

SUMMARY

The current issue of the "Ethos" is devoted to the category of classicality and the role of classical values in modern culture. Although the eponymous theme is characterised by some ambiguity, nevertheless – as the text *From the Editors* stresses – life in modern times is still based on classical foundations, such as the philosophical ideas of ancient Greece, the Roman concept of the law, and the teaching of the Gospels. The continuity of truly humanistic values, linking antiquity with Christianity, is indicated by John Paul II (in an address of 1995 whose fragment opens the section of articles in the current issue) when he speaks about the defence of human life as of everyone's duty at every moment in history. The other text with the Pope's message is a short speech of the Holy Father to Poles just after the liberalisation of the bill about the protection of human life by Polish Parliament. In this speech the Pope made a statement, among others, about "the lack of the rule of law in a state in which the killing of the innocent is allowed", while the nation which accepts the crime committed on unborn children was called by him "a nation without future". In a set of texts about the defence of conceived life there is also a letter of an ethicist addressed – even before the voting in Parliament – to the President of the Republic of Poland and to all Polish deputies and senators.

The main articles are grouped into four parts. The first part *The Human Being – A Classical Concept* is devoted to fundamental anthropological issues. An embodiment of man's eternal problem, such as human dignity, is to be found in Antigone. Jean-Marie Meyer, a French thinker and scholar, takes up this "Antigone's problem" and refers it to the reality of our contemporary times. The moral dilemmas of humanity, whose centre is constituted by man's freedom, are considered by Georges Cottier, OP and Tadeusz Styczeń, SDS. In turn, Stanisław Grygiel points to moral conclusions given to man to be read on the basis of the very Act of Creation calling man to life.

The next part *Rootedness in Classicality* refers to the sources of our culture. It begins with an analytical article by Władysław Tatarkiewicz, written a score of years ago, in which the author discusses four basic meanings of the concept of "classicality". Three articles are devoted to philosophy: Fr Marian Kurdziałek surveys the main philosophical problems determining culture throughout the centuries till modern times; Giovanni Reale discusses the essence of ancient philosophy; while Andrzej Bronk, SVD and Stanisław Majdański elucidate the classical understanding of philosophy in the Catholic University of Lublin. In turn, on the example of antique medical ethics, Zbigniew Chłap shows the opening of classical ideas to evangelical values.

The third part of articles *The Universality of the Gospel* has a theological character. It begins with two interconnected papers: Jacek Salij, OP presents the fragility of culture built by man, and Fr Jerzy Bajda shows the chances of saving truly humane culture found in the teachings of Christ. Małgorzata Borkowska, OSB and Paweł P. Ogórek, OCD present the value of holiness and its examples in the modern world. The remaining two articles in this part touch the

problem of the conjunction of the mundane and the supernatural in the social dimension. Against the background of the current discussion about the new constitution of the Republic of Poland, Fr Józef Krukowski discusses various attitudes towards the matter of God's name ("invocatio Dei") in such documents. On the other hand, Roman Jusiak, OFM postulates a deeper involvement of the laity in the life of the Church.

The fourth part *The Classical Ancestry of Art* refers to ancient clues in the domain of fine arts, and especially in poetry. Jadwiga Żylińska indicates the creative role of the Greek language in the culture of the West. Fr Jan Sochoń attempts to determine the modern significance of the classical poet. In turn, Anna Papierkowska discusses tombs of children, erected during the Renaissance in Poland, which are unique in the world.

The monographic theme of classical values is also raised in other texts of the present issue. The section *Interviews of the „Ethos”* contains a talk about the essence of metaphysics and practising philosophy with Prof. Stefan Świeżawski by Jarosław Merecki, SDS. The section *Notes and Reviews* presents a commentary on a book about classical references in literature and painting (by Lechosław Lameński) and a review of Sophocles's *Antigone* staged by the Juliusz Osterwa Theatre in Lublin (by Jan F. Jacko). The evangelical films by Robert Bresson are reviewed by an American film critic, Robert E. Lauder, in a short paper originally published in an American periodical *Crisis*. (The section of Reviews also contains Ireneusz Ziemiński's discussion of the latest book by L. Kołakowski about the conflict between the Catholicism of Thomas Aquinas and the Jansenists.) The classical value of disinterested beauty and its need in modern world is taken up by Wojciech Chudy in his commentary in the section *Through the Prism of the „Ethos”* – The addresses of Pope John Paul II about the Christian roots of Europe have been collected in the bibliography by Maria Filipiak.

The standing columns complete the present issue. In the section *Thinking about Fatherland* a priest and a poet, Andrzej Madej, OMI, publishes three poems about modern Poland. Józef Suchocki gives an account of a pilgrimage from Suwałki to Wilno from the perspective of a participant (section *Reportage*). In the section *Reports* Fr Andrzej Czaja discusses a scientific session in the Catholic University of Lublin on the subject of Yves Congar, an outstanding theologian and pastor of our times. The section *The Pontificate in the Eyes of the World* contains a letter of a Polish Moslem, Musa Konopacki, about the ecumenism of John Paul II, published in a periodical of the Moslems in Russia.