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## **Religious and cultic activity of high school and university students in Poland. Between religious zeal and lack of practice**

### **Introduction**

I should like first to explain that analogously to other researchers I understand the concept of “religious and cultic activity” as an active personal participation of the researched high school and university students in obligatory and optional religious practices, the performance of which is a basic and pious duty of Catholics. This duty obviously involves compliance with recurring obligatory religious practices, imposed by the institutional Church, while the sphere of piety involves performing optional religious practices. It is the participation of my respondents in these two types of religious practice that I devote this sociological paper to. Sociologists of religion include religious practices to elementary and exposed components of traditional religiosity. In Poland, they are still the main feature of religiosity of a folk type and Church – related issues of lay Catholics<sup>1</sup>. Religious practices are both of an individual and private character as well as collective and public one. Sociology of religion defines religious practices as “ritual behaviour” and “instrumental behaviour”. What is crucial in ritual behaviour is the manner of its implementation by the faithful, while its purpose and motivation matter less. When it comes to instrumental behaviour, the stress is put on the target and motivation, yet the manner of its implementation is of lesser importance<sup>2</sup>. Emile Pin believed that for that

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<sup>1</sup> W. Piwowarski, *Przemiany globalnych postaw wobec religii (na przykładzie Puław)*, in: W. Piwowarski, *Religijność ludowa – ciągłość i zmiana*, Wrocław 1983, pp. 5-12.

<sup>2</sup> J. Baniak, *Praktyki religijne katolików XX wieku – analiza socjologiczna*, “Studia Gnesnensia”, 2002, vol. 16, pp. 277-318.

reason such behaviour involves in particular acculturation activity of the Church and is strictly combined with the transfer of its faith<sup>3</sup>.

Religious practices may be easily examined by means of the methods used in the sociology of religion. Thus, by using such methods it is possible to empirically determine religious viability of individuals and social communities and their religious – cultic activity. Janusz Mariański believes that it is much harder to examine the sphere of intensively and motivation of religious practices, that is to objectively assess the motives and reasons for which Catholics undertake and perform such practices, and it is even harder to indicate “spiritual depth” of their religious life<sup>4</sup>. The motives behind the undertaking and performance of religious practices, analogously to other actions of specific individuals, require a different and deeper look or approach of researchers, entering the psyche and free will of a religious individual, that is reaching for the methods and techniques of psychological examinations which may frequently give a sociologist methodological problems and difficulties<sup>5</sup>. Religious practices are strictly linked to the sense, purpose and essence of religion. This reason authorises the institutional Church to demand that its members carry out religious practices, some of which are tainted with the sanction of grave guilt. Piero Sandre believed that clear statistical dependency may be observed between religious practices and the faith of Catholics. This dependency is clearly visible when there is a “continuum” of ritual practices, which most often translates into two different situationally determined forms: 1) when a believing individual simultaneously carries out a few religious practices – both obligatory and optional ones; 2) when a believing individual performs a given religious practice under the sanction of grave guilt simultaneously in different circumstances and social communities<sup>6</sup>. This approach of a believing individual to religious practices means the manifestation of his/her deep ritual commitment, is a symbol of his/her internal, spiritually deepened religious – cultic activity and the practices themselves become an integral component of such religiosity.

The sociology of religion currently divides religious practice into three general groups: obligatory single practices, that is the so called rituals of passage<sup>7</sup>, obligatory repetitive practices such as Sunday service, Easter confession; optional practices, that is the practices voluntarily performed out of the doctrinal requirements of the Church, confirming above – standard religious commitment of a believing individual<sup>8</sup>. Władysław Piwowski once wrote, that single practices have always been most stable and most

<sup>3</sup> E. Pin, *La paroisse catholique. Les forms variables d'un systeme social*, Roma 1968, pp. 99-100.

<sup>4</sup> J. Mariański, *Motywy wiary w świetle badań socjologicznych*, "Collectanea Theologica", 1975, ed. 3, pp. 137-150.

<sup>5</sup> J. Baniak, *Motywy wiary i niewiary katolików miejskich (p 1)*, "W drodze", 1990, no 8, pp. 85-93; "W drodze", 1990 (p. 2), no. 9, pp. 86-92.

<sup>6</sup> P. Sandre, *Soziologia Della religio sita. Introduzione al. Metodo e Alle technice Della ricerca*, Roma 1967, pp. 18-19.

<sup>7</sup> W. Piwowski, *Socjologia rytuału religijnego*, "Roczniki Nauk Społecznych KUL", 1983, no. 1, pp. 5-84.

<sup>8</sup> J. Mariański, *Religia i Kościół w społeczeństwie pluralistycznym. Polska lat dziewięćdziesiątych*, Lublin 1993, pp. 128.

common, while other practices were carried out less often, in particular it was true of optional practices that is "pious practices". According to Piwowarski, the lowest percentage of the faithful "performed periodical optional practices, such as attending May, June, October religious services or the services related to the rites of Lent. The participation of the faithful has always been marked with decreasing trends"<sup>9</sup>.

In the light of such theoretical assumptions, one must put forward a question about dynamics of religious – cultic activity perceived through the whole of religious practices of my respondents – high school and university students, men and women – covered by qualitative and quantitative sociological research. I conducted the research from 2007 to 2010 among 456 high school students in Kalisz and at Poznań University of Communications and Management among 426 students of sociology, pedagogy, management and IT. The respondents in both groups were selected from school registers by means of random purposive sampling technique and the quantitative research was performed by means of an auditory survey. The survey questionnaire contained 76 substantive open and closed questions and 8 questions concerning personal information of the respondents. The probe method frequently used in sociological research was applied. The total number of respondents was 882 people, including 508 women and 374 men, and the disproportion of the selection was related to excessive representation of female students. Besides, the aim of the research included qualitative survey that covered 58 respondents, (29 men and 29 women) randomly selected in both environments (high school and higher school). At the stage of analysis and description of the survey results, the following methods were applied: statistical, comparative, social analysis, correlation of variables.

The result of the current surveys and assumed theoretical assumptions encourage asking questions concerning religious – cultic activity of my respondents. Do the respondents in both groups carry out as Catholics obligatory repetitive practices, ordered by the institutional Church – Sunday service and Easter confession and also optional and occasional practices related to the cult of patron saints, Virgin Mary and others? What is the personal attitude of the respondents to obligatory performance of some practices – do they perform them willingly and for what reasons, or perhaps they oppose and rebel against this religious duty, thus contesting the orders of the Church? What sense do they themselves give to such practices in their own religiosity? Respondents declared participation in various religious practices or their negligence or personal non-participation for some time, due to their age and real – life circumstances. I also asked them about the reasons for their participation and non-participation in such religious practices. Further analysis contained herein will present their declarations, confronting them with declarations of other respondents from other sociological surveys.

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<sup>9</sup> W. Piwowarski, *Religijność ludowa w ciągłości i zmianie*, "Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici", 1990, no. 216, pp. 48-49.

## **Compulsory repetitive religious practices of the surveyed youth**

The category of compulsory patterns of religious life of Catholics comprises the following: participation in Sunday service and services related to religious festivities, Easter confession and Holy Communion. The meaning of these practices in religiosity and parish bonds of Catholics are highlighted almost by all sociologists or religion and pastoral theologians. F. Boulard and J. Remy stressed that "Sunday practice is a manifestation that is publicly fulfilled as an acknowledgment of a social control, imposed by a religious group. Besides, this manifestation is different from the manifestation performed individually or in the family due to the implementation of the rituals of passage – religious wedding or church funeral. To a certain extent, the participation in a liturgical gathering provides an opportunity of a previous identification with a religious group"<sup>10</sup>.

From a sociological point of view, it may be claimed that it is not the frequency of the performance of religious practices but rather subjective motivations behind them can provide a more detailed explanation of the level of religious and cultic activity of a believer, since it is the motives that reveal its inner and spiritual dimension. The sense, meaning and character of emotional experience and reactions accompanying religious practices also have a specific influence on the authenticity and level of religiosity of people. The compliance with external conduct and the sphere of motivation help to understand religious practice more completely as an important component of the bonds of Catholics with the Church – with its religious and moral doctrine and various structures<sup>11</sup>. Sociologies more and more frequently include religious practices of high school and university students in their research plans and concepts. Young people's participation in religious practices, especially in obligatory practices means their personal bonds with the Church and the parish community as a basic group of religious reference<sup>12</sup>. The results of my research presented in this paper refer to that research, and at the same time they are its continuation conducted in similar environments of Polish youth.

## **Respondents' participation in obligatory Sunday and festive church service**

Sunday mass is a basic religious duty of Catholics which they are expected to observe and systematically attend under the sanction of grave sin. This duty results from the essence and the meaning of the third commandment and not from the order

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<sup>10</sup> F. Boulard, J. Remy, *Pratique religieuse Urbaine et region culturelles*, Paris 1968, pp. 28-29.

<sup>11</sup> J. Baniak, *Praktyki religijne katolików XX wieku...*, op. cit., pp. 281-282.

<sup>12</sup> J. Baniak, *Niedziela jako dzień święty w wyobrażeniach i ocenach katolików polskich*, "Teologia Praktyczna", 2004, vol. 5, pp. 245-252.

of the Church, which through this order only reminds Catholics about continuing validity of this religious duty. Only an important reason releases them from attending Sunday mass. It must be stressed here that this practice is strictly related with religious and festive character of Sunday as a day solely devoted to the cult of God as well as a religious reflection of believers, connected with peace and relaxation after weekdays<sup>13</sup>. Participation in Sunday mass does not only mean the fulfilment of a religious duty ordered by the Church but also a regularly renewed manifestation of a Catholic's belonging to the Church. Ferdynand Boulard was of the opinion that without Sunday Mass attendance no one can call themselves as a "complete Christian"<sup>14</sup>. This duty is continuously reminded by an appropriate ritual norm of the Church. Catholics should be familiar with this norm if they want to fulfil this religious duty.

Theoretical assumptions make us think how frequently the surveyed students participate in obligatory Sunday Mass. A proper frequency means their proportional religious cultic activity in parish and academic communities.

Table 1. Frequency of high school and university students' participation in Sunday mass

Respondents' participation	Women		Men		School students		University students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Each Sunday	230	45.4	142	38.0	238	52.2	134	31.5	372	42.2
Once a month	60	11.8	30	9.0	40	8.8	50	11.7	90	10.2
3-5 times a month	40	7.9	44	11.8	32	7.0	52	12.2	84	9.6
Occasionally	24	4.7	31	5.6	19	4.2	26	6.1	45	5.1
Once a year	23	4.5	25	6.7	17	3.7	31	7.3	48	5.4
Non-attendance	114	22.4	96	25.7	90	19.7	120	28.2	210	23.8
No data	17	3.3	16	4.3	20	4.4	13	3.0	33	3.7
In general	508	100.0	374	100.0	456	100.0	426	100.0	882	100.0

Source: own research.

The research reveals that the respondents' participation in Sunday mass differs in terms of frequency. Nearly 1/4 of them (23.8%) with a higher percentage of men (25.7%) than women (22.4%) and a larger percentage of university students (28.2%) than high school students (19.7%) openly declared their non-participation in this religious duty for a long time. According to them, the Church should not "force" by means of its orders or "threatening with everlasting hell" to participate in the mass on every Sunday and religious festival. The Church's approach to obligatory or "mandatory" participation in the mass irritates such respondents, especially men and male students, so they rebel against it and object to it, believing it to be completely unnecessary. It is worth mentioning

<sup>13</sup> S. H. Zaręba, *Dynamika świadomości religijno-moralnej młodzieży w warunkach przemian ustrojowych w Polsce: 1988-1998*, Warszawa 2003, pp. 24-28; J. Mariański, *Emigracja z Kościoła. Religijność młodzieży polskiej w warunkach zmian społecznych*, Lublin 2008, pp. 127-184.

<sup>14</sup> F. Boulard, *Premiers itinéraires en sociologie religieuse*, Paris 1954, pp. 19-20.

that when asked to respond to an additional question – what does the obligatory mass result from – God's order or the Church's order? – a significant percentage from 210 respondents failing to participate in Sunday mass, chose the order of the Church which they did not accept at all (174 = 82,9%), while other members of the group either did not point to this source (20 = 9,5%) or indicated God's order which they also rejected as unacceptable. (16 = 7.6%).

Slightly less than 3/4 of respondents (72.5%) participated in the obligatory Sunday mass, yet the frequency of the participation was significantly varied in the whole researched group, both in terms of their sex and type of their school. The highest percentage among those attending the holy mass did so systematically every Sunday (42.2%), with a larger number of women (45.4%) than men (38,0%), as well as a larger number of school students (52.2%) than higher school students (31.5%). Furthermore, 10.2 % of the respondents participated in the holy mass at least one a month, 9.6% – from 3 to 5 times a year, 5.1% – occasionally, 5.4% – once a year, 3.7% – provided no response. These frequencies were always dominated by women and high school students over men and college students, respectively. A dominating percentage of the respondents attending Sunday mass, justified their participation by God's order of the third commandment (76.5%) while others referred to Church order (20.1%). As many as 96.6% of the respondents participating in Sunday Mass, treated non-participation as a grave violation of their conscience or as "a violation of religious law" that orders to worship God, which as they themselves said constitutes unquestionable duty of each Catholic and Christian. Among various motives for the frequency of participation the most influential is the level of declared religious belief or disbelief of respondents. The biggest number of respondents participating in the mass included those deeply believing in God (90.7%) and traditional believers (71.3%), the percentage of the participants goes down significantly when it comes to those religiously indifferent (37.5%), doubtful (32.3%), declaring disbelief, yet having some bonds with Christian culture (6.4%). The higher level of the religious faith, the more frequently the respondents participated in Sunday mass, whereas weakened faith, all the more its fall, directly contributes to weakened attendance or non-attendance of such respondents in the mass – a Catholic's duty that they do not observe or fulfil selectively. On the other hand, it is clear that 19.0% of the believers did not attend Sunday mass, while 27.0% of the indifferent respondents fulfilled this duty with various frequency.

### **Sunday as a holy day devoted to the cult of God from the point of view of respondents**

What day is Sunday – a common day, like 6 weekdays preceding it that people including believers devote to their own lives, or perhaps it is an extraordinary day –

that is different and dissimilar to those common working days, so a day which people as individuals and social groups want to devote to a religious cult, to worship God and consequently spend and experience this day solemnly rather than prosaically – in a secular spirit? It was in that context that I asked respondents whether they believe that the third commandment of the Decalogue is still valid and binding for Christians and Catholics. Is the obligation to celebrate Sunday still observed? What is their attitude to sacral dimension of Sunday? Should any works and activities inconsistent with its sacral character be undertaken and performed on Sunday?

Table 2. Respondents' attitude to Sunday as a holy day and to ban on work on this day

Attitude to Sunday	Women		Men		School students		University students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Order to celebrate – possibility of its application										
Total	174	34.3	114	30.5	182	40.0	106	24.9	288	32.7
Partial	86	16.9	57	15.2	69	15.1	74	17.4	143	16.2
Impossible	188	37.0	158	42.2	146	32.0	200	46.9	346	39.2
Lack of opinion	39	7.7	26	7.0	36	7.9	29	6.8	65	7.4
Lack of data	21	4.1	19	5.1	23	5.0	17	4.0	40	4.5
In general	508	100.0	374	100.0	456	100.0	426	100.0	882	100.0
Being in gainful employment or doing non-essential house chores										
Permitted	130	57.3	118	64.1	102	56.0	146	63.8	248	60.3
Hard to evaluate	42	18.5	30	16.3	32	17.6	40	17.4	72	17.5
Prohibited	28	12.3	15	8.2	28	15.5	15	6.6	43	10.5
Lack of opinion	17	7.5	13	7.1	13	7.1	17	7.4	30	7.3
Lack of data	10	4.4	8	4.3	7	3.8	11	4.8	18	4.4
In general	227	100.0	184	100.0	182	100.0	229	100.0	411	100.0

Source: Own research.

Significant percentage of respondents (39.2%) unambiguously stated that these days, in the living conditions completely different in cultural and economic terms, the third commandment is no longer applicable, so it is ineffective in practice, which as they believe is illustrated by an increasing number of Catholics, especially young ones, who fail to attend Sunday mass, and who also do not treat Sunday as an exceptional day from a religious point of view, and much more frequently give it a typical secular or commercial character and use this day for personal or family matters and needs, also for shopping and relaxation. Therefore, they lack enough time for religious issues. Most respondents in this group (73.4%) clearly oppose or even rebel against the “official order” – as they remark – from priests and the Church that forces people to spend Sunday time religiously, for example through an obligatory participation in the mass and ban on trade. Critical attitude to the effectiveness of the biblical order to celebrate Sunday is more commonly expressed by men (42.2%) than women (37.0%), and more frequently by university students (46.9%) than high school students (32.0%).

On the other hand, it is clear, that nearly every second respondent (48%) believes that the order of the third commandment is still binding and is fully applied in a religious life of a Christian or a Catholic. For this reason, they believe Sunday should be treated as a sacred day devoted above all to a religious cult and worshipping God and not to doing one's own secular things. In this group, 32.7% of the respondents indicate a full efficiency of this commandment and 16.2% mention its partial efficiency, as it is dependent on the good will and life opportunities of people. The application and efficiency of this commandment was more positively assessed by women (51.2%) than men (45.7%), and more frequently by school students (55.1%) than university students (42.3%). Among positive assessments clearly dominates a belief in full efficiency and application of the order to celebrate Sunday (32.7%) rather than partial application (16.2%). Other respondents either abstained from any assessment (7.4%) or ignored the question (4.5%).

The surveys indicate that in the group of 411 respondents questioning the efficiency of the application of this commandment at present, as many as 60.3% believe it is fully permitted to be in any gainful employment or do non-essential house chores (doing the laundry or general house cleaning or shopping in malls), and this view is shared by a higher percentage of men (64.1%) than women (57.3%) and a higher percentage of university students (63.8%) than high school students (56.0%). Besides, 17.5% of respondents believe that performing such jobs and chores depends on various factors, yet it is not forbidden, and this view is accepted by more women (18.5%) than men (16.3%), and slightly more high school students (17.6%) than university students (16.7%). The remaining respondents either expressed no opinion on this matter (7.3%) or skipped the question (4.4%). In total, as many as 76.5% respondents, including 75.8% of women and 80.4% of men as well as 73.6% of high school students and 81.2% of university students support completely or partially being in gainful employment and non-essential house chores. Only every tenth respondent believed that Catholics should not do be in gainful employment and do house chores, which can be done on working days. They believe that taking up jobs on Sunday is in clear opposition to the Decalogue and Church's indications and thus they commit a mortal sin. The order to celebrate Sunday and prohibition to take up any paid jobs and do non-essential activities at home on this day is most often accepted by deeply believing respondents (89.7%), and believing in a traditional way (78.4%) and less frequently by those religiously indifferent (38.6%), doubtful (30.7%) and non-believers (11.3%). This way a higher percentage of non-believers and those variously separating from religion rather than believers undermine the efficiency of the third commandment at present and also advocate the freedom to be in gainful employment and do non-essential house chores on Sundays and Church holidays<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> A. Dylus, *Niedziela w epoce globalizacji gospodarki*, in: *Niedziela w społeczeństwie pluralistycznym*, Opole 2001, pp. 33-44.



## Respondents' participation in obligatory confession and Easter communion

The Catholic Church obliges its followers under the sanction of grave guilt to go to personal confession and communion at least once a year, especially in the Easter period. This duty obliges all Catholics who already went to first confession and communion and are not affected by any obstacle, which could prevent them from fulfilling this religious duty. Besides, an aware Catholic knows well, that the second commandment of the Church orders them "to go to confess their sin at least once a year" and the third one orders them "to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least once during the Easter Season". Practically, these two commandments of the Church indicate a certain religious minimum in a Christian's life, which should be personally obtained by them – confessing sins and going to Easter Communion.

At present, the confession – the sacrament of reconciliation – is undergoing a crisis for a number of reasons and it also concerns young people. Stanisław Zaręba's survey of 2003 conducted among high school and university students reveals that 67.8% of women, 53% of men, 66.7% of high school students, 58.5% of university students, 78.5% of rural dwellers, 76.3% dwellers from towns up to 20,000 inhabitants, 66.7% of dwellers from bigger towns and cities, 53.7% of Warsaw inhabitants went to Easter confession at that time<sup>16</sup>. I also included this issue in my own research and asked the respondents the following questions: Do you comply with the obligation of Easter confession and communion? Do you confess you sins at that time and what are the reasons?

Table 3. Participation of the respondents in Easter confession and communion

Declarations of respondents	Women		Men		School students		University students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Going to Easter confession										
Each year	200	39.4	123	32.9	189	41.4	134	31.6	323	36.6
More rarely	73	14.4	43	11.5	48	10.6	68	16.0	116	13.2
Does not confess	214	42.1	189	50.5	192	42.1	211	49.4	403	45.7
No data	21	4.1	19	5.1	27	5.9	13	3.0	40	4.5
Receiving Easter communion										
Each year	213	42.0	128	34.3	198	43.4	143	33.6	341	38.7
More rarely	79	15.6	57	15.2	62	13.6	74	17.4	136	15.4
Fails to receive	195	38.3	170	45.4	171	37.5	194	45.5	365	41.4
No data	21	4.1	19	5.1	25	5.5	15	3.5	40	4.5
In general	508	100.0	374	100.0	456	100.0	426	100.0	882	100.0

Source: Own research.

<sup>16</sup> S. H. Zaręba, *Oceny aksjologiczne młodzieży warszawskiej*, in: *Młodzież Warszawy – pokolenie pontyfikatu Jana Pawła II*, W. Zdaniewicz, S. H. Zaręba (eds.), Warszawa 2005, p. 62.

The research indicates that almost 2/5 of respondents declare they do not comply with Easter obligation for years (45.7%) with a larger number of men (50.5%) than women (42.1%), more university students (42.5%) than high school students (42.5%). On the other hand, it is clear that almost every second respondent (49.8%) goes to confession at that time, including 36.6% of the ones confessing every year, and 13.2% confessing with variable frequency. More women confess at Easter (53.8%) than men (44.4%), more school students (52.0%) than university students (47.6%). The research reveals that a higher percentage of students go to communion than to confession at Easter. While 49.8% of respondents went to confession at that time, the sacrament of Easter communion was received by 56.1%, which means that 45.7% did not confess and 41.4% did not receive the sacrament of communion on Easter Saturday for many years – as they themselves emphasised. Perhaps the 4.3% of respondents who did not confess at that time decided to receive the Holy Communion. All groups of respondents contain larger percentages who systematically confess at Easter, emphasising that they do so to fulfil the duty imposed by the Church. The factor that affects the respondents' participation in this duty at Easter is the level of their religious faith or lack of it.

It may be said that a significant number of the interviewed school students and university students refuse to fulfil compulsory religious practices, namely participating in Sunday and holiday mass as well as confessing and going to communion at Easter, at the same expressing their opposition to this obligation being imposed by the Church Law on all believers. Many of those respondents also object to this Church requirement, and their opposing view, sometimes a personal rebellion, is expressed through their responses. This opposing attitude is seen in 1/4 of respondents in reference to obligatory Sunday mass and in 1/2 of respondents in reference to the obligatory Easter confession and communion. Nevertheless, the approval of obligatory Sunday mass is seen in 3/4 of the interviewed community and the duty of Easter confession and Easter communion is accepted by only 49.3% and 54.1% of respondents, respectively. These both obligations are more frequently fulfilled by women and high school students rather than by men and university students, and still most frequently by devout respondents systematically fulfilling other religious practices. Religiously indifferent respondents find it difficult to comply with such obligations. They are of no importance for over 90% of non-believing respondents<sup>17</sup>.

## Optional private and public religious practices of respondents

Optional religious or devout religious practices are of a personal and voluntary character, and their fulfilment is not binding for Catholics under sanction of grave guilt penalty. Catholics carry out these practices spontaneously and voluntarily. Therefore,

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<sup>17</sup> J. Mariański, *Kondycja religijna i moralna młodych Polaków*, Kraków 1991, p. 35.

they function as “optional” practices in the institutional model of Catholic religiosity. That is also the reason why, as Gabriel Le Bras once wrote “The Church treats these practices as a manifestation of specific and more intensive religiosity”<sup>18</sup>, as they contribute to deepening bonds between humans and God, as well as religious bonds among the faithful in a parish and a catholic family. E. Pin emphasized in the 1960s, that technical society shows radically weakened frequency of fulfilling such religious practices, and a number of them even disappear from some local Churches, as no tradition can influence religious practices<sup>19</sup>. Sociologists of religion claim that the set of optional practices is quite wide and diversified, so they indicate devout religious practices performed individually and in public, all – church and regional ones, strictly religious and traditional or even social ones. Some of these practices have strictly national, local or environmental character. Therefore, I will focus here only on selected optional private and public practices fulfilled by my respondents in both groups and responding to two questions: What is the significance and what is the role of religious practices in your subjective and public religiosity?

### Personal prayer of respondents

Polish most popular and most common devout practise is an individual daily prayer that is “a common daily prayer” that some Catholics say daily – in the morning and in the evening, while some others say it once a day only – either in the morning or in the evening. That is why it is important to ask about the attitude that young Poles have to an individual prayer and family prayer, treated as a religious practice. Sociologists of religion claim young Poles pray individually less and less frequently, and this phenomenon has many grounds. Yet, secularization of daily life and dynamism of consumer attitudes or a secular way of life are indicated as major reasons for shrinking religious sphere of youngsters.<sup>20</sup>

The observations of other researchers of individual religiosity of young people make us ask about the attitude or approach of my respondents to personal and family prayer. Can they see the sense and need for this prayer in their life. How frequently do they say individual and personal prayers?

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<sup>18</sup> G. Le Bras, *La vitalité religieuse de l'Eglise de France*, “Revue d'Histoire de l'Eglise de France”, 1954, no. 2, pp. 277-278.

<sup>19</sup> E. Pin, *Pobudki religijne a przejście ku społeczeństwu technicznemu*, in: *Ludzie – Wiara – Kościół*, Warszawa 1966, p. 188.

<sup>20</sup> F. W. Wawro, *Postawy religijne młodzieży szkół średnich*, in: *Z badań nad religijnością polską. Studia i materiały*, W. Piwowarski, W. Zdaniewicz (eds.), Warszawa 1986, pp. 205-229; M. Dębski, *Przejawy “niewidzialnej religii” w religijności młodzieży akademickiej w województwie pomorskim*, „Socjologia Religii”, 2005, pp. 127-148; P. Curyłowski, *Religijność młodzieży ponad-gimnazjalnej (raport na podstawie badań socjologicznych we Włocławku)*, “Ate-neum Kapłańskie”, 2004, ed. 2-3, pp. 184-205.

Table 4. Attitude of respondents to an individual prayer

Declarations of respondents	Women		Men		School students		University students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sense and need for prayer in respondents' personal religiosity										
Permanently necessary	161	31.7	107	28.6	179	39.3	89	20.9	268	30.4
Occasionally necessary	120	23.6	88	23.6	82	18.0	126	29.6	208	23.6
Unnecessary	202	39.8	159	42.5	168	36.8	193	45.3	361	40.9
No data	25	4.9	20	5.3	27	5.9	18	4.2	45	5.1
Respondents' declaration of saying individual prayer										
Twice everyday	100	19.7	54	14.4	93	20.4	51	14.3	154	17.5
Only in the morning	42	8.3	25	6.8	45	9.9	22	5.2	67	7.6
Only in the evening	49	9.6	29	7.7	51	11.2	27	6.3	78	8.8
Only on Sunday	47	9.3	38	10.2	33	7.2	52	12.2	85	9.6
Occasionally	41	8.1	34	9.1	29	6.4	46	10.8	75	8.5
Does not pray	211	41.5	174	46.5	180	39.4	205	48.2	385	43.7
No data	18	3.5	20	5.3	25	5.5	13	3.0	38	4.3
In general	508	100.0	374	100.0	456	100.0	426	100.0	882	100.0

Source: Own research.

The research proves that respondents' opinions concerning the sense and reason for prayer in their personal lives are quite different and inconsistent with the expectations of their R. E. teachers or parish priests, and also with the doctrinal assumptions of the Church. It must be emphasised that more than 2/5 of the general number of respondents (40.9%) explicitly state that prayer does not play any role in their personal life and give it no meaning. A number of them added they felt no need to pray to God because they do not believe in any power or causative force of such a prayer. Still, some others are irritated by "uttering prayers repetitively" or "making" God or other saint persons provide us with good luck in life or in crucial living matters. Some respondents inform that they were brought up in a secular home, without religion so also with no prayers, so without "trying to obtain strange heavenly graces. For some others prayer is "something inappropriate" for young people as they are able to "handle their own problems". Yet, prayers could be of use for "elderly, sick and uncared people, unable to manage their life, thus believing that by means of prayer they may request some changes from God though this reasoning could be naïve and illusionary". All those respondents also object to the "persuasions" from the Church and priests to young people not to abandon praying. Among the respondents rejecting the need for prayer and questioning its sense in their own life, men (42.5%) dominate over women (39.8%) and university students (45.3%) outnumber school students (36.8%).

On the other hand, still a high percentage of respondents (54.0%) understand the sense and role of prayer in their religious and personal life. The assessment of the sense and role of prayer in personal life of respondents is not homogeneous – a slightly higher

percentage of respondents (30.4%) are always able to see this need, in every situation, as humans permanently need God's assistance. In turn, a lower percentage of respondents (23.6%) believe that prayer may be necessary only in some situations in life, in some mental and emotional conditions, and it is meaningful when an individual is authentically religious and believing, as it is then that they correctly understand its sense and believe in its effectiveness. They believe that in other circumstances humans may go without prayer, for example when they do not feel the need for praying or have no time for praying in a given situation. The need for prayers in both dimensions (permanently and occasionally) is recognized by a larger number of women (55.3%) than men (52.2%) and more by school students (57.3%) than university students (50.5%).

If such a huge number of respondents (40.9%) question the sense and need of prayer, considering it as unnecessary in their religiosity, and others oppose to making life success dependent on prayer the following question arises – how often do the respondents themselves pray? Table no. 3 provides the answer. Analysing the research results it provides, it is worth mentioning that more than 2/5 of respondents (43.7%) with more men (46.5%) than women (41.5%) and more university students (48.2%) than school students (39.4%) do not pray at all in that or any other way. Lack of prayer is differently explained by respondents, yet most often they indicated no interest in prayer.

The research shows that more than 50% of respondents (52.0%), including 55.0% of women and 48.2% of men as well as 55.1% of school students and 48.8% of university students, say an individual prayer, however its frequency is unstable and significantly diversified in each community group. Daily prayers are said by 33.9% of respondents, including 17.5% of those praying both in the evening and in the morning, while others pray either in the morning (7.6%) or in the evening (8.8%) Still others pray only on Sundays (9.6%) or occasionally, that is very rarely (8.5%). Everyday prayers are said more frequently by women (37.6%) than men (28.9%) and more frequently by school students (41.5%) than university students (25.8%). When it comes to both morning and evening prayers, school students pray the most (20.4%), followed by women (19.7%) and university students who pray more rarely (14.3%) and finally by school students (14.4%). The respondents justified their personal prayer by various motives. Among the factors encouraging respondents to pray individually, a more significant role is played by religious faith and its lack.

The number of believing respondents praying individually is three times higher than the number of those religiously indifferent, and the difference between the percentages amounts to 41.8% in favour of believers. Yet, religiously indifferent respondents and non-believers do not pray individually twice as often as believing respondents, and the difference between these numbers amounts to 39% in favour of non-believing or religiously indifferent people.

Mutual, family prayer is another type of private prayer said by all or most family members, most often under the guidance of pious parents, less frequently guided by grandmother or grandfather, and still less frequently by a younger family member. The

research by M. Kłoczowski and A. Sztylko conducted among young Polish intelligentsia in the 1990s proves that at that period 24.0% of the respondents participated in this prayer every day, 35.5% occasionally and 35% did not pray at all in this form, or even chose not to make the sign of cross twice a day<sup>21</sup>. In the light of these data a question may be asked how frequently mutual prayers are said mutually in the families of researched students, whether such prayers are said at all and whether they include the respondents themselves?

The research shows no mutual prayers were said in a large percentage of families of my respondents (43.1%) and such information is provided by 44.6% of men and 42% of women as well as 47% of university students and 39.5% of school students, who indicated various reasons for this phenomenon. The remaining percentage of families of my respondents (52.6%) pray mutually, yet this prayer is said with various frequency. Family prayer is indicated by 53.3% of surveyed women and 51.7% of surveyed men as well as by 54.6% of school students and 50.4% of university students. Only every eighth family prays that way every day (12%). A similar percentage of families (12.1%) indicated saying mutual prayer 2, 3 times a week, when time and circumstances were favourable. Then, per week, taking a daily prayer into consideration, mutual prayers were said only in every fourth family. Some Sundays and Church holidays saw mutual prayers said by 13.5% of families of the surveyed school and university students, while other families (15%) prayed mutually only occasionally, when "forced" to such prayers by important events and vital needs.

During the research respondents were also asked if they themselves actively participated in mutual family prayer. Their answers reveal that not all engaged themselves in this form of prayer, and the percentage of those who did not take part in the prayer was similar to the number of those claiming that they do not say prayers together in their families (43.1% against 45.9%). This means that nearly half of the surveyed community of respondents did not participate in a mutual family prayer, and this figure concerns 43.5% of women and 49.2% of men (an increase by 5.7%) and also 38.2% of high school students and 54.9% of university students (an increase by 16.7%). The respondents justified their failure to pray mutually providing various reasons.

### **Respondents' participation in the holy mass on working days**

A Catholic's participation in the holy mass on working days means their personal religious commitment. This element is of crucial importance in young people's religiosity. This issue was also considered by me in my own research and I asked the respondents whether and how often they attended the holy mass in a working week.

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<sup>21</sup> M. Kłoczowski, A. Sztylka, *Świadomość społeczna młodej inteligencji*, Warszawa 1989, pp. 98-100.

Table 5. Respondents' participation in holy mass on working days according to their declarations

Holy mass on working days	Women		Men		School students		University students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Every day	53	10.4	35	9.5	56	12.3	32	7.6	88	10.0
2-3 times a week	25	5.0	10	2.7	25	5.5	10	2.3	35	4.0
Once a week	32	6.3	29	6.4	35	7.7	26	6.1	61	6.9
Once a month	18	3.5	10	2.8	19	4.2	9	2.1	28	3.2
Non-attendance	356	70.1	274	73.3	294	64.4	336	78.9	630	71.4
No data	24	4.7	16	4.3	27	5.9	13	3.0	40	4.5
In general	508	100.0	374	100.0	456	100.0	426	100.0	882	100.0

Source: own research.

The research proves that a significant percentage of respondents (71.4%) do not participate in holy mass on working days, and this refers to 70.1% of women and 73.3% of men as well as 64.4% of school students and 78.9% of university students, all of whom variously justify their absence. These as well as other similar responses clearly demonstrate a negative and critical attitude of respondents as well as their lack of will to participate in the holy mass on working days. The holy mass on working days is of no interest to them and they prefer to spend this time doing different activities and pursuing other objectives. For some respondents, it is enough to occasionally attend the holy mass, yet they would willingly abandon it, realizing that they would "free themselves" from fulfilling this religious duty. Consequently, only a small percentage of respondents in each group attend the holy mass on working days – it is done by 24.1% of respondents in total, with 25.2% of women and 21.4% of men as well as 29.7% of school students and 18.1% of university students. However, the frequency of this participation is significantly diversified – 10% of respondents attend holy mass every day, others do so on some weekdays. They explain their own religious and cultic dedication by means of various motives, that prove those young people just like the others from this group participate in optional holy masses on working days due to religious and spiritual reasons, wishing to enrich their own religiosity, as otherwise they would not decide to do so, taking into consideration other interesting ways of spending their free time.

### **Respondents' participation in confession and communion during the liturgical year**

A dominating percentage of Polish Catholics, including the youth, go only to Easter confession and it is then that they receive communion along with other participants of a religious service. What interested me in my research, was the question – what is the percentage of high school students and university students going to confession and receiving communion more than once a year in the Easter season?

The research shows that 46.0% of respondents claim they never confessed over the year, with more men (50.3%) than women (42.9%) as well as more university students (52.3%) than high school students (40.1%). The respondents abandoning confession and communion in the year justified their absence resorting to various grounds. At the same time the research shows that 48.3% of respondents go to confession over the year (apart from Easter confession), yet it is done with different frequency. 51.8% of women and 43.6% of men as well as 54.2% of school students and 42.6% of university students confess within those time limits. Systematic, monthly confession is confirmed by 13.4% of respondents, with majority of them confessing on the first Friday of each month. Other respondents confess at the following intervals: once a quarter (11.2%), every six months (11.6%), once a year at any time (12.1%). More frequent confession is justified by respondents through various motives. Deep believers are the ones who confess most often.

Over 2/5 of respondents never received communion at that time (40.8%) with a slightly higher number of men than women (a difference of 7.1%) and more university students than school students (a difference of 9.1%). They explained their absence providing different reasons. However, 53.5% receive communion over the year, albeit they do so with various frequency, with 56.9% of women and 49% of men as well as 57.9% of high school students and 48.9% of university students. Every tenth respondent in each group receives communion every day or once a week – on a working day or on Sunday. 11% of respondents receive communion once a year, and every twelfth respondent does it once a quarter, 18.2% receive it once a year, at any time. Self – communion practice over the year is variously explained by respondents. Deep believers practice it most often, other believers do it less frequently.

### **Index of selected religious practices carried out by the surveyed youth**

The index means herein a determined measure of a specific phenomenon placed at a given period of time, indicating the level of its dynamics in adopted conditions. Creating an index is a strictly statistical operation that allows to gather indispensable indicators and at the same time give them a proper value. Creating an index of religious practices carried out by surveyed high school and university students, I took into consideration only four basic practices – Sunday mass, Easter confession and an additional confession over the year, communion over the year and a personal prayer over the week. I consciously assign numerical values to these four practices to be able to establish how intensively they are carried out by researched school and university students. I overlooked other religious practices while creating the index as they are of lesser importance for respondents' religiosity.



Table 6. Indexation of selected religious practices of researched high school and university students

Type of religious practices	Time of carrying out the practices	Frequency of carrying out the practices	Values in the index according to point system
Sunday mass	Over a month	1 – 2 times	2
		3 – 4 times	3
		4 and more times	4
		Non-participation	0
		No data	0
Holy confession	Over the year	1 – 3 times	2
		4 – 8 times	3
		9 times and more often	4
		Non-participation	0
		No data	0
Holy communion	Over the year	1 – 3 times	2
		4 – 8 times	3
		9 times and more often	4
		Non-participation	0
		No data	0
Individual prayer	Over the week	1 – 4 times	1
		5 – 5 times	2
		8 times and more often	3
		Every day	4
		Does not pray	0
		No data	0

Source: own research.

Table 7. Typology of respondents' religiosity recognized on the basis of carrying out religious practices by them: regularly practising believers – 25.5%; zealously practising believers – 19.6%, irregularly practising believers – 11.9%

Frequency of practising	Women		Men		School students		University students		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Zealously	104	20.6	69	18.4	105	23.0	68	16.0	173	19.6
Regularly	146	28.7	79	21.1	127	27.8	98	23.0	225	25.5
Irregularly	55	10.8	50	13.4	45	10.0	60	14.0	105	11.9
Non-practising	184	36.2	157	42.0	158	34.6	183	43.0	341	38.7
No data	19	3.7	19	5.1	21	4.6	17	4.0	38	4.3
In general	508	100.0	374	100.0	456	100.0	426	100.0	882	100.0

Source: own research.

Summing – up the four religious practices taken into account, we assume that a respondent may obtain from 0 to maximum 16 points. Dividing these points by four will make it possible to create a typology of religiosity of the researched respondents which will comprise four basic categories: 1) zealously practising believers – from 13 to 16 points (173 individuals); 2) regularly practising believers – 9 to points (225 individuals);

irregularly practising believers 5 – 8 points (105% individuals); 4) the non-practising – 0-4 points (341 individuals).

The indicators presented in table 7 provide information about three essential issues: a) dominating percentage of respondents (57%) carry out four included religious practices; b) the performance of the practices is not uniform, as the three different groups emerge from the respondents: regularly practising believers – 25.5%; zealously practising believers – 19.6%, irregularly practising believers – 11.9%; c) on the other hand, it is clear that a huge percentage of respondents did not carry out these practices or grossly neglected carrying them out – 38.7%.

Independent variables significantly affect the indicators of carrying out and refraining from these practices. More women than men carry out these practices zealously (a 2.2 pp difference) and more systematically (a 7.6 pp difference), they are also carried out in these both dimensions more by high school students than university students (7 and 4.8 pp, respectively). Still, a larger number of men and university students than women and school students carry out these practices irregularly (a 2.6 and 4 pp difference respectively). They, more than women and school students, did not carry these practices at all (a 5.8pp and 8.4pp difference, respectively). Special attention is brought to a larger percentage of respondents in each group, that is those who did not carry out these religious practices, as it amounts to 2/5 of the researched community. This percentage dominates over all categories of the practising, by 19.1 pp over zealously practising believers, by 13.2 pp over regularly practising believers, and by 26.8 pp over irregularly practising believers, though, the indicator of those not carrying out those practices is lower by 18.3 pp from the total indicator of those who carry them out (57%).

In sociological terms, religious practices may be researched by means of the so called “continuum” method which facilitates determination of the level of intensity of a specified feature or the emergence of a phenomenon, besides, it also helps to define the direction of its development. In my survey, I approach religious practices of school and university students at both ends of this continuum – from a very zealous performance of such practices to their “negligence” and total “non-practising”. For this purpose, I consider previously determined indicators in a dichotomous way – those practising zealously and regularly as well as practising irregularly and non-practising. The application of the method correlating the phenomenon with adopted independent variables shows the proportion of those “more” religious to “less religious”. This quotient provides the answer to the question which of the respondents carried out these religious practices more and which ones did it less intensively? The correlation lets it establish a mutual relation between the two variables, and changing the value of one correlated variable translates into changing the other variable<sup>22</sup>. The correlation between the variables may have a triple consequence: positive, and then the increase in the value of one variable means a growth of value of the other variable; negative, and then the growth

<sup>22</sup> H. M. Blalock, *Statystyka dla socjologów*, J. Tabin, J. Topińska, H. Stonzec (trans.), Warszawa, pp. 304-306.

of value of one valuable translates into decline in the value of the other variable; superficial, and then no interdependency occurs between the variables<sup>23</sup>. In other words, the correlation table shows the distribution of the quantities, their scales and interdependencies<sup>24</sup>.

Table 8. Religious practices of respondents in correlation with their social features (in %)

Social features of respondents	Number of surveyed respondents	Carrying out religious practices		Quotient More – less
		Zealously	Weakly and no practising	
Sex of respondents				
Women	508	54.6	43.2	1.26
Men	374	46.5	50.4	0.92
Type of school				
High / secondary	456	50.8	44.6	1.13
Higher	426	43.6	53.6	0.81
Place of residence				
Countryside	180	74.3	23.7	3.13
Little town	231	64.8	33.2	1.95
Big town	261	54.5	43.6	1.25
City	200	50.8	46.7	1.08
Type of family				
Integrated	636	67.4	30.7	2.19
Broken	158	51.3	45.6	1.12
Single parent	76	59.8	37.4	1.60
Social background				
Peasant	191	69.4	28.2	2.46
Working	208	56.3	40.7	1.38
Craft business	95	52.6	44.3	1.19
Intelligentsia	330	48.8	49.6	0.98
Mixed	46	54.6	42.4	1.07
Level of religious faith				
Deep	125	80.5	16.5	4.88
Traditional	365	69.8	26.7	2.61
Religiously indifferent	266	38.3	57.7	0.66
Non-believers	126	11.4	82.6	0.14
In general	882	54.1	42.6	1.27

Source: own research.

Indicators presented in table 8 reveal that the researched community of high school and university students is mostly composed of “better” practising people (along with “zealously practising ones”), yet respondents practising “irregularly” and “non-practising” are a minority (the difference between these two groups amounts to 11.5 percentage points in favour of the practising). The quotient amounting to 1.26 means

<sup>23</sup> N. Goodman, *Wstęp do socjologii*, J. Polak, J. Ruskowski, U. Zielińska (trans.), Poznań 1997, pp. 401-402.

<sup>24</sup> Z. Rogoziński, *Z metodyki statystycznej badań społecznych*, Łódź 1955, pp. 53.

here an average norm of carrying out religious practices by respondents in these two groups. The respondents whose quotient is larger than the average carry out religious practices zealously and systematically. However, the respondents whose quotient is smaller (lower) than the average, carry out religious practices non-systematically or even ceased to carry them out at the researched period. These people, on principle, present atheist or religiously indifferent attitude.

Analysing the indicators of correlation between subsequent independent variables presented in table 8 with the declarations of respondents concerning their performance of religious practices, we can observe that the indicators of cultic involvement of the researched are diversified. The largest indicator of carrying out these practices is observed in deeply believing respondents (4.88) and rural people (3.13). High indicators of these practices were also obtained by respondents believing traditionally (2.61), respondents from peasant families (2.46) and from integrated families (2.19) – scoring above average. On the other hand, the frequency of practises of men (0.92), students (0.81), respondents from intelligentsia families (0.98), religiously indifferent individuals (0.66), high school students (1.13) and especially of non-believers (0.14) is below average. Presented circumstances did not encourage carrying out religious practices systematically in communities of researched high school and university students<sup>25</sup>.

## Ending

While recapitulating the problems and issues presented in this paper, constituting only a short fragment of a sociological monograph, it must be emphasised that religious practices of all types of the researched young people were analysed by me solely on the grounds of their declarations accessible to sociologists. The research shows that the general level and frequency of carrying out obligatory and optional religious practices by my respondents deviates significantly from doctrinal expectations and requirements of the Church. Even though recurring obligatory practices are carried out systematically by a large percentage of respondents, especially among high school students, nevertheless, much higher is the percentage of the ones who carry them out unsystematically and infrequently or even occasionally. Unfortunately, a very high percentage of the researched women and men, school and university students do not carry out these practices at all. These respondents do not attach any importance to a religious cult related to those practices and rites, at the same time they oppose to the duty to carry them out and rebel against Church's decision ordering to carry them out – thus contesting this decision entirely. Still, the level of carrying out optional practices is very low – prevailing percentage of respondents in each community group do not perform them at all. Others

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<sup>25</sup> W. Wesoły, *Formacja i świadomość misyjna katechizowanej młodzieży. Studium socjologiczno-pastoralne*, Olsztyn 2005, p. 259.

have no knowledge of some religious rituals and rites, they were surprised to learn such practices are still celebrated in the Church. Still, others claim that these practices do not fit into the spirit of contemporary times, into contemporary living conditions, and the Church should remove them from its own liturgy. Only a majority of deeply believing respondents and a certain percentage of believing traditionally carry out these practices systematically, fully comprehending their sense and meaning. These people attribute a very important role to such religious rites and practices in their religious and personal life. Personal and social traits of the respondents substantially affect the level of performance of religious practices, yet, only global professions of faith and a personal bond with the institutional Church affect most deeply and most intensively the religious commitment of the respondents in each of their community groups. Statistical indicators applied in the research confirm this dependency.

*Józef Baniak* – THE ACTIVITY OF RELIGIOUS-CULT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN POLAND. BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND DECEPTION

This article presents the results of research of levels of participation in mandatory religious practices (Sunday Mass, confession and Easter Holy Communion) as well as voluntary practices like Holy Mass on weekdays and other religious celebrations. The research has been executed among the high school students in a city of Kalisz (456) and students in a city of Poznań (426). Studies have shown Sunday Mass is regularly attended by 42.2% of respondents, irregularly by 19.8% and occasionally by 10.5%. Holy Mass regular attendees include 74.5% of deeply religious people, 58.4% of religious ones and 27.0% of being religiously neutral. On the other hand, 23.8% of respondents did not attend Sunday Mass, and among them the religiously indifferent people (67.6%) dominate over the believers (19.0%). Holy Confession and Easter Holy Communion are participated in each year by 36.6% respondents and less frequently by 13.2% of respondents. This practice was met by 70.2% of highly religious and 23.2% of religiously neutral respondents. On the other hand, this practice was not met by the 45.7% of respondents, including 70.4% of religiously neutral and 25.1% of believers. Respondents also presented their own attitude to the sacral aspects of the Sunday: 48.9% believe that Sunday is a holy day, and 46.6% considered it a normal working day, or as a leisure day. Respondents also declared their participation in the Holy Mass on weekdays - 24.1% did, and 71.4% did not participate. In addition, 52.0% stated that they pray during the week, including 33.9% doing so on every day and 18.1% less frequently, while 43.7% claimed not to pray at all. Throughout a year up to 48.3% respondents used Holy Confession and participated in the Holy Communion (53.5%), while 40.6% and 40.8% did not meet those religious practices. Concluding, the religious activity of high school students and students is very diverse and is more likely to be on average level, what appears to be far from what it is expected by the Catholic Church.