

# Evangelizare media misit nos – Proclamation of the Gospel on the Digital Continent

WOJCIECH KLUJ, OMI

CARDINAL STEFAN WYSZYŃSKI UNIVERSITY, WARSAW

## Introduction

It was the year 2002. The last visit of Pope John Paul II to Poland was slowly coming to an end. At the Pope's special request, the time of his personal visit to the cathedral in Krakow was planned. For 14 years, it was his cathedral. Before leaving Poland he wanted to pray in silence at the relics of the saints who are buried there. He arrived to the cathedral around 18.15. When he entered, he stopped at the sarcophagus (coffin with the relics) of St. Stanislaus. There he sat down in the chair and quietly recited the Liturgy of the Hours. Beside him stood a priest who brought him a lamp so that he could read the breviary. The Pope, from time to time, looked up at the sarcophagus, and at times he supported his head with his hand. The breviary took him about 35 minutes. After finishing, he went to the Wawel Cross, stopped at the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament and then at the great altar of coronation of the kings of Poland, at which he used to celebrate Masses and services. Then, after about 45 minutes, he left the cathedral. At that time, he was accompanied by few members of the cathedral chapter and ... by cameras.

When he sat in the chair and the breviary was given to him, silence fell and the TV commentator stopped speaking. The Pope prayed Vespers and state television filmed this ... silence. Time was passing, one minute, two, five, fifteen... the cameras began switching from the Holy Father to the sarcophagus of Saint Stanislaus, and sometimes other priests. After some time, the cameraman found a good prospect for the Pope with a bouquet of flowers standing

next to him. And it was only after 25 minutes, that the commentator said few words. These were the last hours of John Paul II during his last pilgrimage to Poland, and it was obvious that the television will continue to broadcast these events. But how is television, which by nature does not tolerate silence, supposed to show prayer in silence? Although there was no commentary said, the cameras almost “screamed” to drown out this silence. It was probably the most appealing half an hour of silence in the history of television, at least in Poland.

This event can be an example of the tension between two “worlds” – Christian prayer and new medias. It is not easy and obvious how to proclaim the Gospel in the world of the new social medias. But there cannot be any doubt that to be a Christian means to try to proclaim Jesus Christ in every place and culture. The five classical missionary mandates express this desire to proclaim the Good News about Jesus “to the whole creation” (Mk 16:15, see also Mt 28:18-20; Lk 24:46-49; Jn 20:21-23; Acts 1:8).

Let us start our analysis with the story from the Acts of the Apostles. When Paul was planning his further activities, something important happened. He wanted to stay on the territory, which he already knew, in Asia Minor (what is now Turkey). But “one night Paul had a vision: a Macedonian appeared and kept urging him in these words, ‘Come across to Macedonia and help us.’ Once he had seen this vision we lost no time in arranging a passage to Macedonia, convinced that God had called us to bring them the good news” (Acts 16:9-10). In today’s challenge of new digital continent we may see the image of the same call, which Paul heard 2000 years ago: “come across the digital ocean and help us”.

## Reflection since Vatican II

With the famous decree “Inter Mirifica” (1963) of the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church officially spoke, for the first time in its history in such an important document, about mass communication. It was Pope John XXIII who introduced this topic to the Council. Later, in 1975, Pope Paul VI wrote in his Apostolic Exhortation “Evangelii Nuntiandi” (No. 45), that the Church would “feel guilty before the Lord” if she did not use these tools to proclaim the Gospel.

The new tools of mass social communication began to dominate today’s world during the pontificate of John Paul II. We mention here just two of his

documents. In the encyclical “Redemptoris missio” (1990) he presented the perspective of the “new evangelization” and the modern equivalents of the Areopagus (new cultural sector of life) of Church’s mission in today’s world<sup>1</sup>. To be sure there is nothing wrong with the “old” evangelization, but since the world is changing, so has to change also some ways of evangelization. In the talk to Latin American bishops (on 24<sup>th</sup> of March 1983) John Paul II explained more that this “new evangelization” has to be “new” in three senses: in “its ardor, methods and expression”. Evangelization through the means of the social media has to use new methods and new expressions and it requires new ardor from the contemporary missionaries.

The second document of John Paul II, the Apostolic Letter “Rapid Development” (24<sup>th</sup> of January 2005) was one of the last documents of the dying John Paul II. He wrote (signed) it being already very sick and conscious that is dying soon (two months later). This perspective gives special light on the will of Pope, who wanted to sign it, anyway. Generally John Paul II looked upon the new means of communication in a very positive way (perhaps he was even too optimistic). He regarded the rapid development of technology of social medias as one of the signs of progress in today’s society. This new reality poses one of the most demanding challenges for the Church of today. It is not only a question of using mass media to spread the Gospel, but “to integrate the message of salvation into the ‘new culture’ that these powerful means of communication create and amplify” (no. 2).

Pope Benedict XVI coined the new expression – the “digital continent”. He started to reflect on it in address to the Plenary Assembly Session of the Pontifical Council for Social Communication (29<sup>th</sup> of October 2009). For deeper reflection it is good to analyze his eight messages for the World Day of Social Communication, especially for year 2009 and 2010<sup>2</sup>.

He invited young people (not only, but particularly them) to take on the responsibility for the evangelization of the “digital continent”. He repeated this expression also in the next year underlining this issue even in the sub-title

<sup>1</sup> The first Areopagus is the world of the new mass media (cf. no. 37 C).

<sup>2</sup> See more: B. Bilicka, *Chrześcijański styl obecności na „cyfrowym kontynencie” w orędziach Benedykta XVI [The Christian way of presence on the “digital continent” in the messages of Benedict XVI]*, “Forum Teologiczne” 16 (2015) p. 139-151, see: <http://wydawnictwo.uwm.edu.pl/uploads/documents/czytelnia/forum/forumXVI.pdf> (05.11.2018).

“Ministry in a Digital World”.<sup>3</sup> Against those who are afraid of these new means of communication he looked at the large variety of possibilities in using these means of communication in the service of the Word of God. He wrote among others: “The world of digital communication, with its almost limitless expressive capacity, makes us appreciate all the more Saint Paul’s exclamation: ‘Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel’ (1 Cor 9:16).” On the other hand, of course, he was aware of dangers.

One of the most symbolic days in this evangelization of the “digital continent” could be the day of 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2012, when Benedict XVI sent his first “Tweet” from the *@Pontifex* account. Today, the Twitter account of Pope Francis ranks among the most often visited in the world.

## Starting point of missiological reflection

In missiological reflection we are aware that the missionary has to be able to adjust to every new reality. In the long mission history, we can see how the Church was able to use the means of communication available at that time. In antiquity it was well developed network of Roman roads in Europe and the Silk Road in Asia. Later, the media of that time such as handwritten texts were copied by monks and other scholars to disseminate Sacred Texts and other important and theological works.

Many texts were translated and the common heritage of faith was enriched in new languages. In middle Europe we pay special attention to the work of Saints Cyril and Methodius, who developed the Cyrillic alphabet in the ninth century in purpose of reaching Slavic people. In the fifteenth century the new possibilities came with development of the printing press. Later, *Polyglotta Vaticana* became one of the first publishing houses printing in many languages. The same was true with development of radio and television.

Sometimes these new “worlds” required not only using new means, but also changing the lifestyle of the missionary. Matteo Ricci in China of the end of sixteenth and beginning of seventeenth century decided to change his

<sup>3</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 44<sup>th</sup> World Communication Day “The Priest and Pastoral Ministry in a Digital World: New Media at the Service of the Word”, in: [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/messages/communications/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_mes\\_20100124\\_44th-world-communications-day.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/messages/communications/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20100124_44th-world-communications-day.html) (29.08.2018).

style of life and follow customs of Chinese mandarins. He had to learn their language, studied Chinese literature, dressed as local people. Today we need similarly “digital missionaries” of such kind, who will be both specialists in technological matters and also will be able to transmit faith in this new world. Every culture has their rights, their customs, their language. As in the case of contact of the Gospel with other cultures of Asia or Africa, certain customs will be accepted and creatively developed, others will be indifferent, but there will also be those who cannot be accepted and for whom meeting the Gospel is a great challenge. Today the perspective changed. We do not go out “some-where overseas”. This new “digital” work of interconnections is among us. It is “our”, we breathe it like air.<sup>4</sup>

### Some characteristics of language and customs of the “digital continent” (and “digital religion”)

As much as the missionaries of the past had to learn the languages and customs of the new continents, so we have to do today. On this new continent also our “religiosity” is changing somehow. We do not know yet how.

The introduction of the microphone freed the preacher from the high pulpit and from the necessity to shout. He did not have to stand “above heads” of the praying community and did not have to shout to be heard. Now he can stand closer to the audience, can speak more casually, and explore intimacy and conversation as values in authentic communal religious experience. Introduction of microphone changed the idea of preaching the catechetical sermons into more personal homilies (with good and sometimes not good consequences). The art of the proclamation of the Gospel on digital continent requires different capabilities.

<sup>4</sup> As it was summarize by Jaclyn S. Parrish: “There was a time when the thought of international missions conjured up images of a complete and irrevocable break with the familiar world: a hut on the savannah, a shack in a Chinese village, a boat on the open ocean. But as the twenty-first century dawned, we found ourselves at sea on stranger tides. Today, Maasai warriors exchange money with their cellphones. Refugees livestream their journeys across the Mediterranean. News of terrorist attacks breaks on Twitter moments after the bombs explode.” – See J.S. Parrish, *Missions in the Digital Age: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*, in: <https://www.imb.org/2017/08/07/missions-digital-age-good-bad-ugly/> (07.08.2017).

It is too early to analyze fully the language and customs (habits) of the “Digital Natives” but slowly we start to see some signs how do “they” live, what languages do they speak, what customs do they follow. Digital Natives value more freedom of expression, democratization of knowledge, creation and dissemination, and opportunities to play with, or create new, personal identities. With the introduction of hypertext, the experience of reading media text on computers was affected by at least two significant changes. Hypertext allowed readers to (choose to) move beyond the single page. Readers do not just interact with text through sight but also through sound, and also with the act of “clicking a mouse” or of “touching with a finger.”

The question for missiological reflection is how it is changing our understanding of life of faith? As it was true with other continents, the “digital faith” is also full of myths. Some of them are about the possibilities of human redemption, freedom and the possibility of becoming more godlike in a new way. Among them there are some about relationship between technology and spirituality.

As beautiful and powerful as it is, this new digital continent also needs Christ’s redemption. It is God, who is the First Communicator. This communication (between God and humanity) has reached its perfection in the Word made flesh. This new reality create some new challenges for evangelization, new categories of saints and new categories of sins, it creates new heroes and new ways of prayer. One of the most important questions, deeply hidden in the human heart in every continent, also digital, is the request of the Apostles directed to Jesus “teach us to pray” (cf. Lk 11:1).

### *Digital continent gives tools for building the Kingdom of God, but also devastating weapons*

The little devices, which most of us always carry with us are so powerful that they change not only what we do, but also what we think and – perhaps – even who we are. Life tied to digital technology 24 hours a day is not just a habit but essential to the life of many people. E-mail, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram... all of these methods of communication have their places in politics, commerce, friendship and even romance. For more and more people the virtual world is no less real than the one outside the virtual world. Why should it not be used in evangelization? We are called to give a “soul” to the fabric of communications that makes up the “Web”.

Contemporary communication technologies are a gift from God. The origins of them come from the creative energy of communicating God. The history of faith is a history of communication. The Word of God, did not become, however, an e-mail or text message. Through Mary, the Word became flesh close to real, human beings in real time. The Word became a person to be followed, enjoyed and loved! In Jesus, the message and the messenger are united.<sup>5</sup>

On the one hand are we ready to say that our mobile phones or computers are becoming for us a sacred space, or at least a tool to connect with sacred? Of course on the other hand the same devices, which help us to share Good News with friends, may become also a tool for sinful addictions.

For the first time in the history of missions we can communicate across continents so quickly, practically in the same time. From the personal perspective of a given missionary, one of the heaviest burdens for many missionaries – loneliness – now is not such a big problem. Missionaries communicate with their friends and home community by Facebook or WhatsApp. If there are urgent prayer requests or a need for any other immediate actions, such as in a case of Asia Bibi from Pakistan, the information can spread throughout the world within few minutes. Now it is also possible to prepare a daily meditations or other resources for Christian life for the Christians living in the countries where they form minority, sometimes very small. Different applications offer possibility for more private conversations, for those who want to go deeper in their spiritual live.

As missionaries of the past, contemporary digital missionaries have to learn new “digital” languages. As in the “traditional” missions there are also some new problems coming. On this new continent we are more often tempted on hyper-connectivity. This may cause some distraction in normal life of missionaries. The attitude of being always connected can destroy prayer life or a conversation with real people. Being always linked to Skype, YouTube, Pinterest, WhatsApp, Messenger and other can be very temptative. Another

<sup>5</sup> See T. Rosica, *Global Mission in a Digital Age. Address to US & Canadian Jesuit Formation Conference (June 16, 2015)*, in: <http://saltandlighttv.org/blogfeed/getpost.php?id=64054> (12.11.2018).

new problem coming in this digital continent is the fact that missionaries can be left in difficult situation, when some people – for instance from Africa – find what other Christians – for instance from Europe – are saying or writing. They may be hurt and will not want to listen to the Good News. Already in “Redemptoris missio” John Paul II reminded that now more and more often credibility of a missionary is verified by the attitudes of the sending community, which now can be followed from anywhere in the world.

The digital world is still very new and many Christians are not aware yet about it’s possibilities and dangers. One of these dangers is a temptation of overusing of social media or gaming. According to research done by Barna Group, one of the serious problems is posed by pornography.<sup>6</sup> Even though the Christian faith helps in struggling with it, nevertheless, about 41 % of practicing Christians (against 72 % of the whole society) have problem with it. As Jaclyn S. Parrish reminds, according to International Mission Board policy “ongoing, unrepentant pornography addiction disqualifies men and women from missionary service.” On the other hand there are some who can give brilliant witness of liberation from this addiction.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, it seems that in this new “digital continent” the main role in evangelization does not have to be played by priest or religious. It could be, but does not have. Better missionary is the one who is able to live better on this new continent in the Christian way.

## Examples of Christian Apps

As the example of the “new country” on this “digital continent” still very often is given World Wide Web. There are many books and articles written on different Christian websites, even in the Deep (Dark) Net. For this paper I would like to pick up another “digital country” formed by Christian Apps. Taking into account the size of this text I want to present some data from

<sup>6</sup> See more: Barna, *Porn in the Digital Age: New Research Reveals 10 Trends*, (Research Releases in Culture & Media • April 6, 2016), <https://www.barna.com/research/porn-in-the-digital-age-new-research-reveals-10-trends/> (12.11.2018).

<sup>7</sup> This part was elaborated on the basis of books: A. Spadaro, *Cybertheology. Thinking Christianity in the era of the Internet*, New York 2014 and *Digital Religion. Understanding Religious Practice in New Media Worlds*, ed. by H.A. Campbell, London & New York 2013.

last few days<sup>8</sup>. Although, I am aware that by the time of publication of this article it will not be up to date anyway. On April 29, 2019, with the help of Google search engine I checked 10 main websites / blogs with the highest position asking for “Christian Apps”. Among these top ten were two websites with advertisings / selling information and 8 texts with brief presentation of most popular Christian Apps. Among them there was still one from year 2016, two from 2017, three from 2018 and two from 2019. Even though there are changing quickly it is worthwhile to check some names and basic information about them.

From the year 2016 there is a blog post titled *13 Christian Apps to help your faith* posted November 17, 2016 by the common Author named “KFA – Christian Living”. The address of it was <https://www.fanawards.com/christian-apps-help-faith>. It presented the apps in six groups. The first one was named “Bible Apps”. In this group, the author enumerated two: *YouVersion Bible App* (with rating 4.7/5, for Free), *Olive Tree Bible App* (rated 4.6/5, also for Free). In the group “Memory Apps” which showed Apps helping to memorize Bible the author presented also two: *Fighter Verses* (rated 4.7/5, for \$2.99) and *Bible Memory: Remember Me* (rated 4.6/5, for Free). In the next group about Christian music there was presented just one application called *K-Love – Christian Apps* (rated 4.7/5, for Free). Next group, also with two examples was named “Ministry Apps”. In this group there were presented *In Touch Ministries* (rating: 4.6/5, for Free) and *Living Proof Ministries* (rated also 4.6/5, for Free). The fifth group called “Evangelism Apps” was the biggest, with four examples. The author explained that behind the development of several such apps was movement of Campus Crusade for Christ (called also Cru). The enlisted apps were: *Soularium* (rating 4.8/5, for Free), *God Tools* (rating 4.6/5, for Free), *Jesus Film Project* (rating 4.5/5, for Free) and (a non-Cru app) *Share Your Faith* (rating 4.8/5, for Free). The last group was called “Prayer Apps” and it contained also two examples: *VOM [Voice of Martyrs] Pray Today* (rating 4.8/5, for Free) and *PrayerMate* (rating 4.7/5, for Free).

The main example from 2017 was the address <http://www.recklesslyalive.com/15-must-have-christian-apps/>, in which there was a text called *15 Must-Have Christian Apps to Grow & Inspire Your Faith*, written by Sam Eaton and

<sup>8</sup> This text was written at the beginning of the 2019. As it is published a year later, some details are already outdated.

posted on June 5, 2017. In this text there was no rating, but the cost was given. This list was not subdivided into other groups but just presented 15 Christian applications. The number one on the list was *YouVersion Bible App* called also by the author: “The Best Bible App”. It was available for Free. Second on the list was *Pray As You Go* called by the author as “Daily Prayer App”. It is also for Free. The third one was: *SermonAudio* called “Worldwide Downloadable Sermon Database”. It is also for Free and as the name suggests it is full of sermons, actually at that time it was over 1.2 million. The following were: *Verses* – Bible Memorization App for Free; *Got Questions* – Answers about Faith, God, Jesus, and the Christian Life, for Free; *Jesus Calling Devotional* – Daily Devotional App, for \$ 9.99; *Spotify* – Music App, for \$ 7.99, for students \$ 4.99; *Daily Audio Bible* – exactly like it sounds, for Free; *Storybook Bible for Kids* – App for Kids, for Free; *You & Me Forever App* – App to Grow in Marriage, for Free; *IHOPKC* – International House of Prayer App, for Free; *Podcasts App* – Millions of Podcasts, for Free; *Audible* – The Best Resource for Audio Books, for Free; *iDisciple* – offering very broad range of books on Adoption & Foster Care, Bible, Career, Children/Teens, Emerging Generation, Evangelism, Leadership, Life Challenges, Marriage, Men, Money, Parenting, Personal Productivity, Prayer, Purpose, Relationships, Spiritual Growth, Women, Worldview. Free for first 3 books; and finally *EveryDollar App* – Dave Ramsey Budgeting App, free for a Very Dollar Plus members.

From the year 2017 the Google search engine in Poland showed also an address: <https://insider.pureflix.com/lifestyle/10-christian-apps-you-cant-live-without>, which is not available in Poland. Only from the brief description one could see that it was about Bible apps, prayer apps and entertainment apps.

The first one from 2018 was written by Mary Dixon and posted on April 28, 2018. It was called “10 Must-Have Christian Apps to Grow & Inspire Your Faith” and published on website: <https://www.askgateway.com/10-must-have-christian-apps-to-grow-inspire-your-faith/>. This list enumerated applications starting with number 1 and finishing with 10. These were: 1. *YouVersion Bible*; 2. *Pray as You Go*; 3. *Pureflix*; 4. *Prayermate*; 5. *Got Questions*; 6. *eChurch Total Engagement Package*; 7. *YouVersion Bible for Kids*; 8. *eHarmony*; 9. *Today’s Christian Music*; 10. *Faith & Mental Wellness*.

Another website from 2018 was posted by Reagan Rose on September 5, 2018. It was entitled “10 Best Christian Apps for iPhone” and published on website <https://www.redeemingproductivity.com/10-best-iphone-apps-christians/>. Here the list started with number 10 and finished with number 1.

This list mentioned such applications as: 10 – *Scripture Typer*, 9 – *Sermon Audio*; 8 – *Overcast*; 7 – *You Need a Budget*; 6 – *Refnet*; 5 – *The Study Bible*; 4 – *Productive Habit Tracker*; 3 – *Grace to you Sermons*; 2 – *Prayer Mate*; and no. 1 – *Bible*. They were not described or evaluated, just listed.

The third result from my google research posted in 2018 was written by Keith Ferrin on October 3, 2018 and was called “8 Free Christian Apps You Should Have On Your Phone”. It was available on the website <https://keithferrin.com/8-free-christian-apps/>. This short presentation contained information on such Apps as: *YouVersion* advertized as the best all-around Bible app; next one was *Logos* presented as the best app for Bible Study; followed by *Read Scripture* – the best app for reading the entire Bible; *iDisciple* – the best app for devotions, sermons, videos, and music...all in one place; *ChristianAudio* – the best app for Christian audiobooks; *Scripture Typer* – the best “memorization” app; *Bible Lens* – a fun app for connecting the Bible and YOUR pictures...and then sharing them; *Dwell* – the best app for listening to the Bible... if you like a stylized experience and the English Standard Version.

Among results published in 2019 we have a website with no precise information on the date of when it was posted. It is on [https://en.softonic.com/solutions/what-are-the-best-christian-apps?ex=at-1742-C&utm\\_expid=.03MT-8JmvSQ2hkR8KNTAqhA.2&utm\\_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F](https://en.softonic.com/solutions/what-are-the-best-christian-apps?ex=at-1742-C&utm_expid=.03MT-8JmvSQ2hkR8KNTAqhA.2&utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F). It was posted by Anonymous Author and called “What are the best Christian apps?”. This is a result of the votes for the best 8 Christian Apps. There is no information who were the voters, but there is information how many votes every App received. There is also an information, that all of them are Free. These were: 1. *Faithlife News* (13 votes); 2. *Proverbs* (10); 3. *A Lamp Unto* (10); 4. *And Bible* (9); 5. *Joyful Living with Bible* (8); 6. *PrayerMate* (7); 7. *OurPrayer* (6); and 8. *Bible Memory: Remember Me* (4 votes).

The last one, published already in 2019, shown in my brief Google research was written by an author called: The Praying Woman and entitled “15 Best Christian Apps of 2019.” It is available on <https://theprayingwoman.com/15-best-christian-apps/>. These best Christian Applications for the year 2019, according to the author are: 1. *PureFlix.com*; 2. *Not Just Words*; 3. *Scripture Typer Bible Memory*; 4. *Our Daily Bread*; 5. *Daily Devotion*; 6. *She Reads Truth*; 7. *Echo*; 8. *Prayer Notebook*; 9. *PrayerMate*; 10. *Crosspaths*; 11. *Christian Mingle*; 12. *Collide*; 13. *Olive Tree Bible+*; 14. *Bible Gateway App*; 15. *Bible (YouVersion)*.

## Four Case Studies from Poland

For the purpose of this presentation I have chosen four apps, which seem to be popular among Catholics in Poland and I have been using them. These are: Pismo swiete, Modlitwa w drodze, Evangelizo – Ewangelia na dziś and Magnificat.PL.

- 1) “Pismo święte” (Holy Scripture) is a non-official application based on the website [www.pismo.swiete.pl](http://www.pismo.swiete.pl) and Facebook profile [www.facebook.com/pismoswietepl](http://www.facebook.com/pismoswietepl). It offers possibility to download the texts of liturgical prayers (as well as songs and commentaries – in the paid “Premium” version) to iPhones, or other Kindle readers. It offers possibility of liturgical prayer for those who want to pray it while not at home. The liturgical texts of the liturgy of hours are published for non-commercial use with agreement of the Conference of the Polish Bishops.
- 2) “Modlitwa w drodze” (Prayer on the way) is a Polish Jesuit Application – as the name says – for the people “on the way”. It can help with prayer almost everywhere, at home, on the way to work or school. Every day it offers the new inspiration for prayer based on given day Gospel. The best advantage of it is the fact that it can be heard. It may be used without necessity of looking at it. During Lent time it offers also the possibility of the meditations on the Way of the Cross as well as “a Lenten corner for kids”, “Extreme Way of the Cross”, Chaplet to Divine Mercy. What is quite interesting there is also a possibility of Rosary to be recited or even sung together. At the end there is also proposal of examination of conscience and Archives.
- 3) “Evangelizo – Ewangelia na codzień” (Gospel for today) is a Polish version of the service offered in 16 languages, also in French, English, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, German, Arabic, Italian, Armenian, Chinese, Gaelic, Greek, Malagasy, Korean and Russian. It offers the texts of readings for given day, a commentary to the Gospel taken usually from saints of the early Fathers of the Church, short information about saints commemorated given day (some of them are not well known), proposition of prayers in different intensions.
- 4) “Magnificat.PL” is also a Polish version of the Application available in few languages. However, the Polish version is not just a copy of original French or English. It offers some proposals of morning and evening

prayer, as well as prayer before going sleep. It proposes also a meditation of the day, which is not always related to the Mass readings of given day. It offers also some information on some saints, not necessary from the day. For every month it offers some texts for reflection or catechesis.

For a deeper methodological analysis of Christian apps one may use the article of H.A. Campbell, B. Altenhofen, W. Bellar & K.J. Cho, *There's a religious app for that! A framework for studying religious mobile applications.*<sup>9</sup> They proposed 11 categories of Religious Applications: Prayer, Focus/Meditation, Ritual, Sacred Textual Engagement, Devotional Worship, Religious Utilities, Religious Social Media, Religious Games, Religious Wisdom and Leaders, Religious Media Outlets, and Religious Apps for Kids. Systematizing them they created two parent classifications, 1) oriented around religious practice, 2) embedded with religious content. These were: 1) Apps oriented around religious practice: Sacred Textual Engagement, Prayer, Focus/Meditation, Devotional Worship, Ritual. 2) Apps embedded with religious content: Religious Utilities, Religious Wisdom and Leaders, Religious Media, Religious Games, Religious Apps for Kids, and Religious Social Media.<sup>10</sup>

The Religious apps mentioned above in the brief overview may also be divided into two groups. There are some concentrated on Bible or research in spirituality and prayer but also some more precisely “missionary” trying to reach with Good News those who are not Christians yet. The other group is directed to those who are more generally interested in some cultural values of Christian faith.

<sup>9</sup> “Mobile Media & Communication” 2 (2014) no. 2, p. 154-172.

<sup>10</sup> In another classification of religious apps they proposes such categories as: Lifestyle (in it apps with daily meditations and scriptures), Reference (in it apps with information on holy books, religious writings and other religious information; often digital versions of sacred texts), Education (apps with guidance and instruction on religion). These categories are to be found also in these fours Polish Apps. There were also others, who did not show up in these fours, such as Utilities (such as inspirational pictures), Entertainment (such children's television or religious quotes), Games (religious games), Music (musical libraries – there is music in background in “Modlitwa w drodze”).

## Concluding suggestion for “digital missiology”

As much as the missionaries of the past had to learn the languages and customs of the new continents, so we have to do today. On this new continent also our “religiosity” is changing somehow. We do not know yet how.

People are using today their smartphones, iPads, iPhones, or other tools as part of their daily lives. So we might use them as well for strengthening our faith or send a message to a friend that we just finished praying for him or her. Changes are going quickly. Some of these Apps might be soon forgotten, but it seems that the tendency will continue.

Pope Francis likes to speak of the church as a “field hospital after a battle”. From this image of a church as a “field hospital” we can derive a new understanding of the church’s mission in different “countries” on the digital continent. Going there does not require passport nor travel ticket to enter. One just needs a keyboard, a screen or a hand-held device. In different “countries” of this continent there are many wars each day with many wounded people, who live there, work or troll. It is an immense battleground that needs many field hospitals set up to bind wounds and reconcile warring parties.

Some people say “You are what you eat”. To conclude my presentation let me repeat after one of the authors: “You are what you install”. Which religious applications do I have in my phone?

P.S. The whole idea of this article takes on a new meaning in a new social situation, forced isolation, caused for coronavirus. Until now, the media mission was to cover a long distance, which in effect was to shorten the time of arrival of the news. In a situation of isolation, this distance is sometimes much shorter, but the sense of communication itself changes. Internet / Internet evangelization at the time of restrictions on public gatherings has a completely new purpose. All kinds of online mass transmissions, online retreats, spiritual advice over the phone, etc., are not so much about reaching someone as sustaining a spiritual hunger that is impossible through physical contact with people.

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