

FOREWORD

Wrocławski Przegląd Teologiczny
28 (2020) 1, 5–6
Wrocław Theological Review

The Church During the Pandemic

When I was writing the editorial to the second issue of the Wrocław Theological Review, I was not aware, much like the rest of the world, of the gravity of the petition expressed in the *Supplications*: “From the air, hunger, fire, and war... Save us, Lord!” Today, as we face a genuine threat to the health and even the lives of many, there are also abundant, controversial opinions on the role that the Church should assume in such a time. I ask myself: what should theologians, as people who ask various types of questions about God, be doing now? Should they be performing spectacular deeds that would put them on the covers of magazines? Should they undertake less glamorous activities that would lay solid, efficient foundations for future evangelization? It seems the latter will be necessary once the churches cease being desolate for fear of infection. People easily become used to comfortable settings, watching church services in the media. They are often unaware that sacraments can only be truly experienced within a community, not in front of a monitor. It will take a lot of effort to direct the post-pandemic situation towards building, developing, and strengthening the faith. These challenges also must be reflected in the research of theologians, regardless of specialization.

For this reason, the editors of the Wrocław Theological Review have continued their work despite the pandemic. Being aware of the role of theology in evangelization, we present the results of these theological explorations in this issue of the Wrocław Theological Review. Researchers of biblical theology, systematic theology, spiritual theology, pastoral theology, and Church history made every effort to share their analyses of the often detailed matters of their research. Such research may seem far from daily life, some critics have emphasized this point particularly strongly both during the pandemic and while encouraging theologians to abandon their studies in favor of charity services. I believe that such an approach is incorrect on all accounts, not because we are not obliged to be merciful towards our brethren (on the contrary!), but because future evangelization must have strong foundations in scholarship, especially of the

Bible. This topic is discussed in the first two papers written by the researchers from Florence (Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Centrale) and Lublin (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin). Without a well-deciphered Church doctrine, it is impossible to spread the Gospel. Additionally, detailed research results in a systematic strengthening of the faith, which could be compromised during the pandemic.

As to systematic theology, we have access to the thoughts of academics from Rome (Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Pontificia Università di Santa Croce, Pontificia Università Antonianum), Opole (Faculty of Theology at the University of Opole), Lugano (Facoltà di Teologia a Lugano), Warsaw (Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Warsaw), and Wrocław (Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław). Studying the doctrine, although inarguably important, is not sufficient to ensure the proper functioning of the Church, especially as regards the spiritual and pastoral aspects of the community. Research into spiritual theology is discussed by representatives from Katowice (Faculty of Theology at the University of Silesia). Analyses in pastoral theology are shared by researchers from Wrocław (Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław) and Katowice (Faculty of Theology at the University of Silesia). The foundation becomes more stable with each conclusion drawn from historical events. Research in this discipline allows us to establish the best path for further development of the Church community and to bring it closer to its Founder. To this end, we have also included the examinations of researchers from Hildesheim (Universität Hildesheim), Wrocław (Pontifical Faculty of Theology in Wrocław), and Szczecin (Faculty of Theology at the University of Szczecin).

We would like to share with you the latest issue of the Wrocław Theological Review, and another one written in English. It is a source of great satisfaction that more and more foreign authors want to publish their research with us. It forecasts greater recognition of our periodical not only within the country but also abroad. We sincerely hope that the pandemic that affects us all will allow us to gain deeper insight into theological issues so that we can emerge well-prepared to undertake evangelization after the restrictions are lifted.

Father Sławomir Stasiak
Editor-in-Chief