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Abstract The need of reflection on the tasks of the lay people in the Church and in the world twenty years after the Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles laici* was published seems obvious. From the point of view of an observer living in Poland it must be said that recently the discussion on the role of the laity in the Church and in the world has been outshone by the big problems connected with the systemic transformation of the country and Poland's accession to the European Union. The author of the article, leaving the question of the role of the laity in the Church to other authors, focuses on the possibilities that exist now, and at the same time on the difficulties and limitations of realization of apostolic tasks by Polish Catholics in different parts of social life. The starting point for this reflection is outlining the modern social-cultural context for the apostolic involvement of the Catholics in the world, and the point it strives to reach is showing the direction for a revival of the social apostolate of the laity in Poland.