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JUSTIFICATION OF MARY IN THE LIGHT
OF „JOINT DECLARATION ON JUSTIFICATION”

The justification was and still is a basic criterion of Lutheran belief and to that extent that Lutheranism gave the doctrine on justification a matter of the utmost importance – as M. Luther wanted – of first and main paper¹, in order finally in confession Lutheranism to be broadly recognized (after Valentin Löscher)² as *articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae* – the paper, from which depends “to be or not to be” of the Church. It is no wonder that first ecumenical conversations were concentrated especially on the most serious obstacles, making difficult a road to visible communion of the Church. The ecumenical dialogue from one hand brings already concrete fruits, a proof of which is signed *Joint Declaration on Justification*³, and from the other side it fills with hope that there will be possible to overcome next difficulties on the way to the unity. In any case the *Declaration*

¹ *Artykuły Szmalkadzkie*. In: *Księgi Wyznaniowe Kościoła Luterskiego*. Bielsko-Biała 1999 p. 338.

² H. G. PÖHLMANN. *Abriss der Dogmatik. Ein Kompendium, Fünfte, verbesserte und erweiterte Auflage*. Gütersloh 1990 p. 267.

³ ŚWIATOWA FEDERACJA LUTERAŃSKA I PAPIESKA RADA DS. JEDNOŚCI CHRZEŚCIJAN. *Wspólna deklaracja w sprawie nauki o usprawiedliwieniu* (WD). In: *Zbawienie w Roku Jubileuszowym*. Red. Z. J. Kijas. Kraków 2000 p. 139-168 [hereinafter: *Joint Declaration on Justification*].

itself gives voice to, when mentioning the problem ranges that should be taken by further dialogue. „There are issues of various significance which require further to be explained: they regards among others to relations of God’s Word and church science, its authority, its unity, department and sacraments, at long last relations between justification and social ethics”⁴. In this context you may notice that Mariology, as a such is not crucial truth of faith in none of Christian religion, therefore it did not become originally a separate topic in the ecumenical dialogue⁵.

A purpose of this paper is making a reception of *Joint Declaration* on the ground of catholic Mariology. The reception itself will not be restricted to resembling of judgements of the councils and synods, because it would be too narrow understanding of the problem. The reception will be showed as vital process which is persistently made within a sphere of faith, as it is reality indigenously *ecclesiae*, always present in a life of believers⁶. It goes deeper and further than acceptance of council

⁴ WD 43.

⁵ A. A. NAPIÓRKOWSKI. *Mariologia w dialogu katolicko-protestanckim*. „Salvatoris Mater” 3:2001 no. 4 p. 92.

⁶ Connections of reception with unity of Church are seen from the very beginning. Individual local or regional Churches by mutual reception contributed to preservation and vitality of not divided Church yet. Moreover, in reference with early councils the reception co-decided about content of judgments, about their truth and false. During a period of before Constantinian time there was already a custom according to it reliable judgments of the council of one local Church were recognized and accepted by other Churches. As an exam le may be the council in Antiochene of 268. It was a certain kind of direct reception from side of Churches which directly did not take part in making decisions, and however recognized it as own and followed its requirements in practice. In history of early Christianity are also known the facts of critical taking position on council and synod judgments. It was leading either to their party modification or to complete calling into question and lack of reception (e.g. synod in 449). In critical reception could be crystallized individual topics of significant importance for science and life of the Church. They are formed, shaped consciousness of the believers in given period of time and gave it specific character. We should also mention authoritative recognition of given judgment as a expression of faith of whole Church. Then a dogma became an expression of authoritative reception. Reception process that took place especially after great councils of early Church, was characterized by many tensions, struggles and conflicts. After great councils, chrystological

judgements or ordinary teaching of Church. It exceeds the religion borders and „creates a certain community of inter – religion interpretation and communication, that plays an important role between divided Churches. They are requirement of life itself of believers and sense of faith entitled them”⁷. The reception understood in this way will be a reflection of readiness to recognize right of other Christian and Churches to own autonomy. This is why, that the right is admitted to others, one may in turn to take over from a partner of dialogue these values, that he represents within the sphere of faith, life and theology. Ecumenical understanding of the reception assumes that individual religion traditions are concrete expression of realization of Church and vitality of Christian faith⁸. Variety of those traditions became in the past a reason of division of the Church. A task of reception is lead back to integration of religion traditions, getting out of them crucial and lasting values which will contribute to making rich of other Christian. This paper wishes to encourage to look for new ways, that would lead to visible unity of the Church of Jesus Christ.

and trinitarian ones, were still carrying on fierce discussions and controversies. After council in Nicea (325) disputes around the term *homousios* were still carried on for tens years. Followers and opponents were still defended their reasons, not considering that the matter has been definitely finished. Only after Constantinian Council I (381) a dogma about co-essentiality of Logos and father gained general recognition and was definitely accepted.

Analogous situation was after council of Chalcedonian in years of 451-518 when fate of the judgment seemed to be still not settled, and after Constantinople Council II (553). The latter was held under pressure of Cesar Justynian was accepted by Rome only after arduous process of interpretation. We are dealing with process of critical and long term reception of the judgments of the council. The council reception phenomenon however does not belong to distant past. The reception is a permanent element of each council or synod in life of the Church. W. HRYNIEWICZ, *Proces recepcji prawdy w Kościele. Jego znaczenie hermeneutyczne i ekumeniczne*. „Collectanea Theologica 45:1975 fasc. II p. 19-34.

⁷ W. HRYNIEWICZ, *Recepcja jako problem ekumeniczny*. In: *Recepcja – nowe zadanie ekumenizmu*. Red. W. Hryniewicz, L. Górka. Lublin 1985 p. 18.

⁸ Com. *Sposoby wprowadzania w życie recepcji. Perspektywy w dziedzinie recepcji dokumentów powstałych w wyniku międzynarodowego dialogu luterkańsko-katolickiego*. „Studia i Dokumenty Ekumeniczne” 9:1993 no. 2 p. 79-85.

Although the *Declaration* does not speak directly about the role of Mary in work of justification, but touches topics, which regards to Immaculate Conception. *Joint Declaration* at least in three places touches the dogma of 1845. It does it when discussing the problems: of justification, sanctification and an issue of merits. Relating to the Virgin Mary aspect of *iustificatio* is very interesting and necessary in the ecumenical dialogue. Furthermore, science on justification included in *Declaration* should correct, and even control catholic Mariology. In order not to speculate about something what has not been written in Declaration one should point at the tasks that results from it for theological understanding of Immaculate Conception dogma in justification.

Teaching of catholic Church on the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary is a subject of solemn definition and obtained a status of „science manifested by God”⁹. Pius IX in comment attached to the dogmatic definition, emphasizes continuity of this dogma In faith of the Church, of such as was expressed in the holy liturgical books and in teaching of Fathers or some Popes. Moreover, he refers to several biblical texts (Gen 3, 15, Lu 1, 28 & 1, 42), it does not represent directly based on the Bible. When we look at the definition, we shall notice that as a master of fact, it does not use a formula „Immaculate Conception”. It also does not precise what does mean „first moment” of conception; but states in return that the Virgin Mary from this „first moment” has been protected against a sin.

It seems to me that would be necessary to look for better, i.e. biblical concept that could replace the term „Immaculate Conception”. Surely, such concept is justification understood as a result of redemption, made by Jesus Christ, thanks to it, justice of original creation has been restored to the man.

⁹ PIUS IX. Bulla *Ineffabilis Deus*. DzS 2803 [BF VI, 89].

Virgin Mary, like other people, coming from sinful house of Adam, needed to be justified, needed share in fullness of grace, that God gave to world in his Incorporated Son. Virgin Mary obtained a grace of redemption and justification – in exceptional way. Trying to read as much as exactly reality of Mary's justification, let's refer to bull *Ineffabilis Deus* of Pius IX, dogmatizing the truth on Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. It is said there about one and the same decree of everlasting choice and destination of God's Son and Mary in the secret of Incarnation. God predicting for ages survived Incarnation of his Son, predicted also, selected and assigned Mary for His Mother¹⁰. Considering her maternity, she came in the only and perfect way into contact with Christ. Hence, German theologian A. Müller rightly observes that decree of God's selection and assignment Mary for the Redeemer's Mother is at the same time decree of redemption of Mary¹¹. On this way Mary has been suspiciously justified. So, first considering a function that Father has predicted in the plan of salvation. Mary is also first taking advantage from a grace of justification. This everlasting assignment of Mary for a Mother of the Redeemer decided about it that Mary became first person taking advantage from of a grace of justification, and that her Son gave his Mother those mercies to a larger degree than any others¹². It also had an influence on the way of justification of Mary. Mary has been justified suspiciously in exceptional way, suitable only for her.

In positive dimension of justification a special attention is paid to a role of Holy Spirit who always is present in the Church,

¹⁰ Com. A. ALFARO. *Cristologia e antropologia*. Assisi 1973 p. 221-244; S. LYONNET. *L'association et la mariologie biblique*. In: *Maria in Sacra Scriptura*. Vol. VI. Romae 1987 p. 84; R. LAURENTIN. *Court Traité sur la Vierge Marie*. Paris 1988 p. 25.

¹¹ A. MÜLLER. *Marias Stellung und Mitwirkung in Christusereignis*. „Mysterium Salutis“. Vol. 312 p. 425-427.

¹² L. MELOTTI. *Maria e la sua missione materna. Saggio di teologia mariana*. Torino 1976 p. 96.

Corpus Christi and Temple of Holy Spirit. Therefore successful reception of *Declaration* requires clearer emphasizing in the catholic theology positive effect of justification what is residence of Holy Spirit in Mary. This residence is a synonym of sanctification. A Spirit prepares people, anticipates them by his grace, in order to attract them to Christ. He showed to believers Lord rose from the dead, recalls them the words and opens their minds for understanding His death and redemption the Resurrection thanks to it the man has been justified. This is Holy Spirit presents to believers mystery of Christ, especially in the Eucharist in order to reconcile them with the God and to lead to communion with Him, to bring „abundant fruit” (J 15, 5. 8. 16). Properly it was expressed by St. Great Basil, when wrote: „If we are in communion with Holy Spirit, that is He gives us return to paradise, opens us the gates of heaven and makes us adoptive God’s children. Thanks to Him we can trustingly call God as our Father. He gives us participation in Christ’s grace and makes that we become sons of lightness. He is also the making of future glory”¹³.

One should not forget about sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit in the dogma on Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. Dogmatic theology presenting its science states that science on Immaculate Conception do not call into question an assignment of Mary to state common to each creature, called to salvation: on the contrary shows that also Mary has been „redeemed”, being protected against the original sin. But the catholic assume that she used this graciousness „from her conception” and in that point it is disclosed discrepancy with the protestants. At the same time the catholic recognize a variety of motivation that led to define a dogma: either it has been emphasized that Corpus Christi (*corps*) couldn’t born from body (*chair*), marked

¹³ ŚW. BAZYLI WIELKI. *Liber de Spiritu Sancto*. 15, 36: PG 32, 132.

by sin, or Immaculate Conception has been comprehended as a sign of holiness that granted to Mary free of charge and made her a woman „filled by grace” (com. Lu 1, 28), would allow her on some day to say *fiat* at Annunciation. This second argumentation is itself more satisfactory and it seems to be more promising in prospect of the dialogue. Just like Assumption of Mary means fulfillment of the salvation, that God gives to all people¹⁴, the same her Immaculate Conception means bringing into holiness to which God calls all the justified.

Making reception of *Declaration*, modern Mariology should put much more emphasis on more and more powerful stress of presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the secret of suspicious justification of Mary in secret of the Immaculate Conception. It is obvious, since action of the Holy Spirit is an element of the redeemed decree, and also realization of whole redeemed economics¹⁵. Gospels mention clearly about Holy Spirit and His action in relation to Mary in scene of Annunciation, in connection with secret of Incarnation of God’s Son. Virgin Mary becomes God’s Mother due to action of the Holy Spirit in her: „The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power the Most High will over shadow you” (Luke 1, 35). However, a gift of Holy Spirit at the moment of Incarnation, that allowed Mary in the secret of her God’s maternity accept God’s Son, has been preceded by the gift of Holy Spirit that shaped and formed her as a new creature¹⁶. If each justification – as observed by D. Bertetto – assumes invisible mission of the Holy Spirit (com. Ga 4, 6), that is the more particular, more lofty justification of Mary¹⁷. Therefore one may rightly say that „**God’s Spirit prepared the Virgin from the beginning of her existence in order to**

¹⁴ Com. GRUPA Z DOMBES. *Maryja w Bożym planie*. No. 264-265.

¹⁵ Com. H. MÜHLEN. *L’Esprit dans l’Eglise*. Vol. II. Paris 1969 p. 185.

¹⁶ Com. KK 56.

¹⁷ D. BERTETTO. *Lo Spirito Santo e Santificatore*. Roma 1977 p. 270-271.

ensure her perfect friendship with God; which was called finally by dogmatic as the Immaculate Conception”¹⁸. By direct action of Christ’s Spirit, the Virgin Mary obtained all those gifts and graces, which other people receive by sacraments, especially through the baptism sacrament.

Summing up we can say that the Holy Spirit should be seen as „source reality in the light of that we understand our salvation situation”¹⁹. Moreover, He is that who continuing justifying work of Christ, passes on the Church, and through it to people of all times a grace, which justify and idolize a man. At last, the Holy Spirit being in just man forms together with him one mystic person. Thus, He became a base of forming in the world unity, being an anticipation of the eschatological unity.

Positive implication of the *Joint Declaration* would be avoiding of term „merit” by modern catholic theology. If, by „merit” we understand legal claim (assuming equality of achievement and reward), so In today’s dogmatic such idea is not a category to be suitable to explain the salvation event. The catholic Church absolutely exclude a possibility to bring credit of salvation by own efforts²⁰. It refers both to preparation stage to the justification and a time after it.

The term „merit” should be avoided in the catholic theology, both for historical reasons and the essential ones. That is for sure historically that this term does not belong to a group of biblical ideas. It has been introduced to theology in III century and became in time the sense of legal claim or just merchant transaction. Finally, it was referred to explanation of relations between God and a man just in a meaning of close amount due or merchant transactions.

¹⁸ G. PHILIPS, *Marie dans le plan du salut*. „Cahiers marials” 16:1972 p. 89.

¹⁹ L. BOFF, *La gratia come liberatione*. Roma 1985 p. 271.

²⁰ Com. WD 19.

Avoiding of the term „merit” seems to be also justified by essential reasons. This idea can not adequately express a relation between the God and the man. Firstly, the man must not put against God any claims on the justice; that is out of the question here about any „compensation”, because as a creature, a man is fully dependent from God and depended on His grace. Secondly, in the salvation event a compensation between the man’s achievement and the reward is impossible; as the creature he may have only restricted achievements, while promised us the everlasting life is free of any restrictions²¹.

The sinful man is in a state from which, he is not able to get out himself at all. He can not live it on his own. Without help of Christ he is not able to return to live at peace with God, to go into state of grace²². Thus, in preparation to the justification that is out of the question about any merit. Because, in the preparation to justification the thing is a way on which the adults reaching the justification, abstract scholastic concept of „instructions to grace” can not express this dynamic event. Therefore, the term „preparation to grace” should be replaced by the biblical terms meaning the beginning of life relation between God and a man.

The people after Adam’s sin having lost the friendship with God can not live in their spiritual fullness, if they do not bring back to life in the Christ, that is: if they do not become justified. On the other hand, they are not able themselves to do anything for their justification, if Christ’s grace does not meet them half way. Preparation to the justification that is according to the Holy a seeking, readiness of the heart, conversion of whole heart, a fundamental decision. This preparation to the justification should be considered in the context of grace to freedom. In each salvation event an initiative belongs exclusively and fully to the

²¹ Drawn attention by G. KRAUS. *Nauka o łasce – zbawienie jako łaska. Podręcznik teologii dogmatycznej*. Kraków 1999 p. 252.

²² M. FLICK, Z. ALSZEGHY. *Il Vangelo della Grazia. Trattato dogmatico*. Firenze 1967 p. 197.

God's grace. This grace, however, does not destroy autonomous action of the human freedom. And, there is similarly with the preparation to the justification. Within fully undeserved, free of charge action the God initiates a process of preparation and supports it. While, a man voluntarily is opening himself and follows along a way of the preparation. Within this whole preparation process to the justification a life exchange is made: of full of love God's summon, response of human love; coming of the God to the man and return of the man to the God God's calling and human decision of acceptance of God. It is good illustrated in the *Parable of prodigal son* (Luke 15, 11-32). Younger of brothers who has wasted his part of fortune living in foreign land in extravagant way, in a moment when he fell into poverty decided to come back to his father. He was going to confess to his offences and to ask father In order he accept him not as a son, but as a hired hand. He made immediately his decision. Father, who saw him coming back, welcomed him. He did not allow him to say even prepared words, but ordered to dress him quickly and prepare the feast. Coming back from the field older brother heard that there is a party at home, and servant told him about its reason. So, he got angry and he did not want to come in. He was convinced just only by explanation that he is always at home together with father, and now one should enjoy because his brother „was dead, and came to life”. This parable illustrates in a certain way the catholic – Lutheran dispute on the merits. Older brother thinks like catholic: his younger brother did not deserve reward, because he lived in obscene way. He did not perform good deeds. His father thinks like „protestant” accepts son regardless of deeds. Father's love to younger son is deep and forgiving any offences. Analogous thought is also showed in biblical parable on workers in the vineyard (Mt 20, 1-16). Over there the workers also revolted against the host for the sake of his „unjust” generosity. All obtained the same regardless of their own merits.

Principle of free grace is also showed in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Virgin Mary. The Mary as distinct from all other people is a human starting her life on the earth in a state of justification grace. She has been created in the grace. Thus, you can state after A. Müller that „**Mary was born without the original sin** because under her maternal participation in the Christ’s humanity she is in close meaning that who is full of grace (...). God’s maternity thus was salvation sanctification for the Mary. Mary would have also entered into the state of the original sin, if the Christ’s salvation merits had not protected her previously. And just this protection from the original «sin» – states the German theologian – is «more lofty way» of Mary’s salvation”²³. Previous justification of the Mary and her initial holiness was not Her merit. God made Her in that way because He wanted himself. He made an entrance into the human history, starting his love to the humankind from the Immaculate Conception. God came in the world to save a man. His salvation works are not preceded by any merit from our side.

The Immaculate Conception does not mean taking Mary out of power of common salvation. Exceptionality of Mary’s justification includes above all its form. In Her the Christ’s merits are ahead of fact the original sin. Each human being through its birth cymes into this Kingdom of the original sin from which must be cleaned by Christ’s grace. Liquidation of time distance between conception and justification is the first aspect of this exceptionality.

We may find in the submitted standpoints some issues that may, and even should become a subject of consensus between our two traditions, even, if one of them does not accept the dogma as it is. First of all, one should notice that both parties share the same care of to show full reverence to Christ’s almighty from one hand reminding that Mary herself like each creature needs to

²³ MÜLLER, *Marias Stellung und Mitwirkung in Christusereignis*. p. 430.

be saved by her Son, but from the other hand expressing that the Immaculate Conception should be understood with reference to the secret of Incarnation. Secondly, all standpoints of our divided Churches take root in the theology of grace and justification. If the truth is that the Protestant Reformation rightly put emphasis on absolute God's initiative in gift of his grace (*sola gratia*), so also the catholic science on the Immaculate Conception should be understood based on the principle *sola gratia*; because the Immaculate Conception is not connected with personal merits of the Mary, but is fully work of God who „chose us before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight” (Eph 1, 4) and who protected the Mary against any sin already from her conception in order to prepare her to that on a certain day could be a mother of his Son²⁴.

Joint Declaration expresses quite correct the standpoint of both Churches affirming that nothing what precedes the justification does not deserve for the justification. In this sense a justification is entirely free God's gift. However the dispute between Lutherans and Catholics concerned that if after justification one may deserve for increase of grace and reward of everlasting life. Council of Trent clearly stated that you may what be denied by Lutherans. *Declaration* stall try to find the following compromise: „When the Catholics hold on good deeds, understood as «merit», they wish to say through it that according to the biblical testimony there is promised reward in the heaven. They want to express responsibility of man for his actions, they do not call into question, and the more negate a character of good deeds

²⁴ „Even, if Protestants and Catholics are not consent to the fact of confession that Mary was free of each sin, that is however both of them jointly state that we realized human condition that goes through development, search, pains, weaknesses and restrictions. If Jesus himself experienced temptation nothing allow us to exclude the Mary from similar situation. Her holiness has not been given her at a time. It is testified by the scenes of disappearing of Jesus in the Temple «His parents did not understand» (Luke 2, 50) and scenes describing the Mary intervening in Jesus' public life”. *Ibidem*. p. 271.

as a gift, of that the justification itself is still undeserved gift of the grace”²⁵. This statement seems to stray away from that in what the Catholics believe and what is thought by Council of Trent punishable by excommunication. A fact that that reward is promised does not mean that it is deserved because somebody may give gifts that are quite undeserved. In catholic point of view the justification makes us capable of deserving in true meaning of that word. However, the everlasting life is also a gift because our capability to deserve is God’s gift which is undeserved itself²⁶.

In this context one should stress that about merit we can not also say after justification of the sinner. G. Kraus gives two explanations of this standpoint. First, he stresses that in order to keep essential positive content of the merit it seems sufficient the biblical concept of reward. The thing is basic question: do good deeds of the man have any value at God? Affirmative answer is included in words of promise of reward that is a grace: good deeds are a gift of the grace; gratefully offered God are in His eyes full of value. The God gives a reward for them not as legally due payment, but being a grace within a sense of pay. Second, there is deciding here the personal perspective here. A man and the God is connected by relation of personal love. Love does not count nor sum up; the love showers with gifts. From love the God gives himself in Jesus Christ; in Him the believer newly receives the God’s childhood²⁷. To these gifts the believer answers also with love and its deeds; and places his faith in that in action of his child the God perceives some values and will give him promised heritage of the everlasting life.

²⁵ WD 38.

²⁶ A. DULLES. *Dwa języki opisu zbawienia*. „Gość Niedzielny” 2000 (2.04.2000) s. 5.

²⁷ KRAUS. *Nauka o łasce*. p. 253-254.

Thanks to grace of faith we may feel conviction that as becoming widespread showed by Vatican Council II of chrystological-ecclesiological understanding of the Mary, „**She no longer shares confession as it was formerly**”²⁸. Ecumenical close relations become joint conviction then when the Catholics and Evangelicals in concord consider existence of vital communication of those all who are united under one Head – Christ and open to life-giving action of the Holy Spirit. In a case of such concord, there is also possible eschatological understanding of intercession of the Mary as using within one Christ’s Body. Such positive reception of our subject matter is visible for instance in the reformatory theology, remaining under Taize influence²⁹.

Summing up the theological – dogmatic implications of *Declaration* on ground of the Immaculate Conception dogma we have to emphasize that as to the dogmatic point of view the catholic science on the Immaculate Conception should be understood based on the principle *sola gratia*; because the Immaculate Conception is not connected with personal merits of the Mary but is fully a work of God who „chose us before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight” (Eph. 1, 4) and who protected the Mary against any sin already from her conception.

It would be desirable thing, so that Roman Catholic Church recognize that in dogmatic point of view the Immaculate Conception dogma of the Virgin Mary refers only to the Roman Catholic Church, that formed it. Considering „hierarchy of truths” one should recognize that this dogma that’s why it does not belong to the joint profession of faith within the moment of divisions, may not binding for all Christians. This principle was

²⁸ H. OTT. *Steht Maria zwischen den Konfessionen?* Paris 1984 p. 314.

²⁹ Com. P. Y. ÉMERY. *L’unité des croyants au ciel et sur la terre. La communion dans la prière de l’Eglise.* Taizé 1962; M. THURIAN. *Maria.* Mainz – Kassel 1965 p. 220-227; *Mutter Teresa u. Frère Roger.* Freiburg 1988. Com. also P. GABUS. *Point de vue protestant sur les études mariologiques et la piété mariale.* „Marianu. Ephemerides mariologicae“ 44:1982 p. 475-509.

used many times by card. J. Ratzinger in dialogue with the East referring to the Roman primacy: „Rome may not require from the East in a question of science on primacy more than that what has been formulated and experienced during the first millennium”³⁰. Prefect of Congregation of Science and Faith also notices that consensus could be happened based on mutual recognition of their own standpoints as „entitled and orthodox”³¹.

Desirable proof of the brotherly love would be use, to the believers of Protestant Church and Orthodox Church, an attitude of prudence and love, what was presented by the Catholic Church for ages during theological discussions carried on regards to this subject. That, what in the Church has not been a problem of the faith for 19 centuries, but theological opinion, can not be assessed in XXI century as a point of division. We also can not forget that both St. Bernard and St. Thomas Aquinas preserve whole their prestige in the Catholic Church and after definition of 1854 they are still considered as witnesses of full faith even if in due time they voiced against the Immaculate Conception. Let’s not forget as well that Pope Alexander VII in w 1661 in his bull *Sollicitudo forbade the followers and opponents of the Immaculate Conception mutual fighting each other and exclusion from the Church. Whether catholic attitude towards the Orthodox and Protestants should not remain just like that? Possible full communion, regained newly between the Churches, would demand in order to start new dialogue concerning these problems.*

Signed on 31 October, 1999 Joint Declaration on Justification is a sign of such good will based on partnership Churches in aspiration for unity of the faith and possibility of joint testimony in the salvation act of God in the Jesus Christ. This document opened new chapter in history of the ecumenical dialogue. Meaning of the *Joint Declaration* can not be overestimated and

³⁰ J. RATZINGER. *Les principes de la théologie catholique*. Tèqui. Paris 1985 p. 222.

³¹ Op. cit.

not for the sake of past that must remain in memory as warning for us and for future generations, but mainly for the sake of future. This document does not close the history. It also did not take care of all disagreements, even in the matter of justification. First of all, its importance lies in that it opens new chapter in the history of common Church. *Declaration is testimony that the Roman Catholic Church and Evangelic Churches associated in World Lutheran Federation, are able to arise over divisions, former disputes, painful condemnations and to talk on doctrinal topics; is a proof that we may listen to each other, try to understand and learn to speak common language.*

USPRAWIEDLIWIENIE MARYI W ŚWIETLE
 „WSPÓLNEJ DEKLARACJI W SPRAWIE
 NAUKI O USPRAWIEDLIWIENIU”

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Nauczanie Kościoła Katolickiego o Niepokalanym Poczęciu Najświętszej Maryi Panny stanowi przedmiot uroczystej definicji i otrzymało status „nauki objawionej przez Boga”. Pius IX w komentarzu, jaki dołączył do definicji dogmatycznej, podkreśla ciągłość tego dogmatu w wierze Kościoła, takiej, jaka wyrażała się w świętych księgach liturgicznych i w nauczaniu Ojców lub niektórych papieży. Ponadto odwołuje się do kilku tekstów biblijnych (Rdz 3, 15, Łk 1, 28 i 1, 42), to jednak nie przedstawia dowodów bezpośrednio w oparciu o Biblię. Gdy przypatrzymy się definicji to zauważymy, że właściwie rzecz biorąc, nie stosuje ona formuły „Niepokalanie Poczęta”. Podobnie nie precyzuje, co oznacza „pierwsza chwila” poczęcia; za to stwierdza, że Maryja od tej „pierwszej chwili” została ustrzeżona od grzechu.

Wydaje się, że należałoby poszukać lepszego, to jest biblijnego pojęcia, które mogło by zastąpić termin „Niepokalane Poczęcie”. Takim pojęciem jest z całą pewnością usprawiedliwienie rozumiane jako owoc tajemnicy odkupienia, dokonanego przez Jezusa Chrystusa, dzięki któremu człowiekowi została przywrócona sprawiedliwość pierwotnego stworzenia.

Maryja, tak jak wszyscy inni ludzie, pochodząc z grzesznego rodu Adama, potrzebowała usprawiedliwienia, potrzebowała udziału w pełni łaski, jaką Bóg darował światu w swoim Wcielonym Synu. Maryja dostała łaski

odkupienia i usprawiedliwienia – i to w sposób wyjątkowy. Weszła ona, ze względu na swe macierzyństwo w jedyny i doskonały sposób w łączność z Chrystusem. Stąd dekret Bożego wybrania i przeznaczenia Maryi na Matkę Odkupiciela jest jednocześnie dekretem odkupienia Maryi. Na tej drodze Maryja została uprzedzająco usprawiedliwiona. Tak więc, pierwsza ze względu na funkcję, którą Ojciec przewidział dla niej w planie zbawienia, Maryja jest także pierwszą korzystającą z łaski usprawiedliwienia. To odwieczne przeznaczenie Maryi na Matkę Odkupiciela zadecydowało o tym, że Maryja stała się pierwszą osobą korzystającą z łaski usprawiedliwienia, i że jej Syn udzielił swej Matce tych łask w stopniu większym niż wszystkim innym. Miało także wpływ na sposób usprawiedliwienia Maryi. Maryja została usprawiedliwiona uprzedzająco w sposób wyjątkowy, jej tylko właściwy.

Pomocą w reinterpretacji dogmatu Niepokalanego Poczęcia NMP może być pomocna „Wspólna deklaracja w sprawie nauki o usprawiedliwieniu” i chociaż nie mówi ona wprost o roli Maryi w dziele usprawiedliwienia, ale porusza tematy, które dotyczą Niepokalanego Poczęcia. Wspólna deklaracja co najmniej w trzech miejscach dotyka dogmatu z roku 1854. Czyni to omawiając zagadnienia: usprawiedliwienia, uświęcenia i kwestię zasług. Maryjny aspekt *iustificatio* jest bardzo interesujący i potrzebny w dialogu ekumenicznym. Co więcej nauka o usprawiedliwieniu zawarta w Deklaracji powinna korygować, a nawet kontrolować katolicką mariologię.

Podpisana 31 października 1999 r. Wspólna deklaracja jest znakiem takiej dobrej woli partnerskich Kościołów w dążeniu do jedności wiary i możliwości wspólnego świadectwa w zbawczym czynie Boga w Jezusie Chrystusie. Dokument ten otworzył nowy rozdział w dziejach ekumenicznego dialogu. Znaczenie Wspólnej deklaracji nie da się przecenić i to nie ze względu na przeszłość, która musi pozostać w pamięci, jako ostrzeżenie dla nas i przyszłych pokoleń, lecz głównie ze względu na przyszłość. Dokument nie zamyka historii. Nie załatwił też wszystkich nieporozumień, nawet w kwestii usprawiedliwienia. Jego doniosłość leży przede wszystkim w tym, że otwiera on nowy rozdział w dziejach Kościoła powszechnego. Deklaracja jest świadectwem, że Kościół rzymskokatolicki i Kościoły ewangeliczne zrzeszone w Światowej Federacji Luterkańskiej, potrafią wznieść się ponad podziały, dawne spory, bolesne potępienia i rozmawiać na tematy doktrynalne. Jest dowodem, że możemy słuchać się wzajemnie, starać się zrozumieć i uczyć się mówić wspólnym językiem.