

SUMMARY

The editors of the *Ethos* present the readers with a special, commemorative issue *After the Farewell*, dedicated to the late Holy Father John Paul II. The pontificate of the Polish Pope was a great chapter in the history of the Church, in the history of the world, in the history of Poland, as well as a chapter in the life of each of us who was its witness. One might say that this chapter is now concluded, yet we might have by now reached the moment when we need to grasp the essence of Pope John Paul II's message in a new way. The legacy that he has left us comprises an extremely rich teaching, as well as numerous homilies and addresses delivered during the countless pilgrimages and apostolic visits. It is probably unlikely to summarize this pontificate or to provide its short synthesis. Thus the authors of the texts included in this Special Edition of the Quarterly *Ethos*, most of them close friends and collaborators of the late Pope, were asked to share with the readers their first reflections at this new historic moment.

In the text *From the Editors*, the author points out that the theological testament of the Holy Father John Paul II can be found in his last encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*. Particularly significant are the words which Pope John Paul II wrote in the conclusion of the encyclical: "Ave, verum corpus natum de Maria Virgine! Several years ago I celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of my priesthood. Today I have the grace of offering the Church this Encyclical on the Eucharist on the Holy Thursday which falls during the twenty-fifth year of my Petrine ministry. As I do so, my heart is filled with gratitude. For over a half century, every day, beginning on 2 November 1946, when I celebrated my first Mass in the Crypt of Saint Leonard in Wawel Cathedral in Krakow, my eyes have gazed in recollection upon the host and the chalice, where time and space in some way «merge» and the drama of Golgotha is re-presented in a living way, thus revealing its mysterious «contemporaneity.» Each day my faith has been able to recognize in the consecrated bread and wine the divine Wayfarer who joined the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and opened their eyes to the light and their hearts to new hope." Then, on 2 April 2005, shortly after the evening Eucharist, John Paul II stood face to face with the divine Wayfarer. The Triune God deigned to accept the burned offering of the life of the Pope who during his last days did not for a moment part with the Rosary he held in his hand, even at the moment of death. One can say that at that moment John Paul II recovered the lost time that seemed to have been irrevocably lost in the Garden of Olives, when the divine Wayfarer had repeatedly asked his closest apostles to watch with him, and yet received no support from them at the threshold of his Passion.

The text "From the Editors" is followed by the concluding part of the "Meditation on the Book of Genesis" from the *Roman Triptych* by Pope John Paul II, which is in turn succeeded with Karol Wojtyła's meditation "The Prayer in Gethsemane", originally included in the book *Sign of Contradiction*, which contains the texts of the addresses given by Karol Wojtyła in the presence of Pope Paul VI during the Lenten Retreat in the Vatican in March 1976.

The final text in the opening part of the volume comprises Father Styczeń's dramatic account of the last moments of the life of the Holy Father John Paul II.

The first section of the article part bears the title *The Farewell* and it includes Card. Joseph Ratzinger's homily delivered during the funeral Mass of Pope John Paul II, as well as Card. Angelo Sodano's homily delivered during the Eucharistic Concelebration for the repose of the soul of Pope John Paul II, and Card. Camillo Ruini's homily delivered during the Novendiali Mass in memory of the late Pope John Paul II.

The texts of the homilies are followed by a personal testimony of Card. Stanisław Nagy, who stresses that the leitmotif of the pontificate of the late Holy Father was the case of man, the concern expressed already in his first encyclical letter *Redemptor hominis*. This concern was inseparably connected with John Paul II's reverence for the mystery of the human life expressed above all in the encyclical letter *Evangelium vitae* and in his founding of the Pontifical Academy for Life. These two issues, so dear to the late Pope, were accompanied by his vision of the charitable God, a vision that will help us in overcoming the civilization of hatred and death.

In his statement, Abp. Józef Życiński reflects on the spiritual atmosphere that prevailed among the Polish people immediately after the passing of Pope John Paul II. The mass expression of the bond with the late Holy Father, in particular on the part of the young people and in the mass media, testified to the people's objection to attempts at blurring values and to their need for openness to the ideals of beauty, dignity and sense. Pope John Paul II, who epitomized service to truth and the affirmation of the evangelical values, at the same time engaged the transforming culture of our age, pointing out to the values that are common even to apparently opposing parties.

The succeeding section is entitled *A Witness to God's Unity with Man* and it includes reflections devoted to some particular themes that were present in Pope John Paul II's message throughout his pontificate.

Andrzej Szostek, MIC, shows the continuation of the programmatic encyclical *Redemptor hominis* in the further teaching of the Holy Father John Paul II. His first encyclical included the main motifs which were to be developed in the course of the pontificate, namely, the concern for the life of each and every human person, the vision of the family as the school of love, the claim that love is the only environment that fosters the growth of the human person, as well as the concern for the weakest considered as the basis of human solidarity. Other outstanding marks of the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, developed against the background of his first encyclical, include the vision of reconciliation as a *sine qua non* condition of any dialogue on any level of social life, in particular of the interreligious dialogue, as well as evangelization through witness-bearing which is to demonstrate that the charitable God was revealed to man in Jesus Christ, through his Incarnation and Redemption. The Holy Father's calling for the renewal of religious life appealed in particular to the young. His concern for preserving the identity of the Church was visible in the new documents announced during his pontificate, among them the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *Code of the Canon Law*. Through his personal sanctity, even more apparent due to his acceptance of pain and suffering in the last years of his life, Pope John Paul II, who taught people how to live and who lived in the way he taught, showed the Church and the world a new formula of the Petrine ministry.

Card. Joachim Meisner, the Cardinal of Cologne, in his lecture delivered on the occasion of his being conferred an honorary doctorate by the Catholic University of Lublin, stressed the Polish roots and the Polish heritage of the late Holy Father. During the communist period, the traditional marks of Polish Catholicism: devotion to Mary, the Mother of God; incorporating the faith in everyday life; the cult of holy paintings and relics of the Saints, made Poland a "thorn" in the *corpus socialisticus*. The religiousness of the Polish people, the presence of the faith in their daily life, expressed most beautifully in the celebration of religious festivals, was the background against which the interconnectedness of theology and anthropology, so characteristic of the teaching of Pope John Paul II, developed.

Abp. Alfons Nossol points that the world's reaction to the passing of Pope John Paul II demonstrates that the late Holy Father was above all the Pope of dialogue and reconciliation. Indeed, his concern for human solidarity and for ecumenism within the field of the Christian religion was evident from the moment of his election to the Holy See. John Paul II considered ecumenism as one of the most important tasks of his pontificate. The vision of unity that he cherished grew out of ecclesiology and eschatology, and it was deeply rooted in his efforts to retrieve and sustain peace in the world. The Pope held ecumenical meetings during each apostolic visit. Also numerous documents that he announced throughout his pontificate, such as the encyclical letter *Ut unum sint* and the apostolic letters *Tertio millennio adveniente* and *Novo millennio ineunte*, address ecumenical questions. The deepest foundation of the late Pope's ecumenical attitude was his vision of the communion of love. He made it evident by his invitation to representatives of various Christian Churches and Communities to participate with him in the ceremony of the opening of the Holy Door in St. Paul's Basilica Outside the Walls to celebrate the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. John Paul II conveyed his ecumenical message also through his visits: to the Patriarch of Constantinople, to the Canterbury Cathedral, to the World Council of Churches, to a Lutheran congregation, and to the Rome synagogue. One must not fail to mention the Pope's special ecumenical message for the Polish people, expressed and expanded continually during the apostolic visits to his homeland.

John F. Crosby analyzes the impact of Karol Wojtyła's personalism on the final shape of the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on Religious Liberty *Dignitatis humanae*, promulgated in 1965. Particularly dear to Card. Karol Wojtyła was the statement opening the Declaration: "Truth can impose itself on the mind of man only in virtue of its own truth, which wins over the mind with both gentleness and power." Some of the richest treasures of the intellectual and spiritual legacy of John Paul the Great can be mined by considering how his Christian personalism empowered him to illumine and deepen the teaching of the Declaration that truth should be proposed but never imposed.

Zofia J. Zdybicka, USJK, points out that Pope John Paul II combined the personality of a mystic and a thinker. Among his most significant accomplishments was bringing out the truth about man, the truth about the sense of his life and its prospects, as well as the truth about God's relationship to man. Throughout his teaching John Paul II stressed that grasping the full truth about man's condition involves a rational effort (philosophy) complemented with openness to the truth revealed by God in Jesus Christ.

The next section bears the title *A Gift to the World and to the Church* and it comprises texts in which authors point to the most visible accomplishments of the late Holy Father John Paul II.

In his two addresses to the American people, delivered respectively on 2 April 2005, after the death of Pope John Paul II had been announced, and on 9 April 2005, after returning from the Pope's funeral in Rome, the United States President George W. Bush stressed that the late Holy Father was justly considered a champion of human freedom and a witness to the dignity of human life, at the same time remaining an inspiration to millions of Americans. In Poland, John Paul II's witness launched a democratic revolution that changed the course of European history. In the West, his witness reminded people of their obligation to build a culture of life in which the strong protect the weak. During the Pope's final years, his witness was made even more powerful by his daily courage in the face of illness and great suffering.

George Weigel points out that there are many ways of remembering and mourning Pope John Paul II, who should also be remembered, however, as a man with a penetrating insight into the currents that flow beneath the surface of history, currents that in fact create history, often in surprising ways. This might have been conditioned by his very dramatic life, marked by the Nazi occupation and the communist period. It was against this background that the significance of the question of freedom surfaced in the teaching of the late Pope. During his epic pilgrimage to

Poland in June 1979, at a moment when “history” seemed frozen and Europe permanently divided into hostile camps, John Paul II demonstrated that human beings are not just the by-products of politics or economics. He gave back to his people their authentic history and culture – their identity; and in doing so, he gave them tools of resistance that communist truncheons could not reach. Fourteen months after teaching that great lesson in dignity, the Pope watched and guided the emergence of “Solidarity.” And then the entire world began to see the communist tide recede. In the 1990’s the Pope devoted most of his teaching to explaining why freedom untethered from moral truth risks self-destruction. John Paul II urged that the key to the freedom project in the 21st century lay in the realm of culture: in vibrant public moral cultures capable of disciplining and directing the tremendous energies set loose in free societies. A vibrant public moral culture is essential for democracy and the market, for only such a culture can inculcate and affirm the virtues necessary to make freedom work. John Paul II relentlessly preached genuine tolerance: not the tolerance of indifference, as if differences over the good did not matter, but the real tolerance of differences engaged, explored, and debated within the bond of a profound respect for the humanity of the other.

Wojciech Chudy presents a profile of Pope John Paul II seen as a teacher or a tutor: the tutor of the entire humanity and the tutor of each individual person. John Paul II was a teacher of life. His deep belief that it is human dignity that determines the greatness of the human person, being at the same time the source of the truth about the person, appealed to believers of various religions, as well as to atheists and to those who are religiously indifferent. Pope John Paul II often stressed the didactic function of culture whose primary task is to make man more humane. Convinced that genuine culture enhances the good in the human person, John Paul II never ceased his strenuous pedagogical efforts that resulted in a renaissance of the Christian culture. To John Paul II, the core of human culture was the family which teaches openness to other human beings. The educational activity of the late Holy Father concerned the fields of social and political life: he stressed that the personal growth of a human being is the measure of social progress. Thus he awakened whole societies to truth and freedom, at the same time warning them against a new form of totalitarianism that springs from a wrong conception of freedom. As the horizon of his teaching on social issues was the civilization of life, he succeeded in transforming the image of the Church from that of a “redemptive office” to one of the mystical body of Christ. The final lesson that the world received from Pope John Paul II was one on suffering and accepting death with full awareness and courage.

Fr. Czesław S. Bartnik reaches to the “deep structure” of Christianity in order to characterize the pontificate of Pope John Paul II. The teaching of John Paul II excludes two extreme visions of the Christian religion, which can be described respectively as the a priori and the a posteriori one and which have remained antagonistic throughout the history of the Church. According to John Paul II, the task of the Church is to incorporate the model of Christianity in which the transcendent by way of mystery fuses with the mundane in the human person, both in the individual and in the social dimension of the person. Such a model excludes both the vision in which God is a dictator who creates religion without man’s participation and the vision in which it is man himself who creates the idea of God and religion. Contrary to those visions, John Paul II held that religion is made by God and co-made by man. Throughout his life and his Petrine ministry he developed and strengthened the primacy of the God-centred current within the Church, combining it with a creative response from the world of human persons, both as individuals and a social body. John Paul II’s vision demonstrates clearly that reforms in the Church can be introduced only within the lower, interpretational human sphere, while the redemptive message of Jesus Christ is not subject to reform.

Fr. Richard J. Neuhaus stresses that the pontificate of the Holy Father John Paul II can be aptly called a chapter in the history of the Church, as it was marked by a powerful accent on the historical, demonstrated in the 1991 encyclical *Centesimus annus*. John Paul II, the faithful ser-

vant of the eternal truths entrusted to and transmitted by the Church, set forth those truths within the context of the lived experience of the Church and the world. What is described as his personalist and phenomenological approach produced the most keen attentiveness to the lived experience of the actual person and the actual person in actual communities. With respect to Christian unity, *Ut unum sint* gives a sensitively detailed account of Christians living in tragic separation, while *Evangelium vitae* elicits the primordial wonder of the gift of life as experienced in the most intimate precincts of human life. There is also the very extensive catechesis known as “the theology of the body,” which is a treasure that is only now being more widely appreciated. As Pope, he wrote and spoke as the father of a family, inviting all members of the family to reflect with him on the truths by which the family is constituted. His repeated invocation of the words of *Gaudium et spes* that Christ is not only the revelation of God to man, but the revelation of man to himself was the basis of a sustained teaching that is best described as prophetic humanism. The prophetic humanism of John Paul II has transformed in a lasting way the Church’s ministry of witnessing to eternal truths in critical but loving engagement with the lived experience of the Church and the world.

Wanda Póltawska and Andrzej Póltawski stress that the sociological phenomenon of spiritual unity that could be witnessed in Poland after the passing of Pope John Paul II sprang from the fact that the late Holy Father in his teaching fully revealed to the faithful what every human person actually strives for in his or her life and what can only give sense and happiness to human life. John Paul II described human love as both an inner movement towards another person and an emotional experience; a spiritual union, but also an all-embracing task. An integral part of his mission was to rescue the sanctity of human love and to recover its beauty.

Fr. Józef Kudasiewicz concentrates in his reflection on the essence and meaningfulness of the change that Pope John Paul II introduced into the Catholic Church. Teaching on the Church is present in all the documents that the Pope announced during his pontificate, in particular in the encyclical *Redemptor hominis* and in the apostolic letters *Mane nobiscum Domine*, *Tertio millennio adveniente* and *Novo millennio ineunte*. The late Pope always stressed that the Church, being a community in the process of renewal, needs constant self-examination and self-purification. The Church must also be a communion of love. It is the spiritual nature of this communion that constitutes the foundation of the Church. According to John Paul II’s vision of the Church, expressed fully in the exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa*, the fundamental task of the Christians is that of new evangelization. New evangelization is needed by those from among the baptized who have lost the sense of living their faith, who no longer consider themselves members of the Church and live their lives in separation from Christ. Pope John Paul II not only renewed the face of the Church with his apostolic word, but he also personally participated in this renewal: he would give forgiveness and ask forgiveness, while preaching the Gospel he would defend the dignity of the human person. His pontificate demonstrated that the only way to a renewal of the Church is through acts of humble love.

The section *Crumbs of Memory and Gratitude* comprises personal reflections on the personality and accomplishments of Pope John Paul II.

Vittorio Messori reflects on the suffering of Pope John Paul II, remembering the Pope’s remarkable energy and activity, and ponders over a hypothetical situation in which one would spend a night watching beside the Pope’s bed.

Fr. Alfred Wierzbicki observes that John Paul II’s humanism is deeply rooted in the memory of the humanity of Jesus Christ. The late Holy Father was the Pope of a historic turn, and he started a change in the thinking about the place of Christianity in history, about the duties of the Church towards the society, about the relationship of the faith and culture in the age of an intellectual crisis. John Paul II restored the primacy of the religious language, which was accompanied by a moving testimony of his life. Indeed, his last encyclical was literally written with his suffering. Pope John Paul II conceived of apostolic ministry as taking its roots in the idea of man seen as an

image of God. He stressed that human dignity cannot be fully grasped unless one simultaneously discovers a living bond between the human person and God. This deep belief was the foundation of the late Pope's personalistic approach and the source of his conviction of the unity of the human race. In the age of weak thought, distrustful about the secular promises of salvation, John Paul II accepted the task of demonstrating that the values traditionally called humanistic are actually deeply rooted in religious thinking. Among the practical concerns that made Pope John Paul II a worldwide authority on matters of freedom and justice was the issue of revitalizing human solidarity, as well as that of renewing the imagination of charity in a world flawed with scepticism and relativism. John Paul II demonstrated that what the world badly needs in the present age is the testimony of the Church living the mystery of Redemption and the one of the charity of God. He also incessantly showed that trust in human conscience takes its roots in the experience of the beauty of the Gospel. Trust in human conscience expresses trust in human reason, as well as trust in the faith that finds its grounding in human reason.

Zygmunt Kwiatkowski, SJ, a missionary in Syria, holds that the reactions in the Muslim world to the passing of Pope John Paul II demonstrated that the late Pope had largely contributed to the abolition of the religious barrier in people's hearts between the world of Christianity and the world of Islam. The Holy Father John Paul II helped the faithful of both great world religions discover that religion is not the start of a conflict. On the contrary, it offers an opportunity to deepen the mutual respect and is thus a field of reconciliation.

Bp. Andreas Laun, OSFS, presents a personal reflection on his meetings with the late Pope, and describes how the pontificate of John Paul II affected his life and his attitudes, how it shaped his theological thinking. Within this perspective special attention is paid to the Holy Father's accomplishments in the sphere of moral theology, in particular to his continuation – in the apostolic exhortation *Familiaris consortio* and in the encyclical *Evangelium vitae* – of the teaching of Pope Paul VI presented in the encyclical *Humanae vitae*. One should also note the critical appreciation of the latest developments in German moral theology, not always “healthy” ones, expressed by John Paul II in his encyclical *Veritatis splendor*, as well as the remarkable teaching on the Eucharist in the encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*. The prophetic cry “Santo subito” and the special atmosphere that prevailed in St. Peter's Square during the Holy Father's funeral testified to the fact that John Paul II was indeed a teacher of genuine peace and an authority to the whole world.

Fr. Livio Melina, Vice-President of the Pontifical Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, stresses that the Holy Father John Paul II, apart from being the biblical rock, the guarantor of the link with the tradition, became also a source of new spirituality, a source of the charism that enlivens and renews the life of the Church. The task of the Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome is to show how the Pope taught us to love human love and to see the core experience of love in the communion of human persons. Pope John Paul II was the founder and a supporter of the Institute. He was aptly called the Father of the Institute. This fatherhood is now hidden in the fatherhood of God.

Alina Merdas, RSCJ, presents a poetic meditation on the image of the Pope lying in state, his attire in Polish national colours: white and red. This image of the late Pope evokes his cultural roots, shaped by the dramatic history of the Polish nation, aptly described by John Paul II's most admired poet Cyprian Kamil Norwid.

Adam Rodziński presents a brief recollection from the years when Karol Wojtyła was his academic colleague, their discussion on St. John's of the Cross mystical theology, as well as the appreciation of his own poetry by Pope John Paul II.

The succeeding section of the volume is entitled *The Popes of the Turn of the Centuries* and it includes the homily John Paul II delivered during the Mass for the inauguration of his pontificate, as well as Benedict XVI's inaugurational homily. Both Popes made the words “Open wide the doors to Christ” a recurring theme in their homilies.

The section **Thinking about the Fatherland** includes the Testament of the Holy Father John Paul II.

The **Calendar** section covers the Calendar of the last days of the life of the Holy Father John Paul II.

The volume concludes with the **Notes about the Authors**.

Summarized by *Dorota Chabrajska*