

The political dimension of interreligious dialogue during the pontificate of John Paul II

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“There can be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions.
There can be no peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions.
There can be no dialogue between the religions without research into theological foundations”¹.

Hans Küng

The Second Vatican Council

The dialogue of Roman Catholic Church with Islam and Judaism, so called interreligious dialogue, initiated after the Second Vatican Council² (1962–1965), is one of the most important signs of the times of the turn of the second millennium of Christianity. He made us realize that the Christians are in the same boat with all the followers of other religions³.

Conciliar documents on this issue include: *Declaration on the Relationship of Church to Non-Christian Religions (Nostra Aetate)*⁴, the *Declaration of Religious Freedom*

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¹ H. Küng, *Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic*, London 1991, p. 105.

² See J. Wierusz-Kowalski, *Sobór Powszechny Jana XXIII*, Warszawa 1962; A. Kubiś, *Wkład papieża Jana XXIII w dzieło II Soboru Watykańskiego (w czterdziestolecie otwarcia)*, “Analecta Cracoviensia” 2002, vol. 34, p. 159–169.

³ *20-lecie pontyfikatu Jana Pawła II. Sympozjum Ogólnouczeniowe w Akademii Teologii Katolickiej w Warszawie 16 listopada 1998 r.*, ed. J. Krasieński, Warszawa 2000, p. 121.

⁴ See *Sobór Watykański II. Konstytucje, dekryty, deklaracje. Tekst polski*, ed. J. Groblicki, E. Florkowski, Poznań 1986, p. 334–338.

(*Dignitatis Humanae*)⁵, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)*⁶. The Declaration is of particular importance for the interreligious dialogue.

To the bishops of Iran (3 December 1994) John Paul II stressed: "The Second Vatican Council's declaration *Nostra Aetate* gives clear indications that inspire the Church for its interreligious dialogue. They are mainly: respect for one's conscience, rejecting all forms of coercion or discrimination with regard to faith, freedom to practice one's religion and give witness to it, as well as appreciation and esteem for all genuine religious traditions"⁷.

Grounds and forms of interreligious dialogue

The interreligious dialogue is based on theological grounds: anthropological, creationist, revelationist, Christological and pneumatological⁸. This kind of dialogue is not only theological but also political, because it contributes to building peace among religions and nations, is building a better world. The 1991 document *Dialogue and Proclamation*⁹ in paragraph 47 presents four forms of interreligious dialogue: "The dialogue of life, where people strive to live in an open and neighbourly spirit, sharing their joys and sorrows, their human problems and preoccupations. The dialogue of action, in which Christians and others collaborate for the integral development and liberation of people. The dialogue of theological exchange, where specialists seek to deepen their understanding of their respective religious heritage, and to appreciate each other's spiritual values. The dialogue of religious experience, where persons rooted in the own religious traditions share their spiritual riches, for instance with regard to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways of searching for God or to the Absolute"¹⁰. All forms of interreligious dialogue constitute a political dimension of this dialogue, because they serve the cause of peace, development of humanity, understanding between religions, promote brotherhood, mercy, the common good and justice.

In speech to the Plenary Session of the Secretariat for Non-Christians¹¹ (Rome, 3 March 1994), John Paul II emphasized: "No one can fail to see the importance and the need which interreligious dialogue assumes for all religions and all believ-

⁵ Ibidem, p. 414–426.

⁶ See ibidem, p. 105–170.

⁷ B.L. Sherwin, H. Kasimow, *John Paul II and interreligious dialogue*, New York 1999, p. 212, annotation 6.

⁸ See M. Rusiecki, *Trynitarnie podstawy dialogu międzyreligijnego*, in: *Jan Paweł II a religie świata*, ed. J. Perszon, Toruń 2007, p. 35–65; S. Górzna, *Dialog Kościoła katolickiego z islamem według Jana Pawła II*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie" 2008, vol. 1, p. 57–58, annotation 4; Eadem, *Dzieci Abrahama. Dialog Kościoła katolickiego z islamem i judaizmem w okresie pontyfikatu Jana Pawła II*, Słupsk 2013.

⁹ See F. Arinze, *Dialogue and Proclamation. Two Aspects of the Evangelizing Mission of the Church*, "Bulletin" 1991, no. 2, p. 201–203.

¹⁰ M.L. Fitzgerald, J. Borelli, *Interfaith dialogue: A Catholic View*, New York 2006, p. 28.

¹¹ In 1988 the Constitution *Pastor Bonus*, stipulated that from now on this office was to be known as Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

ers, called today more than ever to collaborate so that every person can reach his transcendent goal and realize his authentic growth and to help cultures preserve their own religious and spiritual values in the presence of rapid social changes”¹².

Principles of solidarity and brotherhood

John Paul II repeatedly mentioned the importance of the principle of solidarity, being a special bond between people, which is formulated in a statement “all with all, all for all”¹³. Constitutive elements of solidarity are community and unity, and common good is the basis for uniting people in the communion¹⁴. The attitude of solidarity should be the style and tool of politics. It is understood as a strong and constant will to commit oneself to the common good. The result of this policy will be peace. People should support and promote education for peace and fight against attitudes of selfishness, hatred and hostility. Solidarity among people must be promoted, because it is the path to peace and development (see encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, No. 39)¹⁵.

Deepening the nature of solidarity, Pope brought out its character, which can be called the brotherhood¹⁶. John Paul II, calling the followers of Islam and Judaism brothers, fostered reconciliation between religions, the peaceful coexistence of religions.

In Bangladesh (19 November 1986), John Paul II stated: “I think the Most High God for enabling me to make this visit as a brother, a brother in our common humanity; a brother in our adoration of the «one God, living and enduring, merciful and all-powerful, who has made heaven and earth, and has spoken to men» (*Nostra Aetate*, 3); a brother in human solidarity, listening to the voice of humanity crying out all over the world for dignity, justice and peace”¹⁷.

The fifth paragraph of declaration *Nostra Aetate* says we “cannot truly call on God, the Father of all, if we refuse to treat in a brotherly way any man, created as he is in the image of God”¹⁸. Every person should treat as brothers all members of the human family, collaborate with them for peace.

¹² B.L. Sherwin, H. Kasimow, *John Paul II...*, p. 37.

¹³ H. Skorowski, *Solidarność*, in: *Encyklopedia Nauczania Społecznego*, ed. A. Zwoliński, Radom 2003, p. 472; S. Górzna, *Political scope of the civilization of love of John Paul II*, “*Studia Socialia Cracoviensia*” 2011, no. 2, p. 90, annotation 78.

¹⁴ S. Górzna, *Political scope...*, p. 90, annotation 79.

¹⁵ K. Tyszcza, *Polityka według Jana Pawła II*, “*Collectanea Theologica*” 2006, no. 4, p. 183; the encyclic see “*L'Osservatore Romano*” 1988, no. 1, p. 7–15.

¹⁶ H. Skorowski, *Solidarność...*, w: *Encyklopedia Nauczania...*, ed. A. Zwoliński, p. 475. See B.L. Sherwin, H. Kasimow, *John Paul II...*, p. 217–218.

¹⁷ B.L. Sherwin, H. Kasimow, *John Paul II...*, p. 217, annotation 16.

¹⁸ See E.I. Cassidy, *Rediscovering Vatican II. Ecumenism and interreligious dialogue. Unitatis Redintegratio, Nostra Aetate*, New York 2005, p. 131.

Four principles of peace

The Pope's peace-building program based on respect for ethical values: truth, freedom, justice and love¹⁹. These four values were mentioned by Pope John XXIII (1958–1963) in his encyclical *Pacem in Terris*²⁰.

In his message for the Day of Peace 2003, John Paul II brought to mind these pillars of peace: "Truth brings each individual to acknowledge his and her own rights, but also to recognize his and her own duties towards others. Justice leads people to respect rights of others and also to fulfill their duties. Love goes beyond justice, for it makes people feel the needs of others as if they were their own, and the empathy leads them to share their own gifts with others, not only material goods but also the values of mind and spirit. Freedom, finally, is a factor in building peace when it allows people to act according to reason and to assume responsibility for their own actions"²¹.

The main goal of the dialogue, according to John Paul II, is an unending quest for understanding and affirmation of the truth²², which is a fundamental value for a fair and fruitful dialogue²³. He saw the truth as a fundamental principle which should be applied in relations between people and nations.

John Paul II emphasized the interdependence of truth and freedom, because the truth gives meaning to freedom and freedom is a prerequisite for learning the truth²⁴. All parties must stand in the truth to start a real discourse, also by bringing to the world the underlying causes of conflicts²⁵.

A basic condition for building peace, according to John Paul II, was justice. The constant direction and purpose of his political activities was to defend and promote justice. This is the virtue and moral strength, which is to support the commitment to the rights and obligations of any person due to their dignity²⁶. The Pope understood justice as respect for the natural rights of human individuals and social order²⁷.

¹⁹ R. Rajcecki, *Stolica Apostolska wobec rozbrojenia*, Warszawa 1989, p. 41; Górzna, S. *Political scope...*, p. 97.

²⁰ F.J. Mazurek, *Podstawowe prawo osoby ludzkiej do pokoju*, "Społeczeństwo" 2003, no. 5, p. 565; S. Górzna, *Political scope...*, p. 92, annotation 98. See Jan XXIII, *Encyklika O pokoju między wszystkimi narodami opartym na prawdzie, sprawiedliwości, miłości i wolności Pacem in terris*, Paris 1963.

²¹ M.L. Fitzgerald, J. Borelli, *Interfaith dialogue...*, p. 151.

²² See T. Górka, *Prawda jako zobowiązanie. Bibliografia wypowiedzi Jana Pawła II z lat 1978–2003*, "Ethos" 2004, no. 1/2, p. 635–647; S. Górzna, *Political scope...*, p. 92, annotation 101.

²³ M. Krzyżanowska, *Rola dialogu międzyreligijnego w trzecim tysiącleciu w świetle nauczania Jana Pawła II*, "Filozofia Dialogu" 2006, vol. 4, p. 201; S. Górzna, *Political scope...*, p. 92, annotation 102.

²⁴ M. Zięba, *Kościół w ćwierćwiecze pontyfikatu Jana Pawła II (cz. 2)*, "W Drodze" 2004, no. 1, p. 22; S. Górzna, *Political scope...*, p. 92, annotation 104.

²⁵ J.A. Kłoczkowski, *Pontifex – budowniczy mostów*, "Gazeta Wyborcza" 2000, no. 74, p. 12; S. Górzna, *Political scope...*, p. 93, annotation 112.

²⁶ K. Tyszka, *Polityka według Jana...*, p. 182; S. Górzna, *Political scope...*, p. 95, annotation 134.

²⁷ J. Dębowski, *Watykańska doktryna pokoju i jej polskie odniesienia*, Białystok 1991, p. 67; S. Górzna, *Political scope...*, p. 95, annotation 135.

The principle of love is the fulfillment of these principles. John Paul II emphasized that "Love for our brothers and sisters involves an attitude of respect and sympathy with gestures of solidarity, and a cooperation in the service for the common good"²⁸. The Pope pointed out the priorities, primacies included in the "four-nomial" that draw the shape of a civilization of love. They are included in the first encyclical *Redemptor hominis*²⁹, and developed especially in his encyclical *Dives in Misericordia*³⁰. The first primacy of this four-nomial of the civilization of love is the primacy of mercy over justice, the second is the primacy of a person over a thing, the third is the primacy of ethics over technology, and the fourth is more to "be" than to "have"³¹.

Mercy and forgiveness

John Paul II frequently spoke about mercy as a way to peace, first by building brotherhood, followed by a shared commitment to consolidate peace: "Genuine compassion is seen as something necessary to form and strengthen interpersonal relations, inspired by a deeper respect for everything human, and by a sense of brotherhood"³². "This applies to all descendants of Abraham – Jews, Christians and Muslims"³³.

During the ecumenical meeting (Lisbon, 14 May 1982), Pope John Paul II emphasized that "Christians are called to follow Lord Jesus, the model of mercy. Judaism also believes the commandment of mercy as a basic one, Islam in its confession of faith this quality attributes to God. Abraham, our common father, teaches all Christians, Jews and Muslims, to follow the path of mercy and love"³⁴.

Forgiveness is one of the manifestations of mercy. It has not only a theological but also political dimension, since it leads to reconciliation between feud parties. This is a necessary condition for sustainable peace. In the Vatican Basilica (12 March 2000), during the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, Pope John Paul II said: "We forgive and ask for forgiveness! (...) Let us ask pardon for the divisions, which have occurred among Christians, for the violence some of them have used in the service of the truth, and for attitudes of mistrust and hostility sometimes taken towards the followers of other religions (...) "³⁵.

²⁸ *Joannes Paulus II – in memoriam. Księga pamiątkowa Stowarzyszenia Biblistów Polskich ku czci Ojca Świętego Jana Pawła II*, ed. W. Chrostowski, Warszawa 2006, p. 316, annotation 121; S. Górzna, *Political scope...*, p. 96, annotation 145.

²⁹ See John Paul II, *Encyklika Redemptor hominis*, ed. T. Królak, Warszawa 2007.

³⁰ *Jan Paweł II promotorem godności człowieka*, ed. A. Bałabuch, Świdnica 2007, p. 121, annotation 4; the encyclical see "L'Osservatore Romano" (pol. ed.) 1980, no. 10, p. 9–16. See M. Gryczyński, *Jan Paweł II i miłosierdzie*, "Przewodnik Katolicki" 2008, no. 13, p. 23.

³¹ *Jan Paweł II...*, ed. A. Bałabuch, p. 122–124.

³² *Joannes Paulus II...*, ed. W. Chrostowski, p. 315, annotation 115.

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 315, annotation 116. See M.C. Boys, S.S. Lee, *Christians and Jews in Dialogue: Learning in the Presence of the Other*, Vermont 2006.

³⁴ John Paul II, *Spotkanie ekumeniczne w Lizbonie*, "L'Osservatore Romano" (pol. ed.) 1982, no. 5, p. 13.

³⁵ Z. Kubacki, *Jan Paweł II – papież pokoju i dialogu międzyreligijnego*, "Studia Bobolanum" 2006, no. 3, p. 43.

The policy of consensus and non-violence of policy

The guiding principle of John Paul II's openness to worshippers of different religions was the Pope's concern for peace between nations and between adherents of different religions. The political aspect of the Catholic Church's dialogue with Islam and Judaism is the policy of consensus, the agreement achieved primarily through a dialogue. The consensus is often presented as the essence of politics, as the "politics" in one of its meanings outlines the method of peaceful resolution of conflicts. The peaceful coexistence can be achieved through negotiations, reconciliation and compromise, that is, by building a consensus³⁶.

For the followers of different religions, John Paul II proposed the concept of non-violence policy, in which it is necessary to resign from using violence, and to use peaceful means. Religion can never justify violence and conflict³⁷.

Noteworthy is the contribution of John Paul II and the Holy See in mitigating the conflicts in the Balkans and the Middle East. The Pope intervened to end the conflicts not for political gain, but for the good of man. He visited the Balkan nations as a pilgrim of peace. He appealed to solve the problems according to law and justice in the spirit of love, to help the victims of the war, he met with representatives of Jewish and Muslim communities³⁸, he called for prayer for the gift of peace, he called religions to engage in the recovery of peace, he appealed to the international institutions to take actions to stop the fighting.

To Muslims participants at the Day of Prayer for Peace³⁹ in the Balkans and throughout Europe (10 January 1993), John Paul II said: "Your presence in Assisi on this occasion is of great significance. It proclaims that genuine religious belief is a source of mutual understanding and harmony, and that only the perversion of religious sentiment leads to discrimination and conflict. To use religion as an excuse for injustice and violence is a terrible abuse, and it must be condemned by all true believers in God"⁴⁰.

At the conclusion of the Day of Prayer for Peace (also in Assisi, 27 October 1986), John Paul II emphasized: "The very fact that we have come to Assisi from various quarters of the world is in itself a sign of this common path which humanity is called to tread. Either we learn to walk together in peace and harmony, or we drift apart and ruin ourselves and others. We hope that the pilgrimage to Assisi has taught us anew to be aware of the common origin and common destiny of human-

³⁶ *Konsensus*, in: A. Heywood, *Klucz do politologii. Najważniejsze ideologie, systemy, postaci*, Warszawa 2008, p. 15. See S. Górzna, *Polityka w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II*, "Collectanea Theologica" 2013, no. 2, p. 147–160.

³⁷ See G.C. Durie, *Terrorism: What Is It and How Do We Deal with It?*, in: *War in the Bible and Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. R.S. Hess, E.A. Martens, Eisenbrauns 2008, p. 113–125.

³⁸ See G. Ignatowski, *Zmierzając ku braterstwu. Wpływ wizyty Jana Pawła II w Państwie Izrael na prace komitetu łączącego Naczelnego Rabinat Izraela ze Stolicą Apostolską*, Katowice 2008, p. 41–50.

³⁹ See E. Sakowicz, *Światowy Dzień Modlitwy o Pokój w Asyżu*, in: *Jan Paweł II. Encyklopedia dialogu i ekumenizmu*, ed. E. Sakowicz, Radom 2006, p. 435–442.

⁴⁰ *Recognize the Spiritual Bonds which Unite us. 16 years of Christian-Muslim Dialogue*, ed. T. Michel, M. Fitzgerald, Vatican City 1994, p. 101.

kind. Let us see in it an anticipation of what God would like the developing history of humanity to be a fraternal journey in which we accompany one another toward the transcendent goal which he sets for us”⁴¹.

John Paul II involved himself in solving the conflict in the Middle East⁴² as the Holy Land had a special significance for him. For the Jewish nation he asked for security, and for the Palestinian people he asked that they could find their homeland and live in peace. In the Apostolic Letter *Redemptionis Anno* (20 April 1984), John Paul II emphasized: “For the Jewish people who live in the State of Israel and who preserve in that land such precious testimonies to their history and their faith, we pray for the desired security and the due tranquillity that is the prerogative of every nation and condition of life and of progress for every society. The Palestinian people find their historical roots in that land and who for decades have been dispersed, have the natural right in justice to find once more a homeland and to be able to live in peace and tranquillity with the other peoples of the area”⁴³.

The Pope strived to ensure that politicians would draw attention to the fate of Jerusalem and the communities living there. He appealed for a cessation of military operations, called for prayers to end the war, for a just solution to the ongoing conflict, that the right to the freedom of religious practices should not be violated, a fruitful dialogue between the parties to accelerate the peace process. He met with politicians, drew public attention to the plight of Palestinian refugees. He argued that only sincere dialogue promotes peace and understanding between religions and nations. He worked in the field of diplomacy, sending letters of appeals to the presidents, in the hope of avoiding war in the Persian Gulf. In letters to the presidents⁴⁴ he asked to bring peace in the region, which is sacred to the followers of the three monotheistic religions, noting that any international problem can be solved by military force.

During the general audience (5 December 2001), John Paul II stressed that “I receive with deep sadness the news of new victims of absurd violence and bloodshed in the Middle East. With a heavy heart I say once again that violence never solves conflicts, but only heightens their dramatic consequences”⁴⁵.

A special status of Jerusalem, based on international guarantees, advocated by the Holy See is the political dimension of interreligious dialogue. Thanks to this status it will be possible to preserve the “unique and sacred character of the city”, especially “the existence of religious communities, their state and future”⁴⁶.

⁴¹ M.L.Fitzgerald, J. Borelli, *Interfaith dialogue...*, p. 1.

⁴² See B. Fastyn, *Jan Paweł II wobec konfliktu izraelsko-palestyńskiego*, Warszawa 2004; D. Rudnicka-Kassem, *John Paul II, Islam and the Middle East: The Pope's Spiritual Leadership in Developing a Dialogical Path for the New History of Christian-Muslim Relations*, Kraków 2012.

⁴³ *Recognize the Spiritual...*, ed. T. Michel, M. Fitzgerald, p. 56.

⁴⁴ See John Paul II, *List do George'a Busha*, “L'Osservatore Romano” (pol. ed.) 1991, no. 1, p. 42; Idem, *List do Michaila Gorbaczowa*, “L'Osservatore Romano” 1991, no. 11, p. 42.

⁴⁵ *Apele Papieża Jana Pawła II o zgodę i pojednanie*, “L'Osservatore Romano” (pol. ed.) 2002, no. 5, p. 42.

⁴⁶ J. Moskwa, *Prorok i polityk*, Warszawa 2003, p. 206, annotation 62.

The existence of the State of Israel⁴⁷ (1948) made the Catholic-Jewish relations also held at the political level. John Paul II, as the first pope, publicly mentioned the name of the Jewish state. Lack of official and diplomatic relations with Israel made it difficult for the Pope to act. Establishing them in 1994 constitutes the political dimension of interreligious dialogue, the political equivalent of a religious event, that means the first-ever visit of the head of the Catholic Church in the synagogue in 1986⁴⁸.

Before the outbreak of the war in Iraq (2003) John Paul II has delegated his messengers, hoping that it would not happen. The U.S. President George Bush did not stop the attack on Iraq, despite the Pope's request. Thus, not always papal diplomatic missions were successful in saving peace, but owing to the Pope that war was not seen as a Christian-Muslim war.

Human rights

John Paul II's emphasis on human rights issues is especially based on theological grounds. The Pope was a defender of dignity over political and geographical boundaries. He stated that people of different religions must unite to defend human rights. Since the beginning of his pontificate he stressed that the condition of peace and justice is respecting of human rights, which are based in religious freedom. To a Jewish-Christian-Muslim group (Lisbon, Portugal, 14 May 1982), John Paul II emphasized: "We (Christians, Muslims, Jews) are united by faith and by a commitment, similar in many ways, to demonstrate by good works the consistency of our respective religious positions. We also desire that, honoring as Lord the Creator of all things, our example may serve to help others to seek God, to open themselves to transcendence, to recognize the spiritual value of the human person and to identify the foundation and permanent source of human rights"⁴⁹.

By engaging in the international arena, John Paul II strived for a central place for human beings and their rights. In the international arena, during the pilgrimages, he reminded that the civilization that would not protect human rights would inevitably proceed towards the culture of death. An interreligious dialogue developed in the atmosphere of religious freedom is important in the development of justice, is a guarantee of peace in the world. Speaking to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations (5 October 1995), John Paul II said: "How important it is to safeguard right to freedom of religion and freedom of conscience, as the cornerstones of the structure of human rights and the foundation of every truly free society"⁵⁰.

⁴⁷ See M. Frasz, *Dialog międzyreligijny w Izraelu i Autonomii Palestyńskiej*, in: *Świat, polityka, religie u progu XXI wieku*, ed. T. Dębowski, Wrocław 2006, p. 135–145.

⁴⁸ Przemówienie w Synagodze Większej [Speech in the Synagogue] see "L'Osservatore Romano" (pol. ed.) 1986, no. 4, p. 78; *Żydzi i judaizm w dokumentach Kościoła i nauczaniu Jana Pawła II (1965–1989)*, Warszawa 1990, p. 162–168.

⁴⁹ *Recognize the Spiritual...*, ed. T. Michel, M. Fitzgerald, p. 106.

⁵⁰ B.L. Sherwin, H. Kasimow, *John Paul II...*, p. 214–215, annotation 9.

Forms of diplomatic activities of John Paul II

Forms of diplomatic activities of John Paul II include: meetings with heads of states and governments, meetings with the diplomatic corps and ambassadors accredited to the Holy See, participating in sessions and official meetings of international organizations, e.g. the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament, objection to military intervention in Yugoslavia, Iraq, declarations about the Middle East conflict.

In speeches to politicians the Pope appealed that they do their best to build peace, apply the method of dialogue, the parties of which must stand to each other in truth, he called for the education and initiatives for peace, for international cooperation, which should contribute to the progress in integrated human and the society development. John Paul II insisted that the leaders of different religions should call for respect for human values, such as respect for life, human dignity and act on behalf of the poor.

In a speech to the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1994), John Paul II said: "The method of dialogue, which in spite of adversity is becoming even more popular, requires loyalty, perseverance and generosity of people who use it. These principles constitute the only basis on which it will be possible to overcome disputes and resolve the genuine hope of dignified future for all nations that live together in this territory"⁵¹.

In speeches to the diplomatic corps the Pope made a broad review of the international situation, assessment of the world political events that took place in the last year, presented the foreign policy directions for the current year, raised various issues, including War in the Balkans and the Middle East, and the peace as the highest good, he pointed out the main threats to peace, appealed to resolve conflicts through diplomatic means, called for the respect, cooperation, dialogue, negotiation, reconciliation, he wanted the international community to take action to eliminate cases of religious discrimination. The Pope stressed that international terrorism spreads fear, hatred and fanaticism, pointed religions as the best way to prevent religious fanaticism and terrorism, mentioned two plagues that afflict humanity: war and poverty, and recalled historical and contemporary religious persecutions.

In a speech to the Diplomatic Corps (13 January 1996), John Paul II mentioned, among others, the new situation in the Middle East (establishing diplomatic relations with the State of Israel): "May God help the Israelis and Palestinians to live together, to live together in peace, in the spirit of mutual respect and sincere cooperation! This is necessary for future generations and will benefit the entire region"⁵², as well as positive changes in Bosnia and Herzegovina: "Bosnia and Herzegovina went through the agreement, which – hopefully – will keep physiog-

⁵¹ John Paul II, *O życiu: aborcja, eutanazja, wojna*, ed. A. Sujka, Kraków 2005, p. 167.

⁵² Idem, *Światła i cienie współczesnego świata*, "L'Osservatore Romano" (pol. ed.) 1996, no. 3, p. 25.

onomy of the country, while respecting its ethnic composition. Sarajevo – another city the symbol – also needs to become in the future the «crossroads of peace». Moreover, isn't it called «Jerusalem of Europe»?⁵³.

In speeches to ambassadors accredited to the Holy See John Paul II emphasized that religions should reject all forms of violence, cooperate for peace, encouraged to develop more and more intensive interreligious dialogue, called for a persevering dialogue. He reminded that the Catholic Church defends human, individuals and nations' rights, he urged all to work towards a new world order, he pointed to poverty, which poses a serious threat to peace. In a speech to the ambassador of Croatia Ive Livlanić (3 July 1992), John Paul II said: "The Holy See has followed with great attention the dramatic events that accompanied the announcement and recognition of the independence of Croatia and constantly demanded the cessation of hostilities and engaging in the dialogue. The Church will always preach that the rights of individuals and peoples can not be defended by force, but only in the atmosphere of honest and persevering dialogue"⁵⁴.

In messages for the World Day of Peace addressed to every human being every year John Paul II put forward a new idea which helped promote the main principles of strengthening peace, showing new dimensions and prospects of peace. The Day had been established by Paul VI and John Paul II continued the teaching of his predecessor. The messages were of great importance in educating for peace, and oscillated around the following issues: the commitment to peace, the four foundations of peace, the right to humanitarian aid, the role of prayer for peace, the role of family and women in education for peace, wars in the Middle East and the Balkans, the value of solidarity and development, which constitute ways to peace, education for peace which was proposed, among others, to followers of different religions, observing of human rights, which are the foundation of justice, their universality and indivisibility, religious freedom as the heart of these rights, the basis of all efforts for peace, a condition of peaceful coexistence, the civilization of love that conquers everything, and the dialogue is a tool for building the civilization. Religions, which play a significant role in fostering gestures of peace and consolidating its terms, shall take the necessary service for peace between nations.

The message for the 31st World Day of Peace 1998, Pope John Paul II pointed out that the Holy Spirit "is present in the action of those who serve selflessly the rejected and suffering, who courageously oppose discrimination against individuals or whole communities for ethnic, cultural or religious reasons; is present especially in the generous action of those who patiently and tirelessly seek to consolidate peace and reconciliation between former adversaries and enemies. Here are signs of hope, which provide an incentive to respect for justice which leads to peace"⁵⁵.

⁵³ Ibidem, p. 25–26.

⁵⁴ Idem, *Kościół broni praw człowieka – jednostek i narodów*, "L'Osservatore Romano" 1992, no. 11, p. 16.

⁵⁵ Idem, *Sprawiedliwość każdego człowieka źródłem pokoju dla wszystkich*, "Społeczeństwo" 1998, no. 2, p. 361.

The preferential option for the poor

Concern for the poor is the essence of human solidarity. The large gap between wealth of rich countries and poverty of poor ones threatens the peace. John Paul II frequently prayed that the poor would experience effective solidarity. A common proclamation of the preferential option for the poor and for social justice is a political dimension of interreligious dialogue. Contemporary world needs cooperation of all religions for the good of humanity. It must take into consideration eliminating of hunger, poverty and discrimination. Poverty and lack of justice are a threat to peace.

John Paul II, referring to the issue of justice in international relations, indicated that the aid given to poor countries is not an issue of transfer to those in need what rich countries have in excess. Help means the impact of "lifestyles, patterns of production and consumption, and the established structures of power" to reinforce them so that they would give an opportunity to build stable societies⁵⁶.

Institutions and organizations for peace between the religions

The following institutions and organizations for peace between the religions are important for the political dimension of this dialogue: the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP), John Paul II Foundation for the Sahel and the *Populorum Progressio* Foundation. Both Foundations act in the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*⁵⁷.

Speaking to the participants at the WCRP (Vatican 1994), John Paul II said: "Today the religious leaders must clearly show that they are pledged to the promotion of peace precisely because of their religious belief. Religion is not, and must not become, a pretext for conflict, particularly when religious, cultural and ethnic identity coincide (...). Religion and peace go together: to wage war in the name of religion is a blatant contradiction"⁵⁸.

In encyclical *Novo Millennio Ineunte* No 55 (6 January 2001), John Paul II calls for interreligious dialogue in accordance with the Second Vatican Council: "In the climate of increased cultural and religious pluralism, which is expected to Mark the society of the New millennium, it is obvious that this dialogue will be especially important in establishing a sure basis for peace and warding off the dread spectre of those wars of religions which have so often bloodied human history. The name of the one God must become increasingly what it is: a name of peace and a summons to peace"⁵⁹.

⁵⁶ J. Szulist, *Spółeczność światowa w katolickiej nauce społecznej*, Pelpin 2008, p. 57, annotation 81.

⁵⁷ See S. Górzna, *Organizacje i instytucje na rzecz pokoju między religiami*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie" 2012, vol. 2, p. 252–266.

⁵⁸ B.L. Sherwin, H. Kasimow, *John Paul II...*, p. 1–2, annotation 1.

⁵⁹ M.L. Fitzgerald, J. Borelli, *Interfaith dialogue...*, p. 145; the encyclical see "L'Osservatore Romano" (pol. ed.) 2001, no. 2, p. 4–23.

Conclusion

Harmonious coexistence of different religions has an enormous importance for the future of the world, it is a necessity and moral obligation. Interreligious dialogue can greatly contribute to the propagation of peace. The political dimension of interreligious dialogue is, in my opinion, a value itself, giving new opportunities for both international relations and a policy of political consensus, contributing this way to peace in the world. Therefore more attention should be paid to the political dimension of interreligious dialogue, so that religion is not a source of clash and conflict. We must realistically assess the role of religion in politics and providing peace. I am convinced that there will be no international peace without interreligious peace. To ensure the world peace a real interreligious dialogue based on the theological and political foundation is necessary. The teaching of Pope John Paul II should become a beacon for politicians and followers of different religions, who can build the interreligious civilization.

Key words: John Paul II, interreligious dialogue, peace, politics of nonviolence

Polityczny wymiar dialogu międzyreligijnego w okresie pontyfikatu Jana Pawła II

Współczesny Kościół katolicki stanowi fundament tolerancji i otwarcia na możliwość rozwijania dialogu międzyreligijnego, w tym dialogu międzyreligijnego. W artykule wskazano formy międzyreligijnego dialogu, pokój i jego cztery filary w nauczaniu Kościoła katolickiego. Przedstawiono dwa konflikty – na Bałkanach i na Bliskim Wschodzie, w których rozwiązanie angażował się Jan Paweł II. Jako Papież Praw Człowieka podkreślał m.in. prawa człowieka do godności, życia i wolności religijnej. Poza papieskimi przemówieniami zaprezentowano różne organizacje, których głównym celem jest osiągnięcie międzyreligijnego dialogu. Celem artykułu jest udowodnienie, że ten rodzaj dialogu ma nie tylko wymiar teologiczny, ale również polityczny.

Słowa kluczowe: Jan Paweł II, dialog międzyreligijny, pokój, polityka bez stosowania przemocy

La dimension politique du dialogue interreligieux durant le pontificat de Jean-Paul II

L'Église catholique contemporaine est le fondement de tolérance et d'ouverture quant à une possibilité de dialogue interreligieux, y compris de dialogue interreligieux. Dans l'article sont décrites les formes du dialogue interreligieux, la paix et ses quatre piliers dans l'enseignement de l'Église catholique. Sont présentés deux conflits – dans les Balkans et au Proche-Orient, dans la solution desquels s'impliqua Jean-Paul II. Comme Pape des Droits de l'homme ce dernier mettait entre autres en valeur le droit de l'homme à la dignité, à la vie et à la liberté de religion. Outre les discours pontificaux sont présentées les différentes organisations dont l'objectif principal est de parvenir à un dialogue interreligieux. Le but de cet article est de démontrer que ce genre de dialogue contient non seulement une dimension théologique, mais aussi une dimension politique.

Mots-clés: Jean-Paul II, dialogue interreligieux, paix, politique sans violence

*Политический аспект межрелигиозного диалога
во время понтификата Иоанна Павла II*

Современная католическая церковь является основой терпимости и открытости к возможности разработки межрелигиозного диалога, в том числе межрелигиозного диалога. В статье показаны формы межрелигиозного диалога, мира и его четырех основ в учении католической церкви. Представлены два конфликта – на Балканах и на Ближнем Востоке, в решении которых участвовал Иоанн Павел II. Будучи «Папой Римским прав человека», он подчеркивал права человека на достоинство, жизнь и свободу религии. Кроме его выступлений в статье представлены различные организации, основной целью которых является достижение межрелигиозного диалога. Цель этой статьи заключается в доказывании того, что у такого диалога есть не только теологическое, но и политическое измерение.

Ключевые слова: Папа Иоанн Павел II, межрелигиозный диалог, мир, политика ненасилия