



## *The Movement of Pure Hearts* as the symbol and the road of maturing for pure love

*Ruch Czystych Serc* znakiem rozpoznawczym i drogą dorastania do czystej miłości<sup>1</sup>  
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**Abstract:** Destructive tendencies inside our civilisation affect the virtue of purity in an unprecedented way. Various arguments are being put forward against living a life in chastity. The life in purity is frequently associated with “rejection” of one’s own freedom. It is also argued that chastity is an element of an bygone era. For this reason the issue of sexual purity becomes currently a challenge – there is a need for a strong opposition against the distortions concerning the virtue of purity. For it is purity that provides for the maturing and deepening of love and prepares best for the bodily and spiritual union of woman and man in matrimony. Thus, it is essential to show the beauty and value of chastity. It has to be noted that the Church faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ promotes all initiatives which in today’s world present chastity as a positive moral value. One of these initiatives is the *Movement of Pure Hearts* which through appropriate formation helps young people to fight for the purity of heart and body.

**Keywords:** virtue of purity, love, value, youth, moral teaching of the Church, *Movement of Pure Hearts*, formation

**Abstrakt:** Destrukcyjne tendencje wewnątrz dzisiejszej cywilizacji w sposób szczególnie dotyczą cnoty czystości. Wysuwane są różne zastrzeżenia przeciwko zachowywaniu czystości. Życie w czystości często kojarzone jest z „wyrzeczeniem” się własnej wolności. Funkcjonuje również pogląd, że czystość to „przeżytek”. Dlatego temat czystości seksualnej staje się współcześnie wyzwaniem – potrzebny jest sprzeciw wobec fałszowania prawdy o nocie czystości. Czystość bowiem zapewnia rozwój i pogłębianie miłości oraz najlepiej przygotowuje do duchowo-cieleśnego zjednoczenia kobiety i mężczyzny we wspólnocie małżeńskiej. Niezwykle ważnym zadaniem jest zatem ukazywanie piękna i wartości cnoty czystości. Należy podkreślić, że Kościół, wierny nauce Jezusa Chrystusa, promuje wszystkie inicjatywy, które w dzisiejszym świecie prezentują czystość jako pozytywną wartość moralną. Do tych inicjatyw zalicza się *Ruch Czystych Serc*, który poprzez właściwą formację, pomaga młodym ludziom walczyć o czystość serca i ciała.

**Słowa kluczowe:** cnota czystości, miłość, wartość, młodzież, nauka moralna Kościoła, *Ruch Czystych Serc*, formacja

### Introduction

The moral attitude which makes it possible to read correctly one’s own sexuality as the vocation for love is purity. The Holy Father Francis in his Apostolic Letter *Patris corde* emphasised that “only when love is chaste, is it a true love” (Franciszek, 2021, no. 7). The sexual revolution of the 1960’s, whose aftermath came also to Poland, and popular these days, so called, stress-free upbringing made that there is little understanding of the need for teaching the virtue of

purity as a life attitude and a style of life which would speak for freedom and courage. The mass media make the task of teenagers’ parents and teachers even harder. Yet when teenagers are asked if they would like their future spouses to be sexually abstinent until they enter marriage relationship, it turns out that their answer is positive. They are surprised to learn that the ridiculed virtue of chastity is actually important for them, and virginity may come as the most beautiful wedding gift which they may receive from the loved person.

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Therefore striving for purity is indispensable for being able to give oneself to the other person in love in future marriage. This has been clearly pointed out to the young people by Pope Francis on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2015, in Turin: “I don’t want to be a moralist but I would like to say a word that isn’t liked, an unpopular word. Sometimes the Pope must also take risks to speak the truth. Love is in works, in communicating, but love is very respectful of people, it does not use people, that is, love is chaste. And to you young people in this world, in this hedonistic world, in this world where only pleasure, having a good time, and living the good life get publicity, I say to you: be chaste, be chaste. All of us in life have gone through moments in which this virtue has been very difficult, but it is in fact the way of genuine love, of a love that is able to give life, which does not seek to use the other for one’s own pleasure. It is a love that considers the life of the other person sacred” (Franciszek, 2020). That is why love is the “soul” of purity and only thanks to love purity becomes meaningful. It is purity, that lets a person to fulfil their greatest destiny and concurrently the most fundamental desire, that is, experiencing a mature and responsible love (Przybyło, 2017, p. 52-54). At the same time, this virtue helps young people to avoid certain situations of sexual tensions or to overcome them if they should become an obstacle on the way to develop such a mature personality which would be able to offer oneself and to receive this gift from the other person.

From this point of view it is extremely important to show the beauty and the value of the virtue of purity. It seems that today – more than ever before – there is a need for the positive vision of purity. Purity is a moral attitude positive in character, in the sense, that it shows what to do. It must be stressed that the Church faithful to the teaching of Jesus Christ promotes all the initiatives which in today’s world depict purity as a positive moral value. Among these initiatives perfectly matching the moral doctrine of the Church one can find the *Movement of Pure Hearts* which via an intellectual and spiritual formation helps young people to fight for purity of their heart and body and to realize God’s vocation to holiness.

In spite of the fact that the *Movement of Pure Hearts* is totally different form the predominant permissive trends and styles of life, it has a positive influence on young people and it develops dynamically leading to God ever greater number of those who desire to live in purity.

## 1. Christian value of purity

In Christianity the virtue of purity plays a vital role. On the tablets of stone which Moses received on the Mount Sinai there was also an inscription that read: “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Ex 20:14). The teaching of Christ included in the New Testament refers to this issue as well: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Mt 5:27-28). A virtue of chastity is of extraordinary value for individual and social life. When the purity is not respected, then the family and social life is ready to fall as a result of the lack of true love (Każmierczak, 2017, p. 162-164).

Purity is defined as a moral virtue thanks to which a person abstains from any kind of sexual activity whether external or internal, leading to disordered sexual pleasure. Purity is one of the forms of moderation (abstinence) which is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal 5:23). In its basic meaning it is understood as sanctity and the remaining in the state of sanctifying grace (Kowalczyk, 2017, p. 29-32). *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that “chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being. Sexuality, in which man’s belonging to the bodily and biological world is expressed, becomes personal and truly human when it is integrated into the relationship of one person to another, in the complete and lifelong mutual gift of a man and a woman. The virtue of chastity therefore involves the integrity of the person and the integrality of the gift” (Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego, 1994, no. 2337). In further articles *Catechism* teaches that “Whoever wants to remain faithful to his baptismal

promises and resist temptations will want to adopt the means for doing so: self-knowledge, practice of an asceticism adapted to the situations that confront him, obedience to God's commandments, exercise of the moral virtues, and fidelity to prayer. Indeed it is through chastity that we are gathered together and led back to the unity from which we were fragmented into multiplicity" (ibidem, no. 2340). In the maturing for purity psychical and emotional maturity is equally important. "All of these – as Pope Francis points out – prepare them for an integral and generous gift of self that will be expressed, following a public commitment, in the gift of their bodies. Sexual union in marriage will thus appear as a sign of an all-inclusive commitment, enriched by everything that has preceded it" (Franciszek, 2016, no. 283).

Chastity in its positive meaning is portrayed as a sensible order which directs "how a person should react to sexual drive, defines when and in what circumstances it can be actualized, and creates the space of requirements for love stemming on its ground" (Marcol, 1995, p. 104). Within the Christian approach towards sexuality purity is the protection of love, it also helps to overcome sexual desire which leaves no space for love, but it also liberates love from the attitude of use and exploitation. It does not reject either corporeality or sensuality, but it integrates them in personal love (Wojtyła, 2001, p. 151-154). Pope Benedict XVI clearly emphasises this truth in his address to participants in the meeting promoted by the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family: "The true appeal of sexuality is born of the vastness of this horizon that opens up: integral beauty, the universe of the other person and of the «we» that is born of the union, the promise of communion that is hidden therein, the new fruitfulness, the path towards God, the source of love, which love opens up. The union in one flesh then becomes a union for the whole of life, until the man and woman become one spirit as well. Thus a journey begins in which the body teaches us the value of time, of that slow maturation in love. In this light the virtue of chastity takes on new meaning" (Benedykt XVI, 2011, p. 26-27).

Therefore, acquiring the state of purity is a great formative task for every human who faces the alternative: either to check their temptations and find peace, or let them to prevail and succumb into misery (cf. Sir 1:22). "Is this not perhaps the drama of that sexuality which today remains enclosed in the narrow circle of one's own body and emotions, but which in reality can only find fulfilment in that call to something greater?" – asks Benedict XVI in one of his speeches (ibidem, p. 27). Therefore man's dignity "requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint. Man gains such dignity when, ridding himself of all slavery to the passions, he presses forward to his goal by freely choosing what is good and, by his diligence and skill, effectively secures for himself the means suited to this end" (Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego, 1994, no. 2339).

In His sermon on the Mount (cf. Mt 5:1-11,28) Christ calls on man to return to original innocence, emphasising that this state summons him to "discover what is human, the living form of the new man" (Zyga, 1999, p. 170-171). The form of the new man, according to John Paul II, can emerge from the holistic way of being and acting "to the extent to which the ethos of the redemption of the body dominates the lust of the flesh and the whole man of lust. Christ clearly indicated that the way to attain this must be the way of temperance and mastery of desires, that is, at the very root, already in the purely interior sphere ("Everyone who looks at a woman lustfully..."). The ethos of redemption contains in every area – and directly in the sphere of the lust of the flesh – the imperative of self-control, the necessity of immediate continence and of habitual temperance" (ibidem, p. 172). Saint John Paul II refers to what stands for the value of Christian purity, indicating the fact that in human life a certain habit can emerge which allows for lusting after the body to which man has got used to (ibidem, p. 170-171).

Christianity, which is the guardian of purity, emphasises the special value of human body. It was especially accentuated by Pope Francis in post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Christus vivit* addressed to the youth and all the People of God: "Young

people are aware that the body and sexuality have an essential importance for their lives and for their process of growth in identity. Yet in a world that constantly exalts sexuality, maintaining a healthy relationship with one's body and a serene affective life is not easy. For this and other reasons, sexual morality often tends to be a source of "incomprehension and alienation from the Church, inasmuch as she is viewed as a place of judgment and condemnation" (Franciszek, 2019, no. 81).

It is necessary to realise that Christ came to earth when the eternal Word was incarnated in the womb of the Virgin Mary. In his catecheses reflecting upon the subject of chastity Pope John Paul II refers to the words directed to the fellowship of Corinth by Saint Paul (cf. 1 Cor 12:18-27) and points out that the contemporary scientific and biological approach often does not take into consideration the fact that human body is an essential part of a person and situates it at the same level as any other element of material world. Simultaneously, the Pope teaches that the source of the dignity of the body is the fact that it was sanctified by the Holy Spirit: "But even more so it is the supernatural reality constituted by the indwelling and the continual presence of the Holy Spirit in man – in his soul and in his body – as fruit of the redemption carried out by Christ. It follows that "man's body" is no longer just "his own". It deserves that respect whose manifestation in the mutual conduct of man, male and female, constitutes the virtue of purity. This is not only because it is the body of the person. When the Apostle writes: "Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God" (1 Cor 6:19), he intends to indicate yet another source of the dignity of the body, precisely the Holy Spirit, who is also the source of the moral duty deriving from this dignity" (Broszkowski, 2011, p. 165). In the First Letter to the Thessalonians Saint Paul elucidates the truth that God wants them to be sanctified. It means that they should take care of their body by avoiding lustful deeds, so that it could stay holy and honourable, since this is how God summons them to holiness (cf. 1 Th 4:3-5). Paul the Apostle emphasise the great value of the human body once again when he writes the letter to the community of believers in Rome. In this epistle he calls upon

the faithful in Rome to live according to the Spirit, reminding them the fact that Christ dwells in them and that: "although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rm 8:5-10), (Skawroń, 2017, p. 62).

The value of Christian purity is an issue which encompasses marriage and family life as well. All the aspects connected with procreation and human sexuality should be analysed in the light of a dignity of a human person and in accordance with the truth of holiness of family (Papińska Rada ds. Rodziny, 1995, no. 20-21). The Biblical tradition of the Old Testament conveys the truth about the creation of Man as a woman and a man (cf. Gn 1 and 2). Man and woman were created by God separately, however they are united in their equal resemblance of the image of God (cf. Gn 2:27). The act of procreation, involving a man and a woman generates a new life. As a result, marriage appears not only as a natural law, but first of all as God's institution, a covenant of human love which is warranted by God Himself (Drożdż, 2001, p. 231).

In certain circles, especially in erotic subcultures, purity carries a pejorative meaning. The value of this virtue is considered as a negation of sexual liberty, a negation of the right to sexual release, but also as an obstacle in making love. Moreover, purity is depreciated by depicting it as a psychical and moral restraint, which as a consequence, may lead to complexes, neuroses or personality disorders. The aforementioned phenomena constitute an evidence of a great misunderstanding which has a seriously detrimental effect on the shaping of erotic culture (Piotrowski, 2021, p. 68-69; Grabowski, 2012, p. 168). The problem of depreciating the value of the moral attitude (virtue) called purity was noticed by Karol Wojtyła, who called this tendency a resentment. According to him "resentment consists in depreciating of what objectively requires us to recognize it as good, while on the other hand, we minimize its significance and deny it the respect it deserves in order to spare ourselves the effort or excuse our failure to obtain this value" (Kokoszka, 2005, p. 28). Nonetheless, it has to be noted that chastity as a spiritual attitude has its roots in a clear and unspoiled perception of love, that is in the relation with a person of the

opposite sex. This relation is characterized by the affirmation of the person of the opposite sex, or in other words, by recognition of the value itself (not utilitarian, instrumental, or absolute) (Koszyka, 2017, p. 9-17). Therefore it has to be emphasised that the value of chastity makes it possible to discern in the sexual urge, and in the feeling which is aroused as a result, a significant and potentially creative or even creationistic (causative) element of God's work, precious gift from God, vested in people at the very basis of their existence. This gift – like all God's gifts – is inseparably connected with responsibility. It constitutes a call which has to be answered consciously and freely (Franciszek, 2021, no. 7)

Christian perspective on chastity simultaneously puts to an end the mentality which constitutes the aftermath of the old gnostic and Manichean heresy according to which all that is spiritual, truly pure and disinterested cannot be carnal, sensual, sexual, and hence everything truly "spiritual" cannot be "material" (Brown, 2006, p. 216-218). Such an approach degrades man and his body in a sense that "should he aspire to be pure spirit and to reject the flesh as pertaining to his animal nature alone, then spirit and body would both lose their dignity" (Cencini, 2005, p. 82-85). While accentuating the importance of chastity Christianity emphasises that it is not the level of satisfaction related to sexual pleasure that decides about the moral good and purity of hearts of husband and wife. They depend on the intrinsic values by which man lives and which influence the way how he develops deeper relationship between a man and a woman. Chastity is born and matures within the intrinsic perception of values. Therefore, in such circumstances love appears as a gift directed at discovering God (Jan Paweł II, 2008, p. 81).

Practising the virtue of chastity with a frank heart constitutes a condition of love and indissolubility of marriage and provides an appropriate environment to welcome the gift of life. Chastity cannot be treated as the rejection of or contempt for human sexuality. Chastity appears as a kind of spiritual energy which is ready to fight against the threats of selfishness and aggressiveness, and correspondingly it is able to direct it to complete realisation (Paweł VI, 1999, no. 21; Jan Paweł II, 2000, no. 32-33). Chastity is what makes

that personality is harmonious, and that it matures and fulfils itself with an internal peace. Chastity also helps a person to develop a genuine respect towards themselves and enables them to respect their neighbours and perceive them as those who deserve respect since they were created in the image of God. If a man's purity is lessened, their love becomes more and more egoistic and leads to the urge of satisfying sole pleasures. This is why chastity calls for self-control which constitutes a pedagogy of human freedom. Therefore, a man is summoned to pursue the virtue of chastity and to build the foundation of life upon it (Benedykt XVI, 2007, p. 8).

That is why it has to be noted that Christianity emphasises the great significance of the virtue of chastity and requires the believers to observe it in their everyday life (Skawroń, 2017, p. 66). The Old Testament testimonies provide first instructions regarding life in purity without concupiscence. This teaching was developed by Christ who was conceived in the womb of Virgin Mary. The Holy Father Francis observes in his apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et exultate* that: "Jesus promises that those who are pure in heart 'will see God'. Keeping a heart free of all that tarnishes love: that is holiness" (Franciszek, 2018, no. 86).

Apostolic letters of Paul the Apostle are another example in the pages of the Bible, where the believers are summoned to live in purity and abstain from promiscuity and behaviour which is not compatible with the dignity of God's children. Moreover – as Pope Benedict XVI observes – "Paul is also an apostle who, in accepting God's call to chastity, gave his heart to the Lord in an undivided manner to be able to serve his brethren with even greater freedom and dedication (cf. 1 Cor 7:7; 2 Cor 11:1-2). Furthermore, in a world in which the values of Christian chastity were far from widespread (cf. 1 Cor 6:12-20) he offered a reliable reference for conduct" (Benedykt XVI, 2009, p. 20).

And finally there is the Church who guards chastity today and emphasises its importance in a life of a Christian, promoting issues such as premarital chastity, faithful conjugal life and cultivating chastity in different circumstances of life. Nevertheless, it is essential to bear in mind the truth that man

is a being composed of a spirit and a body. That is why a certain tension already exists in him; a certain struggle of tendencies develops between “spirit” and “flesh”, which in fact is the struggle that belongs to the heritage of sin (Katechizm Kościoła Katolickiego, 1994, no. 2516).

## 2. The model of youth formation in the *Movement of Pure Hearts*

The way of pure love is available for every Christian whose task is to train oneself in holiness and to follow the commandments, which is summarised in the Greatest Commandment. This is the road of fight, on which one must practise strong will, fight for the pure heart through practical realisation of love, gradually retreat from addictions, sins and selfishness. Especially important in this respect will be observing of the sixth and ninth commandments which protect human love from disgrace (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, p. 300-301).

There are certain examples which indicate that even in the 21st century world permeated with eroticism, it is possible to struggle for a pure heart and by the same token, to realise God's vocation to holiness. One of such initiatives is the *Movement of Pure Hearts* meeting the criteria of the valid moral Church doctrine (Olczyk, 2015, p. 208) This initiative has its roots in United States. In 1990s a lot of organisations were established whose end was to promote the attitude of refraining from sexual activity before entering the Sacrament of Marriage, since: “this way young people wanted to express their deep believe in love and fidelity to their future spouse. The movement was an answer to the promiscuity which spread across America in 1960s and to its dramatic consequences” (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, p. 324). In 1993 the True Love Waits movement was created by a Southern Baptists pastor, Richard Ross. The movement was addressed to young people with the object of: “promoting sexual abstinence outside marriage, but also the avoidance of all kinds of behaviour that may induce sexual desire” (Olczyk, 2015, p. 208).

At the end of 1980's, Poland witnessed radical socio-economical changes connected with the so called political transformation. One of the results was a diversification of the media market. Apart from the positive aspects of this process, such as the activity of catholic media, a free market enabled the expansion of multifarious producers of pornographic and contraceptive industry who were but interested in maximalisation of their profits. Media market has been “suffused with content that is highly corruptive and erotising for children and youth. Youth periodicals such as *Popcorn*, *Bravo*, *Bravo Girl* or *Dziewczyna*, were exceptionally popular in that time. These glossy magazines promoted deceitful liberty (laxity) drifting far away from any moral values, and sexuality (sexism) having nothing in common with personal love” (Szafraniec, 1996, pp .70-75). Feedback to those alarming circumstances was given by Fr. Mieczysław Piotrowski SChr, the editor-in-chief of bimonthly magazine for young people *Miłujcie się!* The newspaper, whose editor was Fr. Piotrowski, was published as an answer to the wave of demoralisation which started to pour into Poland. Articles appearing in the paper discussed mainly liberation from sexual addictions. The magazine featured also articles “disclosing sexual demoralisation (fornication, prostitution, abortion, pornography, masturbation and other sexual addictions) and portraying the beauty of love” (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, p. 327). The *Miłujcie się!* magazine initiated the activity of the Movement of Pure Hearts, which associates the youth in different parts of Poland. The *Movement of Pure Hearts* is the organisation of young people devoted totally to Jesus, whose greatest desire is to offer themselves as a gift for their future spouse after entering the Sacrament of Marriage. That is why they struggle to follow such values as chastity, modesty, intimacy, virginity, love, respect, and mastering of body and heart.

The statute of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* emphasises that “the spirituality of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* is deeply rooted in the Bible and *the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, it originates from the heritage of the teachings of John Paul II and from the message of the Divine Mercy reported by Saint Faustina (...). The spirituality of the *Movement of Pure Hearts*

derives inspiration from the unfathomed richness of the spirituality handed down through the Tradition of the Catholic Church, but also from the spirituality of the greatest mystics, such as Saint Teresa of Avila, Saint John of the Cross, Saint Ignatius of Loyola, Saint John Bosco, Saint Faustina, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, Venerable August Cardinal Hlond or Blessed Karolina Kózka – the patron saint of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* – and other saints who gave their life for chastity” (Statut Ruchu Czystych Serc, 2017). The biblical foundations of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* centre around the issues which Jesus Himself taught in the Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Mt 5:8). Those who decide to join the *Movement of Pure Hearts* follow God’s design revealed already in the Book of Genesis: “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh” (Gn 2:24). It is noticeable, how Jesus Himself confirmed these verse preaching that: “What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder” (Mt 19:6). That is why young people choose Jesus Christ as their Guide. It is Him, who becomes their only Teacher, Counsellor, but first and foremost their Saviour (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, s. 239, Kiciński, 2004, p. 48). Saint John Paul II, in his book *Crossing the Treshold of Hope*, observed that “young people are always searching for the beauty in love. They want their love to be beautiful. If they give in to weakness, following models of behaviour that can rightly be considered a “scandal in the contemporary world” (and these are, unfortunately, widely diffused models), in the depths of their hearts they still desire a beautiful and pure love. This is as true of boys as it is of girls. Ultimately, they know that only God can give them this love. As a result, they are willing to follow Christ, without caring about the sacrifices this may entail” (Jan Paweł II, 1994, p. 19). The teachings of John Paul II constitute a permanent inspiration and a guidepost for the members of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* (Piotrowski, 2021, p. 67-68).

Members of this community follow the truth that from the moment of baptism their “body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that they are not their own any more” (1 Cor 6:19), hence their task is what Saint Paul said: “For this is the will of God, your

sanctification that you abstain from immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honour, not in the passion of lust like heathen who do not know God” (1 Th 4:3-4). They become concerned about their marriage as well as about their marriage bed (cf. Heb 13:4) and their essential formative task becomes self-control.

New members of the *Movement of the Pure Hearts* take Jesus as their guide and decide to walk every day the difficult road of faith, the road of maturing for love, thus they decide to abstain from sexual intimacy until marriage, since they desire to obey God who shows how to find the only way to indestructible love and how to become an integral gift for the future spouse in Jesus Christ. They do so because they are aware of the fact that Christ allows sexual intimacy only within the Sacrament of Matrimony. Sexual intimacy within marriage becomes then the source of mutual sanctification and a visible sign of this sacrament and leads to the experience of reciprocal love in the love of God. It is also a manifestation of God’s care about the young, so as to protect them from suffering through the demands of 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> commandments (Piotrowski, 2021, p. 71-75).

However, the Members of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* have a great example and a guide on the road of faith in the person of Mary whose every stage of earthly life was characterised by heroic obedience of faith, therefore the members of the Movement desire to live in communion with Mary since this is the most reliable way to unite in love with Christ and to learn purity and beautiful love from the Virgin Mother (Kongregacja ds. Wychowania Katolickiego, 1984, no. 47).

The evidence of true love, oriented to eternity, was given by the patron saint of the Movement of Pure Hearts, Karolina Kózka who was born on the 2nd of August 1898 in the village of Wał-Ruda, near Radłów, within Tarnów County. The everyday life of her family was centred around hard work, help for their neighbours, prayer at home or in the parish church. She would frequently go to church, not only on Sundays but also on weekdays, and always received Holy Communion. She recited rosaries every day (Kania, 1989, p. 6). She loved her siblings and arduously instructed them in catechism. She especially

cherished the virtue of purity and prayed eagerly for it. In the time of World War I, on the 18th of November 1914 a Russian soldier forced himself upon her attempting to rape her. In her biography Fr. Kania wrote: “She tried to defend herself. In the struggle she was stabbed with a knife multiple times receiving several deep wounds. All the time, in her hand cut deep to the bone, she was keeping a kerchief – a symbol of girl’s dignity. With the last effort she managed to escape and ran towards the village through bogs and thorns, but exhausted after the fight and as a result of massive blood loss she fell dead in the swamp (ibidem, p. 14).

Karolina Kózka was beatified on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 1987 to constitute an example for young people. During the beatification Mass in Tarnów, John Paul II taught in his sermon: “that young daughter of the Tarnów Church, whom we shall call blessed from today on, speaks with her life first of all to the young. To boys and girls (...). She speaks of the great dignity of the woman, of the human being; of the dignity of the body which in this world is indeed susceptible to dying and is destructible, in the same way as her young body met death at the hands of a murderer; yet this human body has in itself the sign of immortality that man is to attain in eternal and living God, attain it through Christ” (Jan Paweł II, 2005, p. 421). The community of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* chose her in 2002 as their patron saint because the virtue of purity was a priority in Karolina’s life. Through this virtue she felt a strong bond with Jesus Christ and His Virgin Mother. The attitude of the patron of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* proves that vocation to chastity is not only for consecrated people, but Jesus addresses this summon to everyone regardless of age and life vocation. God chose Blessed Karolina to be the witness also in our times when there is an urgent need for the fight and brave defence of purity of heart. The youth may follow in her footsteps, that is why the formation in the *Movement of Pure Hearts* is centred also around the Sacrament of Penance which is an essential support on the road of chastity. This sacrament helps to achieve the most significant goal for the members of the Movement: “The centre of life for the members of MPH is Jesus present in the Eucharist, who lets us have share in His ultimate victory over Satan, sin

and death. Therefore, the members of the Movement make effort to attend the Holy Mass every day and adore Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament” (Statut Ruchu Czystych Serc, 2017).

The road of education for chastity, which is proposed within the Movement of Pure Hearts, may be followed by ever young person who wants to walk the path of pure life, together with Christ and truly intends to offer Jesus their heart, so that He could heal and purify it and make ready for true love. This kind of formation stays in opposition to the hedonistic style of life. In this context young people frequently become ensnared by propaganda of false liberty and succumb to the widespread immorality. What begins in that moment is the process of: “degradation of the truth about the exceptional vocation of the whole man, and about the fact that body and sexuality are bestowed upon man so that they serve for interaction with God in the act of bringing a new life into this world. At the end of this road of degradation, there is debauchery, promiscuity and all other phenomena of the «civilisation of death», that is contraception, killing of the unborn children, pornography, pathology, violence” (Sołtyk, 1998, p. 235-236). These are the reasons why members of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* struggle to gradually change the society from within through the example of their pure life.

Another point on the way of shaping the behaviour and sensitivity of young people is the answer to the threat resulting from the unrestricted access to pornography in the Internet and television. The main task for the *Milujcie się!* magazine and for the entire *Movement of Pure Hearts* is a resolute opposition to the “civilisation of death”. The Movement conveys a definite programme of maturing for real love which was revealed by Christ Himself (Piotrowski, 2011, p. 179). Thanks to effective initiatives of evangelization a lot of young people in Poland and all over the world, encouraged by the example of their peers, decide to defend Christian values including the virtue of purity. The *Movement of Pure Hearts* answers to Christ’s call to spread the kingdom of God on earth. Although the Movement is diametrically opposite to currently predominant trends and styles of permissive life, it significantly affects the youth, and develops dynamically bringing to God ever greater number of



those who desire to lead the life of purity of heart and body (Piotrowski, 2021, p. 75). This call summons them to make a commitment that they will keep the following promises:

- not to engage in sexual acts until they are united with their spouse in the Sacrament of Marriage.
- not to read, buy or watch pornographic materials.
- to meet Jesus every day in prayer, scriptural meditation, frequent reception of Holy Communion and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
- to avail themselves regularly of the Sacrament of Penance
- to control their sexual desires and emotions
- to avoid everything that weakens and enslaves the will: nicotine, alcohol and drugs
- girls may wish to add that they vow to dress modestly so as not to arouse lustful thoughts or desires in others in any way (Kwiek, Nowak, 2010, p. 301-303).

The evangelisation and the identification with the virtue of purity as well as the membership of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* are all manifested by a ring of Blessed Karolina worn by the youth on their finger. “It constitutes an evangelical sign that God is waiting for everyone, He wants to “get them back on their feet” and restore the lost values. It is an external symbol of what should take place first of all in one’s heart” (Pabis, 2014, p. 42). It is received by those who desire to entrust their life to Blessed Karolina, and especially their desire and care for keeping the vows of purity until marriage, and later, of faithful and pure marital love or pursuing other vocations in pure love of their neighbours throughout their life (ibidem, p. 42).

Human sexuality needs to be educated (Ryś, 1997, p. 89-99). Pope Francis recalls this sentence in the aforementioned exhortation *Christus vivit*: “Marriage requires preparation, and this calls for growing in self-knowledge, developing the greater virtues, particularly love (...). It also involves maturing in your own sexuality, so that it can become less and less

a means of using others, and increasingly a capacity to entrust yourself fully to another person in an exclusive and generous way (Franciszek, 2019, no. 265; Ibid., 2016, no. 280-284). The Movement of Pure Hearts, which pursues intellectual and spiritual formation, helps the youth to prepare appropriately for marriage and family life. For young people this stage of life is fundamental for establishing certain moral attitudes, as well as for shaping their own characters, since sexual education constitutes a process in which the young gradually discover the mystery of their own sexuality (Benedykt XVI, 2007, p. 8-9; Benedykt XVI, 2011, p. 27). Another stage is science which is supposed to make sexuality more “humane”, so that it serve man instead of destroying him and his bonds with other people, and to make him “pure”, that is – in religious sense – “holly”. For a Christian, purity is a gift from God. Jesus Christ invites everyone, especially the young, to follow this path. The end of this road is marked by the reward which is the eternal life: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God” (Mt 5:8) (Franciszek, 2018, no. 83-86).

## Conclusions

All the reflections above lead to the conclusion that the sphere of purity is a great gift bestowed by God upon every man. However, this gift is related with difficult tasks such as mastering one’s thoughts, desires, and inner-self, and controlling the outer purity. Living in a world beset with numerous pitfalls of sin, Christians should study their own nature which is inclined towards transgression; they should act in accordance with God’s grace and take advantage of the appropriate safety precautions which can protect them from sin. Regardless of the situation in which man may find himself he must learn to master his reactions, urges and passions since otherwise he won’t be able to live being torn by destructive compulsions.

The decision about living in purity is even more difficult to be made today than it has ever been before because the contemporary world is being engulfed by a wave of pansexuality which distorts the most essential truths about the nature and vocation of man. The control of passions over the body is called

freedom and concurrently self-control is seen as an example of enslavement by harmful ideology. That is why there is such a great need for the testimony of those who through their pure lives will show that they take great care of the issues of today's world.

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Walking the road of purity as the members of the *Movement of Pure Hearts* do is not a manifestation of contempt for human sexuality, but a sign of hope expressing that so much can be given to others as a result of true and generous love.