

DOI: 10.15290/rtk.2017.16.3.05

*Rev. Jarosław Tomaszewski*  
*Facultad Teológica de Mariano Soler, Montevideo*

## The enthronement of Christ another way. The stage of spiritual unification as leading the Living God on top of the soul of a believer

One of the most important problems of Polish Catholic community of faith at the present time is the idea of the enthronement of Christ the King of Poland – very well known, and yet controversial. This pastoral and spiritual movement, for the first time in the history of the Catholic Church in Poland, seems to divide seriously the Polish Catholic community into two parts: those who are almost fanatical followers of this idea claiming that only the enthronement of Christ the King will save the modern world from darkness, and on the other hand a serious opposition towards this group, that is the environment treating the very enthronement as a serious element of darkness within the Catholic family in Poland. Perhaps, an analysis and practical pastoral application of the idea of leading Christ onto man's spiritual peak which was presented by blessed John Henry Newman in his writings will be a sort of rescue in this dispute.

**Key words:** idea of enthronement, Christ as the King of Poland, stage of inner unification, leading Christ on top of the human soul, the contemplative apostolate.

One of the spiritual problems which have been subject to a long and – it seems – still unresolved theological and pastoral discussion in the Catholic Church in Poland is the intriguing idea of the Enthronement of Christ as the King of Poland. One can raise a bold claim here that the Polish-Catholic enthronement thought is more than one of religious concepts. The enthronement takes a lot of colours and shows the variety of their shades: it is therefore a way of intense experience

of piety, but it is also a political movement, radical religious reading and at the same time uncompromising, purely Polish messianism, it is based on the guarantee of holiness, without refraining at the same time from assimilation of heretical views<sup>1</sup>.

Since the liturgical feast and the Sunday of Christ the King of the year 2016, through the official act performed in the name of the Polish Nation by bishops from Poland Jesus Christ has been acknowledged as the only Lord of Poland. However, in what sense? The disputes surrounding this idea have not subsided; on the contrary, they seem to place – more than ever before – the supporters or opponents of enthronement in two positions, indisputably separated from each other. In the case of the conceptual chaos characteristic of the theory of the enthronement of Christ the King of Poland it is advantageous or even necessary to broaden the theological background, seek a healthy spiritual comment which could introduce order and harmony between the arguing parties of the uneasy dispute. Often reading a controversial opinion in light of another document which shows the same topic in a rational and orthodox way brings understanding. As it turns out, in the classical theology of spiritual life the idea of enthronement – not as an incendiary mixture of restless thought trends but as a consistent and healthy way of inner life acknowledged by Christian authority – has existed before. Its author was blessed John Henry Newman. The purpose of this article is to propose ordering the contemporary vision of enthronement of Christ the King, which has worried many people

<sup>1</sup> The complex ideological reality of the enthronement movement in Poland is shown by, say, a compact introduction composed by one of the main spiritual leaders of the movement, Father Tadeusz Kiersztyn, a Jesuit, commenting in the edition of the special *Nabożeństwo Intronizacyjne*. It serves the faithful as an example of the initiation of this spiritual path, as a kind of textbook for those who practise or wish to perform an act of enthronement. In his introduction Kiersztyn surprises with a few clear tendencies: Polish messianism, a specific interpretation of the visions given to Rozalia Celakówna, distrust of the positive development of the history of the world, the climate of total cultural danger and social suspicion, inspired but artificial prophetism, a vision of the closeness of the end of the world and the belief that there is only one idea capable of saving the earth, and it is of course the idea of enthronement. In the introduction to the prayer book mentioned above Fr. Kiersztyn takes on a rather picturesque tone and poses a prophet, the new Moses, who theatrically battles with the demon for the soul of the world: „I call you in the Name of the One who with the Father and the Holy Spirit reigns over the whole of creation. I call you in the Name of Jesus the King of Poland who liberated this country from the bondage of evil spirits a thousand years ago. I call you to fight for the reign of God over us – to fight under the banner of our Queen. Join the great work of Enthronement!” (translation by author) T. Kiersztyn, *Zanim staniemy przed Królem*, [in]: G. Berger (ed.), *Nabożeństwo Intronizacyjne*, Kraków 2004, p. 11.

for a long time, in light of Newman's classical beautiful doctrine, which deepens thinking and unites the Church<sup>2</sup>.

## Idea of great controversies – brief panorama of double discourse

Theology  
of spirituality

The enthronement thought, exceedingly difficult to express unambiguously, raises many controversies and has already been subject to colourful analyses, starting with bishops' comments, to interesting linguistic research of environments completely unrelated to religious life. Above all, it should be stated clearly that the enthronement movement has become the basis of a certain division in the Catholic environment in Poland, which was unknown before. This division is puzzling, since the very thought of enthronement of Christ the King does not seem to be a heresy, nor a contradictory or theologically complicated idea. Unquestionably, it remains internally healthy, and yet it causes a practical conflict on the level of its absorption in the society and communities. Although it is possible to summarize clearly and systematize the theological bases of the spiritual phenomenon described here, it is difficult to take unequivocal steps in order to heal practically the existing pathological situation of division. In that sense, therefore, the radical enthronement idea troubles the Church in Poland at the level of practice, action and functioning rather than causes confusion in the world of theology. As it has been noticed by many authors, who conduct their analyses completely from the outside, without religious commitment, the unrest brought into the life of the Catholic Church in Poland by the enthronement environment threatens to destabilize the unity for the first time in the history of this Church in the long postwar period or even for the first time in centuries. It seems that the Catholic community in Poland, so far strong and practically consolidated, has been experiencing a clear break, dissonance, because in one church there gather to pray people completely devoted to enthronement or extremely reluctant to it. Therefore the first scale of the problem, apart from the theological dispute – which, it is worth repeating, is quite simple to define – is of a sociological character. In the light of this conflict the Church must first deal with the division, only later or not at all with the doctrinal chaos<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. I. Ker, *John Henry Newman. A biography*, Oxford – New York 2009, pp. 5-11.

<sup>3</sup> A very interesting study of the sociological context of the practical breakdown of the so far strong ecclesial community in Poland is an article by Adam Warzecha. Warzecha draws particular attention to the appropriate lack of communication

In order to illustrate the complex situation within the ecclesial community it is worth giving space to two contradictory, slightly extreme opinions which treat the topic of the enthronement of Christ the King of Poland from their own point of view. The editorial staff and the theological and formation community centred around *Tygodnik Powszechny* are, without a shadow of a doubt, a Catholic milieu which definitely distances itself from this idea. For the theologians and commentators from this side of the Catholic Church in Poland the enthronement idea appears as a sort of fundamentalism, it lacks cohesion, it is incomprehensible placing the universal Christ the King of the Universe in opposition to the local Jesus the King of Poland. Fr. Adam Boniecki, who is certainly still the most important person creating the ideological profile of *Tygodnik Powszechny*, even commenting on the Lagiewniki act of accepting Christ the King of the Universe speaks critically about several aspects of this pastoral phenomenon which he considers important. The aspects are as follows: (1) inconsistency of Polish bishops who in pastoral letters of 2008 and 2012 clearly opposed the thought of enthronement as something unnecessary and harmful, (2) pastoral chaos – it is difficult to understand how is the latest Lagiewniki act to similar enthronement acts performed before several times by communities at Jasna Góra Sanctuary by Radio Maryja in 1997 or in 2000 in Swiebodzin, (3) lack of spiritual care for those baptized Poles who do not yet recognize Christ as their King but may one day look for ways to return, (4) focusing by the Church on spectacular pious acts instead of deepened spiritual formation, (5) mixing with each other the realities of two kingdoms: the human, political kingdom and the eternal one which Jesus seemed to announce, (6) or at last subjective and free interpretation of the famous homily opening the pontificate of St. John Paul II in which the pope called to open the doors to Christ<sup>4</sup>.

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between two milieux – the church hierarchy and the group promoting the idea of enthronement. The conflict of communication leads to a public split and weakening of the unity of the Church in Poland. Cf. A. Warzecha, *Zastosowanie Krytycznej Analizy Dyskursu w badaniu zjawisk komunikacyjnych na przykładzie sprawy ks. Piotra Natanka*, „Świat i Słowo”, 1 (22)/2014, pp. 78-83.

<sup>4</sup> Boniecki writes in his column with a bit of irony: „For many believers, the solemn declaration of submission to Him whose kingdom is not of this world and who has come to invite mankind to feast in the kingdom of heaven is a joyful sensation, which does not mean that the very act of enthronement (for the sake of simplicity I use the old term), if it is to be more than a mass devotional and if it is to reach Poles outside the Catholic Church, requires a thorough explanation”. (translation by author) A. Boniecki, *Intronizacja*, „Tygodnik Powszechny”, 47 (3515), p. 3.

The environment of Catholics gathered radically around the tragic but – on the other hand – outstanding figure of Father Piotr Natanek presents a completely opposing attitude towards the enthronement idea. It is a religious community of a rather specific, provoking or even shocking charism. It is also a group whose bond with the visible institution of the Catholic Church has been increasingly weakening, but whose attachment and boundless devotion to the apostolate propagating the thought of the enthronement of Christ the King of Poland has been growing. The characteristic features of the apostolate are: (1) fatalistic prophetism, which sees the distinctness of the final, apocalyptic sign in the events of the present day, (2) conviction of the universal and pernicious for the Catholic Church and the world deviation of bishops, priests and secular Christians from the fidelity to Christ's true teaching, (3) lack of consent for the Lagiewniki act of 2016 – according to Natanek and his environment it is a sort of half measure, performed for show and in order to calm the conflict and not to solve the deepest problems of civilization, (4) absolutizing the enthronement idea as the only achievable, or even given by God, effective rescue from impending cultural destruction of the world, Church and man. For Natanek's supporters the present era is the apocalyptic fulfillment of universal time given to mankind before the coming of Christ at the end of times. Either there is conversion – whose condition and expression at the same time is the enthronement of Christ the King of Poland – or there is simply no future for the world, faith and humanity<sup>5</sup>.

The purpose of this disquisition is not a detailed analysis of views expressed by determined opponents or dedicated followers of the enthronement idea. It is true that between the environment of Father Boniecki and Father Natanek's group there is nothing more central or balanced. There is either a definite rejection of the enthronement act or blinded devotion to this idea. This tension has already caused a painful division, it is therefore worth pointing to the existence of a reflection – historically much earlier and definitely more open to the experience of not only the local community of Polish Catholics but

<sup>5</sup> Such radical views are probably most expressed in Father Natanek's book, in which he assumes the pose of a predictor of the end of the world, a prophet whom the people of God do not listen to. Natanek writes: „Today so few people believe that the coming of the Kingdom of God is as close as ever. Therefore, for those who believe these are left: courage, confidence, trust and surrounding God like children. If mankind wants to survive it is left with three tests: a test of faith, a test of acknowledging God as the supreme Lord (Enthronement) and a test of love”. (translation by author) P. Natanek, *Listy otwarte ks. Piotra Natanka Roku Pańskiego 2010*, Grzechynia 2011, p. 3.

of the Church in the universal dimension. This is John Henry Newman's doctrine, already mentioned. Referring to the last of the three classic stages of faith – to union – Newman at the same time identifies this moment of spiritual growth with the enthronement of God at the summits of the human soul<sup>6</sup>.

## Unity of life

Cardinal Newman perceived three classic periods of inner life in the light of certain harmony leading a Christian from purification through inner enlightenment to a complete union with God in Christ quietly, without unnecessary leaps, thereby without chaos. Therefore it would be a superfluous complication to attempt to introduce schematic divisions and to artificially define the borders suggesting falsely that here purification ends and in another place there is only the state of union. Always and in everything blessed Newman was a rationalist in the good sense of the word so he set a rather rational, orderly and coherent – not rash – direction of growth in spiritual life. Therefore in the description of the last stage of mystical walking towards Christ, which is union, there appears in Newman's works a clear line of continuity referring to the experience of the previous stages. On the other hand, one can also notice looking with hope towards the future, towards eternal life, which was for the Blessed the type and the summit of the uniting process that every disciple of the Lord should bear witness to. This has best been witnessed by the Mother of Christ, united with Him forever. Newman started the very description of uniting a soul with Christ with presenting the idea of coherence, unity of supernatural and active life, life of grace and nature – the unity that should characterize a Christian mature in faith<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> It must be strongly emphasized that the original idea of enthronement, discussed by Rozalia Celakówna, has a lot in common not so much with the fatalistic reading of history by the Natanek group, but rather with the classic Catholic mysticism, maturely represented in Newman's works. Celakówna wants universal reparation for insulting the Sacred Heart of Jesus – reparation, penance leads to the introduction of God into the throne of the human heart – a purified heart which is ready to unite. Celakówna herself said, mentioned and wrote about the act of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Poland, presenting in her writings a vision intensely permeated with mysticism. She never referred to a social vision of the enthronement of Christ the King of Poland. Cf. R. Celakówna, *Wyznania z przeżyć wewnętrznych*, Kraków 2007, pp. 9-22.

<sup>7</sup> Newman saw that this rational but spiritual harmony of progress was at the same time a sign of the human, natural, humanistic fullness in a Christian. An example of such harmony of growth, uniting nature and grace without contradiction, is

That, indeed, is the peak of spiritual life. If it is real it does not resemble at all an incomprehensible show where a soul plays a mystic role before Jesus, putting on masks of seemingly supernatural charisms. In fact, the union is manifested in a person in the opposite way: it calms, internalizes, frees from emotional passions, assures the soul on its ways and in its choices and, most of all, centralizes all the forces of human personality around the gift of faith. Jerzy Gogola calls this phenomenal process of centralization and cohesion a mystery. The very word 'mysticism' comes from the inexpressible but quiet, slow and systematic uniting of the soul with Christ<sup>8</sup>.

Of course, the progress of uniting may be read out falsely and thus stopped. Such discrepancy which hinders unification because it replaces it with imitation, is first of all psychologism, that is, a conviction that the spiritual phenomena in unification may be replaced with a subjective, stimulated by nature emotional experience of a religious nature. Then, syncretism, a simple consequence of psychologism, or a trend convincing that since the experience of contact with God has a psychological element at its basis it is therefore equally valuable in all religions of the world, is also dangerous. Finally, psychologism combined with syncretism transforms into spiritual Gnosticism, that is a belief that union with God is the effect of perfecting prayer methods, rites or rituals or breathing exercises or similar phenomena which ineffectually imitate the mystery and illusively resemble spiritual values but are in fact contrary to them. Mistaking the above phenomena for manifestations of mysticism considerably slows down the soul's getting closer to God or at some point makes it even impossible. For a man of faith seduced by psychologism or syncretism focuses his spiritual energy around emptiness devoid of Christ. Simply, where there is a seduced Christian's prayer there is no Lord nor His grace<sup>9</sup>.

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of course the figure of the Blessed Virgin. The cardinal claimed: „The honour paid to Mary is not, as it were, a sort of permissible vagary, permissible but dangerous, which The Church has to keep an eye upon, to see that it does not go beyond certain limits. It belongs, on the contrary, to the essence, of the very heart of Catholicism, and, if it needs must be preserved from distortion and deformity, that is not because it is any way equivocal in its nature, but rather because it is the efflorescence, the blossoming forth of the most consoling of Gospel truths, the Incarnation of the Son of God in our humanity”. L. Bouyer, *Newman – his life and spirituality*, San Francisco 2011, p. 405.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. J. W. Gogola, *Teologia komunii z Bogiem*, Kraków 2003, p. 242.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Ibidem*, pp. 243 – 244. Waclaw Świerzawski adds directly that the requirement for spiritual tasting in the mysteries of Christ is to recognize dogma and to conduct all prayer and inner experiences exclusively in the key of the universal

In his analysis Newman never wandered the paths of spiritual Gnosticism, did not waste time for appearances but reached straight to the centre of the spiritual union of the soul in love for Christ. The essence of the union was for him the unity of the life of a Christian purified and enlightened in the process of mystical approach to the Lord. Thanks to the union given as a gift to the soul, a Christian focuses in himself all the personality forces as if in one place – in the spiritual centre where he stays alone with Christ who lives in him without any hindrances. John Henry says that uniting with Jesus in this only centre a believer in a certain way resembles a blind man who has never seen sunlight but who knows very well what the sun is; what is more, he can use sunlight and solar heat on a completely different level for his own benefit. Likewise, a Christian of mature faith is infinitely strongly integrated in himself. Thanks to that inner integration he starts to draw his knowledge, certainty, discernment not from his own intelligence, but directly from Christ. The blessed cardinal called this initial state of union a new inner world of a Christian soul, which was no longer directed towards God by the hand of any human ability but by Jesus, the Master of all reality, who was as if looking at everything through the integrated man<sup>10</sup>.

Therefore according to Newman the theology of full union one can notice a sure, bold attempt to reverse the history of mankind. What harmed man at the beginning, thanks to the union with Christ starts to be a great hope at the end of everything. This great harm of the beginnings was the original sin whose direct effects were: separation of man from God and confusion, chaos, atomization and breaking human personality into tiny pieces. As the whole Christian theology affirms after the original fall man is not able to integrate himself, as a result of which he very often falls into contradictions losing the clear direction of his vocation; he experiences temptations despite the desire for pious life and he is not sure of himself and lives in fear despite discovering God who is understanding and filled with love for him. Since the sin

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tradition and doctrine of the Church. See also W. Świerzawski, *Mistrzu, gdzie mieszkasz? Człowiek – istota mistyczna*, Sandomierz 1994, p. 42.

<sup>10</sup> Newman explains it perfectly: „What a marvellous new state of being, which, though he ever had the senses of hearing and of touch, never had he been able, by the words of others, or any means of information he possessed, to bring home to himself in the faintest measure! Would he not find himself, as it is said, in a new world? What revolution would take place in his modes of thought, in his habits, in his ways, and in his doings hour by hour! He would no longer direct himself with his hands and his hearing, he would no longer grope about – he would see!” J. H. Newman, *Discourses adressed to mixed congregations*, London 1881, p. 86.



man has been wearing this gnawing mark of break mainly because the original sin has deprived him of a sort of God's centre inside him. None of the people has had and until the end of the world none will have an autonomous centre which ensures constancy and stability of his existence. Only God gives this grace. Therefore, as long as God lived in the centre of human personality it enjoyed unity, but when man chose sin God's light coordinating and bringing everything together went out<sup>11</sup>.

It is for this reason that Newman introduced a clear distinction within the human species. Although all the people equally want the original return to unity of life, some look for external solutions and that is why they go astray, while others try to bring Christ back to His due place in the centre of the human heart and they gain a new order thanks to the union. Seeking an external bond is haphazard and pathetic, arousing pity at the most, because no force outside of man's own spiritual organism can unite his inner self. John Henry called the people looking for this external relief in the state of being broken poor – those who walk all the time close to endless darkness<sup>12</sup>.

The situation is completely different with Christians, who receive from Christ a grace of inner light. The Lord's disciples are the people who have understood that the after-sin chaos can be healed with proportionate measures only. If, therefore, the very source of disorder and break lay in the dispersion of God's Centre in man, it is possible to restore harmony, personality ties, the integrity of personality and the order of existence also in this way only. The central place of human personality should be surrendered again to Christ. He must come back there. Man has forgotten what Neman explained systematically in the moment of describing enlightenment that God does not rule a soul by external laws but enlightens it from within, draws it towards Himself as if from the inside through love and fascination and intimacy. For the Blessed Cardinal union was first of all this: leading Christ again to the centre of the human soul, spiritual vigilance with Him, eagerly awaiting

<sup>11</sup> Cf. H. U. von Balthasar, *Czy Jezus nas zna? Czy my znamy Jezusa?*, trans. E. Piotrowski, Kraków 1998, pp. 18-23. See also J. Ratzinger, *Wprowadzenie w chrześcijaństwo*, Kraków 2006, pp. 259-260.

<sup>12</sup> Newman expressed the fate of such people with a sad triad of words, suggesting: „There they are born, there they live, there they die; and instead of the bright, broad, and all-revealing luminousness of the sun, they grope their way from place to place with torches, as best they may, or fix up lamps at certain points, and walk in the light of their fire, and in the flames which they have kindled; because they have nothing clearer, nothing purer, to serve the needs of the day and the year”. J. H. Newman, *Discourses...*, op. cit., p. 88.

His presence which then allows the Christian to collect himself again around Christ's Will, knowing the direction and thus integrating oneself and avoiding going astray, which has become man's permanent condition after the original sin<sup>13</sup>.

In the very culminating point of the union of the human soul with the Lord Newman saw then the peak of mature faith motivating human life properly and ultimately. The Christian who has united with Christ, that is who has allowed the Redeemer to reach the peak of his soul, is no longer split: nor between the mortal and eternal life, nor between prayer and action, nor between love for people and for the Creator. In the soul which is united, or centred around Christ, there is mature harmonious peace thanks to which the Christian can act creatively in the worldly life without becoming attached to it and being fully aware of his eternal destiny. He can also love his beloved ones and be faithful to good friendship, not deserting God for a moment. Finally, he can enjoy what is beautiful on this side of existence, not for a moment losing the conviction that earthly beauty is but a glimmer of the full, more ideal and eternal one. In a person united with Christ there is no more inconsistency. Every mark of the division that began in the human soul after its first fall has been erased. The Christian has restored the true personal Divine reference to his own centre and therefore he again has had the grace of spiritual unity on all levels of his personality<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Blessed Newman expresses the return of Christ to the center of a Christian soul by means of a colorful, rich literary description of the arrival of the king, whose beauty captures the believer. Christ, occupying the place which is due to Him – the main place of the Redeemer – brings the soul sublime gifts of the union, such as spiritual riches, the spirit of sacrifice and the closeness of Angels. In this sense, union is like another conversion, which is no longer of a moral character, but is a complete, ontic, total turning of the Christian towards his Lord. A man of faith knows perfectly well that this return of Christ is for the soul a question of survival. John Henry wrote: „From that day it has begun a new life: I am not speaking of any moral conversion which takes place in it; whether or not it is moved (as surely we believe it will be) to act upon the sights which it sees, still consider only what a change there will be in its views and estimation of things, as soon as it has heard and has faith in the Word of God, as soon as it understands that wealth, and notoriety, and influence, and high place, are not the first of blessings and the real standard of good; but that saintliness and all its attendants – saintly purity, saintly poverty, heroic fortitude and patience, self sacrifice for the sake of others, renouncement of the world, the favour of Heaven, the protection of Angels, the smile of the Blessed Virgin, the gifts of grace, the interpositions of miracle, the intercommunion of merits – that these are the high and precious things, the things to be looked up to, the things to be reverently spoken of”. *Ibidem*, p. 94.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. C. Hollis, *Newman and the modern world*, London 1967, pp. 47 – 49.

It is exactly because of that that in the cardinal's view the level of unification differs in one feature from the previous stages of spiritual life which were enlightenment and purification. The stages described earlier reminded more dynamic processes which took place by combination of grace and ascetic means such as selflessness or obedience and consistency in the dark and many more, analyzed above. Union is not a process which needs separate tools but it is a state which is characterized first of all by perfect unity of the person experiencing the union. This state does not need its own original progress means because its dynamics is ensured by the very presence, the very return of Christ to the core of human personality. Now Christ manages the person's spiritual organism and He does so not by means but through values with which He fills the soul in the union. The inner man is full of self discipline, coherence, gentleness, prayer of concentration, tenderness of the heart and readiness to forgive. Along such a road the Lord brings a Christian to holiness, magnanimity and love which – thanks to the union – will never be disturbed. These permanent qualities of unification make the Christian a heroic soul in the act of faith<sup>15</sup>.

Newman, of course, distinguished perfectly well two ontic realities which come nearer to each other in an exceptionally intimate way during the act of uniting, but do not become united so much as to lose their own living frames. Christ lives as the Lord on top of the soul and is exalted there but He does not unify with the soul so much as to lose the limits of His Divinity. Similarly, the soul adores Christ and forever lives and breathes His presence in itself but it never ceases to be – not before death not even in eternity – the soul of a rational and free man. Therefore all the activities that normally involve every person remain in unification, but now they are undertaken as perfectly and purely as possible. Thus a Christian in unification still does his work but does it professionally, honestly, without excessive attachment to profit. In the same way he continues his social, public or family commitments, educates and develops, without wasting any human opportunity for

<sup>15</sup> Newman then writes in a picturesque way: „Very various are the Saints, their very variety is a token of God's workmanship; but however various, and whatever was their special line of duty, they have been heroes in it; they have attained such noble self -command, they have so crucified the flesh, they have so renounced the world; they are so meek, so gentle, so tender-hearted, so merciful, so sweet, so cheerful, so full of prayer, so diligent, so forgetful of injuries; they have sustained such great and continued pains, they have persevered in such vast labours, they have made such valiant confessions, they have wrought such abundant miracles, they have been blessed with such strange successes, that they have been the means of setting up a standard before us of the truth, of magnanimity, of holiness, of love". J. H. Newman, *Discourses...op. cit.*, p. 101.

progress or growth but in all that he does not lose the supernatural perspective. Everything is done with the measure of greater maturity. Thanks to this disposition the man of faith avoids a sort of spiritual schizophrenia, an unhealthy and harmful split of the world of human affairs and the spiritual world. For Newman, the combination of spiritual depth and natural efficiency was even the essence of Christian maturity<sup>16</sup>.

Mysticism has always called this union of a Christian's inner life and external activity the unity of life. This in turn has been an excellent definition of the state of holiness which for Christians has never been indifference to obstacles and trials, nor a state of moral perfection adored by selfishness. Holiness is uniting internal forces of the Christian's whole personality around Christ who occupies the very top, the very centre of the soul. There is, then, nobody and nothing closer to man than the Lord. Since then, therefore, Jesus has been the only source of both spiritual life with all its acts and human activity combined with internal foundations. „I must definitely emphasize here – wrote Eugene Boylan – that there is no other way to be perfect. All the religious practices that I have written about – prayer, spiritual reading, receiving sacraments, daily Communion, attending Mass – are holy in themselves but they are only means to an end. Using or practising them, even the most common and zealous, does not constitute holiness. They are a great help in achieving it but holiness is something completely different. Holiness is something that influences every moment of our life and is rooted in the depths of our being. It is continuous unity with God, constant abiding in Christ by lovingly fulfilling His will, always and in everything. This alone will make our life fruitful” (translation by author)<sup>17</sup>.

## Complete trust

Heaving led Christ onto the very top of his spiritual life a Christian gained a reliable, constant and permanent source of prayer, piety and inner conversion, which also enriched the sphere of his external activities. In this Newman found correct verification for the act of uniting a Christian soul with the Son of God described here. For the Blessed Cardinal religious living did not matter much because he thought that prayer acts could equally well be composed taking as the basis

<sup>16</sup> Cf. D. Carroll, *Newman a Cardinal: one hundred years on*, [in]: *The Furrow*, Vol. 30, 4/1979, pp. 226-228.

<sup>17</sup> E. Boylan, *Jezus, w którego wierzę*, trans. K. Bednarek, Warszawa 2011, p. 438.

stimuli of spiritual greed which at most was capable of uniting a man with his own self, but surely not with God. For the union, then, more important was – arising from prayer, of course – righteous involvement, faithfulness to inspirations in everyday life, courage to act in accordance with one's conscience, in which God's voice resounded, and the Christian's love of the Lord's Will which he was seeking zealously, which he trusted sincerely and which he then used in his choices without any compromise. Newman believed that a Christian united with Christ bore witness to Him with every moment of his life and only that testimony verified the fact of unification<sup>18</sup>.

Without the slightest doubts cardinal Newman understood that piety was relatively easy to achieve. It is easy because it does not oppose selfishness strongly enough; what is more, if piety is not subjected in the soul to the unambiguous control of the truth it may even strengthen self-love: through admiration for oneself, adoration of one's own virtues and supposed spirituality. Piety therefore does not verify the fact of unification. A Christian may make the verification only at the level of confronting the Will of God which is always demanding and usually does not follow the line of egocentric tastes. Then being faithful to the Lord means to be really united with Him. Secondly, humble reading of the Will of Christ in a sense means also what has already been clearly defined above. The unification is about returning to the original order of the soul which enlightened it before the original fall. If that is the case, the effect of the first people's sin is the deviation from the Will of God and the mistrust chaos. However, what is original and intended by God for every person is included in the act of submission. Man exists – that was God's main creative intention – just to submit to the Creator and thus achieve or receive real happiness. Trustful submission is therefore an indispensable element of unification<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> Por. M. Tierney, *Newman's doctrine of university education*, [in]: *Studies – An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 42, 166/1953, pp. 121 – 123.

<sup>19</sup> Of course, the evangelical foundation of obedience is not fear, nor any awareness of the infinite advantage of God, in light of which man has no chance of autonomy. The foundation here is only love. The Gospel and all the spiritual schools clearly based on It claim that only those who love God worship Him, serve Him and praise Him. One is obedient thanks to Love. Therefore, disobedience is so painful and the consequences of opposition to God so far-reaching, because in fact they are not against legal rules, but against the pure Love of the Creator. Cf. J. Augustyn and K. Osuch, *Doświadczyć zbawienia. Ogólne spojrzenie na Pierwszy Tydzień „Ćwiczeń Duchownych” Św. Ignacego Loyoli*, Kraków 1992, pp. 12-14. See also G. Aschenbrenner, *Życie z Jezusem*, Kraków 1992, pp. 44-47.

According to Newman's idea obedience, or the effect of trust in discovering and accepting God's Will, is so close to union because it makes the soul completely similar to Christ. The cardinal noticed that one of the main features characteristic of Jesus of Nazareth as the Perfect Man had been the submission to the Father; not so much blind and full of fear subordination as chosen conscious loving obedience. It was the Lord's supreme choice. It was obedience that Jesus learned through what He had to suffer. The act of returning to obedience was also the purpose of the act of Incarnation when finally there was Man among people – Jesus Christ, who kept his word given to the Father without breaking faith. He remained faithful. He remained obedient. And that is why a believing soul has no other aim in the act of unification apart from obedience. One cannot love God in Christ without remaining deeply obedient to Him in what is the manifestation of His holy Will<sup>20</sup>.

Among many intentions on which the requirement to be obedient to the Will of God to the end could be built Newman distinguished particularly one significant motive of this highest human fidelity – it was most of all the testimony given to the world. Without obedience to Christ's Will pointing to the glory of the Kingdom of God is only theory which deters people due to its lack of authenticity. That is why it was in obedience that Newman saw the basic expression of the Christian vocation. A person becomes a disciple of the Lord and is called primarily in order to follow the Master. Obedience is the strongest manifestation of effective witness that will never meet a stronger counter argument of the world, which is by nature in opposition to God. What is more, obedience is the proof of the consciousness of the Christian who does not want to spend his days on mindless wandering but discovers his purpose of life with freedom and determines himself to fulfill it<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Newman wrote about Jesus, seeing somewhere in Him a perfect submission of every Christian: „If there was one among the sons of men, who might allowably have taken His pleasure, and have done His own will here below, surely it was he who came down on earth from the bosom of the Father, and who was so pure and spotless in that human nature which He put on Him, that He could have no human purpose or aim inconsistent with the will of His Father”. J. H. Newman, *Discourses...op. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>21</sup> The cardinal taught also: „We are not sent into this world for nothing; we are not born at random; we are not here, that we may go to bed at night, and get up in the morning, toil for our bread, eat and drink, laugh and joke, sin when we have a mind, and reform when we are tired of sinning, rear a family and die. God sees every one of us; He creates every soul, He lodges it in the body, one by one for a purpose. He needs, He deigns to need, every one of us. He has an end for each of us; we are all equal in His sight, and we are placed in our

All that, however, develops in the soul of a Christian on the basis of one condition: the disciple must trust Christ. John Henry always believed that the central axis of obedience was not fear or external law or a fatal inevitable consciousness persuading man with sadness that in every case he was weaker than the Creator so any resistance and opposition to the inevitable Divine judgments made no sense. In a Christian who is subjected to God in such a way at most wrong attitudes may develop which distort his moral and spiritual sensitivity. Researchers to Newman's thoughts notice that in this context he points to a few perversions, distortions of the soul which surrenders to God not in freedom but in repression and fear, and these are: extremely polar morality, which feeds human conscience with scruples in one situation and then seeks relief in convincing itself that nothing is evil or a sin; ignoring natural force in the acts of moral life, that is the subjective conviction that no efforts make sense because God loves human stumbles only and the spiritual poverty and humility supposedly resulting from them; and finally moral safeguard which resembles a wall with which man separates himself from the real world, builds artificial obstacles and all-anticipating barriers so that the corruption of the world assumed in advance does not touch the inner self of the person who should remain completely pure before God. The cardinal saw that motives for obedience understood in such a way were anti-witness and soon destroyed the inner maturity of the soul. The only convincing reason for obeying God may be internalized trust coming from the correct reading of God's love and wisdom<sup>22</sup>.

This aspect of unification, although in its first perspective is very demanding, on the level that the soul is presently interacting with God ceases to cause it any difficulties. Some spiritual authors are not afraid to say even that the opposite state, that is mistrust, would be for the soul a real punishment and torment. The spirit of a Christian united with the Lord lives on trustful awaiting the coming of the Lord's judgments, misses them and the more they demand from him self-denial in the practice of this virtue, the more he desires them. In the process of continuous increase of trust in God a trustful soul crosses further and bolder boundaries, coming almost to this final line beyond which there extends only the kingdom of eternal life. At this last stage of trust there is the most heroic choice. A man of uniting faith is ready to lose

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different ranks and stations, not to get what we can out of them for ourselves, but to labour in them for Him". Ibidem, p. 111.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. T. Gornall, *The Newman problem*, [in]: Clergy Review, Vol. LXII, April 1977, pp. 137-139.

his temporal spiritual vision with which he saw God close to himself, noticed the gestures of God's closeness, read them with more and more joy, in order to receive still in his lifetime on the ground of spirituality eternal vision which does not need more tastes or the solemn dignity of discursive prayer, nor signs or other supports of spiritual growth, nonetheless used nobly in the earlier stages. In this highest, uniting act of trust the soul experiences a state similar to the one experienced by Saul of Tarsus near Damascus (cf. Acts 9,1-19). It agrees to be lovingly blinded in order to see the Bridegroom more and more clearly in a different, eternal way. It loses the light of temporal spirituality, although it is given by grace and is supernatural, in order to gain the only light, unfading and no longer separated from the Three Divine Persons<sup>23</sup>.

Such trust brings the main fruit of unification, that is the state of contemplation. Contemplation in its most important dimension is blindness. God's light is so intense that the human spirit ceases to see, which does not mean, however, that it ceases to be guided. The whole paradox of unification, so difficult as it is, is that a Christian is really led by God only when he becomes blind to his ideas and life calculations. „We said that God was not known because He was so close. We are usually not aware of the air we breathe, we do not see the light itself, we only see things in the light. We do not even see our own face – only its reflection in a mirror. We can see God's face also in a mirror only, and according to Paul this mirror is Jesus and His paschal mystery”<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> Pierre-Marie Delfieux explains this best by meditating upon the fact of the Ascension, which on the one hand seems to be the Lord's departure far away, and on the other is the sign of calling the soul beyond the finite world. Delfieux states: „Jesus disappeared from our human eyes, so that the eyes of our faith may be opened wider. His voice ceased to be audible for our ears, so that the power of His hope would anchor in our souls. Our hands can no longer touch His body so that pure love could enlighten our hearts. What grace is for us this apparent departure, which opens us to the fullness of the mystery of the presence so alive and so powerful! The presence of God, which manifests itself everywhere and fills us with inner light.” (translation by author) P. M. Delfieux, *Medytacje Paschalne*, trans. Mniszki z Monastycznych Wspólnot Jerozolimskich, Warszawa 2009, p. 249.

<sup>24</sup> T. Halik, *Cierpliwość wobec Boga. Spotkanie wiary z niewiarą*, trans. A. Babuchowski, Kraków 2011, p. 133. Karol Wojtyła points out that neither the intellect nor the conscience, nor the other pious powers of the soul, can penetrate the Divine Substance. Therefore, seeing the sacred trust of a Christian, Jesus rewards him with the grace of ‘dark efficiency,’ i.e. the capacity by which the mind, strengthened by the light of God Himself, unites with the Divine Substance. Cf. also, K. Wojtyła, *Zagadnienie wiary w dziełach Św. Jana od Krzyża*, Kraków 1990, p. 204 – 205. Mieczysław Łacek comments that this blindness is always given to people who have been capable of sacrificing themselves for the sake of their radical following Christ. Such people can afford blind confidence,



For Newman such a state of trust was fullness. At the same time it was also the basis of the gift of contemplation. The cardinal distinguished between two kinds of trust that a Christian might have in God. In order to distinguish one from the other he used biblical symbols of flesh and blood and of the gift of God's counsel. Flesh and blood are able to lead the Lord's disciple only to the level of temporal, natural trust. The man of faith so shaped trusts God only to a certain degree: when he starts a job, when he goes through difficulties, takes up new challenges or has to face some unexpected difficulties, he also trusts in financial and living matters. Such a level of trust does not unite with God yet. It merely gives a sense of earthly stability. Whereas there is trust coming from the Spirit of God which absolutely exceeds the threshold of temporal life and does not hesitate to rely on the Word of the Creator in complete darkness, in its crucifixion, in total denial and failure, being aware all the time that it is only beyond mortal life that there is the real and lasting life. The blessed cardinal believed that only that Christian trusted whose all hope was in the invisible eternal life and who for its inheritance offered all the visible worldly goods. Such complete awareness adds the soul the fullness of trust which inextricably unites it with the Lord<sup>25</sup>.

Only then does a disciple united with Christ through utter trust become a reliable and in a sense unrivalled witness of His, and his authenticity, courage and intuitive competence in the life of faith the world cannot rival. Trust obtained in such an intimate communion with Jesus and reinforced thanks to the contemplative gaze beyond

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always and in spite of everything. See also, M. Łacek, *Lektura tekstów teologii życia wewnętrznego. Okres nowożytny (XVI-XVIII w.). Św. Jan od Krzyża*, [in]: Idem, *Wykłady w Prymasowskim Instytucie Życia Wewnętrznego w Warszawie*, Warszawa 2006, pp. 62-63.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas Norris clearly indicates that Newman did not value trust according to flesh and blood, treating it as superficial, or even self-interested. Only spiritual trust is full, holy, contemplative. Norris writes: „Though instances of great holiness are rare, yet they are enough to win God's silent battles and to impress His Kingdom upon society. He explain his conviction in the light of the intrinsic power of the witness of holiness. The man commonly held in popular estimation are greatest at a distance; they become small as they are approached, but the attraction, exerted by unconscious holiness of un urgent and irresistible nature; it persuades the weak, the timid, the wavering and the inquiring; it draws forth the affection and loyalty of all who are in a measure like-minded; and over the thoughtless or perverse multitude it exercises a sovereign compulsory sway, bidding them fear and keep silence, on the ground of its own divine right to rule them – its hereditary claim on their obedience, though they understand not the principles or counsels of that spirit, which is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God.” T. J. Norris, *Cardinal Newman for today*, Dublin 2010, p. 112.

the curtain of eternity introduces the Christian into the very centre of Divine Substance. Owing to that he himself is stable, unwavering, and this power of trustful contemplation emanates from within him further on the whole environment. Only contemplatives evangelize effectively. Compared with the power of their testimony, all pastoral methods, evangelistic endeavors or missionary undertakings appear to be merely a child's theater or a sacred imitation of the virtual tricks of the world. It is, therefore, very important for the external activity of the enthronement movement to meet with the internal analysis of the stage of unification, as Newman described in detail. The apostolate of a contemplative is the apostolate of depth. He does not share with the world the essence of doctrine, nor even the beauty of moral norms, nor the rousing spirit of prayer but encloses all these noble ends in one common denominator, through which he is so effective – the apostolate of a trustful contemplative begins with God Himself. „The summit of mystical apostolate is the radiation of Divine life”<sup>26</sup>.

### **INTRONIZACJA CHRYSZTUSA INACZEJ. ETAP ZJEDNOCZENIA DUCHOWEGO JAKO WPROWADZENIE ŻYWEGO BOGA NA SZCZYT DUSZY WIERZĄCEGO CZŁOWIEKA**

Jednym z ważniejszych problemów wspólnoty katolickiej w Polsce jest bardzo popularna w tym czasie i w pewnym sensie kontrowersyjna idea Intronizacji Chrystusa na Króla Polski. Ten ruch duchowy i duszpasterski, pierwszy raz w ciągu długiej historii Kościoła katolickiego nad Wisłą, wydaje się poważnie dzielić polskich katolików jakby na dwa stronnictwa: tych, którzy niekiedy wydają się być prawie fanatykami powyższej idei, sądzącymi, że jedynie Intronizacja Chrystusa może wybawić nowożytność z jej ciemności; oraz mocna opozycja wobec tego typu myślenia, która właśnie pomysł Intronizacji traktuje jako poważną ciemność teologiczną wewnątrz katolickiej rodziny w Polsce. Być może do rozwiązania tej trudnej dysputy teologicznej przyczyni się analiza i praktyczne, duszpasterskie zastosowanie poprzednio istniejącej już idei intronizacji Chrystusa na szczyt duszy ludzkiej, która przedstawiona została w duchowych pismach błogosławionego Johna Henry'ego Newmana.

**Słowa kluczowe:** idea intronizacji, Chrystus Królem Polski, etap wewnętrznego zjednoczenia, wprowadzenie Chrystusa na szczyt duszy ludzkiej, apostolat kontemplacyjny.

<sup>26</sup> M. Zawada, *Apostolat kontemplacyjny w pismach bł. Elżbiety od Trójcy Przenajświętszej*, [in]: J. W. Gogola (ed.), *Uwielbienie chwały. VI Karmelitański Tydzień Duchowości z bł. Elżbietą od Trójcy Świętej*, Kraków 2004, p. 200.

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