

SUMMARY

The current, double issue of the „Ethos” is wholly devoted to selected problems of bioethics. Naturally, the issue covers only some aspects of bioethics (the scope of these problems is illustrated by means of a list of the domains of bioethics made up on the basis of the Center for Bioethics Library Classification (Washington); the list opens the section *For the Ethos of Ecology* in the present issue). The specific character and importance of these problems, as well as the role of the human being in their centre, are discussed in the introductory article *From the Editors*.

At the beginning of the issue there is a text by Tadeusz Styczeń SDS (*Wolność z prawdy żyje – Freedom Thrives on Truth*) which is a commentary and amplification of the latest encyclical of John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*. The encyclical is also referred to in one of the texts in the section of *Reports* (a report of Fr Bernard Jurczyk from a scientific conference at the KUL devoted to this encyclical).

The traditional introduction to the monographic problems of the current issue has the form of a short text by John Paul II. This time it is an excerpt from the Pope's address to the participants in a scientific conference of geneticists; the address concerned the moral limits of the expansion and application of the science which concerns life.

The main, article part of the issue has been arranged in keeping with the principle of „from the general to the particular”. It opens with a section *The Value of Life* which takes up the subject of the special value of life, especially of human life, from theological and philosophical perspectives. Fr Stanisław Wielgus, rector of the KUL, in a homily published at the beginning of the section, points out the difficult mission of a Christian in the laicised world of today. From a philosophical point of view, similar subjects are raised in a study by Andrzej Póltawski, who presents two antithetical models of understanding the human being after the hecatomb of World War II. Cardinal Fiorenzo Angelini (Italy) presents the universal value of the sanctity of human life, the value which is not determined by a certain denomination, but by the human dignity which characterizes every man. The section ends with a general survey of the documents of the Catholic Church in respect to the teaching of respect to life and natural environment (by Wacław Chomik OFM and Franciszek Rosiński OFM).

The section *For the Ethos of Ecology* concerns the problems of the scientific view of the biological domain, especially the moral foundations of this outlook. Having first provided a catalogue of the domains of bioethics, the section opens with a study by Tadeusz Ślipko SJ, who points to natural law as a philosophical and world view basis of man's attitude towards life and nature. The Spanish physician and scholar, Antonio Pardo, presents the magnitude of false philosophical foundations of bioethics, created by utilitarian and relativistic conceptions. In turn, Wojciech Sztombka discusses a lay conception of the ethics of responsibility for the world surrounding us, formulated by a contemporary German philosopher, Hans Jonas, who refers to

the values of classical philosophy. The section ends with a paper by Józef Zon, who raises a topical issue of the hazards posed by the appliances emitting electromagnetic waves for human health. The moral aspect of this issue often remains unapprehended or consciously neglected.

The third section of the issue is devoted to the ethics of medicine and is entitled *Primum non nocere* (First of all, do no damage). It opens with a paper by Fr Wacław Gubała, who outlines a personalist conception of the medical ethics. In his paper, Hans Thomas, a German physician and scholar, analyses the axiological dimension of corporeality and various attitudes of both the doctor and the patient depending on their understanding of the human body. Franciszek Zerbe attempts to find the middle road between a paternalistic attitude of the doctor towards the patient and a total reliance on the resolution of the selfwilled patient deciding about himself, to arrive at a possible best solution. Subsequent papers take up the border problems of the medical ethics. Fr Stefan Kornas analyses the ethical aspect of experiments carried out in medicine; an Austrian philosopher, Josef Seifert – the ethical aspects of treating non-operable tumours of the brain; while Roman Szulc – the ethical limits of the transplantation of human organs.

The fourth and last section concerns a particular but unusually dramatic issue in the domain of the medical ethics, namely, the problem of abortion, which has caused especially heated polemics in the last decades. The title of the section has been derived from the Hippocratic *Oath*: „Similary I will not give to a woman a pessary to cause abortion”. On the basis of his rich gynaecological and obstetric experience, Włodzimierz Fijałkowski quotes a number of manifestations of human reactions in the first, foetal phase of human life and demonstrates the role of the psychological and social context in this period for the subsequent development of the child. Radziśław Sikorski describes the change of social attitudes in Poland and the forms of shaping them in respect to the problem of abortion, while Jerzy Umiastowski describes the controversy about the formulation of the *Code of Medical Ethics*.

The section *Notes and Reviews* is also mainly devoted to texts connected with bioethical problems and it especially concentrates on ecology. Four reviews (by Jan Jacko, Andrzej Delorme, Tadeusz Chmielewski and Zbigniew Wróblewski) deal with books about ecological problems perceived from theological, philosophical, educational and social perspectives. Patrycja Mikulska critically discusses *The Philosophy of Medicine* by three Danish authors, H.R. Wulff, S.A. Pedersen and R. Rosenberg. The section also contains discussions of the books by two distinguished American Catholic philosophers of economy, M. Novak and B.J. Neuhaus (by Tomasz Mickiewicz) and by a German social philosopher A. Losinger *Iusta autonomia* (reviewed by Fr Franciszek Kampka). The section closes with Andrzej Sulikowski's review of the latest volume of the poetry of Fr Jan Twardowski.

The current issue initiates a new section, namely, *Relations*. It contains a text by Anna Truskolaska, who gives an account of the situation of the evacuees from the former Yugoslavia, who stay in a Refugee House which operates in Lublin.

The whole issue ends with standing columns. In the section *Thinking about Fatherland*, in a poetic text Bishop Józef Zawitkowski shows the drama of being a Catholic in the situation of the present-day Pole. The section *The Pontificate in the Eyes of the World* contains an essay by Fr Luigi Giussani in which he shares with the reader his vision of the presence of John Paul II among the searching persons and communities during the fifteen years of his pontificate. The section *Through the Prism of the Ethos* contains a feuilleton (by Wojciech Chudy) describing a certain attitude towards the Catholic weekly „Niedziela”. *Bibliography* (compiled by Maria Filipiak) concerns the addresses by John Paul II concerning the need and the command of respect for the biological component of the human being. The issue ends with *Notes about Authors*.