanwhile she traverses the path of man in the pilgrimage status, and in fidelity to her master (Christ) is tasked to bring integral healing to all but especially the most vulnerable.

Sacramentality and Eschatological Aspect of the Church: The Future fits in the Overarching Mission of the Church

The Trinitarian origin of the Church (cf. *LG*, 4) indicates a joint action of the divine persons without denying each of these persons his own specific manner of action. Only the Son was incarnated. He inaugurated the Kingdom of the Father on earth (cf. *LG*, 3). The origin of the Church can be said to herald history as part of the eternal plan of salvific act of God in history. The Church's mission is to serve the Kingdom. The Kingdom is both the future of the Church and of the world.

The Church is in Christ in a manner similar to a sacrament of a close union with God and of the harmony of the entire humankind (cf. *LG*, 1). According to Congar the Church and the world have a shared destiny. His words are: "That they should have only the same ultimate end prevents a confusion that would be bad for the Church, as raising a risk of dissolving her own proper mission in that of history, and bad for the world, as raising the risk of misunderstanding [...] its own proper development."¹¹

¹¹ Yves Congar, *Lay People in the Church* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Company, 1957), 88.

The Church is always to serve God's plan for the salvation of humanity and the cosmos. The Church's mission is to give hope to a world afflicted by pandemic, anxiety and violence, among others. *Diakonia*, broadly understood as a struggle for a just world order is a constitutive of the Church's mission. John the apostle can only talk of God as love (cf. 1 John 4:8). Love of God and love of the neighbour renew relationships.

New being and New Life in Christ: Mystery of Christ's Theandric Economy

Today the global economy is directed mainly by liberal capitalist theories.¹² The world is being turned almost irrevocably into a global market. There is mass production of wealth but disproportionately distributed. The yawning gap between the opulent North and the indigent South seems unbridgeable. This exaggeratedly anthropocentric economy is informed by consumerism and materialism. In turn it has bred new victims such as the new poor. For all practical purposes COVID-19 victims are new entrants into the new poor category amongst others seen as economically, socially or even medically unconventional. Misery in any of its forms is far from humanizing. It dehumanises. It always pose a challenge to the Church's mission of promoting fullness of life. To avoid this risk of uncritical and thus ungodly 'marriage' to any spirit of the time, the Church is to hold ever firmly to Christ's theandric economy by *theandrically* intervening in matters common good and aligning herself to have a preferential option for the most vulnerable.

The Church and Public Policy

The Church can shepherd the people of God more effectively by endorsing local, regional, continental and global legislation that promotes healthy, just, stable and vigorous societies. The COVID-19 pandemic has been exacerbated partly on a widespread culture of unhealthy practices such as individualism, greed, and unchecked consumerism. These are heading to a point of no return and the defenders of such exploitation and abuse of the vulnerable may have nowhere to turn. The Church's prophetic engagement with the socio-political and economic structures must be ever emboldened so as to remedy those structures fuelling such anomalies.

In the process of socialization, the Church must always remain faithful to her transcendental vocation, offering answers to ultimate questions of mean-

¹² Cf. Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (Rome, 29 June, 2009), no. 40-42.

ing and human existence including life and death. Today a consumerist and materialist monoculture tends to dominate the world, aided by unscrupulous mass media. The Church loses its theandric cutting edge when it corroborates such an existing structure in the process of socializing (cf. *CV*, 28).

Three focus areas that need the Church's prophetic witness urgently today include, the defence of the dignity of the human person; protection of minority groups (including COVID-19 sufferers) and the care of nature. Human dignity must not be sacrificed at the altar of maximization of profit. The minority groups are exploited not only for human benefit, but also for human greediness.

CONCLUSION

The whole Church has suffered due to the pandemic. Suffering can have a salvific value. The path of the Church is to gather all people to share in the mystery of Christ, thus leading to social renewal. Christ saved us by being in solidarity with sinful and afflicted humankind. Human solidarity enriched by Trinitarian communion reify integral healing and is thus dignifying. Health protocols which ensued because of the pandemic such as social distancing can only be meaningful when understood within the commitment to the greater good of all. The path that the Church must always traverse is the one of embodying the hopes and anguish of mankind for a renewal. The path of renewal-both social and ecclesial-is the much needed recommitment to humanity and relationships which bring wholeness. The aim of this presentation from the inception and now to its inference is to agitate for ecclesial commitment and recommitment to theandric relationships now and in the post pandemic.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Benedict XVI. Encyclical Letter, *Deus Caritas Est* [God is Love]. Rome, 25 December, 2005.
 Benedict XVI. Encyclical Letter, *Caritas in Veritate* [Charity in Truth], Rome, 29 June, 2009.
 Bausch, William J. *A New Look at the Sacraments*. Nore Dame: Fides/Claretian, 1977.
Catechism of the Catholic Church. Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 1994.
 Congar, Yves. *Lay People in the Church*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Company, 1957.
 Francis. Encyclical Letter, *Fratelli Tutti* [On Genuine Solidarity and Friendship]. Assisi, 3 October, 2020.

- Francis. Apostolic Exhortation, *Gaudete et Exsultate* [Rejoice and be Glad]. Rome, 19 March, 2018.
- Francis. Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* [The Joy of the Gospel]. Rome, 24 November, 2013.
- Francis. Letter to the Priests of the Diocese of Rome, *When the Disciples were Together with the Doors Locked for Fear*. Vatican, 30 May, 2020.
- International Theological Commission. *Select Questions on Christology*. Rome, 1979.
- John Paul II. Apostolic Letter, *Salvifici Doloris* [On the Saving Value of Human Suffering]. Rome, 11 February 1984.
- Zizioulas, John D. *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985.

TEANDRYCZNA ROLA KOŚCIOŁA W ŻYCIU ŚWIATA W CZASIE, PRZED I PO PANDEMII COVID-19

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Kościół „ziemski” jest w drodze i ma za zadanie czynić uczniami wszystkie narody (por. Mt 28,19-20). Ma swoją godność transcendentalną, proporcjonalną do jego reprezentacyjnej (sakramentalnej) istoty i funkcji jako powszechnego sakramentu zbawienia. W perspektywie chrystologicznej Kościół „ziemski” realizuje odkupieńcze i zbawcze dzieło Chrystusa. Ze strony Kościoła to zbawcze dzieło jest wciąż aktualne, polimorficzne i niepełne, a niekiedy także splamione grzechem. Kościół bowiem nie jest tożsamy z Królestwem Bożym. Dlatego aktualnym pytaniem pozostaje, jak realizować teandryczną naturę Kościoła w jego misji w aktualnym kontekście historycznym, społecznym i kulturowym? Szczególnej dramaturgii w realizacji misji Kościoła dodaje dzisiaj sytuacja pandemii Covid-19, która z jednej strony przyczynia się do utrudnienia wypełniania szczególnie funkcji liturgicznej, a z drugiej strony wzmaga proces ubożenia ludzi w wielu krajach świata. Nowi ubodzy stają się dodatkowym wyzwaniem dla Kościoła w jego misji charytatywnej. Artykuł ma charakter dogmatyczno-pastoralny, a jego głównymi źródłami są dokumenty posoborowe i najnowsze wypowiedzi papieża Franciszka. Zdaniem autora – Kościół jako wspólnota uczniów Chrystusa – musi uczyć się od swego Mistrza budowania relacji międzyludzkich w poszukiwaniu harmonii ze światem i w służbie ludzkości. Pamięć o teandrycznej naturze Kościoła może w tym zadaniu okazać się bardzo pomocna.

Słowa kluczowe: Kościół; teandryczna natura Kościoła; Covid-19; papież Franciszek.