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The topic of the dissertation: ***Proclaiming the Word of God
in the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Province
of the Order of Friars Minor in Poland
After the Second Vatican Council. A Homiletic Study.***

SUMMARY IN ENGLISH

The current renewal of pastoral activity of the Church initiated at the Second Vatican Council included, among others, preaching with particular regard to delivering the homily. The Word of God is the foundation of preaching the Gospel, and It constantly shapes the life and the mission of the Church of all times. During the centuries of the Church's history, the ministers appointed to proclaim the word of God by virtue of the priesthood established by Christ served the people of God by proclaiming the Gospel. The postulates of renewal of proclaiming the word of God concern also the preaching activity of *the Order of Friars Minor* (commonly called the Franciscans), who, united with the Roman Catholic Church, by their vows of obedience, and following the example of St. Francis of Assisi joined in the ministry of the word in the past centuries. Proclamation of the word of God is the task that the Franciscan community has been fulfilling from its very beginning, and it constitutes the character trait of the pastoral-evangelistic activity of the *Order*.

The purpose of this dissertation is an attempt to show the current state of preaching undertaken and realized by the presbyters of *the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Province of the Order of Friars Minor in Poland*. It concerns mainly presenting the actual state of proclaiming the word of God in *the Province* (the theoretical objective) and showing the influence of the religious authority structures (the general religious structure of *the Order* and the structures of particular provinces) on the preaching (the practical objective). The primary source of this study are surveys conducted among the members of *the Province*. The survey results have been discussed in reference to the guidelines of the Church provided after *the Second Vatican Council* and the documents of *the Order* issued by the General Government and by the Provincial Government. The survey questionnaire has been created based on the

present documents of *the Order* concerning the proclamation of the word of God and on the basis of the preaching methods developed by homiletics included in the literature on the subject.

Presentation of the historical and legal foundations of the community established by St. Francis over 800 years ago, and description of the history and organizational structure of *the Order* and *the Province*, constitute the introduction to the study of characteristics of today's reality in which the surveyed presbyters are working. The personnel and material status of the pastoral ministry provided by particular Houses of *the Order* in Poland and abroad has been presented. The analysis of survey results shows that proclaiming the word of God during the homily is fairly correct and reliable. More attention shall be paid to the time of preparation of the homily and its formal and material aspects. Proclaiming the Word of God by delivering the homily is of Christocentric and ecclesial nature, and it is enriched with the elements of the Franciscan spirituality and charism. Mariological and existential references play an important role in proclaiming of the word of God. Considerable attention is given to the simplicity of the message and to the length of the homily.

Proclamation of the word of God by the Franciscans of *the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Province in Poland* is based on the religious formation of *the Order*, awareness of the monastic identity of each brother and on the constant development of their spiritual life according to the spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi. The love for the Church and the Gospel, rooted deeply in the Franciscan spirituality, is a driving force for the constant renewal of preaching performed by the Franciscans by order of the Church, for the Church and with the Church. The methods, forms and ways of making the preaching of the word of God up to date in the modern world help in the realization of this task. The aspect of the proclamation of the word of God that especially needs the preaching renewal is evangelization realized through parish missions and retreats. The conclusions and homiletic postulates included in this study show the areas which should be improved in order to refine the preaching skills among the brothers of the Province.

Keywords:

*homily, preaching, Friars Minor, charism,
Franciscan spirituality, parish missions, retreat.*

18.05.2021 r.
date



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