

# FREEDOM IS A CONDITION OF AN ETHICAL CHOICE

Not penalizing abortions is not tantamount to enforcing or recommending abortions, but allows for making a choice in accordance with one's own conscience and convictions. Penalizing abortions leads to situations when a doctor in fear of being accused of performing an illegal abortion, will not take a risk of prenatal diagnostics or procedures. Much was said about this by specialists. The impossibility to decide on therapy to prevent a threat to mother's life caused by pregnancy problems, which are very often detected in early stages, is an unlawful endangering of a women's life. How can the law force women to endure waiting until the time, that a mother finds herself on the border of surviving? A young doctor who took part in the protest in Wroclaw, indignantly shouted that doctors want to save lives, not to endanger lives. When sometimes forced to take risk, a doctor should not fear prosecution.

This is an unlawfully imposed restriction on the chance for a doctor to treat unborn children who could live if taking a risk associated with diagnostics was permitted. The law, in turn, imposes the obligation of 'saving' all difficult pregnancies, even against the will of the parents, even if the children born of such pregnancies have no chance of surviving and eventually, the babies die in agony shortly after birth. These details brought forward by the doctors, put prenatal care outside the jurisdiction of the penal law and places it in the realm of education. The state should support those who, out of their free will, decide to keep pregnancies and give birth to sick children. Such involvement of the state is much more difficult than pushing voting buttons in the parliament by several hundred elderly gentlemen, but it does have positive effect. However, who cares?

For some time now, the government has been giving clear clues. They backed off from the program-

me 'Giving Birth like a Human Being', they stopped telephone emergency counseling, new employment laws which prohibited the sacking of women when they are pregnant – all this to show these naughty women their place in the patriarchal world. Certainly not in the streets where they have the audacity to shout at the elderly gentlemen and rullers by the voting buttons in the parliament. Those men with buttons and the men of church, sponsored by the men of rule have realised that the ladies in the streets are capable of doing too much. Never mind. Applause to the protests of the 18th March outside



18th March 2018, Women's Strike in Wroclaw.  
Photo: Beata Dębska

curates offices – I don't know if you noticed, this was the first public protest against the Catholic Church after the IIWW. The protest is a result of the fact that the Church in a cynical way, uses and abuses the Act on church-state covenant and breaks the few laws of this Act, that impose certain limits on the Church, such as respect for the secular state. Society, including Catholics, expected from the Church restraint and ethical conduct in the spirit of social solidarity. Also, keeping in mind historical achievements of the Church in supporting Solidarity movement in the fight for freedom. Now, the Church for material gain, contributes to the loss of our freedom, loss of free democratic state and many personal liberties. Moving the protest to outside the curate's office on the 18th and the 25th March, is a new direc-

tion and a warning signal. The direction to continue... The Church in its pressure on the executive power, put itself on the front page of the public debate.

Lets debate then. The Art 1 of The Covenant signed on the 28th July in 1993 says: The Republic of Poland and the Holy See confirm that the state and the Catholic Church are, each in their own capacity, independent and autonomous, as well as obliged to fully respecting of this rule in their bilateral relations and in cooperation for the development of the individual and the common good. The 28 further articles basically define the realms of the autonomy of The Church.

As far as the autonomy of the state is concerned, we have to refer to the Constitution of The Republic Of Poland , f.e. art 25 of the Act 2 and 3 and in the context of recent events, art 10 which mention "the division and balance of the legislative, executive and judicial powers". There is no mention of the church power. Hence in accordance to the rule of autonomy, these powers are independent and the citizens should not fear the domination of the state, nor the police,

nor the dominating Church. I understand, that the representatives of the church authorities in Poland have the right, to the same extent as other citizens, to a voice in the public debate on a variety of matters, but only to the voice in the debate and not the right to impose concrete laws. The Church has amply earned the call to renounce the covenant by their lack of restraint in taking advantage of the privileges of the covenant and by their lack of respect for the secularity of the state. Unsatiated appetite of the Church for material gain has led to selling itself to the party and politics and when political involvement of the Church drove the country to the verge of dictatorship, the society and its Catholic part says NO to the Church laud and clear.

*Danuta Jaroć*