

SUMMARY

The current issue of the quarterly is wholly devoted to the ethical and social problems of marriage and the family. This monographic subject has been decided on in consideration of the Year of the Family celebrated in 1994 in response to the call of the Holy See and the United Nations Organization. As formulated in the standing column *From the Editors*, which opens the issue, the concentration on the family by the highest religious and political authorities in the world brings to special attention not only the particular value of this social unit but also the extraordinary dangers it is exposed to in our times. This is also stressed in the fragments from *The Letter to Families* by John Paul II included at the beginning of this issue.

Some articles in the „Ethos” have been grouped into three blocks. The first one is entitled *The Matters of the Human Family* and it concentrates on the most general aspects of human life, with special attention paid to the role of the marriage and the family. In a text presented in April, 1994, during the 18th International Family Congress, Abp Kazimierz Majdański takes cognizance of the dramatic situation of the family in the world of today; because it constitutes the most important element of the Christian culture, the family is today exposed to attacks by many factions which favour the „civilization of death”. Alicja Grzeškowiak expresses her own attitude towards the matter in the form of a letter which is to be a response to the Papal *Letter to Families*, mentioned above. Fr Tadeusz Styczeń SDS publishes his address to the 18th International Family Congress in which he determines a concrete criterion of testing the present-day social morality, namely, the attitude towards the conceived child, and he then juxtaposes it with the domain of legislative and political activities of the main European institutions. In his paper Andrzej Grzegorzczak indicates the need of taking cognizance of common elements of thought in the three main religions of the world. The block ends with a paper by Danuta Zabłocka-Skupieńska in which she recalls the main theses of the anthropological-psychological conception of Prof. Kazimierz Dąbrowski and by the French philosopher, Jean-Marie Meyer, and in which he implies the role of corporeality in man determining his moral identity.

The next block of articles, *The Marriage and the Family in the Times of Trial*, takes up the problems of current challenges which the family faces in the modern world. The whole block begins with a meditation by Mother Teresa of Calcutta which concentrates on love within the family. The problems of sexual ethics are discussed in two texts by foreign authors, Bp Elio Sgreccia (Italy) and Aurelio Ansaldi (Spain). Marian Grabowski explains the metaphysical underpinning of the vehemence of the human moral and emotional reaction to the most drastic violations of the norms of coexistence. The last three papers in the block concern the situation of the family in Poland. Wojciech Chudy takes up the issue of the transformation of the model of the family in the most recent times, concentrating on the historical-axiological dimension. (This text was also presented at the 18th International Congress of the Family in Warsaw.) Franciszek Adamski analyses this transformation in the sociological aspect. Krystyna Czuba presents the main problems connected with the formation of the correct model of the family in the younger generation.

This section is also related to the interview of Wojciech Chudy with Prof. Michał Troszyński, in the column *Interviews of the „Ethos”*. Prof. Troszyński, a famous and eminent obstetri-

cian and gynaecologist, explains many misunderstandings and discredits many fabrications connected mainly with press opinions concerning the sphere of pregnancy and birth.

The third block of papers is entitled *Poland-the History of the Family of Families* and refers to the history of the Polish nation. On the basis of the utterances by John Paul II, Marian M. Drozdowski reconstructs the picture and the appraisal of the most recent history of Poland. The papers by Antoni Maśliński have a very special character. The first one, referring in its title to the historical appellation of the Republic of Poland („Serenissima” – „the most luminous one”), is an affirmation of the presence of Poland in Europe through the deeds and acts of Polish thought and arms without which Europe would not be what it is. The other paper remembers the great Polish painter, Jan Matejko, whose centenary of death has recently been celebrated.

The article part of the „Ethos” ends with the standing column, *Thinking about Fatherland*, in which Leszek Elektorowicz considers the reasons for the devaluation of the concept of fatherland and of patriotic values in our times.

The remaining part of the issue contains the regular features of the „Ethos”. In the section *Notes and Reviews* Maria Kunowska-Porębna analyses the picture of the family presented in non-catholic and catholic journals. Subsequent reviews concern items which take up the problems of values – the value of life (review by Fr Jarosław Merecki SDS of a book by R. Fenigsen about euthanasia), the value of national culture (Magdalena Żardecka’s review of two books by Fr L. Dyczewski), and value as a subject of philosophy (Bożena Matuszczyk’s review of two books in the field of the philosophy of language).

In the section *Reports* Fr Janusz Królikowski discusses one of the first scientific sessions in Rome devoted to the new encyclical by John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*. (The encyclical is also the subject of the section *The Pontificate in the Eyes of the World*: Fr Jarosław Merecki SDS discusses there the English-language commentaries published about the encyclical.) The other report (by Marcin Masny) concerns the 18th International Family Congress, already mentioned above, which was held in April, 1994, in Warsaw and turned out to be a great pro-family event.

The section *Through the Prism of the Ethos* is taken up by a short text written by a German philosopher, Robert Spaemann, in which he stresses the value of the impartiality of the philosopher in relation to the truth discovered by him.

The issue ends with the standing columns, *Bibliography* (in which Maria Filipiak sets up a list the utterances by the Pope about the family during the current pontificate) and *Notes about Authors*.

Translated by Leszek S. Kolek