

Coexistence of different models of spirituality within the Catholic Church: example of three catholic revival movements

The main objective of our research is to explore models of spirituality present in three distinctive currents within the Roman Catholic Church: the Catholic tradition movement, one of the movements practicing contemplative spirituality and one of the Catholic charismatic movements. Our project is inscribed in the paradigm of relational sociology, emphasizing the role of relation between people and spiritual world as a founding element of religious phenomena. To understand religious experience of our research participants, it is crucial to reconstruct how they establish and maintain their relationship with God. This relation between believers and the divine is central for Christianity.

Studying the differences in models of religiosity is especially important in the context of scientific understanding of modern Catholicism, which has been described as a increasingly fragmentized denomination. The Roman Catholic Church offers its believers a broad range of possibilities to practice religion according to each one's individual preferences. Since the Second Vatican Council we observe the proliferation of small, voluntary communities based on affinities of their members. Since at least the last decades of twentieth century, rise of new movements within the Catholic Church constitutes an important phenomenon in Polish, as well as global, Church.

In this situation, exploring the mechanisms of diversification proves to be a key issue for sociology of religion. Cases chosen for our research represent three distinctive religious currents within the Catholic church. Their members practice different models of spirituality, which makes them suitable source for analysis.

Our research will be conducted using qualitative methods: semi-structured individual in-depth interviews (IDI), observation and content analysis of found data (publications and publicly available statements by members of studied groups recorded outside the context of our study). This will allow to describe the religious experience of research participants in three main dimensions:

1. the level of practice: how is the relation between the believers and their God constructed? Which means are used to establish contact with the spiritual world?
2. the level of legitimization of practices: why certain practices and objects are treated as effective and valid means to establish this relation?
3. the level of vision of transcendence: what vision of the spiritual world is revealed in those practical preferences? Who is the God that the believers seek to establish relation with?

The analysis will result in an adequate description of differences among studied groups, taking into account not only the practical level, but also their justification and vision of transcendence backing them. In this way, our research can contribute to better understanding of contemporary Polish Catholicism. Furthermore, utilizing structured and focused analysis according with case study methodology will allow for formulating broader conclusions, and for proposing an explanatory theory of mechanisms of internal Catholic diversification.