



PAWEŁ SITEK

University of Economics and Human
Sciences in Warsaw, Poland

ORCID iD: 0000-0002-4625-8803

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER FOR THE DURABILITY OF MARRIAGE

ABSTRACT

The choice of issues and the definition of research objective results from the author's many years of academic and professional work. The author specializes, among others, in guiding and representing spouses in the divorce process. Years of observation led to the idea to study whether there is a correlation between the trend of secularization, lack of prayer and the increasing number of divorces.

In addition to using a method appropriate for a lawyer, i.e. the legal-dogmatic method, surveys were conducted in the planned area on 206 respondents.

The research problems were aimed at answering the questions: Does progressive atheization have an impact and correspond with the practice of prayer? Does prayer have an impact on the human condition? If so, what areas of human life benefit from prayer? A key problem was to investigate whether prayer can affect the durability of marriages?

It is erroneously assumed that Christian prayer occurs and concerns the inner sphere of man. John Cassian, who lived at the turn of the 4th/Vth century between Egypt and southern Gaul, described the phenomenon of *constant prayer*.

While the spiritual benefits of fasting and prayer may be difficult to measure scientifically, there is evidence to support the view that fasting and prayer can have a positive impact on our mental and emotional well-being. The subject has been researched and presented in relation to the trend of increasing number of divorces in Poland.

KEYWORDS: *prayer; marriage; divorce; God; therapy; Creator; benefit of prayer*

1. INTRODUCTION

People have been trying to define prayer and analyze its meaning since ancient times. It is universally accepted that prayer is a cultic activity, found in every religion, and basically consists in directing one's own thoughts to the being that is the subject of worship. Consequently, it is important to note the condition that in order to enter into the consideration of prayer, first of all, one needs faith and later on, one can attempt to comprehend the relationship between the creature and the Creator. Faith in the absolute fact that the beginning of the world, as well as the beginning of every living being, of animate as well as inanimate nature, comes from the will of the Creator, i.e. God. According to such assumption, we have a relationship of God as a Creator and a man as a God's creation, and prayer is a multifaceted relationship between the Creator

and his creation. Further consideration in this regard makes sense only provided that we recognize that a man is a creation of God, who comes from the Creator and returns to the Creator.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (Pallottinum Publishing House, 1994) defines prayer as a gift of God. In paragraph 2560, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: *Oh, if you knew the God's gift! (J 4,10). "The miracle of prayer is revealed right there, at the well where we come to seek our water: there Christ comes out to meet every human being; He is the first to seek us, and it is He who asks us to give Him a drink. Jesus feels the thirst, His request comes from the depths of God, who thirsts for us. Prayer – whether we realize it or not – is an encounter between God's thirst and our thirst. God desires that we desire Him* (Augustine, 64). God, as the source and origin of every living being, has set man apart from the rest of the creatures on Earth by giving him free will. Man, using his free will, can do a lot, but above all he can reject the desire (love) for God, then man becomes a god to himself and feels no need to pray (a relationship with God) remaining alone, in a relationship with himself.

Christian prayer is a covenant relationship between God and man in Christ. It is an action of God and man; it flows from the Holy Spirit and from us, and is directed entirely toward the Father, in union with the human will of the Son of God who became man. In the New Covenant, prayer is a tangible relationship of God's children with their infinitely good Father, with His Son Jesus Christ and with the Holy Spirit (Cf. St. Augustine) (Millenium Bible, Romans, 2018, 6:5).

It is erroneously assumed that Christian prayer occurs and concerns the inner sphere of man. Saint John Cassian, who lived at the turn of the 4th/Vth century between Egypt and southern Gaul, described *constant prayer* (Saint John Cassian, 2020).

According to St. John Cassian, striving for the constant prayer is not daring, but rather a remedy for very weak people. Cassian puts it this way: *instead of living according to your ideas, try to strive for constant prayer, i.e. worshipping the Lord God without illusory ideas about Him*. As a way forward, Cassian proposes a monologic, or a one-sentence prayer (today we would call it an aspiration prayer): *God! Please hurry to rescue me! GOD, come quickly to my side!! (Psalm 70:2)*. *Unlike the aspiration act, which is uttered once, the verse of*

the Psalm, as Cassian commands, is to be repeated almost continuously in all circumstances of life. Therefore, in the Conversation X, Cassian gives an overview of the various life situations – both bad and good – in which the prayer is applicable. If we are subject to temptations, we pray by asking God for support. In the moments of good fortune, we turn to the Lord, so that He will guard us from the pride of self-sufficiency. Cassian wants to show that the prayer is not a kind of luxury, but is a state – a relationship with the Lord God that one builds up day after day, in every situation without exception. What, then, is at stake when we pray? Cassian formulates the answer in a beautiful rhythmic prose: “The point is that in every movement of the mind, every beat of the heart, every glance of the eyes, every twitch of the will – there is God. The constant prayer transforms a person. Further, Cassian elaborates on this thought in the Conversation XIV on reading the Bible – the point is that God’s word transforms a man into the God’s Ark. Cassian believes that a deep union with God is possible, which is why the theme of transformation under the influence of prayer and the word of God returns again and again. Ultimately, together with Christ we ascend Mount Tabor and are transfigured – just like Him.

Research topics are not entirely new. The literature has already indicated the results of research on the impact of prayer on marriages and family life. Fincham, an expert in the research on religion and marriage, points out (Fincham, 2013, 341-354) that prayer increases relationship protective factors by facilitating forgiveness and sacrificing selfish interests for the good of the partner and the relationship. Similarly, the rate of infidelity decreases. Marks (Marks, 2005, 85-111), in his study discovered that *religious communities, practices, and beliefs [of 76 wives and husbands from different religions surveyed] were of central importance in maintaining, supporting, and stabilizing their marriages in the face of time, stress, and other challenges.* However, there were no research on the topic in Eastern Europe, where Christian religion together with post-socialist experience have a great influence on marriages and traditional family structure.

2. RESULTS

The author of this paper is a theoretician of law, but also a practitioner who runs his own law firm, specializing, among others, in counselling and representing spouses in the divorce procedure. On the basis of many years of observation and acquired procedural knowledge, the author decided to conduct a scientific study on the fact of atheization of social life and its possible relationship to the durability of marriages.

The aim was to determine the current structure of believers, atheists and followers of other religions in Poland, while investigating the impact of this structure on the durability of marriages. The genesis of adopted objective was the research hypothesis stating that prayer has an impact on the durability of marriages. The research problems were aimed at answering the questions: Does progressive atheization have an impact and does it correspond with the practice of prayer? Does prayer have an impact on the human condition? If so, what areas of human life benefit from prayer? A key problem was to investigate whether prayer can affect the durability of marriages.

Specifically, the research plan was to verify and evaluate in an interdisciplinary way the impact of prayer on the durability of marriages and the relationship of a lack of prayer to the growing trend of marriage breakdown in Poland. The fact that the number of divorces grows, remains indisputable. In addition, the trend showing deterioration of people's mental health in the 21st century is also indisputable. The research hypothesis thus stated, and the adoption of indisputable facts as axioms, allowed to identify the problems and research questions. Namely, does the increasing number of divorces correspond to the changing structure of believers and non-believers in Poland? Is there a potential relationship between prayer, or rather the lack of prayer, and the growing trend of divorces? Ultimately, the problem of importance that the prayer has for a man's mental health and whether the prayer can have other benefits for a person besides spiritual ones seems interesting. Can prayer as a tangible relationship with God be analyzed from a therapeutic point of view?

The author, deciding to conduct research in the interdisciplinary field, had to use the legal-dogmatic method, but also the survey and interview methods, which are required by the methodology of the social sciences. At the same time,

doctrinal and linguistic interpretations were used in the study of legal and historical sources. It is necessary to emphasize that in the paper a statistical survey was carried out – the collection, gathering and compilation of statistical data, as well as the publication and release of calculation results, studies and analyses carried out, including basic quantities and indicators. The article, of an interdisciplinary nature, requires the use of research methods characteristic of several disciplines of social sciences, i.e. legal methods: legal – dogmatic based on legal and dogmatic interpretation, and a statistical method characteristic of sociological sciences based on a questionnaire. The detailed results and conclusions are presented further in the paper.

2.1. THE SURVEY AND THE INTERVIEW METHOD

One of the key research problems was an attempt to determine what is the influence and impact of the prayer on the divorce trends. According to the secular law, a divorce can be issued by the Court when there has been a permanent and complete dissolution of marriage between the spouses (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 1359, of 2022, item 2140).

In the court practice, these conditions are considered fulfilled when: cohabitation between the spouses has ceased, the parties do not maintain a common household, and the emotional and affectional ties between them have ceased (permanent severance of ties: physical, economic and spiritual).

The social authorities as well as the representatives of the scientific world do not express unequivocal criticism of the phenomenon of a growing number of divorces in Poland or around the world. The politicians incidentally use slogans and programs supposedly saving the prosperity and durability of marriages. The political programs are not the subject of this study.

The underlying point of this paper is an attempt to investigate whether atheization, the absence of God in people's lives and thus the lack of prayer (relationship with God) may contribute to the growing divorce trend. In the 21st century, we are beginning to forget the invaluable benefits of the durability of marriage (Zbyrad, 2021, 51-66).

It is about the benefits for the birth of a new citizen, the upbringing and proper formation of the next generations. This, in turn, translates into benefits for society,

employers, and finally, it guarantees the development of the country and thus GDP. An exceptional example of focusing on the advantages of the durability of marriage, can be seen in the view expressed by Teresa J. Zbyrad (Zbyrad, 2020).

At the end of 2021, there were 8 million 759 thousand marriages in Poland (GUS, 2021). The aforementioned CSO report is the most up-to-date one. This is more than 100,000 fewer than a year earlier. More than half of them are religious marriages. The CSO devotes the first part of its report to the key issue of fertility in demography. At the end of 2021, the Polish population was 37 million 908 thousand, almost 181 thousand smaller than at the end of 2020. The rate of the so-called *actual loss* was – 0.47 percent.

The pandemic exacerbated the unfavorable trends observed in the past years. Indeed, the population has been declining since 2012, except for a slight increase – by less than 1 thousand – in 2017. The changes in the population in recent years are mainly influenced by the natural growth, which remains negative in Poland since 2013. The number of new marriages and their durability remain an element of demographic development, as the number of children in Poland is determined, among others, by the number of marital relationships. Hence the latest data on new relationships and divorces.

The CSO reports that despite a steady increase in the number of births from informal relationships, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total number are still born in formal relationships, i.e. marriages.

Unfortunately, there is also an unfavorable trend in family formation processes – the number of new marriages has remained below 200,000 per year since 2013. In 2021, 168 thousand new relationships were registered. The highest number in this century amounted to 258 thousand and it was recorded in 2008. And marriages and families are the basis of a strong and safe society (Banaszak, 2014, 395–408).

Nearly 61 thousand marriages were dissolved by the court in 2021. The number of divorces in the cities is almost three times higher than in the rural areas. The duration of relations between divorced couples is about 14 years on average.

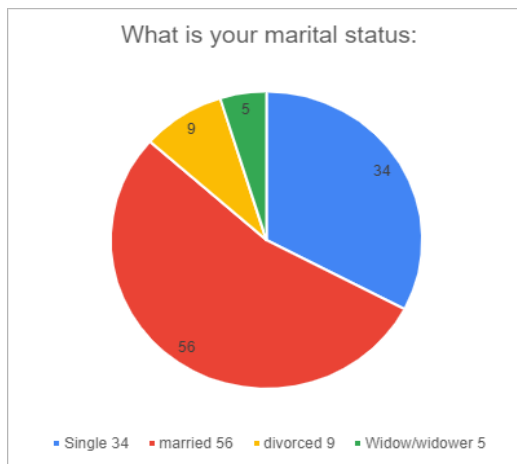
It might be caused and may results in the increasing trends such as: atheization, the number of divorces, objective data on the deterioration of citizens' mental health, the number of addictions.

In this context, there arises a following research problem: what is the relationship and impact of prayer on the trend of divorce, or rather, what are the effects of the lack of prayer in the life of a spouse and how this translates into the durability of marriage?

The data leave no doubt that the once almost automatic process of *inheritance of religiousness* is shrinking. Today, the *faith of the fathers* is not necessarily being adopted by children. In addition, the increasing number of divorces means that fathers do not live with their children, which also translates into a limited impact of so-called religious socialization. Meanwhile, the psychologists emphasize the important aspect of a man's spirituality as a husband and father in the socialization process (Kułaczkowski, Gąsior, Sakowicz, Slodička, 2012, 129-138).

A survey was conducted on 206 respondents in order to obtain the answers as to the key problem questions posed from the conceptual assumptions of this study.

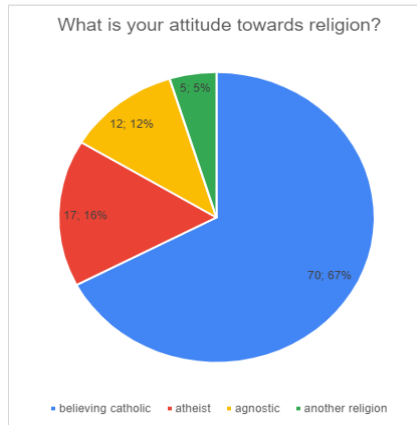
Figure 1. Question No. 1 intended to determine the respondent's marital status.



Source: Results of own survey conducted on 206 respondents in March 2023 in Poland.

Among the 206 respondents, 56% were married, 34% single, 9% divorced and 5% widowed.

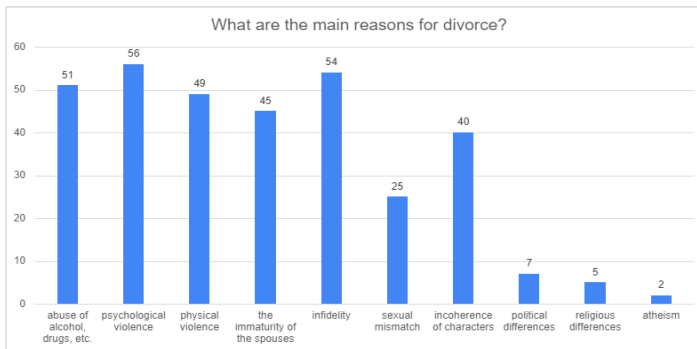
Figure 2. The question No. 2, aimed to determine what is the attitude of the surveyed person towards religion.



Source: Results of own survey conducted on 206 respondents in March 2023 in Poland.

Among the 206 people surveyed, 70% were declared Catholics. The author of the survey deliberately did not ask about the issue of practicing religion. Another 17% were atheists, 12% agnostics and 5% people of other religions.

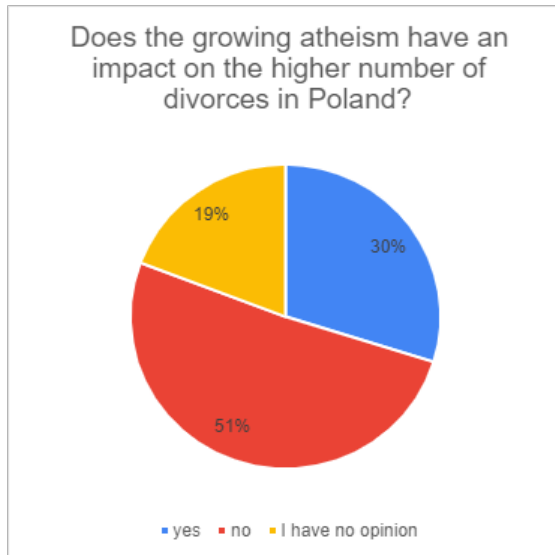
Figure 3 Question No. 3 intended to determine the main reasons for divorce. In this question, the respondents could choose among several answers. The reason for the breakup of a marriage is most often associated with several dysfunctions.



Source: Results of the authors 's own survey conducted on 206 respondents in March 2023 in Poland.

The result shows that among respondents a high rate of reasons was caused by: an alcohol addiction, a mental and physical violence, a lack of spouse maturity, infidelity. It is noteworthy that respondents do not believe that the atheism or the differences in religious views are the main cause of divorce.

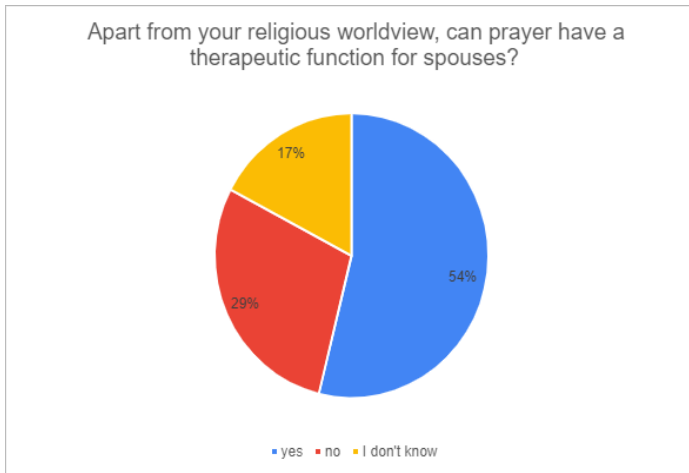
Figure 4. Question No. 4 intended to determine whether growing atheism has an impact on the higher number of divorces in Poland.



Source: Results of own survey conducted on 206 respondents in March 2023 in Poland.

Among the 206 people surveyed, as many as 51% of the respondents answered that growing atheism has no impact on the number of divorces. 30% felt that atheism has an impact on the number of divorces, and 19% of individuals had no opinion on the matter.

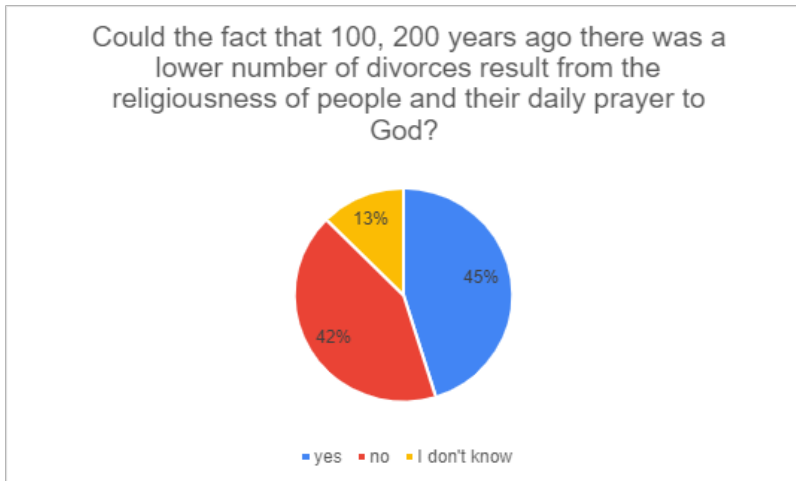
Figure 5. Question No. 5 aimed to determine whether prayer can have a therapeutic function for spouses?



Source: Results of the author's own survey conducted on 206 respondents in March 2023 in Poland.

Among the 206 surveyed people, as many as 54% of the respondents answered yes. Comparing this result to the previous question (no. 4), as many as 51% of respondents believe that atheism has no impact on the number of divorces. On the other hand, in question no. 5, as many as 54% acknowledge the therapeutic benefit of prayer for the marriage. There are 29% who strongly believe that prayer has no therapeutic benefit for spouses, and 17% of individuals had no opinion on the matter.

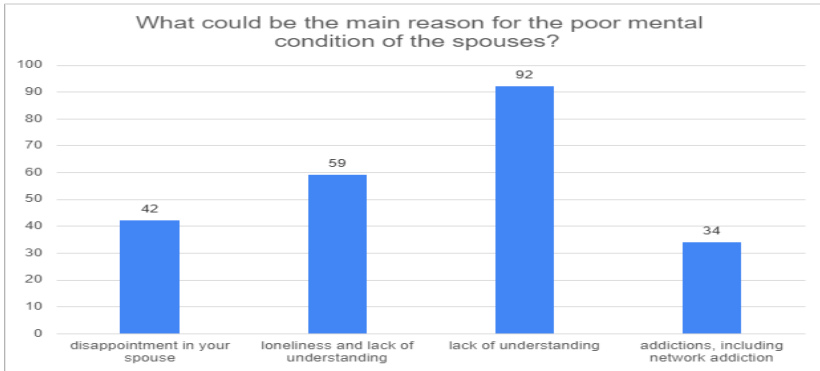
Figure 6. Question No. 6 was posed to determine whether the fact that 100, 200 years ago there were fewer divorces could be due to people's religiousness and their daily prayers to God?



Source: Results of own survey conducted on 206 respondents in March 2023 in Poland.

The respondents' answers to this question were polarized. Indeed, 45% answered yes, 42% answered no, and only 13% had no opinion on this issue. Despite the polarization among respondents, it is worth noting that the 45% who answered *yes* forms a significantly smaller percentage than the number of declared Catholics. This means that among Catholics, the function of prayer and a man's relationship with the Creator is underestimated.

Figure 7. Question no. 7 aimed to determine why the modern spouses may be in a bad mental condition. This question included multiple answer choices.



Source: Results of own survey conducted on 206 respondents in March 2023 in Poland.

The research results indicated that the *lack of understanding* is the main cause of the spouses' poor mental condition. Drawing too far-reaching conclusions from the obtained survey may result in erroneous and exaggerated claims. However, it seems legitimate to say that a person strongly feels the need to be understood and to feel empathy.

Figure 8. Question no. 8 aimed to determine who or what might be the best therapist for spouses. Respondents could indicate several answers.



Source: Results of own survey conducted on 206 respondents in March 2023 in Poland.

The result of the last question is surprising. The lowest number was scored by a psychotherapist, which, especially taking into account a growing popularity of psychotherapy, should be interpreted as a potential disillusionment with the effects of therapies already undergone. The approximate survey results included: prayer as a regular relationship with God (31%), spouse (30%), friend (27%), cleric (31%). The author of the research does not indicate the final conclusions in order not to be accused of manipulation. Certainly, the trends of secularization combined with atheization are noticeable. Additionally, Catholics underestimate the relationship of the number of divorces to a lack of prayer and a weakening relationship with the Creator. At the same time, for several decades, the widespread use of psychotherapy has been undergoing a crisis and we no longer notice the benefits of psychotherapy in saving marriages. At the same time, the survey shows that respondents generally do not directly associate the condition of marriage with a prayer or its lack.

3. DISCUSSION

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF THE PRAYER

It can be assumed that nowadays the prayer has lost its importance due to the rise of atheism. The prayer is perceived as the reciting of the learned lines, closely associated with a particular religion. Such superficial and stereotypical perception strongly discourages from practicing it. Meanwhile, the prayer comes with many benefits, not only on the spiritual level, but also on psychological one (Gruszczyńska, Heszen-Niejodek, 2004, 15-31).

The very word *prayer* brings certain associations. It is colloquially assumed that a praying person usually kneels and repeats certain phrases or performs ritual actions.

The meaning of the prayer is much more profound and means a connection with a Higher Power, provided we are not stuck in the fallacy of self-creation. We can define this Force in accordance with our own beliefs – as God. The external setting, i.e. the names we use or the gestures we make, is of secondary importance. What is important is that the prayer should

be authentic, that is, consistent with the primary conviction that a man is incapable of creating himself, thus indicating a relation of a man with the Creator. In a broad sense of a prayer understood as a connection with God, everything we do can become prayer. If our connection with the Creator (Source) is authentic and thus strong and long-lasting, the words and rituals are no longer necessary.

To experience the psychological benefits of the prayer in your life, it is important to treat the prayer as a meeting with a Higher Power (God). During this meeting you will have the opportunity to voice your innermost desires, fears and doubts, even ask questions like a creation to the Creator. The form of message is not as important as its content. The prayer may become the only chance during the day to drop the mask and stand in the truth revealing your true self. The psychologists believe that the regular prayer, in addition to its spiritual benefits, also has a number of practical advantages that will positively affect our daily lives (Majkowski, 1955/1957, 135-152).

It is possible to hypothesize that the prayer facilitates problem solving. To verbalize and describe what worries us is the first step towards getting out of an unwanted situation. As long as the problem resides solely in the head, in the form of chaos and vague thoughts, it is something frightening and foreign to us. When we dare to put it into words, we gain a healthy distance and can develop a constructive solution. Often, already in the process of the prayer, clarity emerges in us so that we know what we should do (Kwiatkowski. 1958, 178-268).

Next, it is worth pointing out that prayer prevents us from feeling lonely. These days, loneliness has become a plague affecting many people. Technological progress, which was supposed to make communication easier, has paradoxically made us grow distant from each other. We are unable to talk about our needs and emotions. We do not admit our fears and weaknesses, even to ourselves (Bachanek, 2015, 31-47).

For this lack of authentic bonds with oneself, with God and with others, we pay the price of loneliness and emptiness, which must translate into the durability of marriages and their ability to recover. The prayer can at least partially compensate for these losses. Sharing with each other our concerns and trusting that we will be helped has invaluable therapeutic value. The constant prayer, as

noticed by John Cassian, while keeping in mind the four basic types of prayer (prayer of blessing and adoration, prayer of petition, prayer of intercession and prayer of thanksgiving) improves our relationships with others. Practicing prayer is an opportunity to throw out emotions, thus preventing them from being suppressed and accumulated (Jastrzębski. 2014, 79-98).

The prayer brings benefits not only to us, but also to our loved ones, especially the spouse. Relationships with our spouses become more authentic and harmonious, as we do not enter them with the baggage of accumulated feelings. During the prayer, we also learn to communicate our own desires or experiences. This valuable skill will certainly bear fruit in dealing with the loved ones. The prayer is the best introduction to action. The act of prayer (remembering to strive for constant prayer), like meditation, carries a powerful energy that is not indifferent to God. The prayer of thanksgiving has a special power to initiate or attract positive circumstances, especially if accompanied by visualization. Sincere trust and gratitude, expressed in prayer, raise our vibration, inspire hope and motivation, making it an excellent prelude to further action. These are just some of the benefits of regular prayer. Given that prayer costs us nothing in financial terms, it is all the more worth giving it a chance and incorporating it into daily life (Berger, 1971).

4. CONCLUSIONS

Summing it up, prayer is important spiritual disciplines that can help deepen our relationship with Jesus and experience a greater sense of inner peace and well-being. By choosing to fast and to pray, we choose to trust Jesus and seek His guidance and direction for our lives.

While the benefits of fasting and prayer may not be immediately apparent, they can lead to greater mental clarity over time, to a deeper spiritual connection to Jesus, and to a greater sense of gratitude and humility. It is important to remember that fasting and prayer are not meant to be legalistic or burdensome, but rather a way to seek Jesus in a more full way and trust in His provision in our lives.

The fact that the marriages become temporary in Poland cannot be disputed. The duration of marriage keeps getting shorter and shorter. Currently, spouses are not willing to make the effort to reach an agreement through therapy or mediation (Sitek, 2017, 113-131). The patchwork families become an indisputable fact. Nowadays, the growing number of cohabiting couples is becoming an increasing problem. This should be considered a problem because these unions are legal, although not as stable as marriages, and they do not provide the highest degree of family security (Siejka, 2014, 431-446). The trend of secularization and atheization of society cannot go unnoticed. Taking into account the above facts, the author tried to investigate whether there is a relationship between changes in religiousness, in particular the lack and abandonment of prayer, and a greater number of marriages falling apart. The surveys offer the possibility of various interpretations. The author consciously limited our own conclusions, due to the fact that there are increasingly too many suggested views. The author was rather concerned to present the results in such a way that the readers could draw their own conclusions.

The fact that the respondents put so little trust and hope in the assistance of therapists in their marital problems is worth noting, at the same time there are noticeable hopes and expectations with regards to the Church and clergy.

Referring to the hypothesis, the conclusions allow us to formulate a positive verification. The research objective adopted at the beginning proves the actual benefits of the influence of prayer on the durability of marriages.

The prayer can penetrate the structure and the path of human life from within, giving it existential meaning, ordering harmoniously and universally all the areas of life from joy to suffering and up to the death of a man. The prayer and especially the constant prayer should be present in various areas of human functioning. The constant prayer can become self-therapeutic. The Prayer became the main focus of the research in terms of its therapeutic functions for the individual spouse as well as the entire marriage. The prayer realizes and expresses greater needs, participates in the creation and maintenance of basic life goals, as well as copes with difficult situations, by means of which it can become a program of the Christian life.

In particular, the author attempted to determine how the prayer affects the lives of spouses or whether the fact of atheization and consequently the lack of prayer affects the number of divorces.

The paper highlights the spiritual benefits of prayer, the different types of prayers and practical ways to incorporate them into our daily lives. Some scientific evidence was cited to support the view that fasting and prayer can have a positive impact on mental and emotional well-being. As Christians, we can draw strength and guidance from Jesus as we embark on the spiritual journey of fasting and prayer. It might bring numerous benefits. The most common ones, noted in studies, are: a deeper spiritual connection, self-reflection and personal development, increased mental clarity and focus, a sense of humility and gratitude, an inner peace and reduced stress, a bond with Jesus, forgiveness and healing.

While the spiritual benefits of fasting and prayer may be difficult to measure scientifically, there is some evidence to support the view that fasting and prayer can have a positive impact on our mental and emotional well-being. Please find below some examples:

Fasting has an impact on the body and mind: numerous studies have shown that fasting can lead to lower blood pressure, cholesterol and weight levels, and can also improve insulin sensitivity and immune function. These physical changes can lead to improved mental clarity and overall well-being.

The prayer and mental health: There is evidence that suggests that prayer can improve mental health and emotional regulation. Studies have shown that people who engage in prayer or other forms of spiritual practice may experience depression or anxiety less often and may have better coping strategies for stressful situations.

It is worth emphasizing that the verbalization and description of what bothers us constitute the first steps toward getting out of an unwanted situation. As long as the problem is only in the head, in the form of chaotic and vague thoughts, it is something frightening and foreign to us.

When we dare to put it into words, we gain a healthy distance and we can develop a constructive solution. Often clarity emerges already in the prayer, so that we know what we should do.

The prayer keeps us from feeling lonely. Loneliness affects many people. Technological development, which is supposed to make communication easier, made us distant from each other. We are unable to talk about our needs and emotions. We do not admit our fears and weaknesses, even to ourselves.

The practice of prayer is an opportunity to expel our emotions, thus preventing them from being suppressed and accumulating. It brings positive effects not only to us, but also to those around us. Relationships with others become more authentic and harmonious, as we do not enter them with the baggage of accumulated feelings. During the prayer we also learn to communicate our own desires or experiences.

Taking into account that prayer costs us nothing in financial terms, it is all the more worth giving it a chance and incorporating it into daily life. The author intends to continue investigating the relationship between the prayer and the divorce. The research requires an interdisciplinary approach and the involvement of specialists from the widest possible range of scientific fields.

Based on the information provided, the article investigates the relationship between changes in religiousness, particularly the lack and abandonment of prayer, and the increasing number of marriages falling apart in Poland. The author suggests that prayer can have a positive impact on the durability of marriages and highlights the spiritual benefits of prayer, including a deeper spiritual connection, self-reflection, increased mental clarity, humility, inner peace, and reduced stress. The paper aims to present the results in a way that allows readers to draw their own conclusions while acknowledging the noticeable hopes and expectations placed in the Church and clergy as opposed to therapists in marital problems.

REFERENCES

- Bachanek, G. (2015). Psychology versus Theology. Places of encounter in J. Ratzinger's anthropological reflection, University of Białystok Publishing House, p. 31-47.
- Banaszak, A. (2014). Model rodzin według nauki Kościoła Katolickiego gwarantem zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa społecznego. *Journal of Modern Science*. 2014;21(2):395-408.
- Berger, P. (1971). *La religion dans la conscience moderne. Essai d'analyse culturelle*, Centurion, Paris.
- Fincham, F.D. (2013). I say a little prayer for you: Do prayers matter in marriage and family life?. *Contemporary issues in family studies: Global perspectives on partnerships, parenting and support in a changing world*, 341-354.
- Gruszczyńska, E., Heszen-Niejodek, I. (2004). The spiritual dimension of man, its significance in the psychology of health and its measurement, *Psychological Review*, 2004, Vol. 47, No. 1, p. 15-31).
- GUS. (2021). Polish Central Statistical Office Statistics, Population. Size and structure and vital statistics in Poland by territorial division in 2021. As of 30th June.
- Jastrzębski, A. K. (2014). Psychological help and prayer for inner healing, *Scientific Society of the Catholic University of Lublin & John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin*, Issue: p. 79-98).
- Kułaczkowski, J. (2012). K. Gąsior, T. Sakowicz, A. Słodička. 2012, Preparing a daughter for family life as a father's educational task in terms of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, in: *Man in the Family – Hopes and Threats*, ed. Publishing House, Kielce.
- Kwiatkowski, W. (1958). Results of experimental research in the psychology of religion for the last fifty years, *Collectanea Theologica* 29/1-4 year p. 178-268.
- Majkowski, J. (1955/1957). From the psychology of the expression of Catholic prayer, *Philosophical Yearbooks*, Vol 5, No. 4, p. 135-152)
- Marks, L. (2005). How Does Religion Influence Marriage? Christian, Jewish, Mormon, and Muslim Perspectives, *Marriage & Family Review*, 2005, 38:1, 85-111, DOI: 10.1300/J002v38n01_07
- Millennium Bible (Biblia Tysiąclecia). (2018). *Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments*, Pallottinum Publishing House 2018, cf. Romans 6:5, Psalm 70:2
- Saint John Cassian. (2020). *Conversations with the Desert Fathers*, Vol. 1, Collations I-X, Tyniec Benedictine Publishing House.
- Siejka, P. (2014). Skutki prawne konkubinatu jako alternatywy dla małżeństwa w XXI wieku. *Journal of Modern Science*. 2014;20(1):431-446.
- Sitek, B. (2017). Mediacja szansą na ocalenie małżeństwa? Studium prawa rzymskiego, kanonicznego i cywilnego. *Journal of Modern Science*. 2017;32(1):113-131.
- St. Augustine. (1993). *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*, 64, 4: PL 40,56, [za:] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. (1993). Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Citta del Vaticano. Retrieved (20.01.2023) from http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM#fonte, canon 2560.

- The Catechism of the Catholic Church. (1994). Pallottinum Publishing House, Poznań.
- Zbyrad, T. J. (2020). Marriage and family in the process of secularization transformations, Scientific Publishing House of the Pedagogical University, Cracow.
- Zbyrad, T. J. (2021). Znaczenie religii dla trwałości małżeństwa i rodziny (The importance of religion for the durability of marriage and family). Zeszyty Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego Jana Pawła II (Scientific Journals Catholic University of Lublin), 64(3), 51–66. <https://doi.org/10.31743/znkul.13171>

LEGAL ACTS

- Law of February 25, 1964 – Family and Guardianship Code, i.e., Journal of Laws of 2020, item 1359, of 2022, item 2140.