

SUMMARY

The present issue of the “Ethos”, entitled *E t h i c s a n d D e m o g r a p h y*, is devoted to the question of the moral dimension of the so-called demographic issues. The text *F r o m t h e E d i t o r s* points to the fact that the main characteristic of the so-called demographic issues is not their being global, but rather the fact that they concern most deeply each and every human person in his or her uniqueness and dignity. In his address to the World Food Summit, the Holy Father stresses that rightful distribution of goods, as well as food security in the world, results from the ethics of solidarity, while implementation of this ethics remains the primary duty of political and economic leaders, of whole nations and of all the good-willed people. In the opening section we also find an article by Abp. Bolesław Pylak, who presents the profile of the late Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Servant of God and a great follower of the ethics of solidarity, whose experience of spiritual martyrdom during his service as the Primate of Poland in the difficult communist period is the reason why so many Poles are praying for his beatification today.

The first block of articles is entitled *T h e C h i l d i s a G i f t* and it comprises three texts. Abp. Kazimierz Majdański shows that demography is a powerful instrument which can be used either to promote life and genuinely human attitude towards the poor and the weak or to spread the culture of death, together with the myth of overpopulation. Rocco Buttiglione in turn brings up the issue of the family, which he sees as the first and basic unit where the ethics of solidarity is realized in practice, and stresses its absolutely irreplaceable and formative role in the education of the human person and in preparing children for creative participation in social life. Finally, Piotr Jaroszyński analyzes the frequently recurring idea that children are the future of the world, pointing to numerous instances in which children are actually abused and treated rather as objects than human persons, in spite of the enormous popularity of the children’s rights movement.

The next set of texts points to the interdependence of *E t h i c s a n d A x i o l o g y*. First Fr. Janusz Nagórny shows that the so-called demographic problems result primarily from the loss of the truth about man and of the value of life, thus the demographic crisis demonstrates above all the crisis in man’s trust in his future. Then Fr. Janusz Balicki analyzes the ageing of modern society, pointing to the uniqueness of this phenomenon in the entire history of humankind, as well as to the fact that the present situation poses a challenge to intergeneration solidarity, since those who are young today will be soon put in the situation of having to provide for the older generations that are bound to outnumber them. Jan Kłys in turn reflects on the contemporary changes in parental attitudes: the arrival of a child is no longer seen by the parents as a joyful gift of God’s love, but rather as a troublesome burden which challenges their ways of life and threatens their material status, these fears being strengthened by the difficult economic situation in many countries, and thus calling for pastoral initiatives.

The succeeding block of articles is devoted to the question of the *D e m o g r a p h i c C h a n g e s i n P o l a n d*. It opens with a text by Fr. Janusz Mariański, who – having analyzed consumer attitudes of contemporary Poles – points that consumer mentality turns out to be anti-

natalistic in nature, and working against the civilization of love, since it accepts life only insofar as it remains the source of pleasure and welfare, and thus postulates that a new anti-hedonistic orientation of life is absolutely necessary. Wiktoria Wróblewska, dwelling on the metaphore from A. de Saint-Exupéry's *Little Prince*, attempts to explore the social background of the changes in the attitudes of Polish teenagers towards human sexuality, maternity and family, as well as their vulnerability to frequently negative cultural influences. Then Irena Kowalska thoroughly describes the matrimonial and procreational attitudes and behaviours in Poland, as they are influenced by the present economic transformation, and concludes that specific educational initiatives must be taken up in order to reduce the scope of cohabitation, early sexual initiation, teenage pregnancies, out-of-wedlock births and family disintegration since these phenomena pose a serious danger to our demographic future.

The next section is entitled **T h e R i g h t s o f t h e C h i l d – t h e R i g h t s o f t h e F a m i l y**. First Alicja Grześkowiak analyzes the consecutive steps leading up to the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1989 (i.e. the 1924 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, endorsed by the General Assembly of the League of Nations in Geneva, the regulations of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 which pertain to the question of the rights of the child, and the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1959), pointing to numerous weaknesses of this Convention, the most serious one concerning its failure to state unequivocally when human life (and thus the life of a child) begins. Then Krzysztof Wiak describes the model of legal protection of the unborn child in Poland, analyzing the steps taken by particular political bodies and legal regulations which preceded the historic verdict of the Constitutional Tribunal of 1997, and pointing to the fact that the standard of legal protection of the unborn in Poland is high in comparison to the respective situation in Western Europe. Teresa Liszcz presents a survey of the regulations of labour law in Poland which concern protection of maternity and the family, stressing that the responsibility for bringing up subsequent generations is not merely a private problem of the parents, but a national duty which transcends economic terms. Finally, Fr. Artur J. Katolo gives an account of the bioethical aspects of *in vitro* fertilization by pointing to the ways in which it abuses the dignity of procreation.

In the standing column **T h i n k i n g a b o u t t h e F a t h e r l a n d...** Andrzej Grzegorzczak presents how the determinants of collective morality were shaped in the newest history of Poland, seeing the marks of this transformation in gradual disappearance of the idea of mutual service, in the growth of technological dependence which results in a new type of enslavement and greed for material means, as well as in the origin of new, "profitable" ways of life; yet he points that despite these changes, the history of Poland has been marked by the challenge of truth and by numerous attempts to overcome hypocrisy.

In the section **N o t e s a n d R e v i e w s** Andrzej Szostek, MIC, reviews B. Chyrowicz's work entitled *Bioetyka i ryzyko. Argument "równi pochyłej" w dyskusji wokół osiągnięć współczesnej genetyki* [Bioethics and Risk. The "Slippery Slope" Argument in the Discussion of Advancement in Today's Genetics]. Jerzy Gałkowski presents an extensive review of M. Piechowiak's dissertation *Filozofia praw człowieka. Prawa człowieka w świetle ich międzynarodowej ochrony* [Philosophy of Human Rights. Human Rights, as Seen in the Light of Their International Protection], Józef Fert reflects on the poetry of Fr. Alfred M. Wierzbicki, Krzysztof Stachewicz reviews R. Spaemann's *Podstawowe pojęcia moralne* [Basic Moral Concepts], and Tomasz Garbol writes about the lately published *Król mrówek. Prywatna mitologia* [King of Ants. A Private Mythology] by Z. Herbert. The section concludes with the **P r o p o s a l s o f t h e " E t h o s "**.

In the section devoted to **R e p o r t s** Jarosław Merecki, SDS, relates the main topics discussed during the 43rd Philosophical Week held at the Catholic University of Lublin.

The section **T h e P o n s t i f i c a t e i n t h e E y e s o f t h e W o r l d** includes Włodzimierz Osadczy's reflection on Pope John Paul II's apostolic visit to Ukraine.

In the section **T h r o u g h t h e P r i s m o f t h e E t h o s** Wojciech Chudy points to various implications of the acceptance of pluralism in social and political life, stressing that although pluralism is a cultural fact, the objective of culture is not pluralism itself, but rather a unity founded on truth.

The concluding part of the volume comprises a **B i b l i o g r a p h y** of John Paul II's addresses concerning the phenomenon of migration at the turn of the millennia (by Fr. Artur J. Katolo) as well as **N o t e s a b o u t t h e A u t h o r s**.