

Statistical data concerning abuse of minors by some clerics, family values and celebration of Sunday, protection of human life and the issue of attempts to interfere in the organization of religion classes at school – were the topics of the 382nd Plenary Assembly of the Polish Bishops' Conference, which ended on March 14 in Warsaw. In addition to the Communication summarizing the Assembly, the bishops issued two positions: on the celebration of Sunday and on the so-called LGBT-Carta.

During the meeting of the bishops, which took place on 12-14 March in Warsaw, the 100th anniversary of the Polish Bishops' Conference was celebrated, the 100th anniversary of the restoration of diplomatic relations between the Holy See and the Republic of Poland and the 6th anniversary of the election of Pope Francis. The Holy Mass with thanksgiving in the Temple of Divine Providence was presided by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of the Holy See, who also delivered the homily.

During the Plenary Assembly, the President of the Polish Bishops' Conference and the Vice-President were elected for a second 5-year term: Archbishop Stanisław Gądecki and Archbishop Marek Jędraszewski.

According to the decision of the bishops, the statistics on the scale of the abuse of minors by some clerics in Poland were collected. They are related to cases reported from January 1, 1990 to June 30, 2018. "Bishops strongly condemn all forms of abuse of minors. The published data, on the one hand, once again underline the necessity of taking care of the victims through concern and help, and on the other, they demand a continuation of the fight against the abuse of minors by people of the Church", the Communication reads. During the Assembly, Archbishop Wojciech Polak, Primate of Poland and president of the Commission for the Clergy of the Polish Bishops' Conference, was elected Delegate of the Committee for Protection of Children and Youth. The bishops also expressed their gratitude to Pope Francis for the meeting with the presidents of the national Bishops' Conferences from around the world on the protection of minors in the Church, which took place in February in the Vatican.

The bishops further underlined the value of marriage and the family based on "the relationship of man and woman who in a generous gift of themselves agree to accept and bring up offspring". They pointed out that "the right time and the help for the family is the Sunday spent on the Eucharist, at the common table and rest".

Once again the Polish Bishops' Conference reminded of the value of human life. The bishops in the Communication of the Assembly invited all people of good will to celebrate the Day of the Holiness of Life and the National Day of Life, as well as to pray for every human life, from conception to natural death. At the same time, they encouraged to undertake the Spiritual Adoption in all parishes. "The bishops support all initiatives aimed at protecting human life, including marches for life and family, both at national and diocesan level", the Communication reads.

"The Polish Bishops' Conference notes with concern the attempts to interfere in the organization of religion classes at school" – wrote the bishops, recalling the principles contained in the Regulation of the Ministry of National Education of April 14, 1992. They emphasized that "both religion and ethics are important axiological activities, without which the school cannot fully realize its educational tasks determining the future of the family and the nation".

As we read in the Communication, the World Youth Day in Panama, which was attended by more than four thousand pilgrims from Poland, was also summed up. The bishops gave blessings to all pastoral and social initiatives organized in connection with the 100th anniversary of the birth of John Paul II which will take place next year.

Press Office of the Polish Bishops' Conference