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## What to Do with Free Time? The Prospect of Strengthening Societal Security in the Opinion of Polish Theologians

The article is aimed at diagnosing the opinions of Polish theologians on the possibilities of parishes as regards organisation of free time of the faithful in order to consolidate societal security. The basis for formulating the presented conclusions were the results of empirical surveys conducted with members of the Society of Dogmatic Theologians operating in Poland (N=64). The test method used was a diagnostic survey, the technique – a questionnaire, and the research tool – a questionnaire form. A nonparametric chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test and the Spearman correlation analysis were used to analyse the results. The paper is of an interdisciplinary nature. It fits in the area of research pertinent to (pastoral) theology and security studies.

**Key words:** free time, societal security, Church, theologians, Poland.

## Introduction

Systematic reflection on free time<sup>1</sup> is clearly becoming an indispensable space for scientific inquiry.<sup>2</sup> It is spending free time that is a particularly big challenge for many young people,<sup>3</sup> who are often forced to fight for its proper filling. Nowadays, this fight is often aimed against new technologies – a source of many addictions standing in the way of individual development or setting relationships. Spending free time is not only a strictly intellectual problem, considered from the perspective of ethics<sup>4</sup> or pedagogics,<sup>5</sup> but also provokes exploration in relation to *praxis*. By nature man is a temporal creature, whose being in the world goes on between the poles delimited by work and free time. Hence, the current research challenge is to create assumptions that would allow us to properly define the relationship between these two mutually important areas of human existence.<sup>6</sup> Spending free time, which relates to all stages of human life and development, is becoming an increasingly important challenge also for contemporary pastoral activity of the Church<sup>7</sup>

The purpose of the in this article is to diagnose the opinion of Polish theologians affiliated in the Society of Dogmatic Theologians about the order to consolidate societal security. The research was motivated by the understanding of free time based on its negative definition – as the time free from the need expressed in the form of work. It is therefore the time that remains for a person after they have fulfilled their school, professional and household duties, and in which

<sup>1</sup> The article has been written as part of the project “Bezpieczeństwo narodowe – religia – historia” [National Security – Religion – History] carried out at the Interdisciplinary Research Centre of the University of Warsaw “Tożsamość – Dialog – Bezpieczeństwo” [Identity – Dialogue – Security].

<sup>2</sup> J.L. Rose, *Free Time*, Princeton 2016.

<sup>3</sup> G. Węgrzyn, D. Miłaszewicz, *Gospodarowanie rzeczywistymi zasobami czasu wolnego przez studentów – wybrane aspekty*, “Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu” 2018, No. 509, pp. 441-450.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M. Ickiewicz-Sawicka, *Etyczny wymiar czasu wolnego – wybrane aspekty*, “Akademia Zarządzania” 2021, No. 5(1), pp. 154-166; R. Strzelecki, *Etyka a czas*, “Kultura i Rozwój” 2017, Vol. 4(5)/101, pp. 96-102.

<sup>5</sup> J. Pięta, *Pedagogika czasu wolnego*, Warszawa 2004.

<sup>6</sup> B. Kolny, *Czas wolny w świetle zrównoważonego rozwoju*, “Konsumpcja i Rozwój” 2014, Vol. 2(7), pp. 28-38.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. M. Ostrowski, *Kultura wolnego czasu*, in: *Kościół w życiu publicznym. Teologia polska i europejska wobec nowych wyzwań*, Vol. 2, *Materiały spotkań sekcyjnych*, K. Gózdź, K. Klauza, Cz. Rychlicki, H. Słotwińska, P. Szczur (eds.), Lublin 2004, pp. 279-291.

they do whatever fits their needs and interests.<sup>8</sup> Understood as a social and cultural phenomenon, it can be used for rest, entertainment, charitable or self-fulfilment activities, and its basic characteristics are sought by researchers in being voluntary and autotelic.<sup>9</sup>

Considering the ever growing interest in the issue of free time in the last decades,<sup>10</sup> it is worth to bear in mind the need of modern man to use this time for regeneration of psychophysical forces and development, including spiritual development. The danger lurks in wasting it on activities that threaten human physical, mental or social health. At the same time, – which should not be forgotten – the origin of many social pathologies is the lack of skills, opportunities or needs for quality leisure time. That is why the benefit of free time requires awakening the needs of a higher order and the aspirations to meet them, and above all – the ability to use it.<sup>11</sup> It is to be expected that in the research in the area of security studies,<sup>12</sup> including those concerning societal security,<sup>13</sup> the issue of free time will be an increasingly frequent research topic.

<sup>8</sup> T. Wujek, *Praca domowa i czynny wypoczynek ucznia*, Warszawa 1975.

<sup>9</sup> E. Tarkowska, *Czas społeczny a czas wolny: koncepcje i współczesne przemiany*, in: *Kobieta i kultura czasu wolnego*, A. Żarnowska, A. Szwarc (eds.), Warszawa 2001, p. 20. However, the second of these free time activities – autotelicity could be questioned. Its spending can be understood in the context of something subordinate to work, as a period of gaining the strength and regeneration of forces needed to perform it.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. J. Pięta, *Pedagogika czasu wolnego*, Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki 2014; E. Tarkowska, *Czas w społeczeństwie. Problemy, tradycje, kierunki badań*, Warszawa 1987; B. Gruszyn, *Czas wolny – aktualna problematyka*, Warszawa 1970.

<sup>11</sup> I. Urych, *Kultura fizyczna w kształtowaniu bezpieczeństwa zdrowotnego*, Warszawa 2018, pp. 11-113.

<sup>12</sup> We assume after Waldemar Kitler that: “The purpose of research in security studies is to identify cultural, material-energy and social conditions that affect the living and development conditions of the individual in a state, a social group (nation), a state and an international environment, defining the rules and forms of organising and protecting against negative factors of the natural, social and cultural environment for these entities, as well as determining the rights and regularities occurring in this respect.” W. Kitler, *Organizacja Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Aspekty ustrojowe, prawno-administracyjne i systemowe*, Toruń 2017, pp. 21-22.

<sup>13</sup> After Aleksandra Skrabacz and Stanisław Sulowski we assume that societal security is: “protection of existential foundations of people’s lives, providing an opportunity to meet individual (material and spiritual) needs and to implement life aspirations by creating conditions for work and study, health protection and pension guarantees.” Societal security therefore covers all legal, organisational and educational activities that are carried out by governmental, non-governmental

## Theological perspective

Passing to the main part of the research, it is first worth reflecting on the perspective of thinking about time that has been developed within Catholic theology. It may be assumed that since the studied group of respondents is made up of theologians, their thinking about spending free time will in a sense be conditioned theologically. Let us note that as regards the issue of time, the biblical sources are particularly abundant.<sup>14</sup> Already over twenty-five years ago, Professor Father Stanisław Bielecki of the Catholic University of Lublin wrote in the initial sentences of his book concerning the issue of time in the epistles of St. Paul:

The problem of the right way for a Christian to experience time is becoming more and more acute nowadays. Although this is a problem that is primarily related to the practice of everyday living, it nevertheless requires theoretical studies. Christian theology is constantly facing the challenge of continuous quest so as to extract doctrinal topics from the treasury of revelation that would be close to the mentality and needs of modern man.<sup>15</sup>

Systematic reflection on time led the researcher to thinking not only about “the right way to experience time,” but also to recognize the challenge posed by the issue of time for pastoral theology. In the last sentences of the book cited above, the scholar arrives at a conclusion:

For a modern Christian, time is a nonempty χρόνος of entertainment and amusement, but salvific καιρός – an opportunity to sow for an eschatological harvest by doing good. Καιρός – is a time of constant readiness for Parousia and constant fight against inner and external adversities. It may be said that the word καιρός summarizes all that is connected with the Christian way of experiencing time. Can pastoral theology be indifferent to this issue?<sup>16</sup>

The Christian theological reflection on time made it possible to isolate a specific mental current referred to as kairology, which can also

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and local government entities, as well as by citizens themselves. They are aimed at providing a specific standard of living for people, social groups, families, as well as at preventing their marginalization and social exclusion. Cf. A. Skrabacz, S. Sulowski, *Wstęp*, in: *Bezpieczeństwo społeczne. Pojęcia. Uwarunkowania. Wyzwania*, A. Skrabacz, A. Sulowski (eds.), Warszawa 2012, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. A. Jankowski, *Biblijna teologia czasu*, Kraków 2018.

<sup>15</sup> S. Bielecki, *Kαιρός chrześcijanina w ujęciu listów św. Pawła*, Lublin 1996, p. 27.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 409.

be understood as a space for the pastoral activity of the Church.<sup>17</sup> The specification of this mental current was possible thanks to the research of the German Protestant theologian and philosopher Paul Tillich (1886-1965).<sup>18</sup> His theological and philosophical reflections relating to socio-political life (including socialism) had a great impact on theological research on Kairos.<sup>19</sup> Therefrom emerges a Christocentric view of history.<sup>20</sup> Theological research based on the distinction between *καιρός* and *χρόνος* allow one to speak about time perceived also qualitatively and not only quantitatively. Christological reflection on history allows us to view every historical moment as an open door of eternity. Analysing Joseph Ratzinger's thoughts on time, Grzegorz Barth concludes that "The earthly and temporal existence of a Christian is already now being shaped by the ultimate. Eternity is the content of time."<sup>21</sup>

The theological reflection on time, the carrying force of which is Christology, is permeated with contents that have been developed in the course of research in the theology of history and theology of the signs of time. In Christ, eternity not only "entered" time, but became "accessible"; human history has gained eternal significance, the tension between time and eternity has been overcome.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, experiencing

<sup>17</sup> Cf. A.L. Szafranski, *Kairologia. Zarys nauki o Kościele w świecie współczesnym*, Lublin 1990.

<sup>18</sup> Of particular significance are the texts written in the period before leaving Germany. Cf. P. Tillich, *Der Widerstreit von Raum und Zeit. Schriften zur Geschichtsphilosophie, Gesammelte Werke VI*, Stuttgart 1963. The thought about time is scattered with varying quantitative and qualitative intensity in other works of the thinker. Cf. P. Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought, from its Judaic and Hellenistic Origins to Existentialism*, ed. C.E. Braaten, New York 1972; P. Tillich, *Beyond Religious Socialism*, "Christian Century" 1949, Vol. 66(24), pp. 732-733; P. Tillich, *The Shaking of the Foundations*, New York 1948; P. Tillich, *The Protestant Era*, trans. J.L. Adams, Chicago 1948; P. Tillich, *Religion and Secular Culture*, "The Journal of Religion" 1946, Vol. 26(2), pp. 79-86; P. Tillich, *Nietzsche and the Bourgeois Spirit*, "Journal of the History of Ideas" 1945, Vol. 6(3), pp. 307-309, P. Tillich, *The Interpretation of History*, New York 1936.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. E.R. Earle, *The Rhetoric of Kairos: Paul Tillich's Reinterpretation*, "Journal of Communication and Religion" 2017, Vol. 40(4), pp. 24-36; W. Schüssler, *Kairos. Dimensionen eines zentralen Begriffs im philosophisch-theologischen Werk Paul Tillichs*, "Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift" 2014, Vol. 2, pp. 110-122; S. Bielecki, *Poglądy Paula Tillicha na temat kairos a współczesne opracowania teologii pastoralnej*, "Roczniki Teologiczne" 2000, Vol. 47(6), pp. 143-162.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. S. Bielecki, *Poglądy Paula Tillicha na temat kairos...*, p. 146.

<sup>21</sup> G. Barth, *Czas w teologii. Myśląc z Josephem Ratzingerem*, "Verbum Vitae" 2020, Vol. 38/1, p. 381.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. B. Tóth, *Eternity in Time – Time in Eternity: Temporality and the Human Self in the Eschaton*, "Irish Theological Quarterly" 2019, Vol. 84/4, pp. 373-391;

time, also including free time, is always associated with experiencing the sense of life. Pastoral proposals will probably need to be increasingly filled with offers concerning organisation of free time.

## Research methodology

The article is aimed at diagnosing the opinions of Polish theologians on the possibilities of parishes as regards organisation of free time of the faithful in order to consolidate societal security. The analysis of the results of empirical studies presented in this article, which is an essential stage in achieving the research objective, has allowed to answer the following research questions:

- What characteristics and functions of free time are identified by theologians in their opinions?
- What factors influence contemporary people's decisions on how to spend their free time?
- How are the features of free time activities offered by parishes defined?
- What forms of free time activities are organised by parishes, and what is their impact on the parishioners?
- How does the nature of free time activities offered by parishes affect the faithful?

To diagnose the opinions of the respondents on the possibilities of organising free time of the faithful by parishes in order to consolidate societal security the test method a diagnostic survey, the technique – a questionnaire, and the research tool – a questionnaire form were used.<sup>23</sup> The conducted research was quantitative in nature. The questions included in the survey questionnaire were closed-ended, with an option for respondents to select 'other' in some instances and indicate their own opinions.

The survey was carried out between 12 and 14 September 2022 and interviewed were 64 members of the Dogmatic Theologians Society.<sup>24</sup>

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K. Gózdź, *Czas a wieczność według Josepha Ratzingera/Benedykta XVI*, "Studia Nauk Teologicznych PAN" 2017, Vol. 12, pp. 155-171; V. Lomuscio, *From Temporality to Eternity: Three Philosophical Approaches*, "Religious Inquiries" 2015, Vol. 7/4, pp. 17-30; A. Jackelén, *Time and Eternity. The Question of Time in Church, Science, and Theology*, Philadelphia-London 2005; J. Barbour, *The End of Time. The Next Revolution in Physics*, Oxford 1999; Cz.S. Bartnik, *Teologia historii*, Lublin 1999.

<sup>23</sup> J. Sztumski, *Wstęp do metodologii i technik badań społecznych*, Katowice 2010, pp. 190-192.

<sup>24</sup> Hereafter: DTS.

It is an organisation that affiliates (as at the time of the survey) 239 scholars occupied in their scientific and didactic work with dogmatic theology. Looking at this group from the scientific point of view, it is made up of 87 professors, 133 doctors, 19 masters (doctoral students). They represent diocesan and monastic seminaries as well as the following scientific centres: John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Adam Mickiewicz University (Poznań), Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University (Warsaw), Nicolaus Copernicus University (Toruń), University of Opole, John Paul II Pontifical University in Krakow, University of Szczecin, University of Silesia in Katowice, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, University of Białystok, University of Warsaw, Catholic Academy in Warsaw, Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław, Thomistic Institute of the Polish Dominican Province, College of Philosophy and Theology of the Polish Dominican Province. DTS members work at all theological faculties, are lecturers, and often also formateurs, in all theological seminaries in Poland. The majority of the members are priests – 198, and there are also 14 bishops who are members of the Society. As regards lay members, there are 27 people – 12 women (including 2 nuns) and 15 men.<sup>25</sup>

At its 335<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, which took place in Warsaw on 8-9 March 2006, the Polish Episcopal Conference endowed DTS, as a private association of the faithful operating in Poland, with ecclesiastical juridical personality as defined by Can. 322 of the Code of Canon Law. The DTA articles provide that the Society is scientifically oriented<sup>26</sup> and its objectives are as follows:

- analysing the situation of man, world and Church in light of Divine Revelation;
- promoting theology in ecclesial and academic communities;
- supporting doctrinal works of the Polish Episcopal Conference;
- organising scientific seminars and symposia;
- concern for teaching dogmatic theology.

Those objectives are attained in particular through:

- promoting contacts between theologians and ecumenical dialogue, interreligious dialogue and dialogue between theology and culture;
- issuing own magazine and other publications;
- cooperation with theological societies, also from other countries;

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Wykaz członków (wrzesień 2022) TTD*, Archiwum Towarzystwa Teologów Dogmatyków.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *Statut Towarzystwa Teologów Dogmatyków*, Chapter 1, § 1, p. 2, Archiwum Konferencji Episkopatu Polski.



- cooperation with scientific and ecclesiastical institutions;
- a scientific session organised at least once a year.<sup>27</sup>

It was at such a scientific session, held in the form of a scientific conference in Legnica on 12-14 September 2022, the survey the results of which have been published in this article was conducted. The event took place at the House of the Word Evangelising Formation Centre. 64 DTS members took part in the survey. According to the data contained in the DTS Archive, over the last six years, 60 to 70 people attended scientific conferences organised by the Society annually.<sup>28</sup> This indicates that the 64 survey participants are actively engaged in the Catholic Church's activities. Therefore, their insights regarding the parishes' abilities to utilize the free time of the faithful in enhancing societal security are deemed to be significant. The study's findings gain further importance due to the influential role of the research group within the church community, which contributes to forming opinions.

The selection of respondents was purposeful with a view to their profession and knowledge about the subject of the study. The largest group of respondents were people aged 41 to 70, as well as those from a town of over 100,000 inhabitants (see Table 1).

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents with a view to age and place of residence

Variable		n	%	Statistical test result*
Age	Less than 40	15	23.4	$\chi^2(3) = 22.25;$ $p < 0.001$
	41-55	23	35.9	
	56-70	25	39.1	
	>70	1	1.6	
Place of residence	Village	3	4.7	$\chi^2(3) = 80.88;$ $p < 0.001$
	Small town (from 20 to 50 thou.) inhabitants	6	9.4	
	Medium town (from 50 to 100 thou.) inhabitants	8	12.5	
	Large city (over 100 thou. inhabitants)	47	73.4	

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, Chapter 2, § 5.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Archiwum Towarzystwa Teologów Dogmatyków.



The IBM SPSS Statistics 25 package was used for statistical analysis of the results. The analysis with the chi-square test made it possible to check whether the compared groups of people are equal in number, as well as whether there is a statistically significant relationship between nominal variables. The effect was measured using the Cramer's V factor. On the other hand, using Spearman correlation analysis it was checked whether there was a statistically significant relationship between the analysed variables. The value of  $p < 0.05$  was adopted as a statistically significant level.

## Results of empirical research

### Characteristics of free time and its functions

The analysis of the research results made it possible to determine the characteristics of free time in the opinion of the theologians surveyed, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of free time in the opinion of the priests surveyed

Statement	Fully agree		Rather agree		No opinion		Rather disagree		Fully disagree		Statistical test result*
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
A characteristic feature of free time is that it is not spent for money but for pleasure	12	18.8	24	37.5	13	20.3	9	14.1	6	9.4	$\chi^2(4) = 14.59;$ $p = 0.006$
Free time means there is no haste; there is peace, contemplation, freeing oneself from duties and pressures	26	40.6	24	37.5	5	7.8	7	10.9	2	3.1	$\chi^2(4) = 39.91;$ $p < 0.001$
Free time may be filled with rest, play and social, sports, artistic and other activities taken up on one's own, for self-development, self-education	43	67.2	20	31.1	0	0	1	1.6	0	0	$\chi^2(2) = 41.47;$ $p < 0.001$

Statement	Fully agree		Rather agree		No opinion		Rather disagree		Fully disagree		Statistical test result*
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Free time may be used for family or social life	48	75	15	23.4	1	1.6	0	0	0	0	$\chi^2(2) = 54.59;$ $p < 0.001$
Free time may be used for activities that bring immediate benefits	23	35.9	25	39.1	5	7.8	8	12.5	3	4.7	$\chi^2(4) = 33.81;$ $p < 0.001$
Nowadays free time is used for consumption	16	25	33	51.6	10	15.6	3	4.7	2	3.1	$\chi^2(4) = 49.91;$ $p < 0.001$
Alcoholism, hooliganism, crime, drug addiction and other pathologies result from inability to spend quality free time	18	28.1	25	39.1	7	10.9	12	18.8	2	3.1	$\chi^2(4) = 25.53;$ $p < 0.001$

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

The conducted survey shows that the majority of respondents agree with three features of free time, namely:

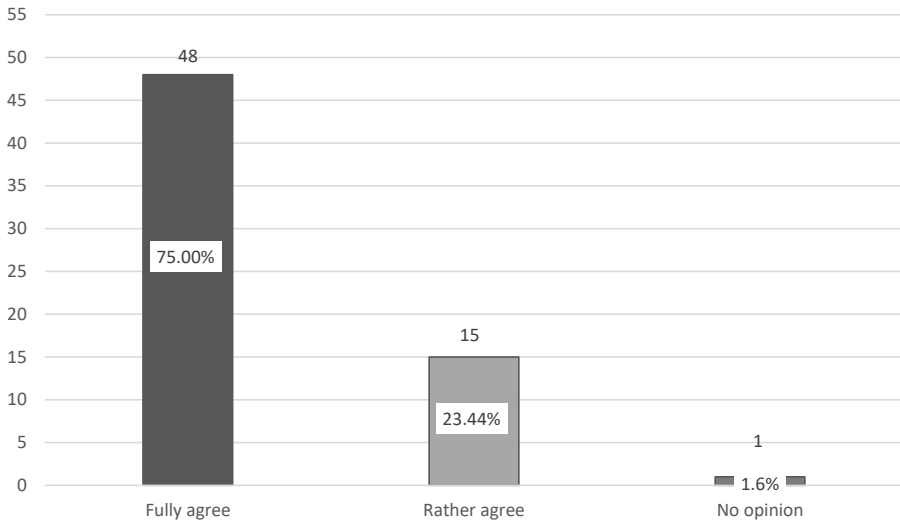
- free time means there is no haste; there is peace, contemplation, freeing oneself from duties and pressures;
- free time may be filled with rest, play and social, sports, artistic and other activities taken up on one's own, for self-development, self-education;
- free time may be used for family or social life.

As regards the other definitions of free time, most of the respondents said they rather agreed with them. However, in the case of two statements, a small, though slightly larger group of respondents in relation to the other definitions expressed the opinion that they rather disagreed with them. It concerns statements indicating that:

- alcoholism, hooliganism, crime, drug addiction and other pathologies result from inability to spend quality free time;
- a characteristic feature of free time is that it is not spent for money but for pleasure.

Out of the statements listed in Table 2, the utmost compliance is that free time can be used for family or social life (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Opinions of the respondents concerning the fact that free time may be used for family or social life.



Source: own research.

In addition, out of the subsequent statements concerning free time, there are also two that show a statistically significant relationship with the age of the surveyed people. The older the person, the more they agree that alcoholism, hooliganism, crime, drug addiction and other pathologies result from inability to spend quality free time. The opposite situation, i.e. a positive relationship concerns the statement indicating that free time can be used for activities that brings immediate benefits (Table 3).

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Table 3. Relationship between the age of the respondents and their opinion on the selected statements concerning free time

Statement	$r_s$	p
A characteristic feature of free time is that it is not spent for money but for pleasure	-0.23	0.07
Free time means there is no haste; there is peace, contemplation, freeing oneself from duties and pressures	-0.16	0.21
Free time may be filled with rest, play and social, sports, artistic and other activities taken up on one's own, for self-development, self-education	-0.08	0.54

Free time may be used for family or social life	-0.15	0.23
Free time may be used for activities that bring immediate benefits	0.27	0.03
Nowadays free time is used for consumption	-0.1	0.42
Alcoholism, hooliganism, crime, drug addiction and other pathologies result from inability to spend quality free time	-0.34	0.007

Source: own research.

### Factors influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people

The factors that, according to most of the theologians surveyed, statistically significantly affect the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people include: friends, peers, and the Internet. As regards television and personal decisions, contradictory answers were given. The respondents' opinions as regards the factors influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Respondents' opinions as regards the factors influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people

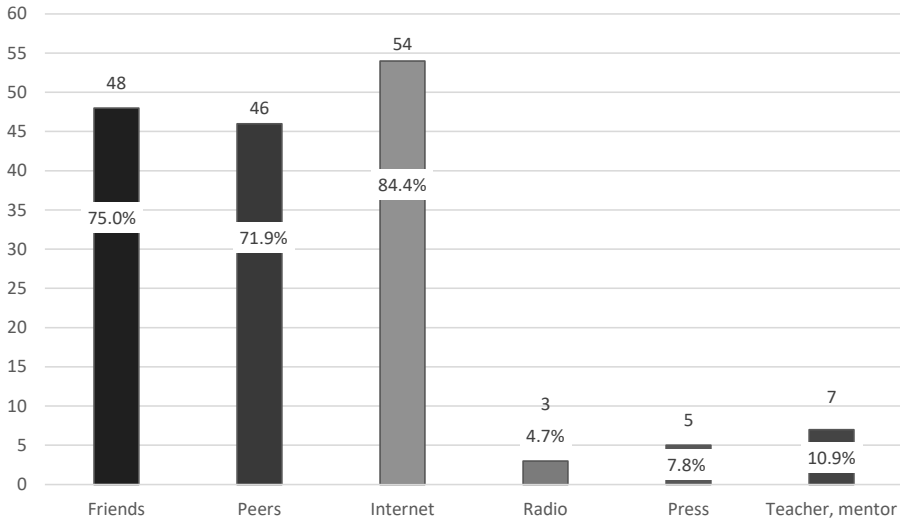
Factors influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people	-		+		Statistical test result*
	n	%	n	%	
Friends	16	25	48	75	$\chi^2(1) = 16; p < 0.001$
Peers	18	28.1	46	71.9	$\chi^2(1) = 12.25; p < 0.001$
Books	56	87.5	8	12.5	$\chi^2(1) = 36; p < 0.001$
Press	59	92.2	5	7.8	$\chi^2(1) = 45.56; p < 0.001$
Teacher, mentor	57	89.1	7	10.9	$\chi^2(1) = 39.06; p < 0.001$
Radio	61	95.3	3	4.7	$\chi^2(1) = 52.56; p < 0.001$
Internet	10	15.6	54	84.4	$\chi^2(1) = 30.25; p < 0.001$
Family member	44	68.8	20	31.2	$\chi^2(1) = 9; p = 0.003$
Religion, priest, catechist	52	81.3	12	18.7	$\chi^2(1) = 25; p < 0.001$
Television	38	59.4	26	40.6	$\chi^2(1) = 2.25; p = 0.13$
Parents	51	79.7	13	20.3	$\chi^2(1) = 22.56; p < 0.001$
Personal decision	39	60.9	25	39.1	$\chi^2(1) = 3.06; p = 0.08$

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

Figure 2 represents three main factors influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people and factors selected by the least number of respondents.

Figure 2. Respondents' opinions on factors influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people.



Source: own research.

Figure 2 represents three main and selected by the least number of respondents factors influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people. A smaller percentage of the oldest respondents indicated television, whereas in the case of a personal decision, it was indicated primarily by the youngest people (see Table 5).

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Table 5. Relationship between the respondents' age and their opinions as regards the factors influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people

Who/what is influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people	Less than 40 years				41-55 years				> 55 years				Statistical test result*
	-		+		-		+		-		+		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Friends	3	20	12	80	6	26.1	17	73.9	7	26.9	19	73.1	$\chi^2(2) = 2.66;$ $p = 0.88$
Peers	2	13.3	13	86.7	7	30.4	16	69.6	9	34.6	17	65.4	$\chi^2(2) = 2.23;$ $p = 0.33$

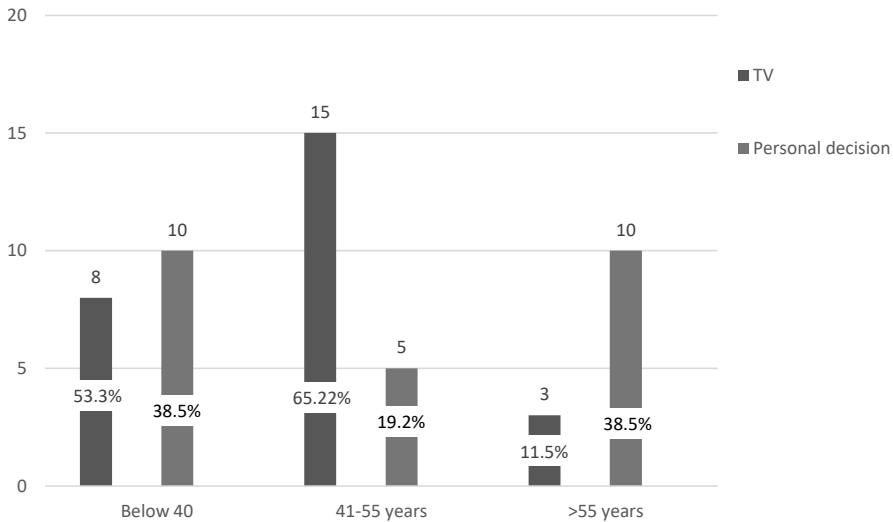
Who/what is influencing the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people	Less than 40 years				41-55 years				>55 years				Statistical test result*
	-		+		-		+		-		+		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Books	12	80	3	20	20	87	3	13	24	92.3	2	7.7	$\chi^2(2) = 1.33$ ; p = 0.52
Press	15	100	0	0	20	87	3	13	24	92.3	2	7.7	$\chi^2(2) = 2.15$ ; p = 0.34
Teacher, mentor	13	86.7	2	13.3	20	87	3	13	24	92.3	2	7.7	$\chi^2(2) = 0.47$ ; p = 0.79
Radio	15	100	0	0	21	91.3	2	8.7	25	96.2	1	3.8	$\chi^2(2) = 1.61$ ; p = 0.45
Internet	2	13.3	13	86.7	3	13	20	87	5	19.2	21	80.8	$\chi^2(2) = 0.43$ ; p = 0.81
Family member	8	53.3	7	46.7	16	69.6	7	30.4	20	76.9	6	23.1	$\chi^2(2) = 2.48$ ; p = 0.29
Religion, priest, catechist	13	86.7	2	13.3	19	82.6	4	17.4	20	76.9	6	23.1	$\chi^2(2) = 0.64$ ; p = 0.73
Television	7	46.7	8	53.3	8	34.8	15	65.2	23	88.5	3	11.5	$\chi^2(2) = 15.89$ ; p < 0.001; Vcr = 0.5
Parents	11	73.3	4	26.7	17	73.9	6	26.1	23	88.5	3	11.5	$\chi^2(2) = 2.09$ ; p = 0.35
Personal decision	5	33.3	10	66.7	18	78.3	5	21.7	16	61.5	10	38.5	$\chi^2(2) = 7.71$ ; p = 0.02; Vcr = 0.35

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

It should be pointed out that a stronger relationship is characteristic of television (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Relationship between the age of respondents and their opinions that it is television and personal decision that influence the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people.

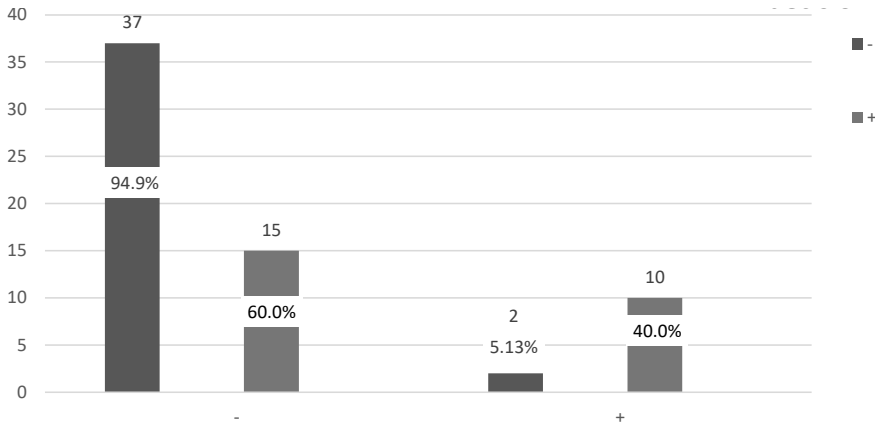


Source: own research.

Subsequent statistically significant relationships regarding factors influencing decisions made in connection with spending free time by contemporary people relate to the correlation of the response “personal decision” with the response “religion, priest and catechist”, where:  $\chi^2(1) = 12.16$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ;  $V_{cr} = 0.44$ . In the group of theologians indicating a personal decision, fewer of them chose religion, priest and catechist (see Figure 4).



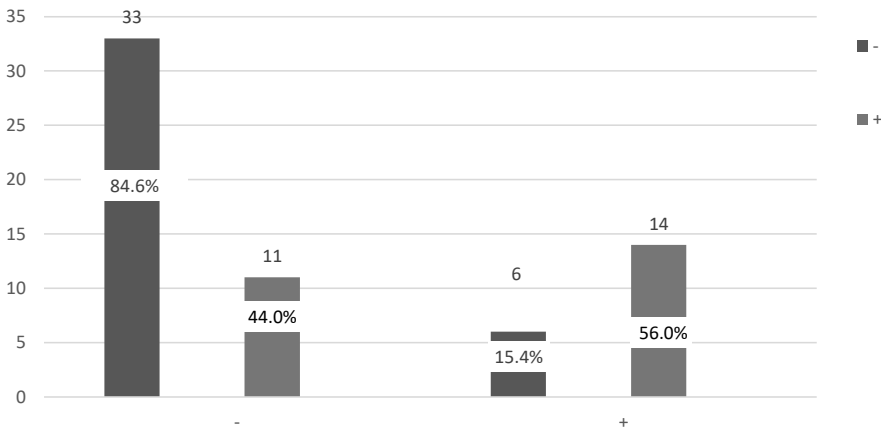
Figure 4. Relationship between factors indicated by respondents as influencing the decision how to spend free time, i.e. religion, priest and catechist and a personal decision.



Source: own research.

A statistically significant relationship also applies to the response “a family member”, where:  $\chi^2(1) 11.7$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ;  $V_{cr} = 0.43$ . In the group of respondents indicating such factors as a personal decision, a larger percentage of them also chose a family member (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Relationship between factors indicated by respondents as influencing the decision how to spend free time, i.e. a family member and a personal decision.



Source: own research.

### Characteristics of free time organised by parishes

A statistically significant majority of the theologians surveyed indicated such features that characterise free time activities organised by parishes as self-improvement, rest, development of personal talents and formation of community leaders (see Table 6).

Table 6. Characteristics of free time organised by parishes

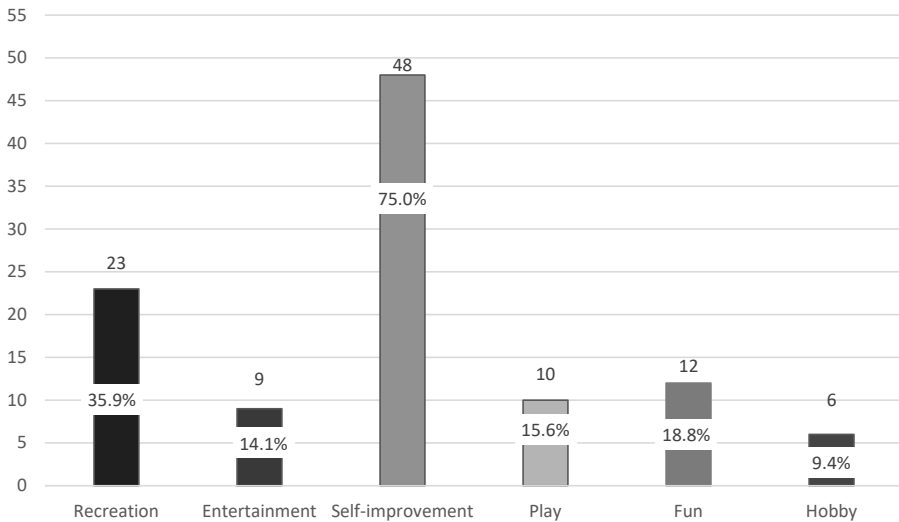
Characteristic of free time	-		+		Statistical test result*
	n	%	n	%	
Recreation	41	64.1	23	35.9	$\chi^2(1) = 5.06; p = 0.02$
Entertainment	55	85.9	9	14.1	$\chi^2(1) = 33.06; p < 0.001$
Self-improvement	16	25	48	75	$\chi^2(1) = 16; p < 0.001$
Rest	37	57.8	27	42.2	$\chi^2(1) = 1.56; p = 0.21$
Play	54	84.4	10	15.6	$\chi^2(1) = 30.25; p < 0.001$
Development of personal talents	39	60.9	25	39.1	$\chi^2(1) = 3.06; p = 0.08$
Fun	52	81.3	12	18.8	$\chi^2(1) = 25; p < 0.001$
Hobby	58	90.6	6	9.4	$\chi^2(1) = 42.25; p < 0.001$
Formation of community leaders	31	48.4	33	51.6	$\chi^2(1) = 0.06; p = 0.8$

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

The variables for which there were statistically significant differences in the number of analysed characteristics of free time organised by parishes are illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Percentage of the respondents indicating selected characteristics of free time organised by parishes.



Source: own research.

As regards the characteristics of free time activities organised by parishes, one statistically significant relationship was observed. It concerns rest. It is quite strong. This category was indicated mostly by the youngest people (see Table 7) and is most applicable to rest (see Figure 7).

Table 7. Relationship between the age of the respondents and their opinions concerning the characteristics of free time activities organised by parishes

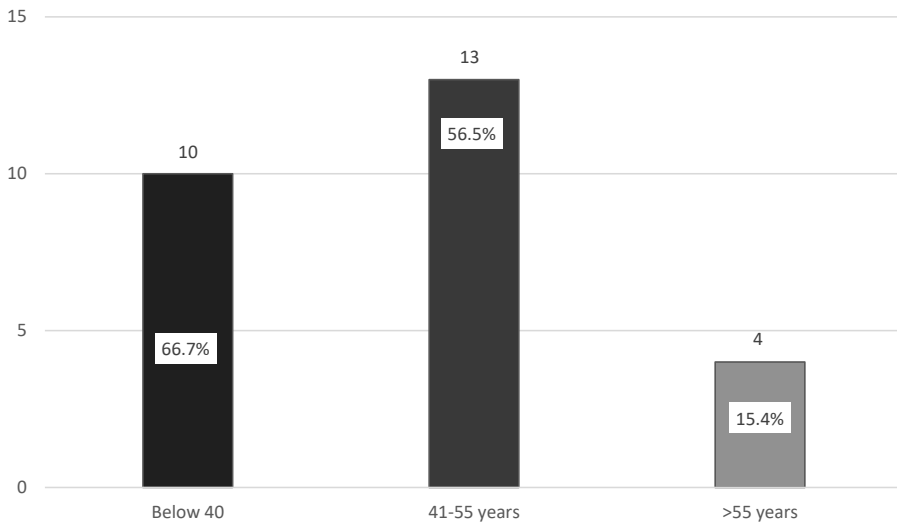
Characteristics of free time activities organised by parishes	Less than 40 years				41-55 years				>55 years				Statistical test result*
	-		+		-		+		-		+		
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Recreation	6	40	9	60	16	69.6	7	30.4	19	73.1	7	26.9	$\chi^2(2) = 4.99$ ; $p = 0.08$
Entertainment	11	73.3	4	26.7	21	91.3	2	8.7	23	88.5	3	11.5	$\chi^2(2) = 2.66$ ; $p = 0.27$
Self-improvement	4	26.7	11	73.3	7	30.4	16	69.6	5	19.2	21	80.8	$\chi^2(2) = 0.85$ ; $p = 0.66$
Rest	5	33.3	10	66.7	10	43.5	13	56.5	22	84.6	4	15.4	$\chi^2(2) = 13.28$ ; $p = 0.001$ ; $V_{cr} = 0.46$

Characteristics of free time activities organised by parishes	Less than 40 years				41-55 years				>55 years				Statistical test result*
	-		+		-		+		-		+		
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Play	13	86.7	2	13.3	19	82.6	4	17.4	22	84.6	4	15.4	$\chi^2(2) = 0.12;$ $p = 0.94$
Development of personal talents	9	60	6	40	17	73.9	6	26.1	13	50	13	50	$\chi^2(2) = 2.94;$ $p = 0.23$
Fun	10	66.7	5	33.3	20	87	3	13	22	84.6	4	15.4	$\chi^2(2) = 2.78;$ $p = 0.25$
Hobby	14	93.3	1	6.7	22	95.7	1	4.3	22	84.6	4	15.4	$\chi^2(2) = 1.92;$ $p = 0.38$
Formation of community leaders	9	60	6	40	12	52.2	11	47.8	10	38.5	16	61.5	$\chi^2(2) = 1.97;$ $p = 0.37$

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

Figure 7. Relationship between the age of the respondents and their opinions that rest is the characteristic of free time activities organised by parishes.



Source: own research.

### Free time activities organised by parishes

Among the forms of spending free time organised by parishes, a statistically significant majority of the theologians surveyed indicated

meetings of rosary circles and meetings of altar boys. Answers are different in connection with meetings developing personal talents, meetings of girl servants to Mary, organisation of day camps or winter camps, and sports activities. As regards other forms, the answers given by the respondents are characterized by variance. They include: meetings of parish choirs, organisation of summer for children, picnics, family meetings and meetings connected with the functioning of Caritas (see Table 8).

Table 8. Respondents' opinions concerning free time activities organised by parishes

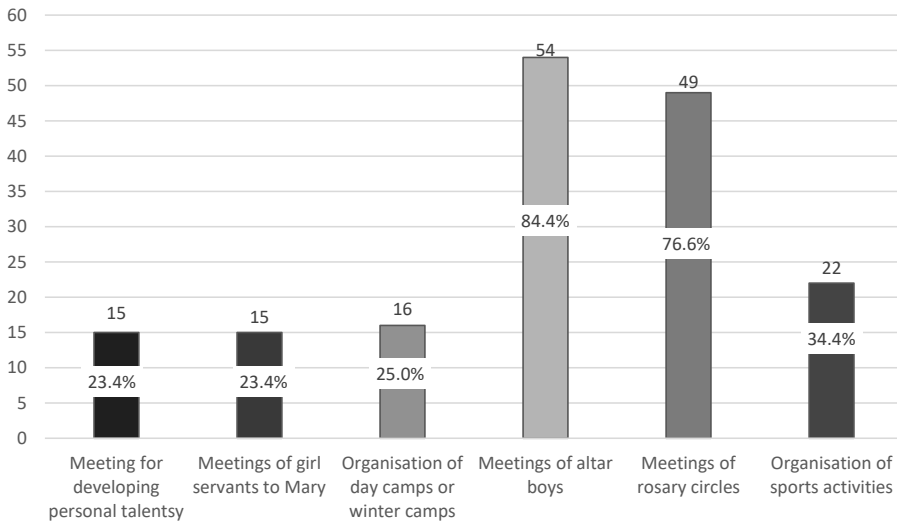
Free time activities organised by parishes	-		+		Statistical test result*
	n	%	N	%	
Meetings of parish choir	32	50	32	50	$\chi^2(1) = 0;$ $p = 1$
Organisation of summer camps for children	39	60.9	25	39.1	$\chi^2(1) = 3.06;$ $p = 0.08$
Meetings for developing personal talents	49	76.6	15	23.4	$\chi^2(1) = 18.06;$ $p < 0.001$
Meetings connected with the functioning of Caritas	32	50	32	50	$\chi^2(1) = 0;$ $p = 1$
Meetings of girl servants to Mary	49	76.6	15	23.4	$\chi^2(1) = 18.06;$ $p < 0.001$
Organisation of day camps or winter camps	48	75	16	25	$\chi^2(1) = 16;$ $p < 0.001$
Organisation of picnics, family meetings	32	50	32	50	$\chi^2(1) = 0;$ $p = 1$
Meetings of altar boys	10	15.6	54	84.4	$\chi^2(1) = 30.25;$ $p < 0.001$
Meetings of rosary circles	15	23.4	49	76.6	$\chi^2(1) = 18.06;$ $p < 0.001$
Organisation of sports activities	42	65.6	22	34.4	$\chi^2(1) = 6.25;$ $p = 0.01$

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

Free time spending forms for which statistically significant differences in numbers were found are shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Respondents' opinions concerning some of free time activities organised by parishes.



Source: own research.

As regards free time activities organised by parishes, no statistically significant relationship were observed. Also in terms of percentages the number of people among respondents from individual age groups who indicated the forms of free time activities presented in the table below is similar (see Table 9).

Table 9. Relationship between the age of the respondents and their opinions concerning free time activities organised by parishes

Free time activities organised by parishes	Less than 40 years				41-55 years				>55 years				Statistical test result*
	-		+		-		+		-		+		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Meetings of parish choir	5	33.3	10	66.7	11	47.8	12	52.2	16	61.5	10	38.5	$\chi^2(2) = 3.1;$ $p = 0.21$
Organisation of summer camps for children	9	60	6	40	14	60.9	9	39.1	16	61.5	10	38.5	$\chi^2(2) = 0.01;$ $p = 1$
Meetings for developing personal talents	12	80	3	20	20	87	3	13	17	65.4	9	34.6	$\chi^2(2) = 3.29;$ $p = 0.19$

Free time activities organised by parishes	Less than 40 years				41-55 years				>55 years				Statistical test result*
	-		+		-		+		-		+		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Meetings connected with the functioning of Caritas	10	66.7	5	33.3	13	56.5	10	43.5	9	34.6	17	65.4	$\chi^2(2) = 4.52;$ $p = 0.1$
Meetings of girl servants to Mary	12	80	3	20	14	60.9	9	39.1	23	88.5	3	11.5	$\chi^2(2) = 5.31;$ $p = 0.07$
Organisation of day camps or winter camps	10	66.7	5	33.31	15	65.2	8	34.8	23	88.5	3	11.5	$\chi^2(2) = 4.24;$ $p = 0.12$
Organisation of picnics, family meetings	8	53.3	7	46.7	9	39.1	14	60.9	15	57.7	11	42.3	$\chi^2(2) = 1.77;$ $p = 0.41$
Meetings of altar boys	3	13	12	87	3	13	20	87	4	15.4	22	84.6	$\chi^2(2) = 0.34;$ $p = 0.85$
Meetings of rosary circles	5	33.3	10	66.7	4	17.4	19	82.6	6	23.1	20	76.9	$\chi^2(2) = 1.29;$ $p = 0.53$
Organisation of sports activities	11	73.3	4	26.7	12	52.2	11	47.8	19	73.1	7	26.9	$\chi^2(2) = 2.88;$ $p = 0.24$

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

## Impact on the faithful of free time activities proposed by parishes

The conducted surveys allows to determine the impact of the forms of spending free time offered by parishes on the faithful. In this context, a statistically significant majority of the theologians surveyed indicated: courteousness, responsibility, dedication to others, selflessness as well as kindness, doing good for others. The opposite situation is characteristic of courage in life, patience, thrift, knowledge, competence and concern for nature. The discrepancy in the answers given concerns discipline, reliability, strong will, industriousness, patriotism and responding to injustice (see Table 10).



Table 10. Respondents' opinions concerning the impact on the faithful of free time activities proposed by parishes

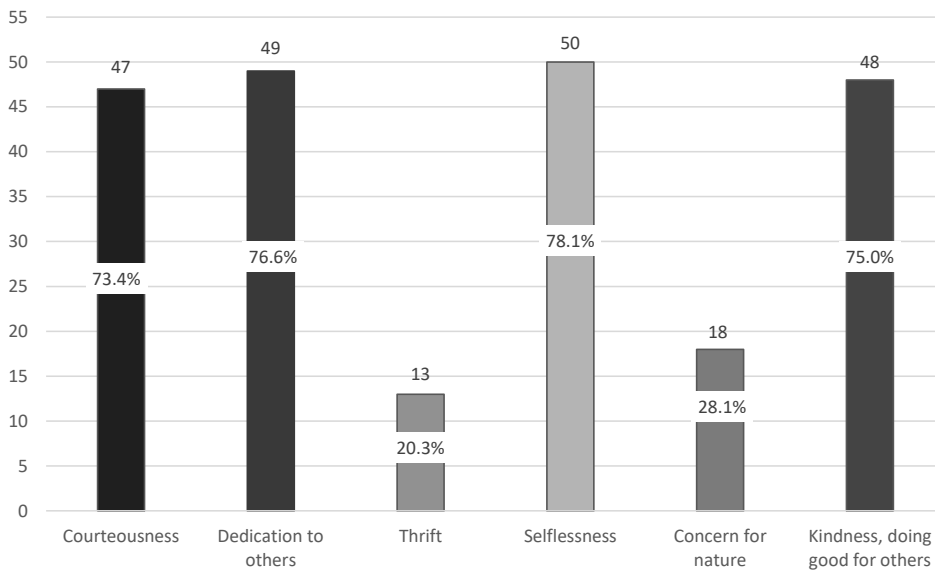
Parishioners' characteristics that are influenced by free time activities proposed by parishes	-		+		Statistical test result*
	n	%	n	%	
Courteousness	17	26.6	47	73.4	$\chi^2(1) = 14.06;$ $p < 0.001$
Responsibility	20	31.3	44	68.2	$\chi^2(1) = 9;$ $p = 0.003$
Discipline, reliability	30	46.9	34	53.1	$\chi^2(1) = 0.25;$ $p = 0.62$
Strong will	33	51.6	31	48.4	$\chi^2(1) = 0.06;$ $p = 0.8$
Courage in life	40	62.5	24	37.5	$\chi^2(1) = 4;$ $p = 0.046$
Industriousness	34	53.1	30	46.9	$\chi^2(1) = 0.25;$ $p = 0.62$
Patience	40	62.5	24	37.5	$\chi^2(1) = 4;$ $p = 0.046$
Dedication to others	15	23.4	49	76.6	$\chi^2(1) = 18.06;$ $p < 0.001$
Thrift	51	79.7	13	20.3	$\chi^2(1) = 22.56;$ $p < 0.001$
Knowledge, competence	40	62.5	24	37.5	$\chi^2(1) = 4;$ $p = 0.046$
Selflessness	14	21.9	50	78.1	$\chi^2(1) = 20.25;$ $p < 0.001$
Concern for nature	46	71.9	18	28.1	$\chi^2(1) = 12.25;$ $p < 0.001$
Kindness, doing good for others	16	25	48	75	$\chi^2(1) = 16;$ $p < 0.001$
Patriotism	30	46.9	34	53.1	$\chi^2(1) = 0.25;$ $p = 0.62$
Responding to injustice	30	46.9	34	53.1	$\chi^2(1) = 0.25;$ $p = 0.62$

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

Variables for which statistically significant differences in numbers were found are shown in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Respondents' opinions concerning certain characteristics of parishioners influenced by free time activities proposed by parishes.



Source: own research.

A statistically significant relationship concerns two from among parishioners' characteristics that are influenced by free time activities proposed by parishes. Courteousness and patriotism were indicated primarily by older people (see Table 11).

Table 11. Relationship between the respondents' age and their opinions concerning the characteristics of the faithful influenced by free time activities proposed by parishes

Characteristics influenced by free time activities proposed by parishes	Less than 40 years				41-55 years				>55 years				Statistical test result*
	-		+		-		+		-		+		
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Courteousness	8	53.3	7	46.7	6	26.1	17	73.9	3	11.5	23	88.5	$\chi^2(2) = 8.52$ ; $p = 0.02$ ; $V_{cr} = 0.37$
Responsibility	4	26.7	11	73.3	11	47.8	12	52.2	5	19.2	21	80.8	$\chi^2(2) = 4.84$ ; $p = 0.09$
Discipline, reliability	8	53.3	7	46.7	11	47.8	12	52.2	11	42.3	15	57.7	$\chi^2(2) = 0.48$ ; $p = 0.79$

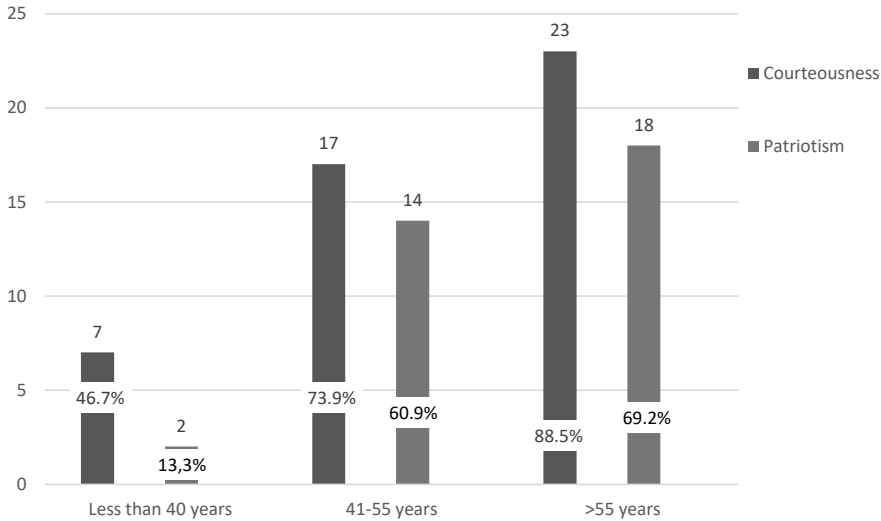
Characteristics influenced by free time activities proposed by parishes	Less than 40 years				41-55 years				>55 years				Statistical test result*
	-		+		-		+		-		+		
	N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Strong will	9	60	6	40	14	60.9	9	39.1	10	38.5	16	61.5	$\chi^2(2) = 3.01$ ; p = 0.22
Courage in life	11	73.3	4	26.7	14	60.9	9	39.1	15	57.7	11	42.3	$\chi^2(2) = 1.03$ ; p = 0.6
Industriousness	9	60	6	40	14	60.9	9	39.1	11	42.3	15	57.7	$\chi^2(2) = 2.06$ ; p = 0.36
Patience	13	86.7	2	13.3	14	60.9	9	39.1	13	50	13	50	$\chi^2(2) = 5.5$ ; p = 0.06
Dedication to others	4	26.7	11	73.3	6	26.1	17	73.9	5	19.2	21	80.8	$\chi^2(2) = 0.43$ ; p = 0.81
Thrift	14	93.3	1	6.7	19	82.6	4	17.4	18	69.2	8	30.8	$\chi^2(2) = 3.6$ ; p = 0.17
Knowledge, competence	12	80	3	20	14	60.9	9	39.1	14	53.8	12	46.2	$\chi^2(2) = 2.82$ ; p = 0.25
Selflessness	4	26.7	11	73.3	4	17.4	19	82.6	6	23.1	20	76.9	$\chi^2(2) = 0.49$ ; p = 0.78
Concern for nature	13	86.7	2	13.3	16	69.6	7	30.4	17	65.4	9	34.6	$\chi^2(2) = 2.23$ ; p = 0.33
Kindness, doing good for others	6	40	9	60	5	21.7	18	78.3	5	19.2	21	80.8	$\chi^2(2) = 2.39$ ; p = 0.3
Patriotism	13	86.7	2	13.3	9	39.1	14	60.9	8	30.8	18	69.2	$\chi^2(2) = 12.8$ ; p = 0.002; Vcr = 0.45
Responding to injustice	10	66.7	5	33.3	10	43.5	13	56.5	10	38.5	16	61.5	$\chi^2(2) = 3.21$ ; p = 0.2

\*chi-square

Source: own research.

It should be pointed out that a stronger relationship concerns patriotism (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Relationship between the respondents' age and their opinions concerning the influence of free time activities proposed by parishes on courteousness and patriotism.

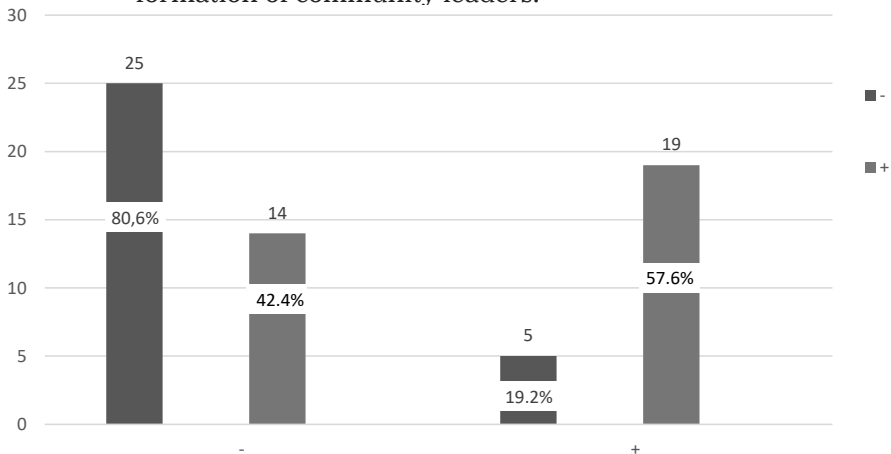


Source: own research.

Another statistically significant relationship concerns the categories characterising free time activities organised by parishes, namely formation of community leaders and development of personal talents, where:  $\chi^2(1) = 9.81$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ;  $Vcr = 0.39$ . In the group of theologians indicating one of these forms, the majority also chose the other (see Figure 11).

Social  
Teaching of  
the Church

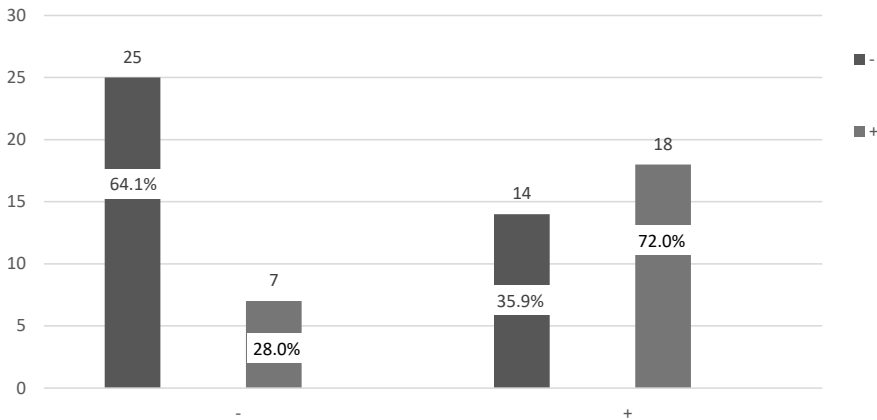
Figure 11. Relationship between the free time activities indicated by respondents consisting in development of personal talents and formation of community leaders.



Source: own research.

As regards free time activities organised by parishes, there was one statistically significant relationship between the variable for which divergent answers were given. This concerns meetings of parish choir and organisation of summer camps for children, where:  $\chi^2(1) = 7.94$ ;  $p = 0.01$ ;  $Vcr = 0.35$  (see Figure 12).

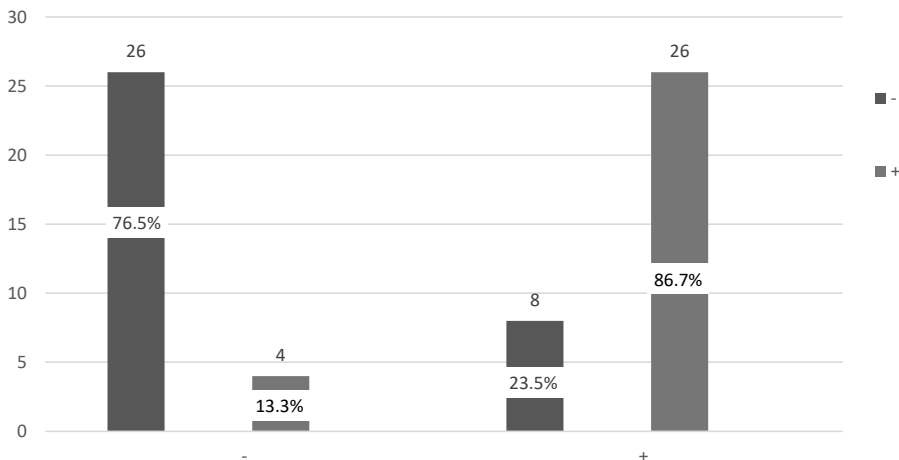
Figure 12. Relationship between the forms of spending free time organised by parishes indicated by respondents, namely meetings of parish choir and organisation of summer camps for children.



Source: own research.

Divergent responses (yes/no) also concerned certain factors influenced by the activities proposed by parishes. A strong, statistically significant relationship between responsibility, reliability and industriousness was observed, where:  $\chi^2(1) = 25.51$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ;  $Vcr = 0.63$  (see Figure 13).

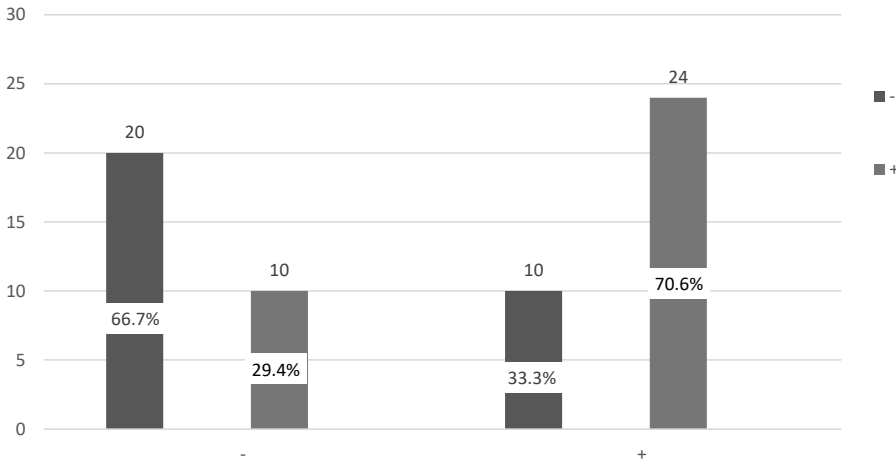
Figure 13. Relationship between discipline, reliability and industriousness influenced by free time activities proposed by parishes.



Source: own research.

An additional statistically significant relationship concerns connection of patriotism and responding to injustice, where  $\chi^2(1) 8.88$ ;  $p = 0.005$ ;  $Vcr = 0.37$  In the case of theologians who indicated one factor, the majority also chose the other (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. Relationship between patriotism and responding to injustice influenced by free time activities proposed by parishes.



Source: own research.

## Conclusion

The purpose of the analysis carried out in this article was to diagnose the opinions of Polish theologians on the possibilities of parishes as regards organisation of free time of the faithful in order to consolidate societal security. Basing on the analysis of the results presented, the following conclusions have been formulated:

The thinking of theologians surveyed about free time corresponds with the intuitive understanding of the term. In light of the analysed answers, on the one hand, it is time free from duties and pressures, on the other – time of peace and no haste. As a significant percentage of them are priests, it is significant that contemplation was also indicated among the attributes of spending free time. If one looks at their professional life from the viewpoint of celebrating mass, for instance, one could venture a conclusion that both in the course of performing ministry and spending free time they are involved in activities directed towards the same goal, even if achieved in different ways. Further characteristics of free time are complemented by theologians' indication of how to fill it in such ways as: rest, fun, activities undertaken out of their own need for development and self-education, social activities,

sports, and artistic activities. What is particularly important from the perspective of thinking about societal security, free time can also be used for social life and life of the social unit to which researchers attribute considerable importance from the viewpoint of security – namely family.<sup>29</sup>

A conclusion of particularly eloquent importance is that the functions of spending free time indicated by theologians – building social bonds and teaching the principles of social morality – can be read as creating intangible dimensions of societal security. On the other hand, a smaller group of respondents indicated functions related to the implementation of its material aspect – organisation of free time for young people, support for societal security and organisation of support for victims of domestic violence. Perhaps those results could be explained in the context of the specificity of theology itself, i.e. a science mostly focused on intangible issues, and the characteristics of the Catholic Social Teaching, which is particularly concerned about community life.

According to most of theologians surveyed the factors that affect the decisions regarding spending free time by contemporary people include mainly: friends, peers, and the Internet. Attributing little importance to teachers and catechists should be considered symptomatic in this context. It may suggest that respondents are aware of ideological changes manifesting themselves in Polish society, especially within the younger generation of Poles. We are talking about a break with the tradition that is taking place today, which is manifested in the loss of social authority by such institutions as the school and the Church.

The research proves that features characterising free time activities organised by parishes are, in particular: self-improvement, rest, development of personal talents and formation of community leaders. Looking at these attributes integrally, one could therefore be tempted to conclude that participation in the activities they offer is aimed at ensuring the development of individuals in such a way that they could lead the social groups they belong to.

In the opinion of the majority of respondents the forms of spending free time organised by parishes are meetings of rosary circles and meetings of altar boys. Much less frequently they offer the faithful such meeting that would favour developing individual talents, day camps or winter camps, and sports activities.

<sup>29</sup> M. Jankiewicz, *Family – Nation – State. The Triad of Creating Poland's National Security*, "Polish Journal of Political Science" 2021, Vol. 7(3), pp. 35-55.



The analysis of research results indicates that the forms of spending free time proposed by parishes have a positive impact on shaping among the faithful such qualities that are of an overwhelming importance from the perspective of interpersonal relations, and even more broadly – from the perspective of the proper functioning of society. These are: courteousness, responsibility, dedication to others, selflessness as well as kindness, doing good for others. A different choice refers to features that have a value especially for individual existence or those related to ecological security: courage in life, patience, thrift, knowledge, competence and concern for nature. This result may provoke a conclusion that theologians' thinking is guided by a community perspective, although most probably understood in accord with the premises of Christian personalism. In this context, it is worth noting that community and the primary importance of relationships should be seen in reference to their theological source – the Holy Trinity.

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