

STATEMENT OF THE BOARD OF THE POLISH ASSOCIATION OF MORAL THEOLOGIANS

19.05.2026

As the Board of the Polish Association of Moral Theologians (Stowarzyszenie Teologów Moralistów – STM) we received with concern the Final Report of Post-Synodal Study Group No. 9, published on 5 of May 2026 on the Vatican website (synod.va), entitled *Theological Criteria and Synodal Methodologies for Shared Discernment of Emerging Doctrinal, Pastoral, and Ethical Issues*.

In this Report – an attempt to illustrate how to approach pastorally the life situations of persons in their existential experiences – the so-called “principle of pastorality” is presented. Its premise is an attentive engagement with the lives of concrete individuals and communities. The Report refers to two situations: alongside a description of the work of a group employing the principle of non-violence, it outlines the situation of two men living in homosexual partnerships. What is troubling is that the important pastoral call to care for persons who discover within themselves homosexual inclinations is not accompanied by a presentation of the Church’s full teaching on homosexuality, grounded in the biblical message and succinctly expressed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (2357-2359). The Report does mention the distinction between homosexual inclinations and homosexual acts. However, it does not emphasise that both homosexual acts and the decision to remain in a homosexual relationship are gravely disordered. Nor does it recall that persons with homosexual inclinations – like all others – are called to live in chastity.

The Report devotes considerable attention to the notion of a “paradigm shift” in the Church. As members of the STM Board, we are convinced that the key pastoral principles must be “truth in love” (*veritas in caritate*) and “love in truth” (*caritas in veritate*). What is essential is the proclamation of the full teaching of Christ with sensitivity and love, as well as the support of people in difficult life circumstances, grounded in the truth of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself provides the model. To the woman caught in adultery, whom others sought to stone, He revealed merciful love (“Neither do I condemn you”), while at the same time calling her to conversion by naming her previous behaviour as sin (“Go and do not sin again” – Jn 8:11). Likewise, in His conversation with the Samaritan woman, He gradually opened her to God’s grace and helped her recognize the morally disordered relationship in which she was living: “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband; this you said truly” (Jn 4:17-18). Christ’s attitude – His sensitive approach to people and His accompaniment grounded in truth and leading to the discovery of truth – should be regarded as a clear paradigm for pastoral ministry.

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