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Summary of the PhD dissertation entitled

The Radio Maryja Family Phenomenon. Theological and Media Studies

The subject of this study is the phenomenon of the Radio Maryja Family related to the evangelizing Redemptorist radio station established on 8th December, 1991 in Toruń. From the very beginning, a large team of volunteers was formed around Radio Maryja, involved in cooperation with the newly established station. They were joined by listeners and began to call themselves the Radio Maryja Family, identifying with the mission and program of the radio. On their initiative, various structures began to be established with the goal of spiritual formation, popularization, development and support of the radio station. RRM creates a community, the basis of the relationship are the Catholic faith, patriotism and tradition.

The aim of an author was to present the specificity of the RRM phenomenon in terms of theology and media. The scientific analyzes were to verify the main hypothesis that the TBRM and the KPRM - constituting the core of the RRM - are an example of the successful implementation of the integrative function of the media. To verify it, a research tool in the form of a survey was developed. The obtained results were compared with data from other sources, including documents collected in the archives of Radio Maryja, chronicles and listeners' testimonies published in various media. Various scientific methods appropriate for the theology of the means of social communication, media studies, journalism, social communication, sociology and history were used to address the tasks.

The literature on the subject already contains various types of elaborations and analyzes of selected aspects of the phenomenon called the Radio Maryja Family, but so far no comprehensive attempt has been made to identify and describe it supported by empirical research combining theological and media reflection with the results of sociological research. This work in this area is therefore pioneering. It covers the period from 1991 to 2023.

The structure of the dissertation consists of an introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. The first of them outlines the broad context of the tasks that the media have to fulfill in social life. This part also presents their functions, with particular emphasis on the integrating role, shown both from the perspective of media studies and in the teaching of the Catholic Church.

The second chapter is devoted to reflection on the importance of the media in the apostolic activity of the Catholic Church and its saving mission. It also touched upon the issue of evangelization in the world of media and their impact on building an authentic image of the Church. Then the role of Vatican Radio and the problem of broadcasting the Holy Mass in the media were presented, which have become particularly important during the Covid -19 pandemic.

The third chapter shows Radio Maryja as a phenomenon on the contemporary Polish media market. It is the only nationwide Catholic medium - its history, social dimension, mission, program goals, religious formation and nature of the message clearly contrast with the mainstream broadcasters present on Polish air.

The origins and importance of the Radio Maryja Family and its structures, emphasizing the special role of the Field Offices of Radio Maryja and the Circles of Friends of Radio Maryja, are presented in the fourth chapter of the work, which also shows the wealth of forms of their activity and the works undertaken inspired by the radio station.

The last chapter presents the methodology of the research undertaken. Its main part contains the obtained results of empirical research and an attempt to interpret them in the light of statistical studies. The analysis focused on the importance of the Toruń radio station in the lives of respondents and on the functioning and most important types of activities of the Field Offices and the KPRM. The characteristics of these communities from the point of view of the respondents themselves were also presented.

From the analysis of the data obtained, a picture of the sociological phenomenon that is the Radio Maryja Family emerges. It is created primarily by the Redemptorist radio station in Toruń, and another components are the Field Offices and the Circles of Friends of Radio Maryja, which are the result of the activating and

integrating function of this Catholic medium. The fundamental dimension of the described social environment are its members, who clearly identify with the community they represent and are aware of its value and importance.