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## GOD'S LOVE IN THE TEACHING OF CARDINAL STEFAN WYSZYŃSKI

The article presents the subject of God's love in Cardinal Wyszyński's teaching. Primate Wyszyński puts God's love at the very center of his theological thought. The theme of God's love is discussed in seven sections: the first of them refers to the most famous words of Saint John's "Deus Caritas est" (1 Jn 4:8,16), which are a short and brief definition of God; the second section develops Cardinal Wyszyński's statement that there was a "time" in which only Love existed; the third section concerns the impartation of God's love; fourth section describes the love of the Father; fifth section speaks of the greatest Love, which is the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ; section six focuses on the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Love; the last section speaks of Mary, Mother of Beautiful Love. The whole ends with the summary. In his teachings on the love of God, Cardinal Wyszyński started with the inner life of the Triune God, with the Person of the Father, and then focuses on the salvific mission of the Son of God and the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit. In this way, he appreciates both the category of God the Father and God as a Father full of love.

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński was deeply convinced of the timeless value of love in the human life, and therefore reflected on it not only on the theological, but also on the metaphysical, psychosomatic, ethical and social levels. In his integral vision of love, although natural love and supernatural love complement each other, supernatural love is always the measure and criterion of natural love. Speaking of love, often and on various occasions, he expressed it in the character of: love

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of God in himself, the love of God for man, the love of man for God, and the love of people among themselves. Although, as a sociologist, he paid special attention to man and human affairs, as a man of unbreakable faith and a shepherd of the Church, he was fascinated by the depth of the mystery of love and therefore of God himself. The awareness that we are dealing with a mystery in relation to the love of God seems to be best confirmed by the gradual crossing of its threshold, the frequent pausing and returning to the same content – not to feel satisfied with the discovery of truth, but rather to rejoice in the fact of finding it and share that joy with others.

The theme of God's love is related not only to the answer to the question: what is it? or: what is this love manifested in? but also to the answer to the even more important question: who is the One to whom this love belongs in its essence? In this way, we can clearly see how much the problem of the love of God must be understood integrally, that is, not only in its manifestations, not only in relation to this world, but also in its ultimate source, that is, in the full happiness of sharing in the life of the Trinity, in its essential love. Everyone is called to live in the image and likeness of the Trinity, that is, to love, especially as a baptized person mystically bound to Christ through His Church. The knowledge of the full truth of the unifying love of the Trinity requires the formation of a new consciousness, and in this task, according to Cardinal Wyszyński, priests bear a special mission, because "We are at the service of the love of Christ, *Vicarii Caritatis Christi*, and it is up to us to pass on the flow of love from the heart of the Trinity to all hearts."<sup>1</sup>

Even though Cardinal Wyszyński did not leave any treaty on the Trinity, humbly confessing his ordinary lack of strength, he often valued its practical form in the form of the *signaculo Sanctae Trinitatis* received during Baptism. The supernatural life of God, the life in the Trinity begins in man by the will of Christ already at the moment of Baptism and is in its essence a Trinitarian life, that is, a life in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This life has its beginning on earth, but has no end in this world. Hence, the request of the Primate seems so timely:

May it be plain to see for the People of God how much the Father desires the return of all his children to the Father's womb; may they see how the Son of God, animated by his love for the Father, works in a saving effort to bring us back to the Father; may they feel the fire of love of the Spirit of the Comforter who renews the face of the earth, so that all things may be in the image and likeness of God.<sup>2</sup>

In this way, also the Theophanic character of God's love is appreciated.

<sup>1</sup> S. Wyszyński, *List do moich kapłanów*, part. I: *Wspólnie z Trójcą Świętą*, Paris 1969, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 100.

The problem of God's love in Cardinal Wyszyński's kerygmatic theology,<sup>3</sup> with the exception of a few papers, constituting a part of larger studies,<sup>4</sup> still remains on the margin of current research, even though many years ago Czesław Bartnik postulated a Trinitarian revaluation of Wyszyński's theological thought.<sup>5</sup> In order to give a general outline of this issue, out of Cardinal Wyszyński's extensive pastoral teaching, those of his sermons, speeches and pastoral letters which seem to be of particular importance for the issue under consideration will be selected.<sup>6</sup> Even the choice of quotations seems to be quite a difficult task, especially because of the Primate's theological directive, extremely original and full of apostolic zeal, expressed in the words: "I just have to look at everything through the eyes of the child of God, who sees God's anticipating love everywhere."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The study of kerygmatic theology, as Cardinal Wyszyński's pastoral teaching is often called, oriented directly towards Christian formation, from the point of view of dogmatic theology, besides its undoubted limitations, has the advantage of showing very clearly not only how to make the best known definitions understandable, but also how to transform mental effort into a deeper love for God.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. J. Ewartowska, *Boże Ojcostwo wewnątrzną zasadą refleksji teologicznej Prymasa Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, „Collectanea Theologica” 71 (2001) No. 4, p. 39–57; J. Strojny, *Aspekty teologiczne Aktu Oddania Matce Najświętszej. Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński – Stoczek Warmiński*, „Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne” 16 (2003), p. 151–160; B. Trzaskalska, *Eucharystia znakiem miłości w nauczaniu Stefana Kardynała Wyszyńskiego*, Warszawa 1996 (Master Thesis – typescript in the collection of Instytut Prymasowski SKW in Warsaw).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. C.S. Bartnik, *Zarys myśli teologicznej Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, „Ateneum Kapłańskie” 73 (1981) vol. 97, p. 223–224.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *Będziesz miłował*, Warszawa, 21.09.1961, in: Kardynał Stefan Wyszyński Prymas Polski, *W obronie człowieczeństwa wolnego. Przemówienia do prawników i do lekarzy*, ed. bp A.F. Dziuba, Warszawa 2013, p. 124–127; idem, *Bóg nas pierwszy umiłował*, Jasna Góra, 21.09.1975, in: Kardynał Stefan Wyszyński Prymas Polski, *Czego potrzeba ci młodzi. Przemówienia i homilie wygłoszone na Jasnej Górze. Słowo wstępne Kardynał Józef Glemp Prymas Polski*, ed. bp A.F. Dziuba, Warszawa 2009, p. 402–409; idem, *Miłość i sprawiedliwość społeczna. Rozważania społeczne*, Poznań 1993; idem, *Miłość na co dzień*, pt. I–II, Rzym 1971; idem, *Na miłość Bożą – ratujmy ludzi*, Warszawa, 12.03.1967, in: Kardynał Stefan Wyszyński Prymas Polski, *W obronie...*, p. 286–296; idem, *Uczcie się kochać...*, Inauguracja roku akademickiego, 6.10.1957, in: Kardynał Stefan Wyszyński Prymas Polski, *Nie chcecie łatwego życia. Konferencje i homilie wygłoszone w kościele akademickim świętej Anny do studentów*, ed. bp A.F. Dziuba, Warszawa 2007, p. 15–23; idem, *Zmaganie się sprawiedliwości i miłości. Zwycięstwo miłości*, Warszawa, 6.04.1968, in: Kardynał Stefan Wyszyński Prymas Polski, *W obronie...*, p. 317–324.

<sup>7</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 69; cf. J. Lewandowski, *Eucharystia. Sakrament osoby i wspólnoty w nauczaniu Prymasa Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, Warszawa 1988, p. 95.

## *DEUS CARITAS EST* – A CONCISE AND SHORT DEFINITION

From an early age, and especially throughout his priestly years, the liturgy was for Cardinal Wyszyński a primary opportunity to reflect on the mystery of God's love. The cycle of mysteries of Jesus' earthly life celebrated every year, from Christmas to Ascension together with various celebrations, was an excellent opportunity for in-depth reflection.<sup>8</sup> The leading role in this reflection was played by the Trinitarian Creed, that is, the Creed in the form of both the "Apostles' Creed" and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. Although, on the one hand, the Cardinal regrets a little the difficulty of assimilating some of the terms and phrases of the Christian faith, on the other hand, he is well aware of the important role they play.

People are concerned about who God is? They create hundreds of terms. From a young child, we have been imbued with the awareness that God is the Most Perfect Being, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, Lord of all things. And I was taught that in my childhood. Man accepts this, even though he does not know what a being is, he does not understand what perfection is, what the power of creation and rule is expressed in.<sup>9</sup>

The transmission or the memorization of the basic contents of the faith is a reference to the ancient tradition of the Church, to the so-called *traditio Symboli*, that is, to its "transmission" to the catechumens and the subsequent *redditio*, that is, to the "giving back" of the Symbol of faith. Since the Christian faith is not knowledge, it cannot be learned or fully understood. Its systematized contents, however, are an irreplaceable aid, so that man does not get lost in his thoughts.

For Cardinal Wyszyński the encounter with the living Word of God, that is Christ, in whom God revealed Himself and the mystery of his unfathomable love, had the greatest impact on the comprehension of the truth about God's love. It is in Christ that one of the most meaningful words in Scripture gain meaning, namely:

"God is love," as the Apostle said (1 Jn 4:8). "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that everyone who believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life" Christ explains (Jn 3:16). So often we think about the definition of divinity, and it is very concise and short: "Deus Caritas est" – "God is love".<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. II, p. 135.

<sup>9</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Potrzeba miłości społecznej*, Warszawa, Kościół św. Antoniego, 30.09.1973, in: Stefan Kardynał Wyszyński Prymas Polski, *Prymat człowieka w ładzie społecznym*, Londyn 1976, p. 123–124.

<sup>10</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Homo Dei – człowiek Boży. Brat dzieci Bożych*, Warszawa, Kościół Świętego Krzyża, 13.01.1974, in: idem, *Prymat człowieka...*, p. 207.

In his teaching, Cardinal Wyszyński does not limit himself to using only the shortest definition of God, although he uses it frequently, but in his statements he encourages everyone to “fix their eyes upon Christ”.<sup>11</sup> He himself is the first to reach its deepest and most life-giving sense. He is encouraged in this effort by the fact that God could have described himself differently, for example, as Justice or Will.<sup>12</sup>

## THERE WAS „TIME” WHEN ONLY LOVE EXISTED

Numerous statements by Cardinal Wyszyński clearly confirm how much he was fascinated by the truth and mystery of God's love at the same time. Acceptance of the truth, however, does not mean giving up the search for its meaning, in which he was strengthened by the awareness of the path taken by numerous Church Fathers and theologians over the centuries.<sup>13</sup> He therefore tries to contemplate love in its source, bringing out, step by step, its most important characteristics. In the first place, God in an absolute sense is “Infinite, Essential Love.”<sup>14</sup> In the way that God is the Highest and Only Love, he is also the Highest and Only Thought, Reason, Mind, Truth, Will, Good, Beauty.<sup>15</sup> But the only God, who is Love in his Being and Essence, is the Trinity, the eternal unity of the Three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As far as possible, while strongly emphasizing the difficulty of human language, Cardinal Wyszyński tries to reveal at least a little of what is happening inside God, who is the Trinity and as Trinity is Love. He starts from the statement that “There was thus ‘time’, at the beginning without beginning, ‘ante saecula’ – before the ages – when only Love existed, for God is Love. In this absolute, undivided Being, the great process of knowing oneself, one's Essential Love, ‘began’. – We speak in a very ‘human’ way, to the extent our terms allow, because there is no time and no consequences in God: ‘before’, ‘after’, ‘was’, ‘will be’. In God everything Is – always and simultaneously.”<sup>16</sup> This emphasis on God's eternity is particularly important in order not to attribute to God not only some changeability, but also preexistence of love itself before Divine Persons. God's love is not subject to any changeability, and while Cardinal Wyszyński speaks of something that might happen in God-Love, it is only to em-

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<sup>11</sup> S. Wyszyński, *List do...*, p. 33.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, „*Ojciec nasz...*”. *Rozważania*, Poznań 1978, p. 62.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. C.S. Bartnik, *Dogmatyka katolicka*, t. 1, Lublin 2000, p. 93; F. Courth, *Bóg trójjedynej miłości*, transl. M. Kowalczyk, Poznań 1997, p. 243.

<sup>14</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Będziesz miłował...*, p. 124; cf. idem, *Bóg nas...*, p. 407; idem, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 39; pt. II, p. 51; idem, „*Ojciec nasz...*”..., p. 53.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, „*Ojciec nasz...*”..., p. 58.

<sup>16</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 22–23; cf. J. Strojny, *Aspekty...*, p. 152.

phasize the individuality of the Persons in God's nature, who differ only in their origin, but not to speak of their separation. In the Triune God there is an eternal exchange of love, and Cardinal Wyszyński, wanting to show it in Father's giving birth to the Son, refers to the concept of birth as an act of knowledge through which the Father expresses his own love.<sup>17</sup>

In God, in this absolute Being, the liking for Love "took place", its the reflection in the image of one's own cognitive thought, from which Sapientia is born – wisdom, that is, God's knowledge of Himself. This is Verbum, Filius, Son of God, who is the reflection of the Father, of His Essential Love. "Light from Light, true God from true God. Begotten, not created, consubstantial with the Father, through Him all things were made [...]" (Eucharistic Creed).<sup>18</sup>

God is not only one, but also perfectly simple. The Primate was particularly influenced by the mystery of the eternal unity of the Three Persons in God.<sup>19</sup> He contemplated this unity with special predilection:

What a mysterious Oneness! All the Love the Father had, He gave to the Son, so that the Love of the Son is essentially nothing less than the Love of the Father. "I and the Father are one" (J 10,30). Such perfect unity requires equal love. Differences begin where unequal love meets. In the Holy Trinity, equal Loves have met. Therefore, there is a unique Unity in it, because the whole Father gives himself to the Son and the whole Son is directed towards the Father. They are bound by a common Spirit, who is their Love, the Holy Breath, coming from the Father and the Son.<sup>20</sup>

Because love is the very essence of God, the Three Persons in their entirety are co-eternal and perfectly equal. The love of the Son is in essence in no way smaller than that of the Father, just as is the love of the Holy Spirit; nor is the love of the Holy Spirit, who comes from the Father and the Son, greater or less due to its origin.

## GOD'S SELF-IMPARTATION

We can say that in the Trinitarian studies of Cardinal Wyszyński love has the role of a special "connector", as it allows to pass in a very natural way from

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. J. Ewartowska, *Boże Ojcostwo...*, p. 42.

<sup>18</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 22–23.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. C.S. Bartnik, *Zarys myśli...*, p. 223–224.

<sup>20</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 23.

reflection on the “immanent Trinity” to reflection on the “Trinity of the salvation economy” or the “economic Trinity”. So thinking of God’s love, which is also God’s life, it should be emphasized that

[...] this pure Being, non-complex, being a perfect Unity, becomes somehow “differentiated”. So far there has only been the Father, Son and Spirit: Father who eternally begets the Son, the Son who is begotten by the Father, the Spirit, who comes from the Father and Son. There was a constant impartation of Love only in the most mysterious depths of the Holy Trinity. And there could exist just this great absolute Love and nothing except for it. But it is love’s characteristics that out of its very nature it wants to spread, it wants to impart itself – “Bonum est diffusivum sui”. Love radiates, in a way it goes out of itself and through this going out – it imparts love, which is always creative and always constitutes some act of fatherhood.<sup>21</sup>

To express the nature of love, that is the impartation inherent in it, Cardinal Wyszyński recalls the Platonic emanative conception of good *bonum est diffusivum sui* (“good is diffusive out of itself”), which was grafted on the Christian soil.<sup>22</sup> Love, which is the life of God, does not remain only in the depths of the Holy Trinity, but by imparting itself *ad extra* it gives and sustains the existence of creations.

## FATHER’S LOVE

The category of God the Father and the Triune God as a Father is not only a foundation, but also the very epicentre of the Trinitarian thought of Cardinal Wyszyński.<sup>23</sup> Very often, when he speaks of the interior life in God, of the relationship between the individual Persons of the Trinity, he starts with the Person of the Father, referring to the Latin expression of *Principium sine principio*,<sup>24</sup> consolidated by Saint Augustine. For Cardinal Wyszyński, the relationship between the Father and love is inseparable and it expressed itself most fully in Father’s

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 23–24.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. C.S. Bartnik, *Dogmatyka katolicka...*, p. 124; J. Ewartowska, *Boże Ojcostwo...*, p. 42.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. C.S. Bartnik, *Zarys myśli...*, p. 224; J. Lewandowski, *Naród w nauczaniu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, Warszawa 1989, p. 43.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. J. Ewartowska, *Boże Ojcostwo...*, p. 41. Already St. Augustine wrote: „Principium sine principio solus Pater est”, *De Genesi ad Litteram. Imperfectus Liber*, II, 5 (PL 34, kol. 222). The Toledan Symbol (675) speaks about the Father as the source and beginning of the whole Deity, from which all fatherhood comes, in reference to the Athanasian Symbol. Cf. *XI Synod w Toledo*, in: *Breviarium fidei. Wybór doktrynalnych wypowiedzi Kościoła*, ed. I. Bokwa, Poznań 2007, p. 101–108.



begetting the Son, in the love of the Father for the Son, and in the mutual love between the Father and the Son, which is the Holy Spirit. The creative act is a further manifestation of the love of God in the wider sense, that is, of the Father's love of the Triune God:

Thus begins a "chain of love" having its origin in the depths of the Trinity and somehow overflowing outside. This is creation! "Let us make the world [...] let us make man [...]", that is, let us pass on a particle of Our Love. Let us give it to a creature created in our image and likeness, who would be able to receive our Love, participate in it and pay with love for the Love received.<sup>25</sup>

The creative act, therefore, is an expression of the love of the Triune God, whose initiative comes from the Father and it is He who "invites the Son" to act together in the unity of the Holy Spirit.<sup>26</sup> At the same time, the Primate does not forget to add that "The creation of the world and of man in the image and likeness of God is the impartation of the immensity of God's love, which we will never fully understand on this earth."<sup>27</sup>

Cardinal Wyszyński provides interesting insights about the beauty and diversity of the created world, seeing the criterion of the hierarchy of all beings and entities in the „degree of love.”

And here are the different categories of beings, entities with which the world is filled. It would seem that this diversity is disturbing, yet there is a strange harmony in it. Why? Because in every creature that is made of God, and therefore of Love, there is a particle of the Father's love that makes the particular being exist and it exists "in its own way", according to the love given by the Father. Beings differ not so much in their dimensions and character as in their degree of love.<sup>28</sup>

At the very top of the ladder of creatures there is man, whose entire existence is presented by the Primate Wyszyński in the perspective of God's love.

Everything that exists has come out of love and is a work of love. And therefore everything has a right to love. And most of all man, the most perfect creature on earth.

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<sup>25</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 24.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, p. 281; see J. Ewartowska, *Szukając prawdy o człowieku. Antropologia teologiczna Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, Warszawa 2010, p. 131.

<sup>27</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 25; cf. M. Parzyszek, *Rodzina w nauczaniu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego. Aspekt pedagogiczny*, Lublin 2012, p. 129; J. Strojny, *Aspekty...*, p. 152.

<sup>28</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 24.



If God has put his love into everything, he has most strongly, if we can say so, involved himself with man. That is why man has the right to love! Man has the right, but also the duty – to love. This is due to his origin and the nature of the child of God. He came out of the womb of Him who is Love. That is why man, in a way, is love and must love. If he does not love, he misappropriates himself, acts against himself and his nature. That is why Christ said that one of the greatest commandments is: “You shall love!”<sup>29</sup>

The need to love God and others according to the measure of self-love is not a matter of liking, but is inherent in the nature of man. Man wants to love, but also to be loved by others. Therefore, Cardinal Wyszyński concludes: “Oh, if we could ‘put an ear to the heart of the tired mankind’ and listen to the desires that are hidden there, we would know that man needs: truth, freedom, justice, but above all, ‘Love’.”<sup>30</sup>

God's love is the “motor” of everything in the created world, but it particularly permeates human life. Cardinal Wyszyński, referring especially to St. Augustine and the physics of Aristotle, speaks about love as the leading force of human life.

So we are of Love and for Love! Everything that is, was created out of the Supreme Love and is aiming back to the bosom of the Father, to its “cradle”, to the arms of overwhelming Love: a stone falling by the force of its weight, a planet in its dizzying course, given to it by the creative love, a flower, leaning towards the sun, a man pursuing happiness [...] Consciously, like man, a rational and free being, or unconsciously like the whole world of non-intelligent creatures, everything aspires to God, to the Eternal Love from which it came out, like a falling object aspires to the centre of gravity of the earth. Everything could say about itself: “My burden is my love! [...]” (St. Augustine).<sup>31</sup>

## THE GREATEST LOVE

In contemplating God's love in Jesus Christ, the eternal and incarnate Son of God, Cardinal Wyszyński concentrates essentially on three themes: the revelation of the Father, the mystery of Redemption, and the mystery of uniting everything in Christ as Head. In relation to the particularly high status of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God,<sup>32</sup> various motifs appear in Cardinal Wyszyński's

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<sup>29</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Będziesz miłował...*, p. 125.

<sup>30</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 24–25.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. C.S. Bartnik, *Zarys myśli...*, p. 224.

Christological reflections in response to the traditionally formulated question: *Cur Deus homo?* Basically, however, he speaks about: the unchangeability of God's plan, man's rescue, reparation and divinization. In the context of the mystery of the Incarnation, Primate Wyszyński very clearly emphasizes the love of the Father, to whom he attributes not only creative but also salvific initiative.

But in the highest form, God's love for us was revealed in the Eternal Word, which became flesh and dwelt among us. It was the greatest Love! It has been made concrete in God Man, in Jesus Christ, under the Heart of the Earthly Mother, which is why we call her the Mother of Beautiful Love. In her the Most Beautiful Fatherly Love was placed – Jesus, who is Love.<sup>33</sup>

Jesus Christ not only reveals the love of the Father, not only is he the Mediator of his love,<sup>34</sup> but is Himself the measure of love. Cardinal Wyszyński interprets with great attention the encounter between Jesus and Nicodemus in this context:

Says Jesus to Nicodemus: God so loved the world [...] In fact, Christ did not give a closer explanation to this short word: "so" – to this extent. He only set a measure of this love: that He gave his only begotten Son. It is necessary to understand the love that God is in order to fill the humble word 'so' with content that would exhaust the generosity of God for the world. It is necessary to understand who the Son of God is in order that, through this understanding, the short "so" can develop colour, turn red, and gain clarity!<sup>35</sup>

The revelation of the full face of the Father and the full truth of the Trinity is the work of Christ. The person of the Incarnate Son himself is the best revelation of the Father. "Man himself would not have come to discern this source if it had not been for the great love of the Father, who sent us his Son calling: 'Abba, Pater, Father' (Rom 8:15). And the Son said: 'My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me – Father's' (Jn 7:16)."<sup>36</sup> Christ not only addresses his only Father using the word 'Abba', but also puts it in the mouth of every man who in Him has become an adopted child of God.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 25; cf. idem, *Na miłość...*, p. 296.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. II, p. 50; see J. Lewandowski, *Eucharystia...*, p. 18; M. Parzyszek, *Rodzina...*, p. 130.

<sup>35</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Na miłość...*, p. 288–289.

<sup>36</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Homo Dei...*, p. 206; cf. J. Strojny, *Aspekty...*, p. 153.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *Bóg nas...*, p. 402; idem, „*Ojciec nasz...*”..., p. 16.

In a comprehensive view of the mystery of Redemption seen in the light of God's love, a series of very difficult questions arise, which the Primate is trying to answer.

If this is the case, why has mankind sinned? Why did mankind get sick when it originated with God, who is Love? If we are all fruits of love, why are we sick, why are we hungry, why have we led a life – perhaps, fortunately, just some of us – so foolish? This condition is explained by the fact that love is absolute. It is a great lady who gathers everything, like an insatiable heart. And that's why you have to embrace it whole and see everything through it, even a particle, even a trifle, even a small thing.<sup>38</sup>

Man can only respond fully to God's love by loving God with one's whole heart. Man's fate is never alien to God, because

In God's eyes, man is a great being, the fruit of love, called to love and to be united with full Love. The fate of man completely devoid of love through eternal damnation cannot simply be contained in God's thought. In human terms, God does everything to prevent the final catastrophe of man, who is born of the love of God and of man, in order that he may possess love, rejoice with it in God, and radiate it in his life with all his brothers, children of the Loving God.<sup>39</sup>

In a mysterious way the contemplation of God's love in Christ becomes the contemplation of His cross. In Christ's cross two loves are in fact present: the love of the Son for the Father and the love of God for people. Christ

[...] allowed himself to be nailed to the cross to show his love for the Father and to convince us of God's love for people. The Son of God wants to repair the eternal harm done to the Father, whom world has learned to fear as Lord and Judge rather than learn to love. Christ reveals that the God of the Gospel is above all God the Father, to whom the best Son leads, implanting in us the "spirit of adoption as sons" (Rom 8:15).<sup>40</sup>

For Cardinal Wyszyński the Cross of Christ is the most meaningful banner of love. "The sacrifice of the Father's love for us hangs on the cross. Only with this awareness can we look at the cross. There would not be a cross if God did not love people so much, if he was not Love itself. The cross is a visible sign of the love

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<sup>38</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Uczcie się...*, p. 17.

<sup>39</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Zmaganie się...*, p. 323.

<sup>40</sup> S. Wyszyński, *List do...*, p. 33.

that is in God, a banner that proclaims Love.”<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, the cross confirms that no power is able to tear God away from love. In the world, “There is no power to tear God away from love towards us. There is no such power either in ourselves or in the whole world! For it is not possible to separate God from Himself, and He is Love – ‘Deus caritas est’ (1 Jn 4:8). One cannot cut Him off from what is essential in Him. God will always remain love – that is, who he is.”<sup>42</sup> The Cross of Christ is also a revelation of the Father’s mercy and justice.

God must be just, and I am not able to give God the right measure for my weaknesses and faults. And here on the cross there is an extraordinary substitute. Only God, Son of God, God Man can make reparation to the Father in a just way. [...] A new force must be used to turn the tide of God’s justice in favour of love. Only God can do this! Only God has this power. The Cross shows me Christ, who has turned the scales in favour of love. Love is not violated by anything. The Father has still kept it all for me. And what is due for justice, will be satisfied by the substitute. Only He can pay God for me in full measure.<sup>43</sup>

Christ, with his most holy Passion on the tree of the Cross, has atoned for humanity to God the Father. It is very suggestive in this regard to compare the widely spread arms of the cross to the “shield” that protects mankind from anger and Christ himself to the “weight” that tilts the balance of Divine justice in favour of love.<sup>44</sup> Another very important centre of contemplation of the love of God is the side of Christ, His Heart, opened with a spear by a soldier.<sup>45</sup>

The completion of the mystery of the salvific death of Christ in the aspect of love is the recapitulation of the whole world in Him. Recapitulation or reunification in Christ is the participation of all people and the whole world in His merit, in the fruits of Redemption. The first of these fruits is reconciliation with the Father, enabling all people to face the Father.

The Word of God, in order to lead to the Father, has taken upon itself humanity. Christ on earth combined them in the one Person of the Word and He returns to the heavens, taking with himself the prisoners to whom he gave the gifts (cf. Eph 4:8). [...] Bringing life from the Father (Jn 5:21) and accomplishing redemption, Christ imbues the whole human race with God’s life and draws everything to the Father (Jn 12:32).

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<sup>41</sup> S. Wszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 261.

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem, p. 261–262.

<sup>43</sup> Ibidem, p. 262.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. J. Ewartowska, *Boże Ojcostwo...*, p. 52.

<sup>45</sup> S. Wszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 267.

Humanity, detached from the Father, now in the Son of God, in the Incarnate Word, returns to the Father. All creation receives, in the Son of Man, in the Firstborn of mankind, a direction towards the Father-Creator. We already know our goal and we do not wander in the wilderness of uncertainty.<sup>46</sup>

Christ's union with the whole human race is at the heart of the doctrine of the mystical Body of Christ, which explains how all people are one person in Christ. In reference to St. Augustine, the Primate explains: "In this great mystical body we are Christ, we are His members, His property, just as Christ is ours as our Head, the Head of His members. So united in Christ Jesus our Lord, we stand before the Father, who is not only the Father of Christ, but also our Father – through Christ (St. Augustine)."<sup>47</sup> Through Christ the Head, all people, as members of the mystical Body of Christ, become participants in all the benefits of the Head, the full communion with the Trinity.

From our Head all grace flows to the members. Christ, who reveals the Trinity to the world, binds all his members to each Person of the Trinity in Baptism: we are thus made sons in the Father, sanctified in the Holy Spirit and clothed in the Son (Gal 3:27). Thus Christ not only proclaims to the world the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, demanding faith in all that He has revealed to us, but by filiation he leads us into an inner relationship with the Trinity.<sup>48</sup>

In this way, this "one thing" that Christ asked the Father in His priestly prayer, is realized (cf. Jn 17:11). The last dimension of the recapitulation of the whole world in Christ is that of His receiving the authority over all creation, because of His united divinity and humanity.<sup>49</sup> Born through Christ's cross, the new supernatural order means not only a renewal and a return to the origins, but also a significant surpassing of the old.

The love of Christ (*caritas Christi*), never fully comprehensible, demands reciprocity. And although this applies to all people, it is first and foremost to the priests who, on the threshold of their priesthood, are clothed with the special sign of love that is the chasuble.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> S. Wyszyński, *List do...*, p. 21.

<sup>47</sup> Ibidem, p. 21–22.

<sup>48</sup> Ibidem, p. 22; cf. J. Strojny, *Aspekty...*, p. 153.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *Miłość i sprawiedliwość...*, p. 203.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *List do...*, p. 10; see J.K. Miczyński, *Tożsamość kapłańska według „Listu do moich kapłanów” Kard. Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, „*Verbum Vitae*” 17 (2010), p. 316.

## THE SPIRIT OF LOVE – THE LOVE ITSELF

Cardinal Wyszyński's statements in which he speaks of the Holy Spirit as the Love of Father and Son, the Spirit of Love or the Love itself which is in God are an inseparable complement of the reflection on his teaching on God's love. Filled with the admiration and faith in the Spirit, Wyszyński emphasizes:

Love is God's essence. This love is the Spirit, common to the Father and Son, existing between Them as their emanation. The Holy Spirit comes from the Father and the Son, from their Love, and therefore is Love itself. We speak of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Love. And love does not cease. It continues to radiate, it imparts itself.<sup>51</sup>

Primate Wyszyński focuses more on God's love opening itself to man and the world in the historic-salvific mission of the Holy Spirit as a gift than on the Trinitarian life of God, that is love of the Father for the Son and the Son for the Father, realized in the Holy Spirit as personal love. With the skill of a true artist, Cardinal tries to capture every detail of the revelation and action of the Spirit of Love.

Here we see how the Spirit of Love works. The Apostles waited in the Cenacle with Mary, Mother of Beautiful Love, for His coming, announced by Christ. Finally he came. He raptured them by the flames of his love, he purified and changed them. He made the miracle of the self-impartment of the Essential Love. This miracle is constantly, although to varying degrees, repeated in the Church as a concrete reality of our personal life.<sup>52</sup>

The Holy Spirit coming to the heart of man, just as to the hearts of the Apostles, is a flaming "fire" that is warm, delicate and not destructive. He essentially transforms man from existing for himself into a loving existence for others. The Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of Love, comes constantly to human hearts, and also to the Church, which is the "supernatural organization of love."<sup>53</sup> The whole effort of the Church consists in transmitting to humanity the love of God. If there were no animating action of the love of the Holy Spirit in the Church, Cardinal Wyszyński does not hesitate to notice, then the Church would simply "wilt".<sup>54</sup> Therefore, for all reasons it is right to emphasize that the Pentecost celebration lasts incessantly.

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<sup>51</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. II, p. 48; cf. J. Lewandowski, *Eucharystia...*, p. 44.

<sup>52</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. II, p. 49.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. II, p. 50; idem, „*Ojciec nasz...*”..., p. 63.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. II, p. 55.

## MARY, THE MOTHER OF BEAUTIFUL LOVE

Mary is an essential link, through Christ and thanks to Him, not only in connecting God with the world, but also in the “chain” of love.<sup>55</sup> Cardinal Wyszyński addresses her using many titles,<sup>56</sup> among which there is also the title the Mother of Beautiful Love (*Mater pulchrae dilectionis*).<sup>57</sup> And although he is fascinated by her motherly care full of love, the quoted title concerns not her love for God,<sup>58</sup> but the state of having Love. “Saying: ‘Mother of Beautiful Love’, we mean not so much the object of love as the state of having Love. Mary fully possessed the God Man, Love out of Love, Emissary of the Father’s love for the children of God.”<sup>59</sup> Mary is the Mother of Beautiful Love because she has been given, like no one else, the privilege of hosting in her human womb the most beautiful of all Love of the Father – Jesus, who is the Greatest Love.

## CONCLUSION

Cardinal Wyszyński’s numerous statements about God’s love, which confirm his original desire to look at it through the “eyes” of the child of God, can be summed up as one great contemplation of God, who is the enlivening Love and who loves eternally. Starting from the shortest definition of God as Love (cf. 1 Jn 4:8.16), Cardinal Wyszyński first of all tries to give recognition to the salvation history teaching about the Trinity by anchoring it even more clearly in God. Since there is no ontological difference between God and love, love is the nature of the only God, His very essence. God is “Infinite, Essential Love,” but because the only God is the Trinity, therefore Primate Wyszyński starts with the Father, who is the source and beginning of the whole Divinity, privileging not only the category of God the Father in the intra-Trinitarian life, but also God as Father. His

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. C.S. Bartnik, *Zarys myśli...*, p. 225.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *Przez waszą mękę – ku odrodzeniu życia ojczystego! Do stoczniovców*, Warszawa, Miodowa, 7.06.1971, in: *Prymat człowieka...*, p. 37; see C.S. Bartnik, *Zarys myśli...*, p. 226; J. Lewandowski, *Maryjność księdza prymasa kardynała Wyszyńskiego*, „Studia Płockie” 23 (1995), p. 55.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 297; see G. Bachanek, *Antropologiczne ukierunkowanie mariologii kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, „Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne” 30 (2017) No. 2, p. 64–65.

<sup>58</sup> Mary’s heart was filled with love for God. This love was: sensitive, servant-like, silent. Cf. J. Królikowski, *“Matka Kościoła” w nauczaniu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego (I)*, „Collectanea Theologica” 61 (1991) No. 4, p. 95–96.

<sup>59</sup> S. Wyszyński, *Miłość...*, pt. I, p. 25.



frequent phrases are: “Eternal love,” “Fatherly love,” “Father’s womb” or “the arms of all-encompassing Love.” It is, in fact, through the eternal paternity of God that the intra-Trinitarian love is revealed as the great and absolute love of God, which is not only a constant self-impartment in the most secret depths of the Trinity, but also the source of existence of man and of all reality. Cardinal Wyszyński recognizes the degree of possessing the Father’s love as the criterion for the hierarchy of all beings and entities. Man is the most perfect creature on earth, because the Creator has “put” the greatest amount of love into him. The desire to love in man is unquenchable and no force is able to tear him away from this fundamental need. Man, born of the love of God and of man, is called to love and unite himself with the full Love.

Primate Wyszyński reflects on the love of God in Jesus Christ essentially in the context of the truth about the revelation of the Father, the mystery of Redemption and the mystery of the unification of everything in Christ as Head. The greatest Love and at the same time the most beautiful love of the Father is the Eternal Word, which has become flesh and dwelled among us. The contemplation of the love of God in Christ becomes the contemplation of His cross. The Cross of Christ is the most eloquent banner of love (*vestigium caritatis*). Cardinal Wyszyński compares the arms of the Cross of Christ to a “shield” protecting humanity from the deserved wrath, and Christ himself to the “weight” that tilts the scales of justice towards the victory of love. The love of God in Christ (*caritas Christi*) is also the recapitulation of the whole world in Him. The doctrine of the mystical Body of Christ explains how all people are one person in Christ and share in all the benefits of the Head and in full communion with the Trinity. The recapitulation of the whole world in Christ also means His receiving power over all creation and its radical renewal.

The Holy Spirit is the Love of the Father and the Son, the Spirit of Love or the Love itself, which is in God. Cardinal Wyszyński focuses on the historic-salvific mission of the Holy Spirit as a gift. It is He who transforms man from being for himself into a loving existence for others. He revives the Church, whose mission is to transmit the love of God to humanity. The presence, through the Holy Spirit, of God-Man, Love out of Love, the Emissary of Father’s love under the heart of Mary makes her the Mother of Beautiful Love (*Mater pulchrae dilectionis*).

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**Keywords:** God’s love, Cardinal Wyszyński’s teaching, Holy Trinity, “God is love” (1 Jn 4:8.16)

## MIŁOŚĆ BOŻA W NAUCZANIU STEFANA KARDYNAŁA WYSZYŃSKIEGO

### Streszczenie

Kardynał Stefan Wyszyński z krótkiej definicji Boga jako miłości (1 J 4,8.16) czyni obszerny traktat agapetologiczny, który choć podobnie jak inne nie ukazał się drukiem, to jednak spaja całą jego myśl teologiczną, zwłaszcza trynitologię. Jako wprawiony duszpasterz był głęboko przekonany, że ujęta historiozbawczo nauka o miłości Bożej nie jest w stanie wyczerpać misterium Trójcy Świętej, dlatego też starał się zakotwiczyć ją mocno w wewnątrztrynitarnym życiu Trójjedynego Boga. Ze szczególnym upodobaniem kontempluje on boską Osobę Ojca, który z miłości rodzi Syna, a następnie wraz z Synem tchnie Ducha. Oprócz tej nieskończonej głębi ojcostwa Ojca, a więc i źródła miłości

ojcowskiej, dającej początek Trójcy Świętej, prymas Wyszyński akcentuje ojcostwo Boga Trójjedynego, które objawiło się w dziele stworzenia i opatrnościowej trosce o nie, a także nowe ojcostwo wynikające z dzieła odkupienia i usynowienia ludzkości w Jednorodzonym Synu Bożym.

Odrębnym rozdziałem trynitarnej refleksji o miłości Bożej jest *caritas Christi* – miłość Chrystusa. Ujmuje ją kardynał Wyszyński w kontekście prawdy o objawieniu Ojca, tajemnicy odkupienia oraz misterium zespolenia wszystkiego w Chrystusie jako Głowie. Szczególnego znaczenia nabiera w tym kontekście porównanie ramion krzyża do „tarczy” osłaniającej ludzkość przed gniewem, a samego Chrystusa do „ciężaru” przeważającego szalę sprawiedliwości na rzecz zwycięstwa miłości.

Niezastąpionym dopełnieniem rozważań o miłości Bożej jest refleksja kardynała Wyszyńskiego o Duchu Świętym, który jest Miłością Ojca i Syna, Duchem Miłości albo też samą Miłością. Ożywczo działa On w sercu każdego wierzącego i w całym Kościele. Jego działania szczególnie doświadczyła Maryja, która z uwagi na stan posiadania Największej Miłości nazwana zostaje Matką Pięknej Miłości.

**Słowa kluczowe:** miłość Boża, nauczanie kardynała Wyszyńskiego, Trójca Święta, „Bóg jest Miłością” (1 J 4,8.16)