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Between Entitlement and Limitation of the Right to Sacraments during the Sars-CoV-2 Pandemic Internet as a Means of Transmission and Communication with the Faithful

Abstract: The article presents the right of the faithful to access sacraments and restriction of the right resulting from the outbreak of the SarsCov-2 virus pandemic in 2020. The article also presents the scope of the entitlement to the spiritual goods of the Church, which is guaranteed by the norm of canon 213 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, as well as the spatial limits for gatherings introduced by state law and bishop's decrees. Access to the Internet and the preservation of online communication has somehow made it possible during the ongoing social isolation to establish communication between ministers and the faithful. Therefore, it was easier to survive the restrictions on access to the Holy Sacraments.

Keywords: the right of the faithful, pandemic, restrictions, Internet

The purpose of undertaking the titular issue is to show the existing tension occurring between the right of the faithful to the sacraments and the restriction on participation in them due to the SarsCov-2 virus pandemic. Internet access made it possible to establish communication between ministers and the faithful during the then ongoing social isolation, making it easier for them to survive the restrictions on access to places of worship and the inability to be physically present in the places where the sacraments are celebrated, especially in the Holy Mass.

The Right of the Faithful to the Sacraments

The faithful's right to the sacraments has its source in the words of Christ that can be found in the Gospel according to St. John (10,10): "I have come that they [the sheep] may have life and have it in abundance." Until the middle of the twentieth century, the quoted Jesus's statement was not the subject of special analysis aimed at concern for the growth of the spiritual wealth of the faithful. This became possible only during the Second Vatican Council in connection with the development of a renewed concept of the Church as one people of God, and the subsequent definition of the fundamental rights of the faithful. Promulgating the Code of Canon Law in 1983, the Church legislature introduced in Canon 213 a guarantee of the right to receive the word of God and the sacraments for all faithful.¹ The right, rooted in the sacrament of baptism, was reflected in the catalog of duties and rights of all faithful.

An important part of the message of Vatican II was the doctrine of the Church, or ecclesiology. The concept developed within its framework is *communio*, used to define a community of people with God, in which God acts through the Holy Spirit.² This community is constituted by one people of God, and all its members form the Mystical Body of Christ, since "God, however, does not make men holy and save them merely as individuals, without bond or link between one another. Rather has it pleased Him to bring men together as one people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness" (*Lumen gentium* 9:1). Such a vision of the Church-community has a biblical source.³ Quoting St. Paul, and referring to the teachings of Pope Pius XII,⁴ the Council Fathers presented the Church as the Body of Christ, which consists of various members performing multiple functions, but belonging to one body.⁵ The Word proclaimed by Jesus was ecclesia-forming and, on the one hand,

¹ Canon 213 *Codex Iuris Canonici* 1983 (further referred to as: CIC/1983 = Code of Canon Law): *The Christian faithful have the right to receive assistance from the sacred pastors out of the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the word of God and the sacraments; see: canon 16 Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* (1990): *Ius est christifidelibus, ut ex spiritualibus Ecclesiae bonis, praesertim ex verbo Dei et sacramentis, adiumenta ab Ecclesiae Pastoribus accipiant.*

² See *Lumen Gentium* (Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, further referred to as: LG) 2, 9. Cf. Andrzej Czaja, "Kościół jako eucharystyczna Komunia. Koncepcja Józefa Kardynała Ratzingera," in *Ineffabile Eucharistiae donum*, ed. Tadeusz Dola (Opole: Opolska Biblioteka Teologiczna, vol. 19, 1997), 57–70.

³ Rz 12, 4–6.

⁴ Pius PP XII, Litterae encyclicae *Mystici Corporis Christi* (June 29, 1943), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (further referred to as: AAS) 35 (1943): 193–240.

⁵ *Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ*, 1 Cor 12, 12–31; Ef 4,4–16; 5, 21–32; Kol 1, 24; LG 8, 1; 32, 1.

proclaimed the Gospel and was a form of revelation, on the other hand, was a call to faith and the formation of a community of believers gathered around the Person of the Divine Messenger, which is the beginning of the Church.⁶ For the Word has the power to create community and sustain it. Through the reception of the Word in faith, there is inclusion in the process of own salvation, and this is expressed in the reception of the sacraments, since it is in the sacraments that the mystery of man was incarnated.⁷

Word and sacrament are two essential building blocks of the Church, with ecclesiastical-legal significance.⁸ The preached Word and the administered sacraments are the two means of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, and both have the power to create and sustain the community. The Church as a community, *communio*, carries out its tasks and ministry through the preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the sacraments, thus accomplishing sanctification of Man. The faithful are entitled by virtue of baptism to participate in the threefold mission fulfilled by Christ and His Church—prophetic, pastoral, and royal—and spiritual goods are the basis for participation in it (in this mission) for all the faithful and each individual. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church specifies that the lay faithful, like other Christians, have the right to receive these goods of the Church “in abundance.”⁹ The entitlement to the Word and sacraments is therefore not only to the minimum extent, such as the right to the Eucharist on Sunday, but to the full extent, including

⁶ See: Marian Rusecki, “Eklezjotwórczy wymiar Eucharystii,” in *Jeżus eucharystyczny*, ed. Marian Rusecki and Mieczysław Cisło (Lublin: KUL, 1997), 168.

⁷ Remigiusz Sobański, “Słowo i sakrament jako czynniki kształtujące prawo kościelne.” *Prawo Kanoniczne: kwartalnik prawno-historyczny* 16, no. 1–2 (1973), 3–15; cf. can. 840 of CIC/1983.

⁸ The first canonist to point to and justify the legal structure of the Church in Word and Sacrament was Klaus Mörsdorf; see the same, “Wort und Sakrament als Bauelemente der Kirchenverfassung,” *Archiv für Katholisches Kirchenrecht* 134 (1965): 72–79; Mörsdorf identifies the legal structure of the Church as an essential element of its visibility, and since the law can only regulate what is revealed externally, therefore the sacramental signs of the Church are the area where the legal structure of the Church has its place; cf. Ludger Müller, “Die Kirche als Wurzelsakrament,” in *Ecclesia a sacramentis: theologische Erwägungen zum Sakramentenrecht*, ed. Reinhild Ahlers, Libero Gerosa, and Ludger Müller (Paderborn: Bonifatius Buch, Druck, Verlag, 1992), 132; See also: Libero Gerosa, “Charisma und Recht, Kirchenrechtliche Überlegungen zum ‘Urcharisma’ der neuen Vereinigungsformen in der Kirche” (Trier: Johannes Verlag, 1989), 120–122; Peter Krämer, *Kirchenrecht I. Wort-Sakrament—Charisma* (Stuttgart–Berlin–Köln; Kohlhammer, 1992), 20–21.

⁹ See J 10,10; LG 37,1; cf. can. 682 of CCL, according to which the faithful had the right to use them not *abundanter*, but only as an aid *ad salutem necessaria*; John Flader, “The Right of the Faithful to the Spiritual Goods of the Church: Reflections on Canon 213,” *Apollinaris* 65 (1992): 377–378; Bronisław Wenanty Zubert, “Prawo do sakramentów świętych,” *Studia Prawnicze KUL* 3 (35), 118.

on weekdays.¹⁰ The principle expressed in can. 213 applies to all the faithful and is universal in nature. It creates a legal basis for action and defines the legal relationship to those persons who are their ministers.¹¹ The legislator in can. 843 § 1 clarifies this general rule by indicating that ministers cannot refuse the sacraments to those faithful who properly ask for them, are properly disposed to receive them, and are not prohibited by law from receiving them.¹² The right to the sacraments refers to either administering or receiving them, and the wording regarding sacred ministers indicates the relationship of the person with a pastoral office to the sacramental subject.

The sacrament of the Eucharist holds a special place in the spiritual goods of the faithful and the sacraments received, since it is the summit and source of all Christian worship and life.¹³ The essence of the community of people with God is its unity, which it achieves in the Eucharist, forming the “Eucharistic community.” The last Council put this issue in a new perspective by pointing out that the Eucharist *is the source and summit of the entire Christian life* (see CL 10; CC 11). In the Eucharist, the basis of the Church’s existence as the continuation of the work of salvation of Jesus Christ through His presence in the world is concretized in a special way. The community of the faithful in union with Christ is fulfilled precisely in the celebration of the Eucharist. Participation in it constitutes the Church as the Body of Christ, which lives and grows whenever the Eucharist is celebrated.¹⁴ Jesus Himself speaks of eating His Body

¹⁰ This is the opinion of Pree, interpreting can. 213 in the context of the conciliar *abundanter* (“Das Recht auf die Heilsgüter (c. 213 CIC),” in *Heiliger Dienst* 4 (1994): 273–291, 274). This opinion should be agreed with, but not in the sense that every pastor is legally obligated to celebrate the Eucharist daily. While the legislator encourages priests to celebrate the Eucharistic sacrifice daily (can. 276 § 2, 20), it does not legally obligate them to do so. Flader, *The Right*, 378–379.

¹¹ Cf. Robert J. Kaslyn SJ, “The Obligations and Rights of all the Christian Faithful,” in *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law. Commissioned by The Canon Law Society of America* ed. John. P. Beal, James A. Coriden, and Thomas J. Green (New York, N.Y.–Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2000), 245–290. Cf. Daniel Cenalmor, “Obligaciones y derechos de los fieles, c. 213,” in *Comentario exegetico al Código de Derecho Canónico*, ed. Angel Marzoa, Jorge Miras, and Rafael Rodríguez–Ocana, vol. II, 91–98 (Pamplona: EUNSA, 1996), 91–98.

¹² Can. 843 § 1 CIC/1983: *Ministri sacri denegare non possunt sacramenta iis qui opportune eadem petant, rite sint dispositi, nec iure ab iis recipiendis prohibeantur.*

¹³ On the centrality of the sacrament of the Eucharist in the Church and in the community in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, see LG 11.1 and 26.1; PO (Second Vatican Council, Decree *Presbyterorum ordinis*) 5.2; CD (Second Vatican Council, Decree *Christus Dominus*) 30/2. Pope John Paul II dedicated his encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharystia*, (April 17, 2003), AAS 95(2003), 433–475. Pope Benedict XVI convened the 11th synodal session on the topic: “The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church.” The result of the Synod’s work is the exhortation: *de Eucharistia vitae misionisgue Ecclesiae fonte et culmine Sacramentum caritatis* (February 22, 2007), AAS 99 (2007): 105–180, see no: 73, 75.

¹⁴ Reinhild Ahlers, “Eucharistie und Kirche. Kirchenrechtliche Implikationen einer eucharistischen Ekklesiologie,” in *Theologisch—praktische Quartalschrift* 1 (1992): 35–40. An

and drinking His Blood as a gift of himself, for it is only in the Eucharist that we receive the gift of the “bread of life.” Hence the Eucharist gives beginning to the community, for which it is strength and food, and strengthens each member of the community.¹⁵ It also contributes to the growth of the Church and unites its participants into one body. It feeds the Church, enlivens it and creates it. Hence it is said that the Church makes the Eucharist, and the Eucharist builds the Church.¹⁶ Therefore, R. Ahlers rightly believes that if the Church ceased to celebrate the Eucharist, it would cease to be the Church.

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in its letter on the Eucharist *Communio in der Lehre des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils* concerning the Church understood as a community, presented it as a sacrament that is “the basis and center of ecclesial communion, into which everyone is incorporated by faith and baptism.” It is also “the source and creating force of communion among the members of the Church,” for the reason that it unites everyone with Christ, “and in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, participating in a real way in the Body of the Lord, we enter into communion with Him and with each other.”¹⁷ Therefore, the right to the Eucharist is among the special rights enjoyed by participants in the liturgy. The claim for admission to this most venerable sacrament arises upon reaching the age of discernment¹⁸ and includes specific entitlements such as:

1. The right of a faithful and the community to the Eucharist on Sundays and prescribed holy days of obligation (can. 528 § 2; 530, 70; 534; 1247);
2. The right to receive Holy Communion on Easter (can. 920);
3. The right to participate in the liturgy of the Eucharist (SC 14; excommunicated and non-Catholics also have this right; for Catholics there is at the same time a specific obligation contained in canons 1247 and 898)¹⁹;
4. The right to visit and adore the Blessed Sacrament (can. 937);

extensive discussion of the Eucharist as *communio* in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council was given by Oskar Saier, *Communio in der Lehre des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils* (München: Hueber, 1973).

¹⁵ Wojciech Hanc, “Eucharystia sakramentem chrześcijańskiej jedności” in *Roczniki Teologiczno-Kanoniczne* 21(1974), notebook 6, p. 64; Hanc, “Eucharystia—sakramentalnym znakiem jedności,” *Ateneum Kapłańskie* 101 (1983): 349–365.

¹⁶ Cf. Marian Stasiak, “Eucharystia fundamentem wspólnoty kościelnej,” in *Żeby nie ustala wiara. Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski przed wizytą Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II*, ed. Józef Homerski (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1989), 165–166; Joannes Paulus PP. II, *Epistula ad universos Ecclesiae Episcopos: de SS. Eucharistiae mysterio et cultu Dominicae cenae* (February 24, 1980), AAS 72 (1980): 113–148, text in Polish: *Listy pasterskie Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II* no. 4 (Kraków: Znak, 1997), 373.

¹⁷ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Certain Aspects of the Church Conceived as Communion, Communio in der Lehre des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils* (May 28, 1992), AAS 85, no. 5 (1993): 838–850.

¹⁸ Can. 913: *Ut sanctissima Eucharistia ministrari possit pueris, requiritur ut ipsi sufficienti cognitione [...].*

¹⁹ See Can. 844 §§ 3 and 4 of CIC/1983.

5. The right of the faithful to participate in the Eucharist according to the norms of the Code of Canon Law (canons 837, 846);
6. The right to receive Holy Communion outside of Mass (*iusta de causa*) according to can. 918;
7. The right to receive Holy Communion on the hand or on the tongue.²⁰

The celebration of the sacraments is the performance of the Church's public worship in accordance with the regulation in canon 834 § 2. Public worship occurs when it is performed by those legally appointed to do so, in the name of the Church and in accordance with approved liturgical texts.²¹

The rights and duties of the faithful are described on the basis of reciprocal implication, that is, when considering subjective rights, it is necessary to pay attention to the interdependence between them so that the law of one determines the duty of the other,²² and vice versa. In a certain situation, the law can only regulate the fulfillment of an obligation, an example of which is canon 1247²³ according to which: "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Mass. Moreover, they are to abstain from those works and affairs which hinder the worship to be rendered to God, the joy proper to the Lord's day, or the suitable relaxation of mind and body." The Church legislator in canon 1248 § 2 defines exceptional situations when the obligation to attend Mass is suspended and the faithful does not commit a grave sin: "If participation in the eucharistic celebration becomes impossible because of the absence of a sacred minister or for another grave cause, it is strongly recommended that the faithful take part in a liturgy of the word if such a liturgy is celebrated in a parish church or other sacred place according to the prescripts of the diocesan bishop or that they devote themselves to prayer for a suitable time alone, as a family, or, as the occasion permits, in groups of families."²⁴

To administer and receive the sacraments, it is necessary to meet certain legal requirements and co-presence in action. Canon law regulates these issues in detail for each sacrament. In the Sars-CoV-2 pandemic, simultaneous physi-

²⁰ Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, *Instructio Memoriale Domini* (May 29, 1969), AAS 61 (1969): 541–547.

²¹ Can. 834 § 2 of CIC/1983: *Huiusmodi cultus tunc habetur, cum defertur nomine Ecclesiae a personis legitime deputatis et per actus ab Ecclesiae auctoritate probatos.*

²² Can. 223 § 1 of CIC/1983; Marian Żurowski, *Podstawy uprawnień wiernych we wspólnocie Kościoła*, *Roczniki Teologiczno-Kanoniczne* 5, no. 28 (1981): 86.

²³ The Code of Canon Law only stipulates the obligation of the individual faithful to participate in the Eucharist (not the obligation to receive the Eucharist) on Sundays and holy days of obligation.

²⁴ Can. 1248 § 2 of CIC/1983: *Si deficiente ministro sacro aliave gravi de causa participatio eucharisticae celebrationis impossibilis evadat [...]; Joannes Paulus PP. II, Epistula apostolica de diei dominicae sanctificatione Dies Domini* (May 31, 1998), AAS 90, no. 54 (1998): 713–766. See more: Elżbieta Szczot, *Prawo wiernego do Eucharystii według Kodeksu Prawa Kanonicznego z 1983 roku* (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 2000), 97–103.

cal presence at the place of the sacraments administered became a fundamental problem, since no one can administer the sacraments of baptism, confirmation or anointing of the sick alone. We cannot confess sins to ourselves, nor can we ordain ourselves to the priesthood. With the proper form, it is admittedly possible to marry by proxy,²⁵ whose necessary physical presence only confirms this requirement. The reception and administration of sacraments requires the simultaneous presence in a specific place, the minister and the receiving subject, using the appropriate matter and form for each sacrament.

Restrictions on Access to the Sacraments

The Sars-CoV-2 epidemic, which broke out in late 2019 in China, spread quite rapidly around the world taking the form of a pandemic,²⁶ caused restrictions on the gathering of the population, including religious worship. In view of the resulting pandemic situation threatening the health and lives of citizens, state authorities, issued a series of laws to protect the population from the sudden development of infection. Thus, the right to exercise freedom to externalize religious freedoms was restricted.²⁷

In view of the concern and anxiety arising from the resulting epidemic threat, the highest authorities of the Catholic Church published relevant deci-

²⁵ Can. 1104 § 1 of CIC/1983. It should be noted that the ministers of the sacrament of marriage in the Latin rite are the spouses (bridegroom and bride) themselves. See: Zbigniew Janeczowski, "Materia i forma sakramentu małżeństwa," in *Ius Matrimoniale* 18, no. 24 (2013): 15; See: Lucjan Świto, *Zawarcie małżeństwa przez pełnomocnika w formie wyznaniowej ze skutkami cywilnymi w prawie polskim* (Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego w Olsztynie, 2019).

²⁶ An epidemic of an infectious disease that involves several countries at the same time is called a pandemic. The countries affected by the virus can be on one continent or all over the world. In a pandemic, there is a high contagiousness of the disease, as well as an asymptomatic form of the disease at the initial stage of infection. The first case of SARS-CoV-2 virus was reported on November 17, 2019, in the Chinese city of Wuhan. In Poland, on March 20, 2020, an epidemic state was introduced throughout the country, see: Regulation of the Minister of Health of March 20, 2020 on the declaration of an epidemic state on the territory of the Republic of Poland, Journal of Laws of 2020, item 49. On March 11, 2020, the WHO recognized Europe as the epicenter of the pandemic.

²⁷ See Aneta M. Abramowicz, "Wolność religijna w czasie pandemii koronawirusa—ocena rozwiązań polskich," *Studia z Prawa Wyznaniowego* 24 (2021): 255–278. The author presents in detail the premises for the application of restrictions on religious freedom and discusses their legal basis. Also: Piotr Stanisław, "Ograniczenia wolności kultu religijnego w czasie pandemii COVID-19: między konstytucyjnością a efektywnością," *Przegląd Sejmowy* 3 (2021): 143–165.

sions and indications aimed at the faithful. Initially, the Apostolic Penitentiary issued a note on March 19, 2020, informing that, especially in the places most affected by the pandemic and until the phenomenon is brought under control, there is a premise of grave necessity (*gravis necessitas*), as referred to in can. 961 § 1, 2^o, so that the minister may grant absolution to multiple penitents simultaneously without their prior individual confession, observing the other conditions required by the canon law.²⁸ The Sars-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic has been recognized as one that creates a circumstance of grave necessity and justifies *absolutio pluribus* without prior individual confession. However, this possibility was used exceptionally due to the failure to preserve the premise of “many penitents simultaneously.”²⁹ P. Stanisz shows that such permission was granted in Poland by a single diocesan bishop to chaplains of infectious hospitals and single-immunized hospitals for those infected with the Covid-19 virus, but only to those patients and staff who expressed a willingness to use this possibility.³⁰ The Apostolic Penitentiary also recognized that the spread of the epidemic constitutes a right cause (*iusta de causa*) justifying the celebration of the sacrament of penance outside the confessional.³¹ A faithful who does not have the opportunity to attend individual confession, but feels a very strong need for reconciliation with God and the Church, should induce an act of perfect contrition. This act causes “the forgiveness of mortal sins if it includes a firm resolve to go to sacramental confession and confess these sins as soon as possible.”³² During the 2020 Sars-CoV-2 pandemic, the Congregation for Divine Worship responded negatively to a question about the possibility of confession via cell phone in order to at least amplify the voice of the confessor and penitent, who can see each other.³³ At the time, the reason for the request to the

²⁸ Note from the Apostolic Penitentiary regarding the sacrament of reconciliation in the current pandemic situation (March 19, 2020), accessed May 17, 2023, <https://episkopat.pl/nota-penitencjarii-apostolskiej-odnosnie-sakramentu-pojednania-w-obecnej-sytuacji-pandemii-20-03-2020-r/> and https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/tribunals/apost_penit/documents/rc_trib_ap_pen_pro_20200319_decreto-speciali-indulgenze_en.html.

²⁹ Piotr Stanisz, “Komunikacja Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce w okresie pandemii Covid-19. Raport z badań interdyscyplinarnych,” in *Edukacja—Media—Teologia*, ed. Andrzej Kiciński, Mirosław Chmielewski (Kraków: Wydawnictwo “Scriptum,” 2022), 25–29.

³⁰ Stanisz, *Komunikacja Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, 52. There is no information available regarding the fact and possible number of such absolutions given.

³¹ Can. 964 § 3 of CIC/1983: *Confessiones extra sedem confessionalem ne excipiantur, nisi iuxta de causa*. Due to the development of the pandemic during Lent, confessions were heard from cars in parking lots or other places where a safe distance could be maintained while observing the indications of the Apostolic Penitentiary, including the suggestion that the place be airy. See Oskar Vyner, “Disembodied Conversion or Gift of Mercy? Confession by Videoconference,” *Antiphon. A Journal for Liturgical Renewal* 25, no. 3 (2021): 287–317.

³² Can. 962 of CIC/1983.

³³ Apostolic Penitentiary, “Lettera circolare riguardante la non ammissibilità dei moderni mezzi di comunicazione nei ricorsi riguardanti materie tutelate dal sigillo sacramentale L’uso dei

Apostolic Penitentiary was to assist the faithful and ministers in administering the sacraments, who are, for example, in hospitals or other places of isolation, in quarantine, due to a restraining order and the impossibility of physical contact. On the other hand, in order to provide spiritual assistance to the faithful in life-threatening danger due to contracting Covid-19, the Penitentiary issued a decree granting special indulgences to the faithful, stressing that: “The Church prays for those who find themselves unable to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and of the Viaticum, entrusting each and every one to divine Mercy by virtue of the communion of saints and granting the faithful a Plenary Indulgence on the point of death, provided that they are duly disposed and have recited a few prayers during their lifetime [...]”³⁴

In Poland, during the initial period of the pandemic, a proposal appeared to increase the number of Sunday holy masses, in order to reduce the number of people present at the various liturgical gatherings.³⁵ Information was also disseminated about the possibility of receiving Holy Communion spiritually or on the hand³⁶ for this period, and on March 12, 2020, an announcement was is-

mezzi tecnologici (October 23, 2002),” in *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 21, no. 1259: Documenti ufficiali della Santa Sede 2002, ed. Erminio Lora (Bologna: Edizione Dehoniane, 2002), 930–931; Waldemar Bartocha, “Celebrazja sakramentu pokuty i pojednania w cyberprzestrzeni z perspektywy teologiczno-kanonicznej,” *Kultura-Media-Teologia* 51 (2022): 10–29; Stefano Testa Bapenheim, “Does the Covid-19 pandemic authorize the derogation from the canonical rule of absolution necessarily preceded by individual confession? (can. 961 CIC),” accessed May 25, 2023, <https://diresom.net/2020/04/22/does-the-covid-19-pandemic-authorize-the-derogation-from-the-canonical-rule-of-absolution-necessarily-preceded-by-individual-confession-canon-961-cic/>. Archbishop Blair advises cellphones cannot be used to administer sacraments, accessed May 25, 2023, <https://catholicreview.org/archbishop-advises-cellphones-cannot-be-used-to-administer-sacraments/>. Andrzej Draguła, “Ciało koniecznie potrzebne Czy możliwa jest spowiedź przez internet?,” accessed June 17, 2023, <https://wiedz.pl/2003/01/01/42-cialo-koniecznie-potrzebneczy-mozliwa-jest-spowiedz-przez-internet/>; Henryk Stawniak, “Wybrane funkcje szafarza sakramentu pokuty—aspekt prawny,” *SEMINARE* 24 (2007), 69–82.

³⁴ Apostolic Penitentiary, “Decree: The gift of Special Indulgences is granted to the faithful suffering from Covid-19 disease, commonly known as Coronavirus, as well as to health-care workers, family members and all those who in any capacity, including through prayer, care for them (March 19, 2020),” accessed May 25, 2023, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/tribunals/apost_penit/documents/rc_trib_appen_pro_20200319_decreto-speciali-indulgenze_en.html.

³⁵ Message from the President of the KEP (= Konferencja Episkopatu Polski, Eng. version: Polish Bishops’ Conference) on the Coronavirus Threat, March 10, 2020, accessed May 26, 2023, <https://episkopat.pl/przewodniczacy-episkopatu-kosciol-stosuje-sie-do-zalecen-sluzb-sanitarnych-ws-koronawirusa-2/>.

³⁶ Announcement of the Chairman of the Polish Bishops’ Conference, in connection with the coronavirus, Poznań, March 12, 2020, N. 1234/2020, accessed June 16, 2023, <http://parafiadomachowo.pl/koronawirus-pilne/>. Although the worshippers were already allowed to receive Holy Communion in the hand, the circumstance of the pandemic caused a wave of criticism in some Catholic circles against Church authorities and those worshippers who received the Host in the hand. See: Standing Council of the Polish Bishops’ Conference, Order No. 1/2020 of March 12,

sued encouraging the reception of Holy Communion on the hand and granting a dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday and holy day of obligation masses. As required by canon law, based on can. 1245: “Without prejudice to the right of diocesan bishops mentioned in can. 87, for a just cause (*iusta de causa*) and according to the prescripts of the diocesan bishop, a pastor can grant in individual cases a dispensation from the obligation of observing a feast day or a day of penance or can grant a commutation of the obligation into other pious works [...]”³⁷ The recipients of the dispensation were asked to connect spiritually with the Church community through broadcasts in the social media.³⁸ It was stressed that “Taking advantage of the dispensation means that absence from Sunday Mass at the indicated time is not a sin.” At the same time, the people were encouraged to persist in personal and family prayer, as well as remain in spiritual connection with the Church community through radio, television or Internet broadcasts.”³⁹ Subsequently, on March 24, 2020, an announcement was issued in connection with another restriction on the number of participants in the gatherings.⁴⁰ Chairman of the Polish Episcopal Conference, Archbishop

2020, para. 2.b. “We recall that the liturgical regulations of the Church provide for the reception of Holy Communion on the hand, which we now encourage.” See: Commission for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments of the Polish Bishops’ Conference, Communication in connection with an inquiry into public initiatives critical of Communion on the hand (October 3, 2020), accessed June 15, 2023, <https://episkopat.pl/komisja-liturgiczna-episkopatu-komunia-na-reke-nie-jest-profanacja/>. See SC (= Sacrosanctum Concilium = Constitution on the Liturgy) 55; Can. 918 of CIC/1983.

³⁷ The dispensation was aimed at 4 groups of the faithful: (1) to the elderly, (2) people with symptoms of infection, (3) school children and adolescents and adults who take direct care of them, (4) people who feel fear of infection. It should be noted that the dispensation is not addressed in p. 3. to those who care for the elderly or sick.

³⁸ See: Permanent Council of the Polish Bishops’ Conference, Order No. 1/2020 of March 12, 2020. This dispensation was initially granted until March 29, 2020. Due to the development of the virus, the dispensation was extended and granted by individual bishops for their dioceses, accessed April, 2023, <https://episkopat.pl/zarzadzenie-nr-1-2020-rady-stalej-konferencji-episkopatu-polski-z-dnia-12-marca-2020-r/>.

³⁹ Ibid. See: Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments with Guidelines for the Celebration of the Paschal Triduum in Places Affected by Epidemics (March 19, 2020), accessed May 17, 2023, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20200325_decreto-intempodicovid_en.html; (<https://episkopat.pl/watykan-o-celebrewaniu-wielkanocy-w-czasie-epidemii-2/>) and the March 25, 2020 update, <https://episkopat.pl/dekret-kongregacji-ds-kultu-bozego-i--disciplines-sacraments-with-guidelines-for-performing-the-paschal-triduum-in-epidemic-affected-places-update-of-25-March-2020-r/>.

⁴⁰ Archbishop Stanisław Gądecki, KEP Announcement of March 24, 2020, accessed June 17, 2023, <https://episkopat.pl/przewodniczacy-episkopatu-prosze-o-uwzglednienie-ograniczenia-do-5-uczestnikow-zgromadzen-religijnych/>. See: <https://chrystuskrol.oblaci.pl/dekret-w-sprawie-duszpasterstwa-w-stanie-epidemii/> (accessed April 25, 2023). Previously, 50 people were allowed. From March 24 to April 11, 2020, there was a restriction on the movement of the population,

S. Gądecki, addressed the faithful in a special announcement, noting that: “In connection with the outbreak of coronavirus, the state authorities have decided that no more than 5 people will be allowed to participate in a holy mass or any other religious rite at the same time,” not counting those officiating the service. In all Polish dioceses, the possibility for the faithful to attend Mass was restricted to those ordering a Mass intention, and in the case of a funeral, only the immediate family. The decree once again encouraged all the faithful to join together in prayer. What was new were the regulations on the limit of the faithful at masses, services and funerals. The number of attendees at funerals was then limited to five people, in addition to those performing religious worship or employed by the funeral home to organize the burial. The pandemic also led to such a state that in some cases the family of the deceased had to make the decision to postpone the funeral because there was no person authorized to organize it, due to the entire family being ill with COVID-19, or being in quarantine. In the fall of 2020, for the first time in Polish history, all cemeteries in the country were closed. From October 31 to November 2, access to cemeteries was banned, except for the necessity of burying the deceased and only for funeral and burial activities.⁴¹ In 2020, more than 477,000 people died in Poland. The increase in the number of deaths compared to 2019 was nearly 68 thousand, while 2021 was a record year in terms of deaths, as 519.5 thousand people died in it. It is difficult to reliably estimate the number of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick given in those years to people in danger of death (*periculum mortis*), or because of old age.⁴² The bishops recommended administering the anointing,

with the exception of going out to buy groceries, visiting the doctor and going to work. From March 12, 2020, schools and kindergartens were closed.

⁴¹ Ordinance of the Council of Ministers of October 30, 2020, amending the Ordinance on the Establishment of Certain Restrictions, Orders and Prohibitions in Connection with the Occurrence of an Epidemic Condition, Journal of Laws of October 30, 2020, Item 1917. November 1 has been celebrated by the Catholic Church since the 9th century as *Sollemnitatis Omnium Sanctorum*. In Poland, it is a statutory holiday, enshrined and guaranteed in the Concordat, Article 9, accessed June 20, 2023, <https://www.gov.pl/web/koronawirus/epidemia-koronawirusa-przybiera-na-sile-dlatego-zamykamy-cmentarze-na-wszystkich-swietych>; Concordat between the Holy See and the Republic of Poland, signed in Warsaw on July 28, 1993, Journal of Laws 1998, No. 51, Item 318. See also: Elżbieta Szczot, “Death in times of SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic. Legal regulations of the Burial of the COVID-19 Deceased in Poland,” *Review of European and Comparative Law* 4 (2021): 135–156.

⁴² See: Can. 1004 of CCL; Bronisław Wenanty Zubert OFM, “Prawa chorego we wspólnocie Kościoła,” *Homo meditans*, vol. XIII (Lublin: KUL, 1992), 131–148; Bronisław Wenanty Zubert OFM, “Sakrament namaszczenia chorych. Próba wykładni obowiązujących przepisów kodeksowych,” *Kościół i prawo*, vol. XIII (Lublin 1998), 231–259; Zbigniew Janczewski, “Sprawowanie sakramentów uzdrowienia w okresie stanu epidemicznego w świetle prawa kanonicznego,” *Prawo Kanoniczne* 63, no. 3 (2020): 3–21. See Ordinance of the Bishop of Płock on the Occasion of Liturgical Activities during the State of Epidemics (March 23, 2020), accessed May 10, 2023, <https://www.diecezjaplocka.pl/biskupi/piotr-libera/listy/zarządzenie->

but only in danger of death, without specifying what state of that danger they had in mind. The Institute of Statistics of the Catholic Church SAC presented data on the sacraments administered for 2020 and indicated that the sacrament of baptism was administered to 312,100 people, down 16.3 percent compared to 2019, with more than 355,000 live births registered in 2020, according to the Central Statistical Office. The sacrament of confirmation in 2020 was received by 252.3 thousand people, which is 34 percent less than in 2019. The number of sacramental marriages performed in 2020 amounted to 91.5 thousand—26.8 percent less than in 2019.⁴³

In 2020, the time for receiving Easter Communion, which according to canon law must be received at least once a year during the Easter season, has been extended in some dioceses, unless for just cause (*nisi iusta de causa*) it is received at another time.⁴⁴ Archbishop S. Gądecki issued a decree under which he decided to extend this time in the Archdiocese of Poznań until the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, that is, September 14, 2020. Thus, he reminded that receiving Holy Communion on the appointed date is one of the fundamental duties of a Catholic.⁴⁵ Not in all dioceses was such an extension granted.

The abolition of dispensations exempting the faithful from the obligation to attend a prescribed mass took effect in Poland on June 20, 2021. The bishops gathered at the 389th Plenary Meeting of the Polish Bishops' Conference decided that the dispensations be abolished at the same time in all dioceses where they had been in force until then due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴⁶ However, restrictions on the gathering of the population continued. On July 7, 2021,

biskupa-plockiego-w-sprawie-sprawowania-czynnosci-liturgicznych-w-czasie-stanu-epidemii and <http://parafia.fatimskaciechanow.pl/zarządzenie-biskupa-plockiego-w-sprawie-sprawowania-czynnosci-liturgicznych-w-czasie-stanu-epidemii-zaktualizowane-dnia-26-marca-2020-roku/>. In the Archdiocese of Boston in the US, volunteer priests were appointed to administer anointing to Covid-19 patients. Clad in protective clothing, the priests performed part of the rite by reciting prayers at the door of a hospital room. Then, once inside the room, they used a cotton cloth to anoint the sick on their feet, accessed May 5, 2023, <https://wpolityce.pl/polityka/497795-grupa-ksiezy-ma-zadanie-namaszczenie-chorych-na-covid-19>.

⁴³ See: accessed August 31, 2023, <https://wiesz.pl/2023/01/16/iskk-nowe-dane/>. See “Pandemia COVID-19 znacząco wpłynęła na życie religijne polskich katolików,” accessed August 31, 2023, <https://episkopat.pl/iskk-pandemia-covid-19-znaczaco-wplynela-na-zycie-religijne-polskich-katolikow/>.

⁴⁴ Can. 920 § 3 of CIC/1983. In Poland, the time for receiving Easter Communion is from the Sunday preceding Ash Wednesday to Trinity Sunday.

⁴⁵ See: accessed April 25, 2023, <http://archpoznan.pl/pl/web/homilia/view/id/dekret-dotyczacy-duszpasterstwa-po-zniesieniu-limitow-uczestnikow-liturgii>.

⁴⁶ See: accessed June 15, 2023, <http://archpoznan.pl/pl/dyspensy-do-uczestnictwa-we-mszy-sw-zniesione>. The introduced limit was in effect until August 31, 2021, <https://dzieje.pl/dziedzictwo-kulturowe/dziennik-ustaw-od-13-czerwca-w-kosciolach-nie-wiecej-osob-niz-stanowi-50-proc>; These restrictions have been extended until September 30, 2021, accessed August 31, 2023, <https://www.gov.pl/web/koronawirus/aktualne-zasady-i-ograniczenia>.

rules and restrictions on participation in religious ceremonies were issued, and a limit on people in places of worship was imposed up to a maximum of 75 percent occupancy of the building. The limit did not apply to persons fully vaccinated against COVID-19. It was also recommended that ceremonies be held outdoors.⁴⁷ On the one hand, dispensations were abolished, while on the other hand, church buildings could only be filled to 75 percent. However, the faithful were not checked for the required doses of inoculation against COVID-19. The end of the epidemic state was declared by the WHO on May 5, 2023, and as of July 1, 2023, the epidemic risk state in Poland was lifted.⁴⁸ Thus, any restrictions on receiving and administering sacraments were not in force any more.

Virtual Participation as an Extension of the Temple Space

The development of the pandemic in Poland did not result in a total ban on participation in the sacraments celebrated, as was the case in some European countries.⁴⁹ The restrictions that were put in place varied and intensified or relaxed with the rise and fall of the disease and the mortality rate of people. This state of affairs often caused confusion, uncertainty and fear among the faithful.⁵⁰ Almost

⁴⁷ From June 13 to June 25, 2021, the faithful were still required to maintain a 1.5-meter distance and no more than 50% occupancy of the building where worship was held. The obligation continued to cover the nose and mouth with the exception of ministers. The wearing of masks (except in health clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies) was abolished on March 28, 2022, accessed April 21, 2023, <https://www.gov.pl/web/psse-zdunska-wola/zniesienie-obowiazku-noszenia-maseczek-zniesienie-kwarantanny-i-izolacji-domowej>.

⁴⁸ Accessed July 31, 2023, <https://www.gov.pl/web/rpp/koniec-stanu-zagrozenia-epidemicznego>.

⁴⁹ In Italy, for example, churches were left open, but the faithful could not enter them to pray because of strict lockdown, accessed April 12, 2023, <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2020-03/church-state-in-italy-cooperate-to-halt-spread-of-coronavirus.html>. Those wishing to pray in a church could do so only if the church was along the road to or from a government-approved reason for leaving home: e.g., to go to the grocery store, pharmacy, doctor's office, or to work when it was necessary and could not be done from home, accessed April 12, 2023, <https://www.ncronline.org/news/italian-government-clarifies-lockdown-rules-churches>.

⁵⁰ In the period from March 13 to June 30, 2020, matters concerning congregations and participation in religious worship were regulated by nine consecutive ordinances, see Stanisław, *Komunikacja Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, 28; Marek Rembierz, "Stan pandemii jako ćwiczenie duchowe. O uczeniu się i oswojaniu siebie w stanie pandemicznej zapaści i dezorientacji witalnej," ed. Wiesław Gumuła, *Dzienniki stanu pandemii* (Kraków: Instytut Literatury i Zakład Wydawniczy NOMOS, 2021), 223–245.

all appeals made by the bishops to the faithful included an encouragement to connect spiritually in prayer through broadcasts in the social media.⁵¹ Restrictions imposed by state and church authorities on access to physical participation in the liturgy caused the activity of the faithful to move to the Internet. In homes and families, the faithful prayed in real time with the celebrant, using television broadcasts, radio broadcasts, via the Internet, via computers or cell phones. In this way, they sought to fulfill the premise of canon 1248 § 2 “[...] or they devoted adequate time to individual prayer in the family or in groups of families.” Authentic home churches were formed in many homes and families. The family as the home Church was presented in the Second Vatican Council’s Dogmatic Constitution on the Church.⁵² In the decree *Apostolicam actuositatem* it appears as *tamquam domesticum sanctuarium Ecclesiae* and forms a small Church.⁵³ In the New Testament, we find the phrases ἡ κατ’ οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησία (Church formed in the home⁵⁴), from which it is clear that it refers to the community of the faithful gathered in the Christian’s home for the Eucharist.⁵⁵ In this way, the space of churches has been expanded and transferred to homes and apartments. Thanks to the delivered broadcast, the faithful could more easily keep the rhythm of Sunday celebrations, experience the weeks of Lent, listen to retreats,

⁵¹ See Permanent Council of the Polish Bishops’ Conference, Order No. 1/2020 of March 12, 2020, accessed April 12, 2023, <https://episkopat.pl/zarzadzenie-nr-1-2020-rady-stalej-konferencji-episkopatu-polski-z-dnia-12-marca-2020-r/>.

⁵² LG 11, 2: *In hac velut Ecclesia domestica parentes verbo et exemplo sint pro filiis suis primi fidei praecones, et vocationem unicuique via, a Domino vocantur*”; Catechism of the Catholic Church no 1656. See more: Winfried Aymans, “Gleichsam Häusliche Kirche. Ein kanonistischer Beitrag zum Grundverständnis der sakramentalen Ehe als Gottesbund und Vollzugsgestalt kirchlicher Existenz,” *Archiv für Katholisches Kirchenrecht* 147 (1978): 424–446; Jean Beyer, *Ecclesia domestica*, *Periodica de re morali, canonica, liturgica* 9 (1990): 293–295, 293–326; Salvatore Berlingò, “Chiesa domestica’ y derecho de familia en la Iglesia,” in *El matrimonio y su expresión canónica ante el III milenio*, 641–692.

⁵³ DA 11, 3 (= Decree *Apostolicam actuositatem*); FC (Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*) No. 55: “The Christian family too is part of this priestly people which is the Church. By means of the sacrament of marriage, in which it is rooted and from which it draws its nourishment, the Christian family is continuously vivified by the Lord Jesus and called and engaged by Him in a dialogue with God through the sacraments, through the offering of one’s life, and through prayer.” C.f. Michel Philippe Laroche, *Mały Kościół. Mistyczna przygoda małżeństwa*, trans. J. Grzegorzczuk (Hajnówka, 2006, based on: Poznań: “W drodze,” 1989), 11–13.

⁵⁴ Cf. 1 Corinthians 16:19–20. Until the third century, Christians did not have their own places of worship. This fact was recalled by Pope Benedict XVI during a catechesis delivered at a general audience on February 7, 2007, stressing that every home can become a small church. Both in the sense that Christian love, characterized by altruism and mutual concern, should reign there, and in the sense that faith-based family life should be centered around the person of Jesus Christ, see also: 1 Kor 14, 34–35; Ef 5, 25–33; Rz 16, 23; Flm 2; Kol 4,15. Tomasz Drożyński, “Oblicza wspólnoty Kościoła w czasie pandemii COVID-19,” *Studia Paradyskie* 30 (2020), 67–83.

⁵⁵ See Barbara Filarska, “Domowy Kościół. Miejsce,” in *Encyklopedia Katolicka* 4, col. 105.

experience the exceptionally lonely 2020 *Triduum Sacrum* and the Solemnity of the Resurrection, pray the Rosary every day.⁵⁶ Due to the incredible development of the media, the word “participation” has taken on a much broader meaning than in the past.⁵⁷

The Pontifical Council for the Social Communications in 2002, in a document issued: *The Church and Internet* noted that “Although the virtual reality of cyberspace cannot substitute for real interpersonal community, the incarnational reality of the sacraments and the liturgy, or the immediate and direct proclamation of the gospel.” However, it can complement these areas and “attract people to a fuller experience of the life of faith, and enrich the religious lives of users.”⁵⁸ The Sars-CoV-2 epidemic turned into a pandemic, with the most dramatic events unfolding in 2020–2021, associated with high population mortality rates and restrictions on religious worship, meant that television broadcasts, or online transmissions from churches and chapels where the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, were celebrated, helped many people get through this difficult period by keeping hope alive in them. They also provided essential information about the life of the Church and often allowed people to remain connected to their own parish community.

Conclusions

Cardinal Robert Sarah, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, on August 15, 2020, in a letter addressed to the Presidents of the Catholic Church’s Bishops’ Conferences, stressed the need to recognize and respect the right of the faithful to receive the Body of Christ and to worship the Lord present in the Eucharist without restriction.⁵⁹ However,

⁵⁶ From March 16 to June 11, 2020, a daily rosary prayer was broadcast from the chapel at the home of Archbishop Stanisław Gądecki for the intention of stopping the coronavirus pandemic, accessed May 14, 2023, <https://misyjne.pl/abp-gadecki-dziekuje-za-3-miesiace-wspolnej-modlitwy-rozancowej-wideo/>.

⁵⁷ Benedict XVI Pp., Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum caritatis*, No. 57. In the exhortation, the pope drew the attention of celebrants to the proper celebration of the Eucharist: “The Mass broadcast by television undoubtedly has the character of a certain pattern. Particular care must therefore be taken to ensure that in the celebration, in addition to taking place in dignified and well-prepared places, the liturgical norms are respected.”

⁵⁸ Pontifical Council for the Social Communication, “Kościół a Internet” (February 22, 2002), *KAI Bulletin* 10, no. 5 (March 10, 2002): 31–35.

⁵⁹ “The faithful should be recognized as having the right to receive the Body of Christ and to worship the Lord present in the Eucharist in the manner provided for, without limitations

the rapid spread of the Sars CoV-2 virus formally restricted the participation of the faithful in the Holy Sacraments in many countries (in Poland from March 12, 2020, till June 20, 2021). While it was possible to receive Holy Communion in a real or spiritual way, or, in certain situations, to make perfect contrition for sins and receive Holy Communion on the tongue or in the hand without prior individual confession, due to government-imposed restrictions on the number of faithful present in the church at the same time, the greatest restrictions were maintained with relation to the most vulnerable, that is, the sick. Mandatory bans on direct human contact in hospitals, or the nationwide lockdown introduced in March/April 2020, as well as the multi-day isolation covering the infected for the period of the declared pandemic, as well as the quarantine of relatives in physical contact with the infected, resulted in many thousands of people, both faithful of the Catholic Church and those belonging to other churches and religious associations, in danger of dying without being able to contact their proper chaplain or priest. Catholics were left without the possibility of being provided with the viaticum and sacrament of anointing of the sick. In Poland, the bishops have not issued specific guidelines for priests to follow in the circumstances indicated. Invoking the ban on the use of cell phones, even just for voice amplification, is not convincing in an emergency time when thousands of newly infected patients arrive every day. The Apostolic Penitentiary gave consolation in the form of assurances of prayer and the promise of the grace of indulgence, which the sick may not even have had a chance to hear about. Church officials relied on decisions issued by secular authorities and failed to take action aimed at those most in need of the sacraments—the faithful in danger of their lives. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on July 14, 2020, that is, after the first wave of coronavirus had passed through Europe, issued a letter entitled *Samaritanus bonus* on caring for people in the critical and final stages of life, stating that “Every person has the natural right to be cared for, which at this time is the highest expression of the religion that one professes. [...] Through the closeness of the Church, the sick person experiences the nearness of Christ who accompanies them on their journey to his Father’s house (cf. Jn 14:6) and helps the sick to not fall into despair, by supporting them in hope especially when the journey becomes exhausting”⁶⁰ (no. 10). It seems that this support in

that go even beyond what is provided for by the norms of hygiene issued by public authorities or Bishops,” Let Us Return to the Eucharist with Joy, Letter on the celebration of the liturgy during and after the COVID-19 pandemic to the presidents of the Episcopal Conferences of the Catholic Church, accessed May 14, 2023, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/let-us-return-to-theeucharist-with-joy-20402>.

⁶⁰ Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, Letter *Samaritanus bonus on the care of persons in the critical and terminal phases of life*, July 14, 2020, accessed June 23, 2023, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20200714_samaritanus-bonus_en.html.

hope was not sufficient, due to which the right of the faithful to the spiritual goods of the Church gave way to restrictions and limitations imposed by state and church authorities and was not fully protected.

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Elżbieta Szczot

Entre l'octroi et la restriction du droit aux sacrements pendant le Sars-CoV-2 Internet comme moyen de transmission et de communication avec les fidèles

Résumé

Cet article présente le droit des fidèles aux sacrements et ses limites résultant de l'apparition de la pandémie du virus Sars-CoV-2 en 2020. On a présenté l'étendue du droit aux biens spirituels de l'Église, qui est garanti par le canon no 213 du Code de Droit Canonique de 1983, ainsi que les limites de l'espace pour le rassemblement des fidèles, introduites par le droit national et les décrets épiscopaux. L'accès à Internet et la préservation de la communication en ligne ont permis, dans un contexte d'isolement social, d'établir une communication entre les ministres et les fidèles, et de survivre plus facilement aux restrictions d'accès aux saints sacrements.

Mots-clés: droit des fidèles aux sacrements, pandémie, restrictions, internet

Elżbieta Szczot

Tra concessione e limitazione del diritto ai sacramenti durante Sars-CoV Internet come mezzo di trasmissione e comunicazione con i fedeli

Sommario

L'articolo presenta il diritto dei fedeli ai sacramenti e le sue limitazioni conseguenti allo scoppio della pandemia del virus SarsCov-2 nel 2020. È stato riportato l'ambito del diritto sui beni spirituali della Chiesa garantito a norma del can. 213 del Codice di Diritto Canonico del 1983, e dei limiti spaziali per gli assembramenti introdotti dalle leggi statali e dai decreti episcopali. L'accesso a Internet e il mantenimento della comunicazione online hanno permesso di stabilire una comunicazione tra i ministri e i fedeli durante l'isolamento sociale in corso e di sopravvivere più facilmente alle restrizioni sull'accesso ai santi sacramenti.

Parole chiave: diritto del credente ai sacramenti, pandemia, restrizioni, Internet