

## **Description for the general public**

The charitable activity of the Church is the largest institution providing help to those in need in Poland. It is funded mainly by the offerings of the faithful, donations from individuals and legal entities as well by the state budget.

The institution of sponsorship for financing charity in Poland, is a new solution which has no other counterpart in the state legal order. It cannot be confused with a sponsoring contract which involves the promotion of the sponsor's economic activity and the obligation to fulfil the sponsor's beneficial requirements. In contrast to the sponsoring institution of sponsorship is to finance a particular legal entity using its trademarks. In the Polish legal order, the sponsorship institution should be classified as unnamed contracts which combine elements of various contracts. One example may be a concession agreement between an ecclesiastical juridical person and a concessionaire e.g. the licence holder pays the registered trade mark owner for the usage of registered marks, products or activities.

The purpose of the research is to show how a sponsorship agreement can be defined to assist the ecclesiastical juridical person to successfully fulfill its purpose i.e. mission and charitable works, for which it has been established. The usage of such a form of financing hides the risk of losing control and influence over the business. Sponsorship can become autocracy defining its own financing conditions. It is therefore important to examine the legal and practical aspects of entering into sponsorship contracts in order to prevent unnecessary abuse. The analysis of legal provisions and available literature is to lead to the development of a theoretical model to be used by the Church in Poland for the purpose of financing its charitable works on the basis of a sponsorship agreement.

The reason for the need to take up this issue is mainly due to the changes in society and the culture of the modern world. Progressive the relativization and the secularization of social life also affects the Church, which is struggling not only with acts of apostasy i.e. the formal leaving of the Church, but also with believers who are indifferent to the affairs of the Church. Moreover, the decreasing numbers of the faithful as well as fewer vocations to the priesthood and religious orders, contribute to a reduction in charitable work activity previously enjoyed. These activities are now often combined with other charitable works or completely closed. A sponsorship agreement is one of the ways of revitalising these works, their maintenance and further development.

The study presented is a continuation of the current scientific grant in the field of canon law entitled: *Legal aspects of the management of ecclesiastical goods* (National Science Center, Sonata 8). The acquired knowledge and experience in the management of ecclesiastical property has provided the opportunity to seek new legal solutions for the author. It is highly significant that the public in Poland continues to place and enjoy the trust of the Church. It is therefore important that the charitable works carried out by ecclesiastical juridical persons are not only protected but additionally developed in cooperation with other forms of funding. Consequently, the importance of the charitable works of the Church should not be allowed to diminish, especially when the funding donated to ecclesiastical charity institutions is generally put to better use than the funding donated to a similar state charity.