

**The spirituality of consecrated life in the teaching of Mother Ludwika
Gąsiorowska (1864-1949) and in the documents of the Congregation
of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate**

Abstract

The aim of the study is to present teaching of Mother Ludwika Gąsiorowska on religious consecration and to indicate its relevance in the face of contemporary challenges to consecrated life.

The Congregation was founded by Blessed Father Honorat Koźmiński OFMCap in the difficult circumstances of the Russian partition. In response to the restrictions of that time, a characteristic way of living consecration developed, described as “hidden.” The sisters live in the world without a religious habit and without external signs of religious life, undertake professional work and daily responsibilities, and at the same time remain in community and carry out apostolic service among people, especially in the urban environment. This model of life, inspired by Christ’s “hidden life” in Nazareth, constitutes the fundamental interpretative perspective for the spirituality analyzed in this dissertation.

The research is based on historical sources and formative documents, with particular emphasis on Mother Ludwika’s writings, especially her conferences addressed to the sisters. A historical-analytical method and critical source analysis were applied, complemented by a theological synthesis of the material.

The dissertation consists of five chapters. The first presents Mother Ludwika’s biography and her vocational journey against the background of the Church and the historical context of her time. The second chapter examines the religious spirituality of the Congregation, highlighting its relationship with the grace of baptism and the specific charism of the community. The third chapter analyzes the dynamics of spiritual growth, rooted in the Christian tradition

and marked by a distinct Marian character, showing the relationship between personal holiness and the fruitfulness of apostolic ministry. The fourth chapter presents religious formation—from vocational discernment, through initial formation, to ongoing formation—as a process leading to mature living of the evangelical counsels. The fifth chapter discusses the spiritual means indicated by Mother Ludwika which foster the development of religious spirituality.

The results of the analysis make it possible to conclude that, in presenting the ideal of religious consecration, Mother Ludwika combines simplicity and hiddenness with a profound awareness of religious identity. At its center are the imitation of Christ and a Marian dimension of self-offering that leads to a deeper union with God. The proposed model of life responds to contemporary challenges, especially individualism and secularization, by indicating a path of return to the Gospel and credible witness to God's presence in the world.

Keywords: spirituality, consecrated, hidden life, vows, imitation of Christ, Mary devotion.