



KS. MARCIN KOŁODZIEJ

UNIWERSYTET KARDYNAŁA STEFANA WYSZYŃSKIEGO W WARSZAWIE

MARCIN.K81@WP.PL

ORCID: 0000-0001-8875-7582

## ADAPTATIONS IN THE POLISH RITES OF THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

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**Abstract.** One of the issues raised by the Second Vatican Council was the need to revise the liturgical books that had been used until that time. The ritual of the sacrament of marriage was the first to undergo this process. The *editio typica* was prepared, and, following the promulgation of the *Code of Canon Law* in 1983, the Holy See published the second model edition of the ritual in question. The Polish version of the rites of the sacrament of marriage was developed on the basis of the Latin book, using historical sets of liturgical books from the nation. By virtue of the authority granted by the legislator, the Polish Episcopal Conference incorporated liturgical adaptations relevant to Poland into the ritual. With adherence to the indications included in the *editio typica*, the formularies and ceremonies established domestically were taken into consideration.

**Keywords:** marriage, sacrament, liturgical law, liturgical adaptations.

The revision of the Roman Rite (SC 62-63), postulated in the Conciliar Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*,<sup>1</sup> included the rites of marriage in the first place. The model edition of this book was promulgated

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<sup>1</sup> Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (04.12.1963) [hereinafter: SC], in: [https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_](https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_)

by St. Paul VI on 19 March 1969, on the solemnity of St. Joseph the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>2</sup> In turn, during the pontificate of St. John Paul II, the publication of the apostolic exhortation *Familiaris consortio* in 1982, followed by the promulgation of the new *Code of Canon Law* from 1983,<sup>3</sup> led to the publication of the book *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium* in 1991 as *editio typica altera*. In this edition, not only was the introduction enriched in content, but also the ritual prayers were supplemented with a pneumatological outline relevant to the celebration of this sacrament. Additionally, in *editio typica altera* ritual was not missing either – apart from the previous ones – the rites of marriage in an extraordinary form, i.e., in the presence of a lay official witness.<sup>4</sup>

This study of a theological and canonical nature aims first to present the understanding of liturgical adaptations, and then to present how the sacramental action of God, which appears in the liturgy and through words and holy signs, was rendered in the Polish version of the *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium* for this purpose, *that the grace of the sacrament is more clearly signified and the duties of the spouses are taught* (SC 77). The guidelines for the preparation of national rituals for entering into marriage left a possibility to develop them in a fairly free way, referring to local customs, *but the rite must always conform to the law that the priest assisting at the marriage must ask for and obtain the consent of the contract-*

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councils/ii\_vatican\_council/documents/vat-ii\_const\_19631204\_sacrosanctum-concilium\_en.html (access: 01.04.2023).

<sup>2</sup> Sacra Congregatio Rituum, “Decretum” (19.03.1969) [Prot. N. R 23/969], in: *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium* (Typis Vaticanis, 2008), II.

<sup>3</sup> “Codex Iuris Canonici auctoritate Joannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus” (25.01.1983) [hereinafter: CCL], AAS 75 (1983), pars II: 1–317; English text in: [https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic\\_index\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic_index_en.html) (access: 01.04.2023).

<sup>4</sup> Marcin Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii. Komentarz do kan. 838 Kodeksu prawa kanonicznego* (Kraków: Scriptum, 2023), 303–304; Paweł Milcarek, “Małżeństwo, chrzest i pogrzeb. Pierwsze posoborowe zmiany w Rytuale Rzymskim,” *Christianitas* 55 (2014): 123; Władysław Nowak, “Akomodacja liturgii sakramentu małżeństwa nowego Rytuału Rzymskiego Pawła VI do potrzeb diecezji polskich,” *Collectanea Theologica* 47, no. 3 (1977): 181; Władysław Nowak, “Elementy Agendy Marcina Kromera w odnowionej liturgii sakramentu małżeństwa dostosowanej do zwyczajów diecezji polskich,” *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny* 32, no. 2–3 (1979): 149; Czesław Krakowiak, “Typiczne wydania Rytuału Rzymskiego Pawła VI,” *Liturgia Sacra* 23, no. 1 (2017): 16–17; Tomasz Jakubiak, “Obrzęd zawarcia małżeństwa w nadzwyczajnej formie,” *Ius Matrimoniale* 25, no. 3 (2014): 34.

ing parties (SC 77). All these important remarks relating to the dignity of marriage were taken into account not only in the *Praenotanda* of the analysed book, but also in the marriage rites themselves.<sup>5</sup>

## 1. THE CONCEPT OF LITURGICAL ADAPTATIONS

Liturgical adaptations as a term were officially used in the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, which is not only a document of pastoral character, but also a legal one. In theological studies, especially in liturgical and missiological literature, they are mentioned in the context of adapting the liturgy to the culture of given peoples and nations, as well as pointing to the conscious, active, full, fruitful participation of the Church's faithful in the public worship of God.<sup>6</sup> The meaning of the concept of liturgical adaptations, as a continuation of the *revisio* postulated at the Second Vatican Council, became clear only after the publication of the *editio typica* of individual post-council liturgical books. Each of them was accompanied by *Praenotanda generalia* and *Praenotanda*. Both introductions contain chapters *De adaptationibus*. These treat about the authority of the local episcopal conferences, which, within the limits of the applicable law, can make appropriate adaptations [*quae conferenceentiis episcopalibus competunt*].<sup>7</sup>

There is a view, propounded by Gerald Arbuckle, that the term *liturgical adaptations*, due to its historical and cultural implications, now seems to be quite devalued. In addition, in the Constitution *Sacrosanctum*

<sup>5</sup> "Praenotanda," no 1–11, in: *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium*, 1–3; Nowak, "Akomodacja liturgii sakramentu małżeństwa," 181–182; Nowak, "Elementy Agendy Marcina Kromera," 149; Tadeusz Syczewski, "Problematyka liturgiczna w przygotowaniu do małżeństwa," *Studia Teologiczne. Białystok, Drohiczyn, Łomża* 11 (1993): 149–150.

<sup>6</sup> Achille Maria Triacca, "Adattamento liturgico: utopia, velleità o strumento della pastorale liturgica," *Notitiae* 15 (1979): 26–45; Czesław Krakowiak, "Adaptacja, akomodacja i inkulturacja liturgii Mszy Świętej w świetle nowego Ogólnego wprowadzenia do Mszału Rzymskiego," *Anamnesis* 11, no. 2 (2005): 109; Jarosław Różański, *Wokół koncepcji inkulturacji* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2007), 21–23.

<sup>7</sup> "Praenotanda generalia," no 30–33, in: *Ordo baptismi parvulorum* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1986), 13; "Praenotanda," no 23–25, in: *Ordo baptismi parvulorum*, 20; "Praenotanda," no 16–17, in: *Ordo confirmationis* (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1973), 21; "Praenotanda," no 38, in: *Ordo paenitentiae* (Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1974), 24; Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 137.

*Concilium*, they appear as a component of the process of adapting the liturgy to the culture and traditions of various peoples (SC 37–40). Therefore, the author suggested that these be replaced with the term *inculturation*.<sup>8</sup> Of course, the latter is known in the documents of the Church, but the meaning of adaptation was not only specified in the liturgical constitution, but it also penetrated into the post-conciliar legislation. While inculturation is a broad and flexible term, adaptations seem to be a rather precise and semantically formed term. Therefore, this postulate does not seem to enjoy any chances for greater success. It is convenient – also on the basis of canon law – to retain these two concepts. Since both adaptations and inculturation refer to updating ecclesiastical institutions *which are subject to change* (SC 1), the former, however, imply a more general updating program, while the latter is one of the ways of achieving it.<sup>9</sup>

The rationale for the presence of adaptation in legal norms is associated with the concept of *aggiornamento*, which was an inspiration for the Second Vatican Council. The liturgical constitution noted that the purpose of this assembly of bishops was *to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change* (SC 1). Adjustments in the public worship of God also seemed necessary for the full implementation of the Council's postulates. The Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* assumes that this would be achieved by revising the existing rites and adapting them to the needs of a particular community. Therefore, adaptations should be seen not only as a kind of equivalent to *aggiornamento*, but also as standards for updating the liturgy.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Gerald Arbuckle, "Inculturation not adaptation: time to change terminology," *Worship* 60 (1986), no 6, 112–120.

<sup>9</sup> Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 138; Anscar Javier Chupungco, "Revision, adaptation, and inculturation: a definition of terms," in *L'adattamento culturale della liturgia. Metodi e modelli*, ed. I. Scicolone (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, 1993), 17–18; Vincenzo Mosca, "Diritto liturgico e inculturazione. Orizzonti teologici, normativi e pastorali," *Euntes docete* 56, no. 3 (2003): 122–123.

<sup>10</sup> Chupungco, "Revision, adaptation," 17; Mosca, "Diritto liturgico e inculturazione," 122; Mark R. Francis, "Liturgy and Inculturation since Vatican II: Where Are We? What Have We Learned?," *Worship* 91, no. 1 (2017): 26–27.

## 2. THE POLISH EDITION OF THE RITES OF THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

The Polish edition of *editio typica* containing the rites of the sacrament of marriage was published in print in 1974, after their prior approval by the Holy Congregation of Divine Worship on November 16, 1972.<sup>11</sup> As Władysław Nowak noted, it is a ripe fruit of the liturgical renewal in Poland. This book was preceded by thorough historical studies. At the stage of its preparation, the customs characteristic of Poland were taken into account. Critical consideration of the already existing forms allowed for the preparation of such a rite, which took into account that the new forms in a way grow organically out of the existing ones (SC 23).<sup>12</sup> Then – taking into account the changes resulting from the promulgation of *the Code of Canon Law* – the second edition of the rite of the sacrament of marriage was prepared, approved by the Congregation for the Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on 19 March 1990.<sup>13</sup> Currently, while celebrating this sacrament, one should use the third edition of the Polish liturgical book, published on the basis of *editio typica altera*.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the introduction, the book contains the rites of the sacraments of marriage during the Holy Mass and outside it, as well as the rites of marriage between a person belonging to the Catholic Church and a non-Christian or a catechumen. In addition to biblical and liturgical texts to choose from and a solemn final blessing, the book of the *Rites of the Sacrament of Marriage. Adapted to the customs of the Polish dioceses*, was equipped with formularies of entering into marriage in foreign languages: English, French, Lithuanian, German and Italian. Furthermore, the Polish ritual possesses –

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<sup>11</sup> Sacra Congregatio for Cultu Divino, “Decretum” (16.11.1972) [Prot. N. 1535/72], in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa. Dostosowane do zwyczajów diecezji polskich* (Katowice: Wydawnictwo św. Jacka, 2005), 6; Nowak, “Elementy Agendy Marcina Kromera,” 149–150.

<sup>12</sup> Nowak, “Akomodacja liturgii sakramentu małżeństwa,” 185; Milcarek, “Małżeństwo, chrzest i pogrzeź,” 129.

<sup>13</sup> The Congregation for the Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments, “Decree” (19.03.1990) [Prot. N. CD 1068/89], in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 9.

<sup>14</sup> Przewodniczący KEP, “Dekret” (20.01.1994) [N. 750/73/P], in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 5.

following the model of *editio typica altera* – an addendum, which contains the rites of marriage within Mass on the Anniversary of Marriage.<sup>15</sup>

The current form of the Polish ritual of solemnizing the sacrament of marriage was influenced primarily by two old Polish collections containing the rites of the sacraments and sacramentals: *Liturgical Books of Henryk Powodowski* from 1591 and *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer* from 1574. Undoubtedly, the latter of the indicated collections, which preceded the *Rites of the Sacrament of Marriage by four hundred years, was of greater importance. Adapted to the customs of the Polish dioceses*, published in 1974. *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer* was the response of this Bishop of Warmia to the postulates of the Council of Trent. Then – similarly as during the Second Vatican Council – emphasis was placed on the preparation of ritual books in such a way that they would take into account the customs and ceremonies that already existed at that time. *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer* was prepared in such a way that it served as a model for similar collections of this type for centuries. Consequently, it survived until the liturgical reform of the Second Vatican Council and was the starting point for the development of the current ritual.<sup>16</sup>

It must not be forgotten that since the publication of the *Tametsi* chapter of the Council of Trent, the canonical marriage has become a formal act of law. Its form, important and necessary for its validity, was modified by the decree *Ne temere* of August 2, 1907, and specified in can. 1094 of the *Code of Canon Law* of 1917. Also nowadays, only a marriage that assumes effective marital consent given by the spouses-to-be is considered to be valid (can. 1057 § 1 CCL), before an assisting qualified witness and two ordinary witnesses (can. 1108 § 1 CCL).<sup>17</sup> *Outside the case of necessity, the rites prescribed in the liturgical books approved by the Church or received*

<sup>15</sup> Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 303–304; Franciszek Blachnicki, Stanisław Hartlieb, “Biuletyn odnowy liturgii,” *Collectanea Theologica* 45, no. 1 (1975): 67; Krakowiak, “Typiczne wydania Rytuału Rzymskiego Pawła VI,” 17; Tadeusz Syczewski, *Problematyka liturgiczna*, 150.

<sup>16</sup> Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 304–305; Milcarek, “Małżeństwo, chrzest i pogrzeb,” 131–132; Nowak, “Akomodacja liturgii sakramentu małżeństwa,” 183; Nowak, “Elementy Agendy Marcina Kromera,” 150.

<sup>17</sup> Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 305; Rafael Navarro Valls, “Commentary on can. 1108,” in *Code of Canon Law. Commentary*, ed. pol. P. Majer (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Wolters Kluwer, 2011), 834.

by legitimate customs are to be observed in the celebration of a marriage (can. 1119 CCL). The general norms of liturgical law in relation to marriage outlined in the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC 77–78) were developed in the introduction to the book of *Marriage Sacraments. Adapted to the customs of the Polish dioceses*. This is the third edition of the ritual valid in Poland, published on the basis of the decree issued by the Chairman of the Polish Episcopal Conference of January 20 1994.<sup>18</sup>

### 3. FORMULAS AND CEREMONIES IN THE POLISH EDITION OF THE RITES OF MARRIAGE

The Polish Episcopal Conference prepared a ritual in which not only the introduction of appropriate adaptations was taken care of, but also it referred primarily to *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer* from 1574.<sup>19</sup> Adaptations of the rite of the marriage sacrament, prepared on the basis of *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer* – as Władysław Nowak demonstrated in his study – included formulas and ceremonies. Firstly, these are the questions that the qualified witness addresses to spouses-to-be before they give their marriage consent: *N. and N., have you come here to enter into Marriage without coercion, freely and wholeheartedly? Are you prepared, as you follow the path of Marriage, to love and honor each other for as long as you both shall live? Are you prepared to accept children lovingly from God*

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<sup>18</sup> “Wprowadzenie teologiczne i pastoralne,” no. 39–44, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 22–24; Milcarek, “Małżeństwo, chrzest i pogrzeb, 129; Navarro Valls, “Commentary to can. 1108,” in *Code of Canon Law. Commentary*, 844; Navarro Valls, “Commentary on can. 1108,” in *Code of Canon Law. Commentary*, 844; Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 305–306.

<sup>19</sup> On the basis of *the Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer*, a unified liturgy of the sacrament of marriage was introduced in Poland, which was compiled according to the indications of the Council of Trent. This rite was then taken over with minor changes by the editors of *the Liturgical Books of Powodowski* from 1591 and *Piotrków Ritual* from 1631, as well as its subsequent editions. In this way, over the period of 1574–1974 the liturgy of the sacrament of marriage in Poland remained almost unchanged. See: Władysław Nowak, “Agenda biskupa Marcina Kromera w dziele ujednoczenia liturgii sakramentów św. w Polsce po Soborze Trydenckim,” *Studia Warmińskie* 12 (1975): 75–90; Nowak, “Akomodacja liturgii sakramentu małżeństwa,” 183; Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 306.

and to bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?<sup>20</sup> The purpose of the questions asked is to establish whether this act is voluntary on the part of the parties entering into marriage. Secondly, the content of the marriage vow, which is the form of this sacrament at this point, needs to be discussed. Of course, both in the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and in the introduction to the analysed book, it was noted that for marriage to occur, it is required that the assistant *ask the persons entering into the marriage for consent and accept the consent* (SC 77).<sup>21</sup> This means that the words expressing marital consent are not as fixed as when performing other sacraments. Therefore, individual formulas of the vows in the national rituals may differ slightly from each other, but they are always texts to be ultimately approved by the Holy See.<sup>22</sup> For example, in the *editio typica* of the rites of the sacrament of marriage, the first text of the vow contains the words used since the Middle Ages in *English-speaking countries*: *Ego N. accipio te N. in uxorem meam (maritum meum) et promitto me tibi fidem servaturum (-am), inter prospera et adverse, in aegra et in sana valetudine, ut te diligam et honorem omnibus diebus vitae meae.*<sup>23</sup> The second text of the vow, which took the form of a question, reads as follows: *N., vis accipere N. in uxorem tuam/maritum tuum et promittis te illi fidem servaturum, inter proera et adversa, in aegra et in sana valetudine, ut eam/eum diligas et honores omnibus diebus vitae tuae?* To these words, in turn, the nuptials, each individually, answer: *Volo.*<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony: English translation according to the second typical edition. For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2016), 15; See also: “Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa w czasie Mszy Świętej,” no. 60, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 29.

<sup>21</sup> “Wprowadzenie teologiczne i pastoralne,” no. 42, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 23; Milcarek, “Małżeństwo, chrzest i pogrzeb,” 129; Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 306–307.

<sup>22</sup> “Wprowadzenie teologiczne i pastoralne,” no. 41, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 22; Antonio Miralles, “Teologia liturgica dei sacramenti. 7. Matrimonio. Edizione elettronica” (Roma, 2011), 89, in [http://www.liturgiaetsacramenta.info/texts/tl\\_matrimonio.pdf](http://www.liturgiaetsacramenta.info/texts/tl_matrimonio.pdf) (access: 01.04.2023); Krakowiak, “Typiczne wydania Rytułu Rzymskiego Pawła VI,” 17.

<sup>23</sup> “Ordo celebrandi matrimonium,” no. 62, in *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium*, 17; Milcarek, “Małżeństwo, chrzest i pogrzeb,” 126.

<sup>24</sup> *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium*, no 63, in: *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium*, 18; Miralles, “Teologia liturgica dei sacramenti,” 88–89; Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 307–308.



There are two vow wordings in the Polish rites of the marriage sacrament. The first one is more extensive and is derived entirely from *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer*. The spouses-to-be, encouraged by the qualified witness, turn to each other and repeat after him the words of the marriage vow: *Ja N. biorę ciebie N., za żonę/męża i ślubuję ci miłość, wierność i uczciwość małżeńską oraz że cię nie opuszczę aż do śmierci. Tak mi dopomóż Panie Boże w Trójcy Jedyny i wszyscy Święci [I, N., take you, N., to be my wife/husband and I vow to you love, loyalty and honesty in marriage and that I will not leave you until death do us part. So, help me God in the name of the Trinity, and Holy Saints].*<sup>25</sup> The other one is maintained in the form of questions asked by a qualified witness to each of the spouses-to-be individually: *N., do you take N., to be your wife/husband? Do you promise to be faithful to her/him in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love her and to honor her/him all the days of your life?* To the question posed in this way, each of the spouses-to-be replies: *I do.*<sup>26</sup> Apart from those mentioned above, a third possibility was also allowed for the engaged couple – if they could not speak – to sign the marriage formula in front of a qualified witness and ordinary witnesses or to consent to the marriage by other signs. Its legitimacy stems from the Codex standards, where the legislator determined that *those being married are to express matrimonial consent in words or, if they cannot speak, through equivalent signs* (can. 1104 § 2 CCL).<sup>27</sup>

The marriage vow is accompanied not only by the act of holding right hands by the bride and groom, but also by the custom of binding them with a stole, characteristic of Poland. On the basis of the national ritual, the celebrant, before the spouses-to-be give their marriage consent, addresses them with the following words: *If you intend to be joined in (sacramental) matrimony, give to one another your right hand*

<sup>25</sup> “Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa w czasie Mszy Świętej,” no. 63, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 31; Nowak, “Elementy Agendy Marcina Kromera,” 152–153.

<sup>26</sup> *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 15; see also: “Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa w czasie Mszy Świętej,” no. 65, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 32.

<sup>27</sup> “Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa w czasie Mszy Świętej,” no. 66, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 32; Pedro Juan Viladrich, “Comemntary to can. 1108,” in *Code of Canon Law. Commentary*, 830; Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 309–310.

and repeat the words of the marriage vow before God and the Church.<sup>28</sup> The ceremony of holding the other party's right hand was known in the rites of the sacrament of marriage as early as the 16th century. *Liturgical Books of Cracow*, *Liturgical Books of Poznań* and *Liturgical Books of Płock* placed this gesture only after the marriage vows and before the priest confirmed the marriage.<sup>29</sup> In this form, it was introduced into *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer*.<sup>30</sup> The significance of this gesture was explained by Władysław Nowak as follows: *Binding the hands of the wedding couple as a liturgical sign, in its expression, is for a Christian an educational instrument designed to help them in grasping the meaning of the Divine Revelation about the monogamy and indissolubility of marriage*.<sup>31</sup> This custom, cultivated by later rituals, was incorporated into the current rituals of the sacrament of Marriage. The bishops expressed a positive opinion on this subject at the stage of the revision of the Polish ritual, which is confirmed by the correspondence preserved in Archives of the Polish Episcopal Conference between cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate of Poland and Franciszek Małaczyński, the Secretary of the Liturgical Commission of the Polish Episcopate. In response to the letter of the aforementioned secretary dated 11 April 1972, the Primate of Poland informed him of the position of the Polish Episcopal Conference, taken at the 130th plenary meeting of that assembly, according to which *the old beautiful Polish custom of tying the groom and bride's hands with a stole, by which one expresses their connection with the sacrament, whose sign and symbol the stole is, should be maintained; the custom of repeating the*

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<sup>28</sup> "Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa w czasie Mszy Świętej," no. 62, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 31; see also: *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 16.

<sup>29</sup> *Agenda latino et vulgari sermone Polonico videlicet et Alemanico illuminata incipit feliciter* (Cracoviae, 1514), col. 66; *Agenda secundum rubricam ecclesie Cathedralis Cracoviensis* (Cracoviae, 1517), col. 46; *Agenda secundum cursum et rubricam Ecclesiae Cathedralis Posnaniensis, Ad ritum Metropolitanae quam potuit vicinius reducta* (Lipsiae, 1533), col. 93; *Agenda Ecclesiae Cathedralis Plocensis* (Cracoviae, 1554), col. 27; Nowak, "Elementy Agendy Marcina Kromera," 154–155.

<sup>30</sup> *Agenda sacramentalia ad usum dioecesis Varmiensis accommodata cum adiunctis verbis et admonitionibus polonicis et germanicis* (Coloniae, 1574); Nowak, "Elementy Agendy Marcina Kromera," 154–155.

<sup>31</sup> Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 310–311; Nowak, "Akomodacja liturgii sakramentu małżeństwa," 184–185; Nowak, "Elementy Agendy Marcina Kromera," 155.

vow after the priest should be preserved in order to avoid nervousness and making mistakes while reading.<sup>32</sup>

The local conference of bishops – in addition to adapting the layout of the content of the ritual, texts of prayers and melodies of songs to the character of the language and a given culture – may introduce adaptations relating to the exchange of rings or omitting this ceremony, as well as supplementing the ceremony with the custom of placing a wreath on a spouse or welcoming spouses-to-be.<sup>33</sup> In reference to the rings, it should be noted that originally only the woman received one from the man as a confirmation of wedding and as a sign of her fidelity to him. When marriage was solemnised in the presence of a priest, at the end of the ritual, an act of blessing the ring by him and its receipt by the woman was envisaged. This can be found in historical French and Italian rituals, as well as in the *Roman Ritual* from 1614. Similarly, in Poland, the custom of giving the ring only to the woman was maintained for quite a long time. This is confirmed by the *Liturgical Books of Henryk of Wierzbno* dating back to the 14th century, then by the *Liturgical Books of Wilno* (1499) and the *Liturgical Books of Cracow* (1514). It was slightly different in Spain. In this country, there existed practice of both spouses wearing wedding rings. They were – similarly as in other countries – blessed at the end of the wedding ceremony and mutually put on by newlyweds. Before the Spanish custom was approved by other countries in Western Europe, it managed to make its way to Poland. Exchanging wedding rings between newlyweds was already known in *Liturgical Books of Poznań* (1533), *Liturgical Books of Gniezno* (1549), *Liturgical Books of Płock* (1554), through which the rituals were finally introduced in *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer* (1574). The practised custom of blessing two wedding rings and putting them on each other's hand by the newlyweds became consolidated in later Polish rituals and is now also inscribed in the marriage rite. The text of ring blessing and the words spoken when they are put on hands emphasize the spouses' commitment to mutual love and fidelity, but also direct the new-

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<sup>32</sup> Prymas Polski, „List do Przewielebnego O. Franciszka Małaczyńskiego” (11.05.1972), in Archiwum Sekretariatu Konferencji Episkopatu Polski, 1479/72/P; Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 311.

<sup>33</sup> “Wprowadzenie teologiczne i pastoralne,” no. 41, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 22–23; Krakowiak, “Typiczne wydania Rytuału Rzymskiego Pawła VI,” 17.

lyweds' thoughts to God from whom they wish to receive the graces needed to persevere in these virtues.<sup>34</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

The rites of the marriage sacrament are a mature fruit of the liturgical renewal in Poland. This book was preceded by thorough historical studies. During its preparation, the customs characteristic of Poland were taken into consideration. Therefore, it is largely a ritual referring to the *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer* dating back to 1574, which is important for discussing this issue.

As part of the *de lege lata* conclusions, it should be noted that in order to be validly married, the priest is required to ask for and accept the consent of the couple entering into marriage (SC 77). This means that the words expressing marital consent are not as fixed as when performing other sacraments. Therefore, particular vows in national rituals may differ slightly, but their texts always need to be ultimately approved by the Holy See. The text of the first marriage vow present in the Polish rites of the sacrament of matrimony comes from *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer* in its entirety, while the second – modelled on the *editio typica* – is maintained in the form of questions asked by a qualified witness to each of the spouses-to-be separately. In addition to the aforementioned, a third possibility for marital consent was also allowed, consisting of the fiancées signing the marriage vows when they are not able to speak (can. 1104 § 2 CCL).

It is a characteristic Polish custom, observed during a wedding ceremony, to bind the right hands of the bride and groom with a stole during the vows. Also, this act – approved by the Polish bishops at the stage of developing relevant adaptations and incorporated into the rites of marriage – comes from *Liturgical Books of Marcin Kromer*. In the Polish ritual of marriage ceremonies, the custom of blessing two rings and putting them on each other's hand by newlyweds was maintained. However, there

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<sup>34</sup> "Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa w czasie Mszy Świętej," no. 68–70, in *Obrzędy sakramentu małżeństwa*, 33–34; Miralles, "Teologia liturgica dei sacramenti," 92–93; Nowak, "Elementy Agendy Marcina Kromera," 154–155; Kołodziej, *Adaptacje i akomodacje w liturgii*, 311–312.

is no mention of veiling and wreathing, which in turn are present in the liturgical books of other countries.

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