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(Apostolstwo świeckich w zrzeszeniach religijnych)

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Abstract. In modern times various forms of unions have been set up and developed. The unions include associations, groups, communities and movements (ChL 29). This new dynamism, concerning both the variety and vigor of the unions, has been defined as “the spring of the Church”, and the apostolic exhortation *Christifideles laici* mentions ‘the new epoch of lay Catholics’ associations’ (ChL 29). Lay Catholics form unions for social-cultural reasons, but first of all for theological ones, since a little community is a symbol of the whole Church. Lay people have the right to form unions, but at the same time they should always do it in communion with the whole community of the Church, which is pointed to by the ecclesiality criteria of religious unions. The religious unions in Poland may have various conditions. At present there are more than 150 such unions, and they embrace about 5% of the population of Poland.