

THE HOLINESS OF A CHRISTIAN IN THE TEACHING OF BISHOP STEFAN BAREŁA

Bishop Stefan Bareła takes up the issue of holiness in his teaching. He points to many paths leading to man's meeting with God. He gives three main dimensions of holiness.

The first is Christocentrism. Man's redemption its beginning at the moment of the birth of the Son of God, and the end is His passion, death and resurrection.

The second dimension of holiness is the Marian dimension. Our Lady leads a Christian to holiness. Chosen by God to be the Mother of God-Man, she becomes the Mother of all believers. Mary is a model of holiness, but always after Jesus Christ.

The third dimension of holiness is the ecclesiological dimension. A Christian achieves holiness in Church and thanks to Church. Church is holy because it is the Mystical Body of Christ. It has sources of sanctification, which are the holy sacraments, with the Eucharist at the forefront.

Bishop Bareła teaches that the theological virtues lead a Christian to holiness. They are faith, hope and love. They help man to unite with God. The most important thing is love and it is the essence of holiness because: *God is love* (1 John 4: 8). Where there is love, there is also God.

An important element leading to achieving holiness is the spiritual life of man. Each person grows gradually in different areas of his life. He should do it himself, but he can follow the example of saintly people.

On the way to holiness, man constantly collaborates with God's grace. Its main role is to follow Jesus Christ. Everyone does it in their own way. Everyone responds differently to God's call.

Man striving for holiness must start working on himself. Moral virtues help him in this. The Bishop puts humility first. She is the basis of holiness. True humility is based on realizing your own fragility. Hence, true humility must be learned from Jesus Christ.

The greatest obstacle to holiness, according to the Bishop, is a sin. The sin is the loss of man on the way to God and the denial of Jesus Christ and Church. Pride is the source of sin. Conscience plays a large role in the fight against sin.

Prayer is an important means of achieving holiness. Bishop Bareła considers it a bridge between man and God. It is the meeting of man with the Creator. Therefore, it is a very important element of his spiritual life.

Holiness is a process. It is achieved through continuous development. This is especially true of love. She is the essence of holiness because holiness is love. True holiness is to love God. According to Bishop Bareła, love is the first and fundamental gift that man receives from God. Therefore, a Christian should put first the commandment: *You will love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength* (Mark 12:30).

