

rites of Holy Week in Liturgical and Custom Law of Catholic Church

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Summary. This study explores the rites of Holy Week, liturgical and custom related to Holy Week. This issue is extremely important when we give consideration the development of the custom for the rites of Holy Week. The variety and richness of customs emphasize how Easter is important for Christian faithful. The Author wants to point out that folk tradition and customs aim to show the fundamental truth of the Christian faith. This study is to help the faithful understand more deeply the legal and liturgical sense of customs of Holy Week.

Key words: rites, custom, Holy Week, Palm Sunday, *Triduum Sacrum*

Holy Week has a very rich and meaningful liturgy, particularly when we consider Paschal Triduum. Then we are celebrating the mystery of salvation accomplished by our Lord and Savior.¹ The liturgy of Holy Week also abounds in very rich folk traditions, family customs related to preparation to Easter. Holy Week rites include the following issues: Holy Week in the ritual and liturgical tradition, church and folk forms of the celebration of Palm Sunday, the first three days of Holy Week (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday), the Triduum Sacrum and its forms of folk celebration (Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday), the Altar of Repose and the tomb of Jesus and associated ritual and folk customs.

1. HOLY WEEK IN RITUAL AND LITURGICAL TRADITION

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday i.e. Passion Sunday, which combines the announcement of the royal triumph of Christ (FPPC 28). The procession

¹ Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, Litterae circulares *De festis paschalibus praeparandis et celebrandis* (16.01.1988), “Notitiae” 24 (1988), no. 2, p. 81–110 [henceforth cited as: FPPC].

on Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. This custom is festive and folk. In Jerusalem, these events were reconstructed from the solemn entrance of Christ into the city. The current Roman liturgy contains both ways. This is called *Septimana Maior*. At the basis of the development of Holy Week, paschal events are highlighted with other events in the life of Jesus [Schenk 1991, 62].

In Holy Week, the Church celebrates the mysteries of salvation accomplished by the Savior in the last days of His life on earth (FPPC 27). These days rites and customs are very rich. This time shaped a kind of ritual parallelism, as a result two cycles were created with different backgrounds: the first of a liturgical and legal nature and the second of various ecclesiastical services, especially processions.² During Holy Week, various forms of piety leads to the recognition of the great value of liturgical rites, enriched by deep elements of folk piety (*Direttorio* 138). Following the Second Vatican Council, the days of Holy Week from Holy Thursday to Easter take precedence over all other liturgical days [Syczewski 2004, 75].

2. ECCLESIASTICAL AND FOLK FORMS OF PALM SUNDAY CELEBRATION

Palm Sunday, also called in the tradition of the church Passion Sunday recalls the evangelical events of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (FPPC 28). It also shows us the coming of the Kingdom which the Messiah King is going to fulfill through his sufferings, death and resurrection.³ Palm Sunday in the Polish tradition begins a time of deep focus and reflection on the Passion. It is a time of penance.⁴ That day, the faithful bring branches as a sign of the royal triumph of the Savior on the cross.⁵

The liturgical reform of 1955 reduced the rite of blessing of palms. After separating the palms, the procession headed to the main church, where the Eucharist was celebrated. The liturgy of Palm Sunday consists of three elements: 1) palm blessing, 2) processions with palms and 3) the Holy Mass.⁶

² Cf. Congregazione per il Cultu Divino e la Disciplina dei Sacramenti, *Direttorio su pietá popolare e liturgia. Principi e orientamenti* (17.12.2001), Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 2002 [henceforth cited as: *Direttorio*], no. 138.

³ *Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 1997, no. 560.

⁴ *I Synod Diecezji Drohiczyńskiej. Statuty. Dokumenty Wykonawcze*, Drohiczyńskie Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne, Drohiczyn 1997 [henceforth cited as: ISDD], 116, 138.

⁵ Caeremoniale Episcoporum, Ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concill Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatum, Editio typica. Typis Polyglotis Vaticanis 1985 [henceforth cited as: CLPB].

⁶ *Mszal Rzymski dla diecezji polskich*, ed. 1, Pallottinum, Poznań 1986 [henceforth cited as: MRP], 106–13.

The custom of blessing palms originated from the Middle Ages in France. The celebration of the Holy Mass included, among others: introductory singing, oration, epistle, gradual, the passage from Gospel about Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, preface and *Sanctus*. The palm was blessed instead of the Roman canon [Wierusz-Kowalski 1956, 212].

Palm branches remind us of the Christ's victory over evil. The olive branches are symbol of peace and joy and say that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. In the 4th century there are mentions on procession with palm trees. In the 7th century, this custom reached the West and had a solemn character. Its main content is the triumph of Christ, who fulfills the prophecy of the Old Testament and entry into Jerusalem to take possession of it [Wierusz-Kowalski 1956, 212]. In the Middle Ages it had various forms. At the center of the procession was always the cross which was decorated with palm branches. The Most Blessed Sacrament was carried as well. Sometimes a bishop played the role of Jesus who entered into Jerusalem [ibidem]. In some countries (e.g. Bavaria, Austria, Krakow) during the procession a wooden figure of Jesus sitting on a donkey was carried. Along the way, they stopped to welcome the Savior, then the hymn *Gloria, laus et honor* was sung. The second time they stopped at the city gate or cathedral. The priest or subdeacon hit the door with a cross before entering the church. This custom, derived from the medieval liturgical drama, took place up to 1955. It was to mean the opening of the abyss by Jesus Christ and the salvation of souls in Purgatory. After the procession, the priest put on purple chasuble and celebrated Holy Mass with the description of the Passion according to Matthew [Schenk 1967, 447-48].

Currently, the procession commemorating the Savior's entry into Jerusalem is solemn rite in the liturgy and custom law. Current liturgical regulations include three forms of palm blessing (CLPB 99-101). The first form is a procession. In due time the faithful gather together in a smaller church or in another place outside the church to which the procession is to go. The priest, with his assistance in red robes, comes to the place where the people gathered together. At the same time the appropriate hymn is sung. Then the priest greets the faithful as usual and introduces them to the experience of this rite. After introducing, the priest says one of the two prayers given in the missal and sprinkles the branches with holy water without saying anything. Then, he read the Gospel passage about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. After the Gospel, the priest preached the sermon. Following, the procession took place to the church where the Eucharist was celebrated. Appropriate antiphons and hymns are sung during the procession. Upon arrival at the altar, the priest worshiped him. At the end of the procession, after leaving other rites, a collect is said. Next Mass is celebrated as usual (MRP 106-10).

A solemn entrance is the second form. If it is not possible to lead the procession outside the church, then the rite of solemn entrance before Mass is celebrated inside the church (MRP 110–11).

A simple entrance is the third form. When the celebrant came to the altar, an antiphon was sung with a psalm or other appropriate hymn about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. After that the priest worshiped it and stood in place of presidency. He greeted the people and celebrates the Eucharist as usual. Where neither a procession nor a solemn entrance could take place, one should celebrate the devotion of God's word about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the Passion of the Lord (MRP 111–12).

For this memorial the palms are also beautifully decorated. Usually it is customary to take five branches to commemorate the five wounds of Jesus. Willow branches are the most common, which are a symbol of the longing of emigrants for the country [Uryga 2002, 180].

Many folk customs are associated with palm trees. A well-known custom in the folk tradition was that the palm was struck children and young people. In some places, housewives by palm struck cows on Palm Sunday or on the first day of spring, when cattle were driven out to the pasture. This was to ensure their health and all prosperity.

Hitting the palm heralded the coming of Easter. Palms brought from the church were used during the storm. They were usually kept behind the painting or in another dignified place.

Crosses were made from palms and placed in the field in order to protect sown crops. They were made by the father of the family. Crosses were also made of straw.

With the palm, the host, after returning to the Holy Mass, had to walk around all farm buildings. The palm brought to the barn deterred all vermin. Palm branches were also burned and households were incensed. On Good Friday, these branches are also made with crosses and placed in the corners of the fields to protect the crops.

3. THREE FIRST DAY OF HOLY WEEK IN LITURGICAL LAW

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week show the next events before the Passover celebration. On Monday, Maria, sister of Lazarus, anointed Jesus' feet six days before the Passover ceremony and wiped them with her hair (John 12,1–3). The feast at Bethany resembles the Holy Sacrifice which Jesus instituted during the Last Supper. On Tuesday and Wednesday, during the liturgy is read the description of the Passion of the Lord according to Mark and Luke. The betrayal of Judas is read on Wednesday (Mark 14,1). In these days, Psalm 51 is often recited in the *Church Have mercy on me, God in*

accord with your merciful love. There was also the habit of saying this psalm while lying prostrate in the temple [Michalak 1939, 194].

Following the Second Vatican Council, descriptions of the Passion are no longer read these days. The Gospels are thematically related to events before Passover. On Holy Monday is read the Gospel according to John 12,1–11 (feast in Bethany). On Holy Tuesday is read the Gospel according to John 13,21–33.36–38 (disclosure of the traitor). On Wednesday the Gospel of Matthew 26,14–25 (Judas' betrayal) [Syczewski 2005, 75].

Holy Week days from Holy Monday to Holy Thursday inclusive have priority over all other liturgical days (MRP 72–73).

4. TRIDUUM SACRUM AND ITS CHURCH FORMS

Jesus Christ accomplished the salvation of people through the paschal mystery of his Passion, through which he destroyed death by dying and resurrecting us with his resurrection. Paschal Triduum and Resurrection of Christ is the pinnacle of the liturgical year.⁷ These days have their own rich liturgy, which requires proper preparation of the faithful through catechesis, comments, homilies and retreats. Therefore, the faithful should be explained the symbolism of these days in order to celebrate it properly (ISDD 117). The Easter feast has the same meaning as every Sunday of the week⁸ Paschal Triduum and Resurrection it begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on the evening of Holy Thursday. It has its center on the Easter Vigil and ends with the Vespers of the Resurrection Sunday.⁹ In these days the Church celebrates the great mysteries of redemption, "uniting inwardly with Christ, her Bridegroom" (FPPC 38; *Direttorio* 104).

4.1. Holy Thursday

The statement of Holy Thursday is the unity of the community of Christian life based on the Eucharist. This day reminds us the institution of the Eucharist, and the memorial of the Lord's passion, death and resurrection of Christ.¹⁰ On that day, penitents were reconciled so that they would have a chance to enjoy the Eucharist again. The Holy Mass, which the bishop concelebrates with his presbytery during which he consecrates the holy chrism and blesses other oils – sick and catechumens – is considered a special sign of the unity of priests with his own bishop (CLPB 102). The rite of blessing of holy oils shows

⁷ Sacra Congregatio Rituum, Decretum generale *Maxima Redemptionis Nostrae Mysteriorum* (16.11.1955), AAS 47 (1955), p. 338.

⁸ *Ogólne normy Roku Liturgicznego i kalendarza*, 1969, in: MRP, 18.

⁹ *Ogólne normy Roku Liturgicznego i kalendarza*, 19.

¹⁰ Ojciec Święty Jan Paweł II, *O przeżywaniu Wielkiego Postu*, Wydawnictwo „M”, Kraków 2001, 56.

the close relationship all sacraments with Jesus' sacrifice. The Chrism Mass shows the unity of sacrifice, the unity of the priesthood and the community of the faithful. The rite of washing the feet points to the source of this unity, which is love and humility [Schenk 1967, 449].

From the Middle Ages, on Holy Thursday, bishops, abbots, superiors of religious orders and Christian princes washed the feet of twelve people, both lay and clergy [Schenk 1967, 449]. Interestingly, the missal of Pius V envisaged rite of washing feet following the Holy Mass, and since 1955 it is following the homily, where pastoral considerations speak for it, it is now being recommended in every parish (MRP 127).

Another rite of liturgy is stripping the tablecloth of the altar – *denudatio altaris*. This custom is related to the preparation of the altar for the celebration of the Holy Mass and cleaning after it. This rite shows us that the Savior left his disciples before his crucifixion [Nadolski 1991, 66–67].

The rite of extinction of the sanctuary lamp is related to maintaining the light up to the Easter Vigil. During Triduum there is a ban on using bells, ringtones and organ music. After singing *Gloria* the bells and organs go silent in the Church. From that moment until the Easter Vigil, wooden instruments are used (*crepitacula, tabulae*) [Nadolski 1991, 67]. This custom is very old and dates back to Carolingian times. In this rite one should seek Jesus' great humility and his agreement to suffering. It also means the church's mourning [Wierusz–Kowalski 1956, 217].

Following the Holy Mass, the Most Blessed Sacrament is moved to the Altar of Repose. This rite means the way of Savior to the Mount of Olives, capturing and keeping him in prison up to the trial [Schenk 1967, 449].

In the liturgy after the Second Vatican Council, the Holy Mass of the Lord's Supper commemorates the Last Supper, when our Lord Jesus Christ was sent on the passion and death of the cross¹¹. All internal attention should be directed toward the mysteries commemorating the institution of the Eucharist and priesthood. The Mass of the Lord's Supper should be celebrated in the evening at an hour more suited to the given community of faithful, preferably between 16.00 and 21.00, with the full participation of all the faithful who they want to take part in their liturgical functions [Syczewski 2005, 7].

The renewed liturgy of Holy Thursday consists of the following parts: the introductory rites, the Liturgy of the Word, washing of feet, the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Procession of the Altar of Repose (MRP 126–32). The community of the faithful should be encouraged to adore the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel for some time, depending on the conditions. At the end of the Mass

¹¹ Sobór Trydencki, Sesja XXII, *Nauka o Najświętszej Ofierze Mszy Świętej*, chapter 1, in: *Dokumenty Soborów Powszechnych. Tekst łaciński i polski*. Vol. IV: (1511–1870). *Lateran IV, Trydent, Watykan I*, ed. A. Baron, H. Pietras, Wydawnictwo WAM, Kraków 2004, p. 637; cf. CLPB 108.

of the Lord's Supper, also known as A Service of Worship for Holy Thursday, the altar is stripped and the blessed water is removed from the stoup (MRP 132).

Holy Thursday, according to folk customs, reminds us of coming passion and death of Jesus on the cross. For this reason this day is called the Last Supper where Jesus eat supper with his disciples in the Upper Room. In memory of this, priests gather together in the cathedral to celebrate along with the Bishop Mass. In parishes, however, priests celebrate Holy Mass in the afternoon, formerly it was 3 p.m. nowadays it is at 6 p.m.

4.2. Good Friday

Good Friday is non-liturgical day, i.e. without Mass. It is a time of mourning. Through the Eucharistic we celebrate the memorial of the blessed Passion, the Resurrection from the dead for this reason it can be celebrated until after the Resurrection [Wierusz-Kowalski 1956, 218]. In the Middle Ages, the faithful watched in prayer from Good Friday to the Resurrection. In the 16th century, a 40-hour service was moved from Holy Week to the rest of the year [Schenk 1967, 450].

The Liturgy of the Word is the oldest part of the Holy Mass. In Rome the mentioned liturgy was celebrated, which consisted in reading the description of the Passion, sermon, prayer of the faithful and visiting the grave of martyrs. At the turn of the seventh and eighth centuries, the adoration of the cross was adopted in the West [Wierusz-Kowalski 1956, 219]. Sources from the 13th and 14th centuries – although it was practiced as early as the 11th century – include the custom of discovering the cross with three chants of *Ecce lignum crucis* [Wierusz-Kowalski 1956, 219]. In the seventh century, for the first time the holy communion was administered. In Poland, Austria and Bavaria became a custom of arranging the tomb of Jesus, where the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place. At that time people watch at the tomb, pray and sing appropriate hymns [Schenk 1967, 450–451].

Following the Second Vatican Council, the liturgy of Good Friday is celebrated in the afternoon, about 3 p.m. if pastoral reasons do not go against. This liturgy consists of four parts: the Liturgy of the Word, the Adoration of the Holy Cross, and Holy Communion and the procession to the tomb of Jesus.¹² It contains almost all the elements that were known in the church's tradition that day. The celebrant with his assistance, dressed in red robes, go to the altar and, after worshipping him, fall on their face or kneel. At this time, the faithful pray for some time in silence. Then the priest with the assistance goes to the place of presidency and faced the faithful says one of the given

¹² Cf. Missale Romanum, ed. 2002/2008, Feria VI in Passione Domini, Celebratio Passionis Domini, 4.

prayers (MRP 133). On that day the altar is to be completely stripped: without the cross, candlesticks and tablecloths.¹³

The liturgy of the word shows the suffering Servant of Yahweh from the book of Isaiah (Isa 52,13–53,12), then follows Responsorial Psalm. The second reading comes from the Letter to the Hebrews (Heb 4,14–16; 5,7–8). Description of the Passion comes from the Gospel of John – John 18,1–19,42 (MRP 134). After reading the Passion, it can be a homily. The color of the liturgical vestments is royal purple. At one time, the most precious was black purple, in which the liturgy of Good Friday was celebrated. However, red purple became more widespread in Good Friday's liturgy. It symbolizes the dignity and majesty [Nadolski 1991, 70–71].

At the end of the Liturgy of the Word, an extensive universal prayer takes place in this way: the deacon, if a deacon is present, or if he is not, a lay minister, stands at the ambo, and sings or says the invitation in which the intention is expressed. Then all pray in silence for a while, and afterwards the priest, standing at the chair or, if appropriate, at the altar, with hands extended, sings or says the prayer. The intentions of this prayer are as follows: for Holy Church, for the Pope, for all orders and degrees of the faithful, for catechumens, for the unity of Christians, for the Jewish people,¹⁴ for those who do not believe in Christ, for those who do not believe in God, for those in public office and for those in tribulation (MRP 134–40). If necessary, the diocesan bishop may allow or add a special intention (MRP 134).

After universal prayer, there is solemn adoration of the cross. The deacon or another suitable minister goes to the sacristy and obtains the veiled cross. Accompanied by two ministers with lighted candles, the veiled cross is brought to the center of the sanctuary in procession. The priest accepts the cross and the standing before the altar and facing the people, uncovers the upper part of the cross, the right arm and then the entire cross. Each time he sings Behold the wood of the cross. The second form of the adoration of the cross which takes place at the door of the church, in the middle of the church and before entering the sanctuary has not changed (MRP 141).

Adoration of the cross is followed by the third part of the Good Friday liturgy – Holy Communion. The deacon or priest brings the Blessed Sacrament back from the place of reposition. Then it takes place Holy Communion. After Communion one can keep silence for a while, afterwards the priest says a prayer after Holy Communion (MRP 146).

On Good Friday, according to centuries-old tradition after the Passion, the Blessed Sacrament is moved to the tomb of Jesus and issued for adoration. In the chapel of the tomb of Jesus there should be an altar and tabernacle for storing cans with the Blessed Sacrament. A veil monstrance can be placed

¹³ Missale Romanum, 3.

¹⁴ This prayer was changed by Pope John XXIII and Paul VI.

on the altar or on the throne, which should be placed close to the altar (MRP, 146–47).

The Passion and Death of the Lord Jesus is commemorated during Good Friday's liturgy. Christian faithful during individual adoration of the Holy Cross can kiss it. On this day, the church has a unique silence and a prayer spirit.

Whoever come to church that day, can adore the cross, pray for a moment or mediate on the Passion. Preparing the tomb of Jesus, it is typical Polish tradition. It is prepared by young people, ordinarily under supervision of elders. A guard of honor always watches over the tomb of Jesus. Firefighters are dressed in firefighter uniforms, a wooden hatchet is hanging by his side and a fire helmet on his head. One must keep in mind that during adoration quietly prayers were filled in the church. Faithful could also sang hymns for Lent e.g. *Bitter Lamentations*.

On Good Friday, faithful tried not to hardly work, particularly in the fields or farms. They focused on direct preparing the house for the Eater, and it was necessary to go to church and to pray for forgiveness of sins.

4.3. Holy Saturday

In ancient times, it was a day without liturgy. They were mourning the death of Jesus.

In the evening, Christian faithful gathered for all-night vigil and prayers. It was a fast day [Schenk 1967, 451, Nadolski 1991, 71]. Following the Second Vatican Council, the Church on Holy Saturday continues the adoration at the tomb of the Jesus, meditating on the Passion and Death of the Savior, and keeps fasting in anticipation of the resurrection. No Mass is celebrated on this day. The altar is stripped. Holy Communion can be administrated only in the form of Viaticum (MRP 148; CLPB 120).

Blessing of Easter food baskets derived from early Christian tradition. In the Middle Ages, the blessing of Easter baskets was one of the most important celebrations. This rite was later moved over to Holy Saturday. It was sometimes celebrated on Good Friday. It was one of the important elements of preparations for the Easter. In the eighth century only the sacrificial lamb and meat were blessed. Over time, other Easter foods were added. In Poland, for instance, the rite of blessing Easter foods was put into place after the Council of Trent. The basic foods brought for blessing was: bread, baked Easter cakes, cheese, butter, eggs, meat, salt and horseradish. The most important thing in the basket was a lamb figure made of dough, butter, sugar, or made of other products.

In the eighteenth century in Poland, Easter food, was blessed on Holy Saturday. It took also place in private houses. For the sake of practical reasons,

Easter food was blessed in one place. Most often it was a porch, chapel, cross, for someone who had a large room [Ogrodowska 2001, 215–18].

On Holy Saturday, there was fasting until midnight. In the morning the water and fire was blessed in the church. Following the celebrations, the coals were taken to home to Christian faithful took to home coals to make a fire in the oven. The holy water was used to bless the Easter food and outbuildings. To this end the thorns and holy water were brought to home. The thorn was placed on the wall, it was to remind the Passion of Jesus Christ.

As for decorative motifs on Easter eggs, they were very different. They depended on the artistic skills of the people. The most frequent ones were *Alleluia*, *Happy Easter*. The most common Easter symbols are lamb, catkins, twigs, as well as lines, signs, lines, bunnies, windmills, rakes, various folk patterns, etc. Easter eggs were also decorated with the figure of the Risen Lord and animals.

5. THE ALTAR OF REPOSE AND TOMB OF JESUS

After the liturgy of Holy Thursday, the Most Blessed Sacrament is moved to the altar of repose i.e. a properly prepared chapel or the side altar. This rite means the Savior's way to the Mount of Olives, capturing and keeping him in prison until trial. This custom dates from the ninth century when a special altar was being prepared, on which candles were lighted until the end of the so-called Dark Laudes of Good Friday. In the 16th century, it was a special chapel in which six candles were lighted. In a special chalice, the consecrated bread was kept as on Good Friday, the Christian faithful did not receive holy communion [Danielski 1979, 468–69; Małaczyński 1958, 77–78].

In some European countries, the altar of repose was considered a symbol of the tomb of Jesus. In Poland, the altar of repose was distinguished from Jesus's tomb [Danielski 1979, 469]. After the ceremony of moving the Most Blessed Sacrament to the tomb, adoration of the imprisoned Christ took place. Then hymns were sung e.g. *Bitter Lamentations* [Danielski 1979, 469; Schenk 1967, 449]. Following the liturgical revision, which took place in 1955, the liturgy of Holy Thursday has joyful dimension. As it is a symbol of the institution of the Eucharist [Małaczyński 1958, 77–78].

The custom of the tomb of Jesus was founded in Europe. The development of dramatized liturgical rites contributed to this rite. The first information about the so-called funeral of Christ comes from Augsburg. We learn about it from Ulric's life from the 10th century. This custom was also known in France. From the eleventh century, the tomb of Jesus is known in other European countries: in Italy, Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, and since the 15th century in Portugal and Sweden. The Most Blessed Sacrament was put on Jesus' tomb while in France and England it was a cross. In Poland

the second form was adopted. Since the 16th century both forms were accepted by placing the cross and the Most Blessed Sacrament in the tomb of Jesus. According to Agenda of Padowsky of 1591, the custom of putting cross on the tomb of Jesus ceased, just the Most Blessed Sacrament was put. The crucifix is placed on the floor on the rug so that the faithful can adore it [Schenk 1967, 451; Wierusz-Kowalski 1956, 226]. Initially, the tomb of Jesus was placed at the altar. It was usually screened by curtains. The stones were put on the curtains in order to secure it. As well it had a deep and symbolic meaning.

There were also known other types of Jesus tombs. For instance, in Poland, southern Germany and Austria, the tomb of Jesus was the altar on which the Most Blessed Sacrament was exposed on the altar which was decorated with candles [Gorczewski 1976, 883].

The place of placing tomb of Jesus was different. Sometimes it was placed in a choir or in the presbytery, even in the main altar [Gorczewski 1976, 883]. In that tomb was put a crucifix, a figure of a martyred Savior or consecrated host which was wrapped in a corporation or monstrance. After placing the host and the crucifix in the tomb, it was sprinkled with holy water and incensed, and the celebrant sang a *responsorium*. Then he covered the Most Blessed Sacrament with a veil and sang *Sepulto Domino* before returning to the sacristy. The faithful, however, began their prayer vigil [Gorczewski 1976, 883–84].

Over time, the Jesus tombs were given rich forms. They were even mobile and richly-decorated. They were symbolic and sometimes national or patriotic accents depending on the socio-political situation. For instance, the period of the Nazi occupation or the activity of Solidarity in Poland. Except for religious meaning, the tomb of Jesus showed the Poland's martyrdom, which was associated with the hope of regaining freedom [Gorczewski 1976, 883–85; Kaczmarzyk 1974, 112–20]. Currently, the tomb of Jesus is situated in the side altar. It usually looks like a cavern carved in the rock.

CONCLUSION

The current liturgical legislation of the Church emphasizes that during Holy Week various forms of piety are particular importance for the Christian faithful. They should lead to the recognition of the great value of liturgical activities that are enriched with elements of piety. The custom is to help us have deeper experience what is done in the liturgy. The rites of Holy Week are very rich both in form and content. All customs of Holy Week are to lead us to meet Jesus who was crucified and he is risen. In this regard, it is important not only legal approach but also a pastoral one. For this reason every effort should be made to make the rites of Holy Week as an opportunity to deepen our relationship with Christ and other people.

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OBRZĘDY WIELKIEGO TYGODNIA
W PRAWIE LITURGICZNYM I ZWYCZAJOWYM
KOŚCIOŁA KATOLICKIEGO

Streszczenie. Niniejszy artykuł dogłębnie omawia zagadnienie obrzędowości Wielkiego Tygodnia w prawie liturgicznym i zwyczajowym Kościoła katolickiego. Tematy te zostały omówione w rozwoju historycznym oraz w aktualnym prawie liturgicznym i zwyczajowym. Szczegółowe zagadnienia dotyczące tego tematu są następujące: najpierw przedstawiony został Wielki Tydzień w tradycji obrzędowej i liturgicznej, następnie ukazane zostały kościelne i ludowe formy obchodu Niedzieli Palmowej – w tradycji ludowej nazywanej Kwietną, w dalszej kolejności przedstawiono trzy pierwsze dni Wielkiego Tygodnia (poniedziałek, wtorek i środa), *Triduum Sacrum* i jego formy obchodu kościelnego i ludowego (Wielki Czwartek Wielki Piątek i Wielka Sobota), Ciemnica i Boży Grób oraz związane z nimi zwyczaje obrzędowe i ludowe.

Słowa kluczowe: obrzędowość, zwyczaj, Wielki Tydzień, Niedziela Palmowa, *Triduum Sacrum*

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