

BEATA M. PARYSIEWICZ

THE COGNITIVE ASPECT OF UPBRINGING TO LOVE
IN THE ACTIONS OF THE FAMILIES' MINISTRY
FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Abstract. The article addresses the issue of the doctrinal aspect of the activities of the families' ministry in the field of teaching about love as a foundation of the Catholic marriage and family. It analyses the question of defining Christian love, its meaning for the proper structure of marriage and family and the correct fulfilment of their tasks. It also points to the links between the correct understanding of love and faith, calling, and salvation. The article also presents the order of love as a foundation of Christian marital and family life and the consequences of breaking that order.

Key words: doctrine; love; marriage; family; order of love.

The question of upbringing to love is often addressed by parents who care for the proper social development of their children, educators and upbringing theorists. The Catholic Church also carefully watches the progressive loosening of discipline in the area of the rules of the Christian marital and family life, which is often linked to the secular understanding of marital love.¹ The problem is also discussed in the context of the political actions of the European Union,² which accepted the gender theory as its standing strategy,³

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¹ Bogdana WOJCIŹKE, *Psychologia miłości. Intymność. Namiętność. Zaangażowanie* (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Marabut, 1993), 28-30.

² "Politics is the set of methods and tactics used to manage a state or a society." Cf. *American Heritage Dictionary*, N. York: Houghton Mifflin, 1969. A definition of politics by: Kate MILLET, "Teoria polityki płciowej," in *Nikt nie rodzi się kobietą*, ed. Teresa Hołówka (Warszawa: Czy-

which is blatantly contrary to the moral requirements set out for believers by the Church under the divine mandate and subject to the sanction of the loss of salvation. (1 Cor 16:22)

For the Catholic Church, the questions of love and upbringing to it is of basic nature, as it is God who demonstrates Himself as Love (1 Jn 4:8) and defines it as the supreme commandment for those who want to live in communion with Him on earth and eternally (1 Jn 3:23). The ambiguity of the term “love” causes its definitions to always be defective, incomplete, and descriptive in nature.⁴ Relating love to God additionally hampers the process of defining, because when learning about God, all definitions are of analogous nature, and the claims of negative theology are the most accurate,⁵ which does not make it at all easier to adequately convey the nature of love. The contemporary social and cultural conditions are an additional hindrance; as within them love undergoes total subjectivisation, it is often only an expression of personal feelings and sensory agitation, as well as individually understood needs.⁶

1. THE CHURCH AND HER MINISTRY FOR LOVE IN THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

The abovementioned difficulties do not, however, mean a resignation from finding a solution to the definition problem, which is motivated by the goal of Christianity and the chief goal of Christian upbringing, which stems

telnik, 1982), 58, also available online, Biblioteka Online Think Tanku Feministycznego, accessed October 15, 2016, <http://www.ekologiasztuka.pl/think.tank.feministyczny>. For an analysis of the term “politics” cf. Andrzej CZAJOWSKI, “Polityka w pięciu odsłonach,” *Wrocławskie Studia Politologiczne* 12(2011): 6-25.

³ Cf. Agnieszka GRZYBEK, ed., *Gender mainstreaming. Jak skutecznie wykorzystać jego polityczny potencjał*. (Warszawa: Przedstawicielstwo Fundacji im. Heinricha Bölla, 2008); Biuro Regionalne WHO dla Europy and Federalne Biuro ds. Edukacji Zdrowotnej w Kolonii (BZgA), *Standardy edukacji seksualnej w Europie. Podstawowe zalecenia dla decydentów oraz specjalistów zajmujących się edukacją i zdrowiem* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Czelej, 2012).

⁴ Beata PARYSIEWICZ, *Wychowanie do miłości. Studium z duszpasterstwa rodzin* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2010), 134-5.

⁵ Cf. Stanisław WSZOLEK and Janusz KRÓLIKOWSKI, “Teologia negatywna i metafizyka,” *Collectanea Theologica* 74(2004), 1: 113-6, 120-5.

⁶ Cf. Kazimierz SKOCZYŁAS, “Wychowanie chrześcijańskie wobec kultury indywidualizmu,” *Teologia i Człowiek* 19(2012): 169-91.

from it, which is love.⁷ For a Christian receives salvation thanks to God's creative and saving love, which is to be imitated by him in order to partake in the earthly and eternal communion of God's love (Eph 3:17-19). Each and every Christian is called to such love on the basis of the holy baptism and most believers implement the God's calling to love in marriage and family.

The Church's ministry for the candidates for marriage, spouses, and parents, i.e. all who recognised a divine calling to holiness through marital and family life within them, should be seen in this perspective. Therefore, the families' ministry, as "a system of Church's actions leading to the accomplishment of the *salvation plan* for the marriage and the family," "the centre of which is the *truth* on the marriage and the family, unerringly conveyed, interpreted, and referring to the 'signs of the times' by the Magisterium of the Catholic Church" is supposed to begin "comprehensive work to ensure conditions favouring the accomplishment of that truth and tangible *aid* for the family to fulfil its calling" (FMD, 1 [*Families' Ministry Directorate – translator's note*]). Therefore, the task of the Church is to precisely and in a way easy to understand for the believers present the doctrine of love, its justification, ways of understanding, and tools for its fruitful implementation in the specific circumstances of the individual's and the fellowship's life, as a perspective for the earthly life and as a perspective for salvation. A clearly stated and presented doctrine of Christian love and, within it, of marital love, is one of the important—mentioned in the words of the Families' Ministry Directorate cited above—conditions which allow for the accomplishment of the marital and family calling. It is the basis of the Christian existential paradigm in the individual and fellowship dimensions.

This task is supposed to be performed especially by the families' ministry, a branch of the Church devoted to the vigilant against any threats, thorough and adequate caring for the proper, i.e. leading to the salvation of all its members, development of marriage and of family. By revealing the full truth about love to the believers in a way which can be understood by them, the families' ministry familiarises them with the truth about marriage and family, their meaning and goal, as love is the rule and goal of both those institutions (*Familiaris Consortio* [henceforth FC], 11). The believers are unable to reach the full truth about love themselves, as it is of revealed nature and requires infallible interpretation by the Church, in which the saving work was entrusted by Christ. The families' ministry's work for love and

⁷ B. PARYSIEWICZ, *Wychowanie do miłości*, 136.

marriage is well illustrated in the words of Mieczysław A. Krąpiec, who discussed the meaning of truth for the correct activities of a human.

“Therefore, since ancient times, it has been pointed out that a human needs to be prepared for responsible actions. Such preparation consisted in a rational justification of reasonable human actions. The justification received the name of “a virtue” (*ARETE—virtus*), on the basis of which a human acts in the proper, justified field, “continuously with force, immediately, and with joy”—*firmiter prompte et delectabiliter*. And all the human abilities with regard to an important object of activity need to be improved. The mind needs to be improved in the area of theoretical cognition; the will needs to be improved in the area of the practical choice of good as a motive for human actions; both the mind and the will need to be improved in the field of creative actions, which is subject to beauty, the truth of which amazes us. However, in all fields, the direction of human actions is chosen by the ‘directed mind’—*ratio recta*—of the discussed set of items around which the action is organised.”⁸

When referring the abovementioned quote to the families’ ministry, it needs to be said that its important task is to prepare a human to receive the truth about love, which shall make him more effective in making right choices and taking right actions in the “field” of marital and family life. This task is completed not only through the empirical diagnosis of the state of contemporary marriage and family (FC, 4), but most of all, through the development and delivery of the truth about themselves to the believers (FC, 5), as well as the truth about love, the rule of marital and family life (FC, 18). This task includes the cognitive aspect of the actions taken by the families’ ministry, which shall be discussed below.

2. THE COGNITIVE ASPECT IN THE ACTIONS OF THE FAMILIES’ MINISTRY FOR UPBRINGING TO LOVE

“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them” (1 Jn 4:16). These words by St John, in which the apostle calls God Love, unarguably define the nature of God, which also determines the understanding of the origin, nature and destiny of men. Putting Love, which becomes the

⁸ Mieczysław A. KRAPIEC, “Idea postępu w krzywym zwierciadle ekologii,” *Człowiek w Kulturze* 2(1994): 25-6, also available online, accessed November 5, 2016, <http://www.gilsonsociety.pl/czlowiek-w-kulturze/czlowiek-w-kulturze-wydanie-on-line-on-line-edition/nr-2/>.

foundation for the salvation of an individual and the subject of the Church's mission, in the centre of Christianity is a consequence of the abovementioned words. However, not only is it important for the believer to know that God is Love, but he also needs to know how this truth influences his life and calling. This question has been addressed by St Paul in the following words, "And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor 8:2). These words, when referred to love, mean that the question of properly understanding God as Love and Christian love are the foundation for the proper Christian attitude in all the circumstances of life.

The truth about God as Love has a special meaning for Christian marriage and family which stems from it, which is a miniature of the Church, called not only to reveal the God of Love to its members, but also to reveal the God of Love to the world which does not know God, rejecting or hating Him (Jn 15:18-19). Basing its statement on the teaching of the Bible, the Church presents persisting in God's love as the main task of every believer (Mk 12:28-34), without which we cannot talk about living faith, but only about its social and cultural expression. God's love is what counts in faith (Gal 5:6), because without it, a believer does not think, judge or act in the Holy Spirit (Mk 12:24), hence he does not fulfil God's calling and is not obedient to His will.

Referring the above arguments to marriage and family, it needs to be said that they have to be defined and described in the light of the divine revelation, as institutions originating from God, founded, arranged, and blessed by Him, hence leading to results stemming from God's acts, from His grace (FC, 13). Marital and family love can fully manifest itself and achieve its earthly and eternal goals set by God, only if it remains faithful to God's plan.

Life in connection with God, as a basic fact for a Christian, is commented upon by Benedict XVI in his Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*. According to the author, the meeting with God is so strong that it directs all actions of a person and illuminates every event in their life, which is expressed by the words, "*We believed in the love of God—this is how a Christian can express the basic option in his life.* At the onset of being a Christian, there is no ethical decision or some great idea, but meeting with an event, with a Person, who gives a new perspective to life, hence *a deciding direction*. In his Gospel, St John presented this event in the following words, "*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall... have eternal life*" (Jn 3:16).

Benedict XVI writes about meeting Jesus; however, we need to remember that for the great majority of believers that meeting takes place only on the

level of faith and not as a mystical experience. Therefore, it is not a meeting in the everyday meaning of that word, as the Saviour Himself pointed out in his conversation with St Thomas, “because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (Jn 20:29). For most people faith is the only space of meeting God because “we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor 5:7). Hence, it can be said that a human meets God in word, the language itself is to a certain degree the “location” for faith,⁹ that is why the language of faith should be characterised by unambiguity and precision, for the believer seeking to know God may be able to create the correct image of Him (Eph 3:7). The necessity of real faith is fundamental, as “without faith it is impossible to please Him (Heb 11, 6), hence it is impossible to gain His blessing for one’s own state and actions.

Unambiguity and precision of teaching are also a guarantee of staying in real communion with God in the ethical sphere, tightly connected to Christian excellence, which is described by St Paul in the following words, “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting” (Eph 4:14-15). The apostle points to the threats stemming from the lack of understanding or knowing the message of the Gospel, the result of which is vulnerability to lies and manipulation, presented as teaching, which impedes the implementation of the God’s plan of salvation in human life. When faith stops being a “shield” (Eph 6:16), man stops being able to differentiate between the truth and lies, he lacks the criterion for assessment—a sense of faith—which allows for the recognition whether the knowledge he is being served is real.¹⁰ The unambiguity and precision of language do not, of course, exclude the possibility of distortion stemming from the individual’s subjective cognitive conditions, but such distortions cannot be eliminated only on the cognitive level; multidimensional personality development is required, which does not abolish the relation: orthodoxy is the basis for good orthopraxy.¹¹

⁹ Cf. Piotr FELIGA, *Czas i ortodoksja. Hermeneutyka teologii w świetle “Prawdy” i “Metody” Hansa-Georga Gadamera* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2014), 244-62, 313-23.

¹⁰ Marek ŻMUDZIŃSKI, “Nauczanie *ex cathedra* w pontyfikacie Jana Pawła II,” *Studia Elbląskie* 7(2006):126, also available online, accessed November 4, 2016, http://bazhum.muzhp.pl/media/files/Studia_Elblaskie/Studia_Elblaskie-r2006-t7/Studia_Elblaskie-r2006-t7-s125-134/Studia_Elblaskie-r2006-t7-s125-134.pdf.

¹¹ Jan STRUMIŁOWSKI, “Egzystencjalna aplikacja dogmatu na przykładzie Thomasa Mertona,” *Polonia Sacra* 19(2015), 4/41: 92-3, also available online, accessed November 4, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.15633/ps.1094>.

The meeting with Jesus takes place through language, which decides about the truth of the message about God's nature. The language can create a true or false image of God. A true image allows for the growth of faith and growth of love, a false image causes faith and love to decline. Of course, language is not the only way of developing faith which is passed indirectly through interpersonal relations. Nevertheless, the word organises and objectivises human experience and is vital for the systematic upbringing and self-upbringing work of the believers.

Taking into consideration what has been written above, the following can be stated:

1. The truth about marriage and family is tightly connected to the possibility of human salvation;
2. Distribution of false information about marriage and family can be an obstacle in the creation and development of faith;
3. Distribution of false information about marriage and family can result in the loss of salvation;
4. The Christian marriage and the Christian family are supposed to be an image of God, who is Love;
5. The truth about marriage and family requires the truth about love;
6. The truth about love is tightly connected to the possibility of human salvation;
7. The truth about love is tightly connected to the creation and development of faith;
8. Distribution of false information about love can be an obstacle for conversion;
9. Distribution of false information about love can be an obstacle for the creation and development of faith;
10. Distribution of false information about love can result in the loss of salvation;
11. Christian love is a tool with which marriage and family fulfil their calling of salvation;
12. Christian love is a tool for the creation of the internal environment of family as an environment for salvation;
13. Christian love is a tool for the creation of the external environment of family as an environment for salvation;
14. Christian love in the marriage and in the family is a tool of evangelisation.

Concluding, the task of the families' ministry is to present the entire truth about love existing in marriage and in family, because the marriage is "an institution of marital love" (V. Fagiolo)¹² and "marital love (*multiformis dilectio*)—both in the theological and legal fields—remains a key to the renewed, person-oriented, idea of marriage."¹³ The importance of that task stems also from the connection of love with human salvation or condemnation. The truth about love is, in this case, of theological and philosophical nature and its psychopedagogical conditions, which become an object of interest of Catholic pedagogy, pastoral pedagogy, and family pedagogy, are not discussed here.

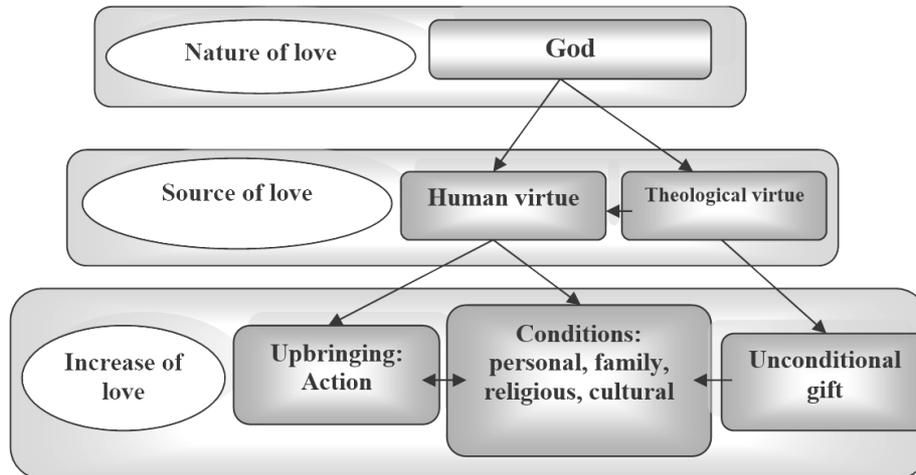
Connecting the truth about love with the truth about marriage and family is necessary to understand the inseparability of marital and family life and the faith life. The isolation of faith and religious life from the entirety of human life makes it harder or impossible to accept and understand the truth about Divine and human love, the perception of which can be completed only by means of the light of faith. The arguments of empiric sciences are not sufficient for man to base the creation of his most important relationships on a highly demanding concept, in which self-denial and self-sacrifice are important and valuable elements of human life. Not only the light of faith is needed for the implementation of that concept, but also its power.

Because of the above, the families' ministry's commitment to the care for the truthfulness of the message of Christian love should be seen as one of the basic areas of activity for the benefit of marriage and family. It is about a proper, precise set of terms, which, when adjusted to the development and cognitive capacity of believers, shall allow them to learn, understand and implement into life the ideal model of Christian love. It shall also allow them to create a comprehensive system of values in which God's love—understood as a purpose of an individual, as well as marital and family communal life, including love as an effective tool of communion with God, a tool of building one's own holiness and building the heavenly kingdom on earth—occupies the central position. The task of the families' ministry in the discussed aspect is presented in the figure below:

¹² Andrzej PASTWA, *Istotne elementy małżeństwa. W nurcie odnowy personalistycznej* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2007), 206, also available online, accessed November 3, 2016, http://www.sbc.org.pl/Content/72409/istotne_elementy_malzenstwa.pdf.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 230.

Fig. 1. Families' ministry for the distribution of the message of love



Source: own work

The figure presents three levels of the message of Christian love, which can be fully adopted to all the parts of the Church's life, hence also to marriage and family. The first level is the definition of the nature of love, derived from God's Revelation, in which He himself presents who He is, as Love, to the human. From that Revelation the human learns who he should become as God's image and as God's child. The second level points to two sources of love which the human has at his disposal for implementing God's love in him: it's his own, human and personal, potential included in nature and the gift of God, which constitutes a source of power for the development of that potential. Human virtue should be discussed in two fields: individual and community-oriented, because the human, as a social being, cannot develop his humanity—and especially so love—without the social aspect of his existence. We can see here that love is of divine and human nature, which is particularly accomplished in the sacramental marital love.¹⁴ At that level, the truth that an individual's limitations may hinder the expression of God's love in human life becomes obvious. The third level depicts the possibility of increasing love: the standard way in which Christian love develops through upbringing actions and personal, family, religious, and cultural contexts, and the unusual way, in which the human discovers and develops

¹⁴ Jerzy SZYRAN, *Dialogalny charakter przymierza małżeńskiego. Studium teologicznomoralne* (Niepokalanów: Wydawnictwo Ojców Franciszkanów, 2010), 78-83.

Christian love by means of special, Divine intervention. Those ways do not rule out one another, but contrary to that, they can cross, support, but also cancel out one another.

The families' ministry should take action on all those levels, after carrying out a diagnosis of the general or individual situation, which is supposed to show the type and scope of an adequate and effective intervention. On the first level, the nature of God's love should be explained; on the second, the awareness of both sources of love being necessary should be reinstated on the third level, the multi-factor theory of human development should be taken into account, in which genetic, environmental and personal capacity should always be complemented by a fourth factor—the intervention of the living God. Finally, it is worth mentioning that “by taking care of our intellect, opening it to the truth, we open it to love.”¹⁵

3. THE ORDER OF LOVE IN THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE FAMILIES' MINISTRY

Finding one's calling is a foundation of a successful Christian life.¹⁶ It is true that a human can, to a certain degree, revitalise his life after making a wrong decision, however, it is always only an implementation of a recovery plan towards what has been destroyed before. One of such decisions is the choice of the state of life, which is supposed to be an implementation of God's love into the world and the execution of God's plan of salvation for a particular person, and in him and through him, for the entire mankind. The decision of getting married, entering into the clergy, or living a consecrated life is actually an act of accepting God's will with regards to the way of loving which God has chosen for a particular person as the best, i.e. the most fruitful way of life, the foundation for personal holiness and the holiness of the Church.

¹⁵ Krzysztof A. WOJCIESZEK, “Dydaktyka filozofii w wiekach średnich. Model św. Tomasza z Akwinu,” *Przegląd Filozoficzny—Nowa Seria* 21(2012), 3/83: 386.

¹⁶ Cf. Waldemar SEREMAK, “Powołanie,” in *Leksykon duchowości katolickiej*, ed. Marek Chmielewski (Lublin–Kraków: Wydawnictwo M, 2002), 691-2, also available online, accessed November 4, 2016, http://www.kul.pl/files/777/Leksykon_duchowosci_katolickiej.pdf; Jarosław PASZYŃSKI, “Krótki traktat o powołaniu,” *Człowiek w Kulturze* 13(2000): 35-57, also available online, accessed November 3, 2016, <http://www.gilsonociety.pl/czlowiek-w-kulturze/czlowiek-w-kulturze-wydanie-on-line-on-line-edition/nr-13/>.

When recognising the marital calling, a person faces the necessity to recognise God's will regarding the choice of a specific person for a spouse. In the present cultural circumstances, the decision concerning the choice of a partner is often made only with the perspective of personal preference, expectations and desires of an individual in mind, without referring it to God's plan of salvation. The lack of a religious perspective in the choice of a spouse creates threats to the development of personal faith and holiness, as well as the faith and personal holiness of a future spouse. It is no longer a question of whether a person is supposed to love and how they are supposed to love. They must make the ultimate decision who to love, who in the name—or as a substitute of God—they should serve with their love, time and life. From the perspective of the present secularisation processes¹⁷ and the humanisation of marriage,¹⁸ it needs to be noted that the above-mentioned problem is often of little importance to an engaged couple, because it is not eternal happiness, but marital happiness which is emphasised the most. Marriage and marital love are treated as private matters, and even as a pure relationship, which reduces them to the human, and sometimes even individual, dimension, while not taking into consideration the community¹⁹ and religious aspects. An individualistic motivation when choosing a spouse—without considering the relationship with God—limits or excludes marriage from God's area of operation and from human cooperation with Him and His grace, because God never encroaches on human autonomy.

At this point, we reach the question of the order of love,²⁰ thanks to which a human can recognise his calling and make the right decisions from the earthly and eternal perspectives. This issue deserves special concern of the families' ministry because of the abovementioned processes of secularisation and humanisation, which impede Christian decision-making process. The question is explained by figures 2 and 3, which can be found below.

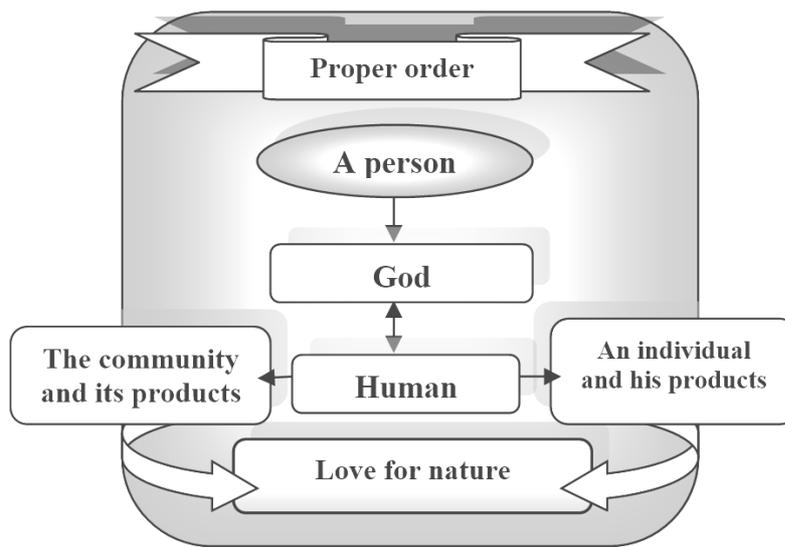
¹⁷ Cf. Piotr GUTOWSKI, "Czym jest 'nowy ateizm'?" in *Nauki przyrodnicze a nowy ateizm*, ed. Marek Słomka (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2012), 7-45.

¹⁸ A. PASTWA, *Istotne elementy małżeństwa*, 17.

¹⁹ Cf. Maciej MUSIAŁ, "Intymność a kultura. Czysta relacja Giddensa," *Filo-Sofija* 1(2011), 12: 352-5, 357-8, 347-60.

²⁰ K. A. WOJCIESZEK, "Dydaktyka filozofii w wiekach średnich," 383-6.

Fig. 2. The order of love as an education task of the families' ministry



Source: own work

The figure above presents the order of love which corresponds with the will of God, hence the proper order. In this order, love belongs primarily to persons, among whom the most important is the person of God. Only after granting Him the central place in the hierarchy of relations and the values connected with them can it be directed to others, whereas in this case love can be individual or communal in nature. The love for the community is expressed in the relationship towards the family of origin and generation, the nation and the state (the homeland) and other communities important for a human. The individual aspect covers the love for oneself and for another person. It needs to be noted that love for oneself supersedes in ordinary life order—according to St Thomas Aquinas—the love for other people and for communities.²¹ A certain type of love is also linked with the products of the people and communities loved by an individual, not because of their value *per se*, but because they represent those people and communities, symbolise their presence and create individual and intergenerational bonds of love. The love for nature is based on similar rules, as it is a sign of God's creational presence, as well as His gift and task for men,²² hence love for it is an expression of the love for God.

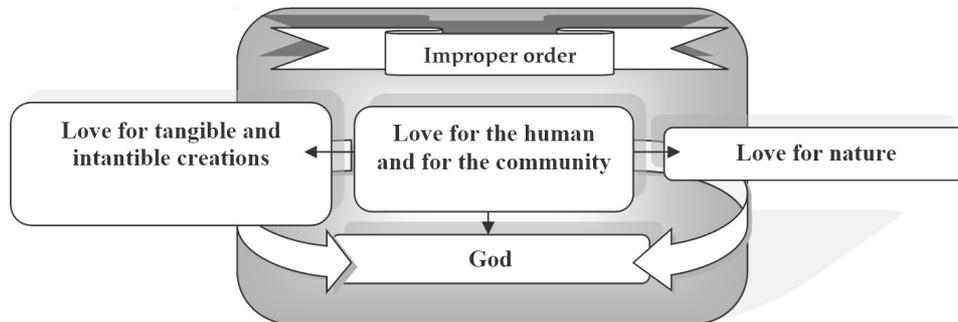
²¹ *Ibid.*, 383-4.

²² M. A. KRAPIEC, "Idea postępu w krzywym zwierciadle ekologii," 23-5.

This order should also be implemented in marriage and family, which means relating all the decisions of marital and family life to God's plan and putting the connection with God before the marital and family relations. The implementation of that order allows for the development of marriage's and family's potential included in God's plan of creation and salvation.

Any disturbance in the understanding of love can lead to a disturbance of the order of love, which is illustrated in the figure below.

Fig. 3. The order of love as an education task of the families' ministry



Source: own work

The third figure depicts the order of love which does not correspond to the will of God, hence a label: improper one. The activity of the families' ministry in that field needs to be intensive and directed at the wide audience of believers. It stems from the features of contemporary culture, which is focused on the individual,²³ their liberties and rights, the important results of which are narcissism²⁴ and consumerism.²⁵ The central position in this hierarchy is occupied by the human, his creations, and—often sanctified—nature. The improper order has the characteristics of total humanism, in which man is the measure of all things and the ultimate authority in differentiating between good and evil. Humanism, in that form, divinises man, making autonomy, self-fulfilment, possessiveness and rationality the main goals of

²³ K. SKOCZYŁAS, "Wychowanie chrześcijańskie wobec kultury indywidualizmu," 169-191; Beata PARYSIEWICZ, "Communio małżeńskie w kulturze aktywizmu i relatywizmu," in *Sens i wartość sakramentu małżeństwa*, ed. Andrzej Czaja et al. (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2008), 159-68.

²⁴ Cf. Magdalena SZPUNAR, "Od narcyzmu jednostki do narcyzmu kultury," *Kultura-Media-Teologia* 18(2014): 106-16; Magdalena SZPUNAR, *Kultura cyfrowego narcyzmu*, (Kraków: Wydawnictwa AGH, 2016), 219.

²⁵ Cf. Zygmunt BAUMAN, *Konsumowanie życia* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo UJ, 2009), 163.

human life,²⁶ in which there is no longer any room for God, truth, faith, calling, obedience, service and self-denial. The absolutisation of the human's part and removing God from an individual's life leads to the obliteration of the truth of human origin and his status as a creation and as a child of God. The human, who is the measure of all things, cannot have a God above him.

By distorting the order of love, the improper order not only makes it impossible to convey and accept the truth about love, but it also makes it impossible to convey and accept the truth about marriage and family as institutions originating from God and leading to Him. Love loses its status as a tool for building communion between people and God, and becomes a tool of satisfying the individualistically defined needs and wants of an individual.

The improper order twists the hierarchy of relationships and values, which restrains marriages and families, even despite maintaining their external features, from accomplishing the plan of salvation set out for them by God, which is crowned with the personal holiness of the spouses, their children and even the world. The human, marriage and family cease to be the image of God in the world and become a god in themselves.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article was to draw attention to the meaning of the doctrine of love from the point of view of pastoral care over family. The contemporary secularisation processes, individualism and humanism, which emancipate love, marriage and family from the influence of Christianity, lead to a neo-pagan vision of marriage and family, while maintaining their external, religious form. Candidates for marriage, spouses, parents and children, when deprived of living faith based on the healthy Catholic doctrine, open themselves up to "every sign of science" (Eph 4:14-15), which shows them the illusions of a perfect family life full of marital happiness. They are like ships "tossed to and fro" by lust, desires and the feeling of entitlement, which makes them vulnerable to "trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting" (Eph 4:14-15). As a result of losing the doctrinal aspect of love, marriage and family, believers reject God's authority in favour

²⁶ Piotr PRZYBYSZ, *Liberalna koncepcja jednostki a marksizm*, 2nd ed., ed. Leszek Nowak and Piotr Przybysz (Poznań: Zysk i S-ka, 1997), 135-157, also available online, accessed November 4, 2016, https://www.google.pl/search?q=Przybysz,+Marksizm,+liberalizm+pr%C3%B3by+wj%C5%9Bcia&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws_rd=cr&ei=Wz0NV6bpLenb6QSNtaLoAw.

of human authority, God's truth in favour of human knowledge, and God's law in favour of human norms, reducing faith to its emotional expression, and reducing God to a powerless companion of earthly life.

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