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Topic: *Proposals of spiritual solutions offered by ancient and modern-day hermits to the crisis of their times*

SUMMARY

The subject of this dissertation is an attempt to show the crisis in the ancient and modern Church and the way of renewal offered by the Desert Fathers and modern-day hermits. The main point of research, as it emerges from the research hypotheses, is to present proposals of spiritual solutions to the crises given by the hermits themselves. The author wants to give floor to those who understand this world far better, because their wisdom comes from the desert, from a special place, marked by God's presence. The answer given by the early and contemporary hermits is a valuable source for the life of all believers.

The dissertation consists of four chapters. In the first chapter entitled: *Kryzys w Kościele pierwszych wieków* [*Crisis in the early Church*], a picture of society and the Church in ancient times in the Roman Empire is outlined. The situation of the crisis faced by the first Christians is presented in detail. These crises had their source in a completely different way of life and experiencing faith by the early Christians, which was connected with cruel persecutions and harmful superstitions shared by the pagan world. Also, as shown in the dissertation, the Church had to face internal difficulties and crises caused, for example, by ongoing dogmatic debates.

The second chapter, entitled *Duchowe odpowiedzi pierwszych pustelników na kryzys w świecie* [*Spiritual answers offered by the first hermits to the crisis in the world*], is devoted to solutions to various crises as provided by the Desert Fathers. In their inner struggle in the desert, the ancient hermits experienced many difficulties, temptations, hence their proposals flow from the deep experience of the desert and reveal extraordinary wisdom and inspiration. The chapter also explains the origins of the eremitic life, as well as the spirituality and way of living of the Desert Fathers.

In the third chapter, *Zasadnicze aspekty kryzysu we współczesnym Kościele* [*Essential aspects of the crisis in the contemporary Church*], attention is focused on the crisis currently affecting the Church community. A detailed description covers the crisis of faith and morals, priesthood and consecrated life.

The last fourth chapter, entitled: *Duchowe odpowiedzi współczesnych pustelników na kryzys ich czasów* [*Spiritual responses of modern-day hermits to the crisis of their times*] is based on the author's research among the currently living Polish hermits. Through a questionnaire specially designed for this dissertation, the hermits share their thoughts and answers, which can be a source of

renewal and a way out of the crisis for the Church. In this chapter, the identity of the modern hermit is also presented in order to better understand this phenomenon, which has recently enjoyed considerable interest.

The author cherishes the hope that the contents of this dissertation will help to appreciate even more the gift of eremitic life in the Church, and that the wisdom coming from the hermits themselves will occasion a deeper renewal of faith.