

SUMMARY

The double issue of "Ethos" is dedicated to the poor and the community formed by them called the Church of the poor. "The poor" is understood here in a broad meaning. As *From the Editors* presents it, the poor are those wronged and suffering from the lack of means of living, freedom, health and education. However, the poor are also – as John Paul II says in his speech in the Philippines published in this issue – "the poor in spirit", i.e. those not concerned with consumption goods but humble and open towards others and God. The advocates of such an attitude are St. Francis, Brother Albert Chmielowski and Mother Teresa. Poverty is often accompanied by human suffering but it also produces a great energy of love and goodness. This dialectics of poverty is discussed in the introductory text and in a majority of the articles in the present issue.

The articles are divided into several sections. The first section, *The Sense of Poverty*, examines those values which can be found in the phenomenon of poverty both from theoretical and practical points of view. Jean Vanier from France, Fr A. Zuberbier from Poland and Bp L. Maritano from Italy write about the meaning of poverty in theology. This group of articles is completed by an interview with Fr Stanisław Nagy who takes up the question of the Church's attitude towards the poor, and poverty in the Church itself. A selection of the writings by Br Albert Chmielowski shows the greatness of the poor and poverty. An exchange of opinions between Aleksander Małachowski and Fr Andrzej Szostek deals with the relation of a suffering person to religion. The next group of articles is *The Experience of Poverty* and illustrates contemporary spheres of poverty and suffering in the world (for example in Armenia – K. Jablonka, and in Poland – M. Świętochowska). H. Bortnowska points out that a special care should be given to people in a terminal state. The official documents of the Polish Church present some attempts to remedy the social ills of emigration and atheism. The third section, *The Witnesses*, contains presentations of those who are handicapped and those who serve them. There are, among others, remarks of the well-known and wheel-chair-bound physicist S. Hawking, a text by T. Zaleski-Isakowicz (a priest who helps the homeless and the poor), and a text by Fr S. Małkowski (who fights for the life of the unborn).

A section entitled *Notes and Reviews* also deals with the most important "social diseases" in the contemporary world. The following books are reviewed: B. Geremek's on poverty in history (reviewed by H. Łaszkiewicz); M. Novak's on socio-economic problems in Latin America (T. Mickiewicz); the work containing the views of the last Popes on the handicapped (Fr H. Niemiec), and an autobiography by R. Nolan, a poet suffering from brain paralysis (W. Chudy). There are also reports on such recent phenomena as AIDS (Z. Wrzecionkowski) and the large number of child runaways. The *Bibliography* contains John Paul II's comments on the suffering.

Another section is a group of articles bearing the name *For Faithfulness to the Authority of Truth*. It includes a commentary of the newly submitted bill to the Polish Sejm about the protection of the unborn and texts concerning some theologian's contention of John Paul II's teaching (among others, the case of "The Köln Declaration"). These questions share a specific understanding of freedom and democracy which is to a great extent distorted nowadays. The articles show the main trends of these distortions: arbitrary and non-objective treatment of the value of man in the life of the unborn (Fr T. Styczeń); the absolutisation of freedom in human conscience (Fr A. Szostek); the tendency in the Church to replace the value of truth by the value of the agreement by a majority (Fr T. Styczeń and Fr J. Bajda).

The remaining part of the issue consists of standing sections of "Ethos". In the section *Thinking about the Fatherland...* C. Zgorzelski writes about the concept of the love of fatherland in the poetry of Adam Mickiewicz. *Reports* include accounts of symposia held at the Catholic University of Lublin and dedicated to recent social changes in Poland. *The Pontificate in the Eyes of the World* presents first press reactions in the West to the encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (Fr H. Seweryniak and M. Gancarz). *The Chronicle of the Institute of John Paul II* reports on the fifth year of the Institute's activities.

Translated by *Andrzej Jaroszyński*