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SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

The Role and Significance of Social Media in Shaping Christian Attitudes of Young People: The Pastoral Study on the Last Class Secondary School Students of Włocławek diocese.

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The primary aim of this dissertation was to deepen the understanding of the role and significance of social media in shaping Christian attitudes among young people toward God, the Church, themselves, and others. The results of the survey, conducted among high school graduates in the Diocese of Włocławek using exploratory methods, were intended to contribute to the development of a specific netiquette, as well as to formulate paradigms and pastoral conclusions that support the work of those involved in the Catholic formation of Polish youth. Achieving these objectives was possible, among other things, through the preparation of theoretical foundations and a detailed analysis of the empirical material obtained. The research process was structured into five chapters.

The first chapter provided a theoretical and methodological introduction, including a range of explanations concerning the issues addressed and the procedures and creative stages applied to the detailed elaboration of the empirical material. Initially, an attempt was made to organize issues related to the research methodology. This section included the conceptualization of key terms from the perspective of the study, such as social media, attitude, and Christian attitude; justification for the choice of the exploratory method as the primary research method; presentation of supporting methods; explanations regarding the area of empirical data collection; analysis of the risks of research failure; and information on the conduct of two pilot studies and the main study. Subsequently, the measurement tool, which was a custom-designed online survey questionnaire, was described, and the characteristics of the respondent group were elaborated. This section presented socio-demographic factors, religious context, determinants of attitude formation, and adolescent social activity. The first chapter concluded with a general profile of the respondents.

The second chapter focused on an attempt to explain the role and significance of social media in shaping the religious attitudes of adolescents, based on the empirical material obtained. Beginning with a discussion of the phenomenon of human religious nature, the problem of declining religiosity in Poland, and the potential areas for its development (particularly in the media context), an analysis of the research findings was conducted, structured into three sections. Each section corresponded to different components of the attitude: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. This part reiterated the truth about

human predispositions that enable knowledge and love of the Creator; examined the issue of religious feelings; and presented the results of research on the opportunities and threats of social media in shaping religious behaviors among youth.

The next chapter discussed the role and significance of social media in shaping the ecclesial attitudes of youth. Initially, several introductory remarks were made, including the need for vigilance against manipulated media messages concerning the Catholic Church and examples of clergy and laypeople's engagement in presenting its true image in the digital space. Following this, social media was presented as an essential tool in the process of gaining knowledge about the Church and forming beliefs about it, along with an analysis of social media's influence on the affective sphere of youth attitudes toward the Catholic Church. The final part focused on analyzing the impact of social media on youth behavior toward the Catholic Church.

Chapter four aimed to indicate the role and significance of social media in shaping the Christian self-perception of high school students (attitudes toward themselves). The analysis in this section focused on social media platforms as a force that can intensify both positive and negative self-beliefs, highlighting the opportunities and threats of social media in building adolescent self-esteem, as well as verifying their impact on the self-behavioral sphere of young Poles.

The last chapter of the dissertation was devoted to analyzing the impact of social media on the Christian attitude of youth toward others. This section addressed phenomena that significantly impact the human community and the dignity of individuals (polarization, hate speech, marginalization, egoism, etc.). Remedies were proposed, including promoting Christian personalism, love of God and neighbor, and activities aimed at building the common good, as well as the Church's efforts to highlight proper authorities. After presenting introductory issues, the first section elaborated on the research findings regarding the construction of a Christian way of perceiving others and the potential threats of social media that could provoke a reductionist and instrumental treatment of other people. The problem of exclusion culture and economism was also addressed. In the second section, an analysis was conducted to determine which media topics related to others evoked the most positive or negative feelings and emotions among respondents. Finally, the third section addressed the impact of social media on the behavioral component of the Christian attitude toward others. The final section of the dissertation included recommendations from respondents concerning the improvement of social media functionality and the development of more ethical and responsible patterns of use.

The conducted analyses led to several conclusions supported by pastoral directives and paradigms. It was found, among others, that: 1) More than half of the respondents use social media to gain religious knowledge; 2) Social media present diverse opinions about the Catholic Church, which can lead to polarized attitudes toward the Church; 3) Women more often use platforms like Instagram and TikTok, while men prefer YouTube, which may influence how they perceive the Church's activities; 4) Social

media can be a significant tool in shaping prosocial attitudes, as content encouraging care for others elicits positive emotions in a significant portion of youth; 5) Collaboration with Catholic influencers may be crucial in reaching youth who value interaction with online creators more than impersonal content; 6) Media messages about the Church can evoke both positive and negative emotions, depending on the content; 7) The low level of positive emotions toward content promoting life from conception to natural death indicates the need for intensified educational efforts in this area; 8) Social media can support youth prayer life, although currently only a small percentage of young people find it helpful in this regard; 9) Social media can provoke self-hatred among some young people, which is a particularly alarming phenomenon; 10) There is a noticeable lack of emotional identification among youth with religious content on social media, which may indicate religious indifference.