

**OUT OF CONCERN
FOR THE MAN
AND THE COMMON GOOD**

**Document
of Councils for Society problems**

POLISH BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. “Be vigilant, stay firm in the faith, be brave and strong. Let everything you do be done in love.” (1 Cor 16,13-14). These words of St. Paul addressed to the Christians of Corinth, are biblical inspiration of the social document that we, Pastors of the Church in Poland, address to our Sisters and Brothers in Christ and to all who have the good of our country at heart.

We do it with humility, aware of that “the faithful expect only one thing from priests: that they be specialists in promoting the encounter between man and God”¹. At the same time we are convinced that “the Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which men ask about this present life and the life to come and about the relationship of the one to the other”².

Poland is now at the turning point in which the development – in spite of many commendable successes – is threatened with serious crisis: a spiritual crisis that held together the people allowing them to survive in the he-

¹ Benedict XVI, *Address by the Holy Father. Meeting with the clergy*, Warsaw Cathedral 25 May 2006.

² Vatican II, *Constitution: Gaudium et spes*, no 4.

aviest times. Without referring to these values the progress may prove to be temporary and illusory and as a result may even threaten existence of the nation.

Therefore we ask for accepting this word as an expression of our concern for the common good, as a voice over the ideological and political separations: the voice of the Church for which „the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts³.

³ Vatican II, *Gaudium et spes*, no 1.

II. PROMOTION OF INTEGRAL IMAGE OF THE HUMAN PERSON

THE HUMAN PERSON CREATED IN THE GOD'S IMAGE AND REDEEMED BY THE JESUS CHRIST

2. Truth about the human person and his final destination has been redeemed by Jesus Christ. Only the God, by his Son and in the Holy Spirit reveals the truth to the human person about that what in the eternal intention of the God was to be a man, what he is at present and what he is to be after crossing the frontier of death. This revelation includes the fates of the human individual from the moment of his creation (beginning) until eschatological fulfilment.

Fundamental message of the Holy Scripture states that the human person was created in the God's own image: "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (Gen 1,27). As "being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead"⁴.

⁴ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 357 (hereafter CCC).

THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

3. The dignity of the human person is special value. It results from the fact that the human individual is a subject and a person at the same time: self-conscious being, free, capable to getting to know the truth, dominating over the world and having a vocation for love. This fundamental dignity has been wounded by sin. Based only on his own forces the human individual is not able to carry out his desires and vocation. Therefore he needs Redeemer. The process of recovering the freedom is being made in the Jesus Christ. "For, by his Incarnation, he, the son of God, *in a certain way united himself with each man*"⁵. While, in the mystery of the Redemption man becomes "newly 'expressed' and, in a way, is newly created" He was newly created"⁶, this unity was definitely confirmed. The final basis of the dignity of the human person is one's entering into the community of the Divine Persons by the Jesus Christ.

On account of a special source that is the God himself, the personal, is "*the most precious possession of an individual*"⁷. Thanks to this dignity the individual transcends the all material world. And for the dignity of the person is objective value therefore it is the "indestructible property of *every human being*"⁸. Just for that reason it is also the foundation of equality of all people among themselves, what for organization of the social life is of fundamental significance.

⁵ John Paul II, *Redemptor hominis*, no 8.

⁶ *Ibid*, no 10.

⁷ Jan Paweł II, *Christifideles laici*, no 37.

⁸ *Ibid*.

4. By virtue of a personal dignity a man is “*always a value as an individual*”⁹ and as such demands being considered in all areas of social, political, economic and cultural life. Therefore any analysis of these life areas must necessarily come out of the same premises, in particular that every man has the dignity that can never be diminished, mutilated or destroyed, but on the contrary should be respected and duly protected. For the sake of his dignity no man can be considered or treated as an object or a “tool” in achieving the goals even noble.

Clearly contrary to the dignity of the human being, and from the moral point of view, is not acceptable *inter alia* abortion, euthanasia, artificial insemination, use of stem cells from the human embryos and cloning. And no goal, making reference to the good of the man does justify such behaviour. Benedict XVI paid attention to these issues in the encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, stating that manipulating with the human life is an expression of the contemporary “technology’s supremacy”, which makes the human person begins to have a conscience incapable to recognize that what is human and good¹⁰.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE NATURAL LAW

5. The relationship to the human rights functions as an objective test, checking the respect of the personal dignity in the social life. The author of these rights is not a state, political authority or any social group. They come from the Creator who created the human nature and gave him the dignity. Hence, each authority has a duty to respect and to

⁹ Jan Paweł II, *Christifideles laici*, no 37.

¹⁰ Cf. Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, no 75.

defend the human rights. They constitute the basic criterion for an assessment of the political and economic systems and the state action program: wherever the human rights are respected, it is also protected his dignity. And in the other way round where the human rights are violated, the human dignity is also disregarded. Apart from the negative aspect (protection of the dignity) the human rights have also the positive one – creating the conditions to more complete development of the human person. John Paul II explains it in the following way: “The human rights are so as to everyone has the space needed to fulfil their tasks and responsibilities. In order he could develop in this way, to become more the human being”¹¹. All the human rights are the unity¹². It is expressed in the goal to which they are oriented, and it is an integral and versatile development of the human individual by using of all these rights.

6. The state of the consciousness of the dignity of the human person and the human rights is increased in our community, and it is a process deserves to be recognized. The practice of absolutization of the rights without taking into account the restrictions which are determined by the dignity and the right of the other person, and forgetting that to each right corresponds the responsibility is a matter of concern. It is clearly seen at the example of opposing the right to life to the so-called the right of woman to decide on the conceived child. It happens that the right to life of the child already living, although unborn, becomes to be

¹¹ John Paul II, *Liturgy of the Word for the young people*, Gdansk–Westerplatte, 12.06.1987.

¹² Out of all social encyclicals the most complete catalogue of the human rights includes the encyclical of John XXIII *Pacem in Terris*, especially numbers 4–11.

recognized as not in force by virtue of absolutization of the woman's freedom to decide about oneself. In the meantime the right to life involves an obligation of the life protection, and that is from the conception up until the natural death. "The right" of the woman to abortion, falling within the scope of so-called new human rights, is an example improper and very dangerous conception of the human rights, in which in fact is not about the dignity protection but about permission for conduct that does not respect the basic goods of the second person. So, one cannot be said about the "right" of the woman to abortion because the right from its nature must correspond to the dignity of every person. In this case we are not dealing with the right but with *corruptio legis* (a distortion of the law).

One can refer to many other examples of that in what way the human rights are manipulated and how wrong they are interpreted (e.g. when the right to confess and practice own religion is recognized as the inferior in relation to the right to freedom of speech). Such trend does huge damages to all community because it consolidates wrong understanding the human rights, making them the tool to justify the lawlessness, distorts consciences and pass over the existence of connection between the rights and the duties¹³.

It is seemed that in view of these trends the plane of dialogue accepted so far within the context of the human rights is not longer enough – contributes rather to devaluation of these rights and makes that they become an expression of utilitarian legalism, "unorganized desires of individual consumer or claims of individual groups and not objective

¹³ "An overemphasis on rights leads to a disregard for duties". Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, no 43.

requirements of the common good of the mankind”¹⁴ – but is should be expanded by reference to the natural law.

7. For the pluralistic Polish community comes increasingly difficult to define the minimum goods and values shared by all. As a result, you can see a number of alarming trends: ethical relativism, being simply for some people one of basic requirements of democracy, because the relativism is supposedly a guarantee of tolerance and mutual respect of the people; positivist conception of the law according to which “humankind, community, and in fact majority of the citizens is the final source of the civil law, and scepticism traditionally presented as main opponent of the natural law. These trends lead to the suppression of the collective consciousness what in turn leads not only to destruction of the basic principles of the natural moral law but to violation of the grounds of democratic order as well.

A postulate of evoking the natural law as the basis of universal ethics is put forward with consciousness that Christianity has no monopoly on it, but refers to the sense common to all the human beings. In the speech to the members of International Theological Commission Benedict XVI reminded that the Christian “natural law doctrine has two essential goals: from one hand it allows to understand that ethical meaning of the Christian faith is not something imposed from the outside on consciousness of the human individual, but the standard that has the foundation in the human nature itself; from the other hand taking as the starting point, the natural law which is accessible for

¹⁴ International Theological Commission, *In Search of a Universal Ethic: A New Look at the Natural Law* (6.12.2008). Translated by R. Kiełtyka, J. Brusilo, WN UPJPII, Cracow 2009.

each rational being, forms a plane of the dialogue with all people of good will, and more generally, with the civic and secular community”¹⁵.

In this context we want to remind about role of the consciousness in our life. „Conscience [...] is for every human individual a matter of fundamental meaning. It is our internal guide and also the judge of our deeds. Thus, it is very important so as to our consciences were right, so that their judgments were based on the truth, so that the good would be named as the good, and the evil – the evil. [...] Therefore Poland calls today above all for people of conscience! Being the man of conscience means, first of all, to listen voice of conscience at every situation and do not appease it, although it is difficult and demanding a number of times; that is to say to become involved in the good and build up it in around oneself, and also never come to terms with the evil, according to words of St. Paul: ‘Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good’ (Rom 12,21)”¹⁶.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

8. The Polish Bishops’ Conference issued in 2009 extensive and many-sided document on the marriage and the family entitled *To serve the marriage and the family*¹⁷. It includes the compendium of doctrinal teaching of the

¹⁵ Benedict XVI, *The non-transferable value of the natural law*, Speech to the members of plenary session of International Theological Commission on the moral natural law and identity of theology, its sense and method (4.12.2010).

¹⁶ John Paul II, *Homily*, Skoczów, 22.05.1995.

¹⁷ Document was accepted at 348th Plenary Session of PEC in Łomża, 19.06.2009.

Church about value of the family, theology of the family life and duties of the sacral communities towards the family as fundamental and not irreplaceable unit of the social life. Encouraging to careful reading of this document, we want once again to present heart of catholic teaching on the marriage and the family because it is foundation of the social teaching of the Church. Moreover, there is a necessity of discovery again the value of marriage and family, because at present this value is largely questioned both by modern culture and by the community.

The very concept of the family as a community which is based on marriage between a man and a woman is criticized today. It is the Creator is the author of marriage and family. It is He defined the rights, what these communities have to be governed. The family can be defined as a community of persons based on marriage, i.e. permanent relationship of one man and one woman. This relationship is open to transmitting the human life.

We would like to remind that exceptional dignity of the marriage is continued by the God who defined “from the beginning” a character of this community. „That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.” (Gen 2,24). The Christ in conversation with Pharisees quotes these words, adding: „So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.” (Matt 19,6). The Christ confirms in this way an inseparable character of the marriage. That’s just union of the man and the woman which is accompanied by the God’s blessing, is indispensable condition of transmission of the life to new generations. It testifies also to the establishment of

the marriage by the God as a right “place” of conception of new life¹⁸.

Changing the rights or tasks established by the God in relation to the marriage and the family, the man contributes to the crisis. “The crisis of the family becomes in turn a reason of the crisis of the community. Numerous pathological phenomena – from loneliness to violence and drug addiction – can be translated by that the families lost their dignity and stopped to play a role assigned to them. When the family collapses, the community is missing the connective tissue, what involves disastrous consequences for the weakest persons especially: children, teenagers, the disabled, sick persons and the aged”¹⁹.

Since the family is the community of persons, its rights are precisely connected with the human rights. However, by virtue of its peculiarity the family has its rights. These fundamental ones were collected and published by the Holy See on 22nd October, 1983 in the Charter of the Rights of the Family.

9. The Creator invited the married couple to be co-workers in transmitting the life by the marriage. The artificial insemination is an evil, what which John Paul II reminded: “The various techniques of the artificial reproduction that would seem to be at service of the life and which are frequently used with this intention, actually open the door to new threats against life. Apart from the fact that they are morally unacceptable, since they separate procreation

¹⁸ Cf. John Paul II, *Mulieris dignitatem*, no 7.

¹⁹ John Paul II, *Out of concern for the family dignity*, „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition), (2000), no 3, p. 43.

from the fully human context of the conjugal act, these techniques have a high rate of failure: not just failure in relation to fertilization but with regard to the subsequent development of the embryo, which is exposed to the risk of death, generally within a very short space of time. Furthermore, the number of embryos produced is often greater than that needed for implantation in the woman's womb, and these so-called 'spare embryos' are then destroyed or used for research which, under the pretext of scientific or medical progress, in fact reduces human life to the level of simple 'biological material' to be freely disposed of"²⁰.

The family gives the life and should be faithful to the right of life. It means that it rests with responsibility of life protection from the very conception. This responsibility explicitly excludes the possibility of abortion. The God's law in relation to the human life is unambiguous and uncompromising. The God prohibits doing it: "You shall not murder" (Exod 20,13). Not any human legislator may say: you are allowed to murder, you are entitled to murder. The right to life is not only the right of the grown up, healthy, intelligent. It is the right of every human person. The right to life is also the right of the newborn who already lives in the woman's womb. The past years show how in our country increased awareness of need of the unborn life protection. It is an effect of the Church's teaching and involvement of many secular believers. We want to thank them for that. Your actions, noticeable on many planes of the social life, and your prayer are great treasury of the Church.

However, we are not able to accept the situation – on the grounds of the good of country and the citizens – where in

²⁰ John Paul, *Evangelium vitae*, no 14.

Poland the conceived children are killed, and also destroyed the human beings defined as the embryos, set up to life with using the different techniques of the artificial insemination. The God's command "You shall not murder" does not know exceptions. The murdering the unborn children and widely promoted contraception contributed to very bad demographic situation of Poland. The Polish community is growing old. On one person advanced in years fall less and less young hands capable of working, what involves inter alia very serious problems for operation of the pension fund system in our country. On the shoulders of people belonging to a small group of working people will rest the obligation to support and satisfy right needs of a large group of the adults. The demographic breakdown threatens the explosion of intergeneration conflict. It is therefore necessary as quickly as possible to implement pro-family politics by the authorities.

THE FAMILY – EDUCATION

10. "Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators. This role in education is so important that only with difficulty can it be supplied where it is lacking. Parents are the ones who must create a family atmosphere animated by love and respect for God and man, in which the well-rounded personal and social education of children is fostered. Hence the family is the first school of the social virtues that every society needs"²¹.

²¹ Vatican II, Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimum educationis*, no 3.

In the earliest period of the human life God is active by parents. He needs their heart, hands, voice, so as to show love in this way. The God needs the parents to guarantee the child conditions of full development. It is known that the family is the most important educational centre and a school of the social life. Its psychological impact is made largely by the quality and frequency of mutual intra-family relationships. The marital and parental bond decides therefore on climate of the home which shapes the psyche of children.

A lot of factors decide on happiness of the child. Among them comes to the fore an experience of love and acceptance. The child has to feel that it is important, loved, needed, dear and valuable. Even, if it is disabled. Therefore, the family should be true community where the man is loved that's why that he is the human being, the only, unique, that he is a person. The permanent contact with parents, with father and the mother, is of a great significance for the child and its full development. There are no doubts that the child for its correct development needs both parents. Therefore the adoption of children by the persons of the same sex is impermissible.

11. It is also the parents' responsibility to educate their offspring. Education consists in fact "in enabling man to become more man, to 'be' more and not just to 'have' more and consequently, through everything he 'has', everything he 'possesses', to 'be' man more fully. For this purpose man must be able to 'be more' not only 'with others', but also 'for others'"²². The goal of education formulated in this way puts before the parents, the first and the main educators of

²² John Paul II, Address to UNESCO, Paris, 2.06.1980.

the child, specific tasks. They are obliged by their original vocation to carry out a task.

One of the main tasks of the parents is shaping the essential values of the human life in the children. It means that the children should gain a sense of true justice which leads to respect for the dignity of every human being, and also a sense of true love as an attitude of care and selfless service towards the others.

The Christian parents have obligation to religious education of their children and they should not offload onto the secular or church institutions. For these institutions are to support the parents' efforts but cannot substitute them for this essential role. The religious education, education in the faith should begin as early as possible. It is important, so that the parents tell to the children about the God, teach them morality, explain the Christian sense of such events like receiving the sacraments, celebration of the liturgical feasts. The parents should also take a conversation with teenagers on topics of the faith and the Christian life. Let us remember that an impact of education is more effective, if it is based on the authority of the parents. They build it through acknowledging the fundamental values and the moral principles and adaptation of their actions to them.

12. We observe alarming phenomenon consisting in delegating the other persons and institutions in place of the family to sexual education of the children. Also in this field the parents should be the first educators. *Catechism of the Polish Church* reminds about it: "So that the 'I do' of the spouses may be a free and responsible act and so that the marriage covenant may have solid and lasting human and

Christian foundations, preparation for marriage is of prime importance. The example and teaching given by parents and families remain the special form of this preparation”²³.

The sexual education cannot be limited to imparting information of the biological-hygienic nature or knowledge on the techniques enabling the getting of the greatest pleasures. For the sexuality always refers to the human person. And the human person has the dignity coming from the God himself. Therefore, from the sexual education one should exclude the propagation of abortion or contraception.

“Education in love as self-giving is also the indispensable premise for parents called to give their children a clear and delicate sex education. Faced with a culture that largely ‘reduces’ human sexuality to the level of something common place, since it interprets and lives it in a reductive and impoverished way by linking it solely with the body and with selfish pleasure, the educational service of parents must aim firmly at a training in the area of sex that is truly and fully personal: for sexuality is an enrichment of the whole person – body, emotions and soul – and it manifests its inmost meaning in leading the person to the gift of self in love.

Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to obse-

²³ CCC, 1632.

rive when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents.

[...] In view of the close links between the sexual dimension of the person and his or her ethical values, education must bring the children to a knowledge of and respect for the moral norms as the necessary and highly valuable guarantee for responsible personal growth in human sexuality. For this reason the Church is firmly opposed to an often widespread form of imparting sex information dissociated from moral principles. That would merely be an introduction to the experience of pleasure and a stimulus leading to the loss of serenity – while still in the years of innocence – by opening the way to vice”²⁴.

²⁴ John Paul, *Familiaris consortio*, no 37.

III. OUT OF CONCERN FOR CULTURE

SPIRITUAL CULTURE AS THE COMMON GOOD

13. In the documents of the Second Vatican Council the term of culture includes both the personal culture, i.e. all material and spiritual products of the man and all forms of the social life. The culture specifies existence of the man and facilitates him pilgrimage to eternity. "Man comes to a true and full humanity only through culture that is through the cultivation of the goods and values of nature"²⁵. John Paul II emphasized these aspects of culture during the meeting with the young people in Gniezno on 3 June, 1979. He said then: "*Culture* is an expression of man, a confirmation of humanity. Man creates culture and through culture creates himself. [...] Culture is an expression of communication, of shared thought and collaboration by human beings. It is born of service of the common good and becomes an essential good of human communities"²⁶. Therefore out of concern for the culture is at the same time a care of the common good.

A lot of elements of daily culture, including e.g. artistic activity are not today a subject of any rules. Lack of bans in

²⁵ Vatican II, Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world, *Gaudium et spes*, no 53.

²⁶ John Paul II, Address of his Holiness John Paul II to the young people, in: John Paul II, *Social teaching*, Vol. I, Warsaw 1982, p. 40.

this regard is often interpreted as the social consent to treat freely that what is to be a means of conveying good, beauty and truth. Lack of clear expectations from the side of communities resulted in surprising forms of activity which are named an art, although in no way they do not contribute to increase the common good. Lack of norms and principles within the field of culture is e.g. a reason of expansion of culture without shame. Huge confusion in a way of understanding the shame has been caused by intentional action, mostly with commercial nature, using the intimate sphere of the man as a commodity. A concern for morality in modern world, also in the field of culture, is a great battle for the human individual. Involvement of the Christians in a defence of morality of the public life has rich tradition. Its fundamental goal is paying attention to the spirituals culture as one of basic elements of the common good.

IN THE FACE OF GLOBALIZATION OF THE CULTURE

14. The family of nations, of which the Father is God, has suitable for itself religious dimension. It has the natural and transcendent character, material and spiritual, earthly and eternal. It is a subject of any salutary action of the God, what in turn requires proper look at the earthly and temporary historical facts concerning the nations. From vision of the humankind as the family of nations arise directly individual rights each of them. The moral order requires so that each nation could exist and develop within the spiritual and material sphere. The right of the nation to exist is also connected to the right to care of one's own identity within the scope of culture that is its quality. In practice it means freedom of citizens in using the language, to believe in and profess one's faith, to bring up chil-

dren in accordance with the family's own traditions, in the art, literature etc. This right refers to each group of the national minority that occupies a certain territory is able to create the community. And the weaker group has the right to personal taking care of its cultural identity. The catholic teaching within this scope grants the national groups living in foreign country the right to develop identity within the scope of the social life, thus in non-political forms of the collective life (educational system, cultural, economic, professional etc. associations). It involves a necessity of creating by the country the material bases to taking part the community in the cultural life (because a poverty excludes at times from participation in the national life the whole social groups).

15. Element of the freedom of nation is also its right to the cultural heritage. It is a natural consequence of a need to obey and keep up the customs and traditions which develop given nation. The Second Vatican Council stated: "From different way of using the things, providing the work and expressing oneself, practicing the religion, shaping the customs, establishing the rights and legal institutions, supporting the development of sciences and arts, and also cultivating the beauty comes into being the diversity of the life forms and shapes in which harmoniously the life values are connected. In this way from the institutions imparted by tradition is formed a heritage typical of each human community. It is also created the historical environment in which it is included the man of each nation or age and from which he obtains the value allowing him to improve the human and civil culture"²⁷.

²⁷ John Paul II, Address of his Holiness John Paul II to the young people, in: John Paul II, *Social teaching*, Vol. I, Warsaw 1982, p. 40.

With the right of national heritage it is connected the right to cultural development. The nation must be developed because it is the right of its existence. It cannot be closed within the range of values and goods worked out by history. The past is important source of inspirations, still alive and creative model element but spontaneously it does not guarantee the future. It must be still developed by the members of given nation anew. Within this process the continuous danger, even increasing at present, is a domination of one group over the others. John Paul II making a speech to the teachers and catechists in Włocławek (in 1991) said: "Incompatible with Christian truth is the attitude of fanaticism or fundamentalism of these people who in the name of an ideology which purports to be scientific or religious, claim the right to impose on others their own concept of what is true and good. Furthermore, in constantly reaffirming the transcendent dignity of the person, the Church's method is always that of respect for freedom. [...] The gospel sensitivity and vigilance will protect us against emotions and agitation which easily can lead to xenophobia or any intolerance, contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, to the spirit of the God who is the Creator and the father loving all people"²⁸.

16. The social and political pluralism is to protect the freedom of citizens and guarantee everybody equal rights, thus it is oriented to a tolerance. It points out to necessity of overcoming the difficulties connected with coexistence of two things or persons one another. In order a tolerance would be inspirational, and not destructive it must be shaped by the spiritual competences, i.e. virtues which make easier

²⁸ John Paul II, *Pilgrimages to Fatherland. The speeches and homilies*, Cracow 2005, p. 683–684.

the full affirmation of “distinctness” of persons. Thus, one should distinguish between weak and passive forms of the tolerance, understood as enduring the dissimilarity, from stronger form, active and creative one, which consists in openness in relation to differences or even their unconstrained acceptance. The tolerance and pluralism however have got the axiological limits. Multitude of views and attitudes, standing behind the value of pluralism, is not the final point of reference in using the rule of its affirmation. This final indication must be always the value of the man and that, what he assumes within the sphere of values in his life. Because “‘pluralism’ as a word includes inside a certain danger – said John Paul II in Brazil in 1980 – in the community, that like to be defined as ‘pluralistic’, there is surely diversity of confessions, ideologies, philosophical concepts. But an approbation of this multitude does not exempt me of course – nor any other Christian who joined to the Gospel – from an affirmation of indispensable foundation, without contradictory rules which must support each action aimed at building the community corresponding with requirements of the man [...] the community constructed on such system of values which would protect them against manipulations caused by individual or collective egoism”²⁹.

17. The common good of each transnational community is based upon value of the human person and results from its relation to others. The fundamental conclusion concerning the common good of humankind can be formulated as follows: cultural diversity is a richness of the humankind, and a richness of the universal culture is based upon the richness which is brought in by individual national cultu-

²⁹ John Paul II, *Social teaching*, Vol. III, Warsaw 1982, p. 505.

res into this wholeness of the humankind. The truth about this relation expressed John Paul II in homily in Gniezno on 3 June, 1997 when he was speaking about the natural wholeness of Europe: "For the history of Europe is a great river into which many tributaries flow and the variety of traditions and cultures which shape it is its great treasure"³⁰. In another place of this speech the Pope stated that "It cannot be done by separating oneself from the roots from which the countries of Europe have grown, and from the great wealth of the spiritual culture of past centuries"³¹.

The Pope saw a need of taking up a work on making the people aware of the common good of humankind. An inspiration to actions on behalf of integration is the crisis of culture, source of which in a case of European culture – in opinion of John Paul II – is "destruction or discolouring the common ideological values and common ethical and religious rules", at parallel to becoming obsolete of the modern secular ideologies. Particular threat for the common good of humankind is making the most of their power by some better developed countries in order to dominate over the other countries. It raises a fear against contacts with the other nations and destroys harmony of the international community. And in the face of globalization within the field of culture, all international obligations, as a way of defence of the common good of humankind, acquires special importance. Because the globalization of the culture, of which effect is its unification, standardization of tastes, loss of the religious and national identity, universalization of the languages, values, customs and products of the material and spiritual culture, would be an attack

³⁰ John Paul II, *Pilgrimages to Fatherland*, *op. cit.*, p. 911.

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 912.

on the common good. Underestimating the fundamental role of civilization-cultural, moral and religious values in the life of the man and the whole communities, one loses a tool for diagnosis and assessment of the modern world. And for defence of the common good of humankind it is necessary to take into account the ethical aspect in the analysis of integration processes. It suggests respecting – in the social life, and also within the sphere of culture – such values like: the dignity and the human rights, justice, solidarity, sympathy, avoiding the violence, peace between people and nations.

PATRIOTISM AS THE SCHOOL OF IDENTITY

18. Love of the fatherland is – according to the Christian teaching – a command of conscience. So, it is connected with feeling of duty, different from the emotional experiences. The Pope Pius X in the apostolic letter dated on 11 April 1909 reminded about the order of love that builds patriotism. He stated that “The patriotism is not the hate for other nations, but the love that ensures in our heart the first place to our country and our compatriots, it is such an order established by the Divine Providence. This love does not exclude the love to other people [...]. The Church has always taught that the patriotism is being connected with order of the fourth commandment of the God”³². Leon XIII has formulated the duty of patriotism much more forcefully: “Now, if the natural law enjoins us to love devotedly and to defend the country in which we had birth, and in which we were brought up, so that every good citizen hesitates

³² Quoted after: W. Serema, *The patriotism of new human being*, in: *Homo novus*, edited by A.J. Nowak, T. Paszkowska, Lublin 2001, p. 333.

not to face death for his native land”³³. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches: “The love and service of one’s country follow from the duty of gratitude and belong to the order of charity”³⁴.

The love to fatherland preserved by the family, the Church and school shaped the patriotism of Karol Wojtyła. In pastoral teaching of the Polish Pope appeared also a lot of contents that expressed his personal attachment and affection for the fatherland. Successive pilgrimages to Poland became manifestation of teaching on the patriotism and a sign of filial attachment of John Paul II to his country. Expression of that was among others often recalling the past of Poland that inseparably is connected with Christ. The papal lesson of history pays attention of the listeners to wide audience of the blessed, saints, insurgents, social activists, scientists, kings and rulers who formed the national culture. The Holy Father competently got out the “spirit of places”, covering up the treasures of patriotism, on the successive routes of his pilgrimages to Poland. From Warsaw, through Cracow, Gniezno, Gdańsk, Jasna Góra and other places, reminded about their participation in forming the national consciousness.

19. To the patriotism, alike each spiritual ability, the man should be brought up. This requirement refers particular actions towards young people coming in the social life. The role of first teachers of the fatherland love is fulfilled by the parents and nobody is able to replace them in it. The family home should be natural place of meeting the child with national and religious contents. In fulfilling the task of brin-

³³ Leon XIII, *Sapientiae christianae*, no 5.

³⁴ CCC, 2239.

ging up to the patriotism the family should be also supported by the clergymen and the teachers. Only common effort taken in the name of better future for the whole nation can bring expected effects. The patriotism is a tremendous power uniting the nation and improving the community life. It is a way of going out from the unit or group egoism towards the common good of bigger community. The national liberation movements around which a part of the community was united played significant role as the nation creative factor, shaping the awareness of the whole nation.

The patriotic education is done by current testimony of the leaders as well. Therefore the important educational role performs an attitude of the politicians, teachers and people representing the authority of crucial social institutions. Positive example of the educational influence of the nation leaders on the patriotic bringing up may be an attitude of clergy towards being restored to life Poland.

20. The crucial element shaping Polish catholic thought on the nation and patriotism of Polish people was history to which one was referred many times, searching in it the factor co-shaping the nation. It is this element that unities the nation and it is at the same time a transmitter of major national values. In the national past there are written down such values like faithfulness to traditional Christian-national virtues, fight for the national existence and Polish statehood that are capable to follow ideological actions of Poles and make more dynamic their social involvement. It also indicates on spiritual identity of the nation over a span of history. In the catholic social teaching, both in the pastoral letters of the bishops, in homilies, and in the publications of the secular social activists, it has been re-

ferred to glorious history of Poland. Thanks to cultivating the tradition and memory of the past Poles became inheritors of the everlasting ideas and could find them as the continuators of ancestors' history. The national culture is one of the culture aspects, closely connected with national social formation of the individuals who build it. The experts of the issues mention a lot of its elements, among others: language, tradition, literature, customs, costumes, ceremonies, spirituality, religiousness, history.

21. When considering the shape of patriotic education it was being paid attention to once more crucial factor constituting the nation, which is a way of everyday life and customs connected with it that are mostly result of commonly cultivated traditions, community of beliefs and fundamental social ideas. The community of nation as the most crucial factor, without it existence of the nation is impossible, is formed by the culture. The cultural community releases strong feeling of national bond, an expression of which is the patriotism. The love of fatherland is strengthened in the national life and shaped by the national and religious education of the community. In the social life the patriotism becomes an element of order and peace when it is build based upon the faith and command of the neighbour love. The pedagogy of patriotism comes down to: education of the intellect (acquiring the knowledge on the fatherland in its historical and modern dimension), education of the imagination (associating the life of individual with the national symbols, particularly by literature), education of the emotions (they colouring the patriotism, and their expression is a participation in ceremonies, respect to the symbols), education of the will (improvement to actions in conformity with sense of patriotic duty), inde-

ing rule (avoiding the anti-national contents and signs, making fun of the patriotism) and education of respect for other nations.

The modern world is characterized by tremendous national and population movement. Mass migrations, translocations, crossing of the national interests are new feature of “migration of peoples” of which we are a witness at present. Under the circumstances the patriotism is still sought after virtue, allowing the individual to feel in the world at oneself, regardless of the history turbulences and fully developing of the humankind. Today, it is even more than formerly a feeling source of identity of the specific human individual.

FOR CHRISTIAN INSPIRATIONS OF THE MODERN CULTURE

22. Connection of the religion with the culture makes that phenomena of the religious indifference, atheism, and also any form of a crisis of religion are reflected in the culture. And it, regardless of range of this term, refers definitively to the earthly reality. The culture, being the life and activity of the human individual as the most perfect being amongst creatures, is aimed at improving his life on the earth, in the mortal life, within the sphere of empirical reality. Its merging with the religion is made then when the values of culture and its goals enter into relationships with values and the final goal of the human being, determined by the religion. And the religion by nature having the inner relationship to the culture world – determines suitable vision of the man and the world and the final hierarchy of values.

The culture of which final value and measure is the human being, becomes at times a threat for him. It happens

so then, when it does not impart his action an infinitive dimension and cross out unlimited possibilities of development of the man in perspective of his eternal life. The man shaped only in the mortal dimension easier gets rid of the moral restraints and limitations, loses a sense of good and evil, crosses the borderlines of falsehood and hatred. John Paul II addressing to the university community in Padua stated: "One of the most important value which should be paid attention to in shaping the person is a freedom. Unfortunately, even though the modern culture made its motto from it, the freedom is still one of the most of all incorrectly comprehended and seriously violated values in the community in which we live. It is connected with untrue conception of the man that makes from him the independent and supreme creature, while he is the dependent creature [...]; the absolute and social creature that to its birthday, development and survival continuously needs help of other neighbours [...]. Thus, so that freedom was the freedom indeed, first and foremost it is necessary to recover the religious and metaphysical vision of the man and things, the vision that as the only determines the right measure of the man and its relationships with neighbours and surroundings"³⁵.

23. In order to be well informed in diversity of offers of the modern world the Church makes the moral assessments of reality. It calls also everybody, so as in conscience to consider that, what is their content. In a case of common in the modern world exculpating the evil, justifying and explaining it, this process of ethical education became disrupted: untruth included in the sin is transmitted as good. At

³⁵ John Paul II, *In the service of truth and freedom*, „L'Osservatore Romano" (Polish edition), 3 (1982), no. 9, p. 23.

the same time it is an element of creating the “new moral order”, in which there are questioned all earlier acquainted truths. Entirety of the moral world image falls under shaking. In this tangle of problems, the man who wants to behave with dignity remains one thing: fidelity to truth. John Paul II in 1997 addressed to young people gathered in Rome: “It is important so that you all become fervent searchers of truth and its fearless witnesses. You are never allowed to step down from lie, falsehood and compromises! Definitely, stand against those who try to deceive your intelligence and entrap your hearts by propaganda and proposals which drive in bondage of consumerism, disorderly sexual life and violence, and finally push in emptiness of loneliness and on wilderness of the death culture. Each freedom separated from the truth is changed into new much more constricting bondage”³⁶. Each Christian inspiration of the modern culture in final expression refers to introducing the voice of conscience, strength of good in the space of meetings and joint human activities.

³⁶ *Be searchers, witnesses and proponents of the Christ's truth. Letter of John Paul II to young people of Rome*, „L'Osservatore Romano” (Polish edition), 18 (1997), no. 11, p. 5.

IV. ETHICAL STANDARDS IN THE POLITICAL LIFE

PRUDENT CONCERN FOR THE COMMON GOOD

24. Social teaching of the Church defines the politics as prudent concern for the common good³⁷. It means that the politics cannot be practiced with the thought of good of one specific political party or group of interest, but should have in the centre of attention the good of whole community. Concern for the common good cannot be replaced by concern for popularity of the party in political polls. In the name of this cheap popularity are taken up decisions which condemn the future generations to poverty. One should remember that the concern for the common good does not include only the living people now, but refers solidarity with the future generations of Poles. Only such party which takes into consideration the good of whole community and the good of future generations authentically lends support to development of our fatherland.

Because the common good may be understood and interpreted in different way, we would like to remind that it includes “the sum of those conditions of the social life whereby men, families and associations more adequately

³⁷ Vide. John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, no 20.

and readily may attain their own perfection”³⁸. It means that the common good embraces the external and internal auspiciousness of the human person and his/her external and internal development.

The vital element of the common good is attention to good state and long lasting development of economy, supporting the development of Polish enterprises, especially in their expansion on the foreign markets, protection of private properties, good program of the social, family and health policy, and also favourable to development relationships with other countries. Therefore we encourage the government to pay more attention to these problems and still anew try to find solutions which will be serving well every person, family, community and the state. Exercising the political authority should be characterized by service conduct. From politicians one expect determined overcoming such temptations like dishonesty, corruption, lie, using the public funds to enrich small group of persons, practicing unethical means for obtaining, keeping or enlarging the authority whatever the cost³⁹.

LANGUAGE OF THE POLITICAL DEBATE

25. In the democratic system the political disputes and conflicts are something normal, because the interests, opinions and convictions of individual social groups and the political parties differ from each other and remain in mutual competition and political dispute.

³⁸ Vatican II, Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world *Gaudium et spes*, no 74.

³⁹ Vide. John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, no 42.

Because the specific content of the common good of all citizens in constantly changing the social-political and economic reality must be defined anew, hence the political dispute is validated. However, it has to proceed according to certain rules. It is important how the political competitors are treated in our country. Unfortunately, we have been observing recently in our country the alarming phenomenon of lower-quality style and level of the debate and political dispute. Treatment of the political competitors as the opponent that should be fought by all possible means becomes almost standard of the political life.

A matter of concern is language of the political discussion, full of aggression and mutual accusations, frequent using the mockery, derisions and also vulgarisms. Moral discrediting of the opponents, arousing the suspicions, lack of respect for the political opponent becomes common practice. A matter of concern is also the intensifying attack on the Church to make political capital. Holding the Church up to ridicule, its moral teaching and activity, unfair accusation are the unethical actions, and we stand fast against them. Spreading of anticlericalism is alarming and harmful.

We want to pay attention to the fact that this friend–enemy model realized in our political life from ethical point of view is not acceptable. Such unethical behaviour has bad influence on the citizens. It discourages to take part in the political life, but in the democratic country participation of the citizens is indispensable. It also radicalizes public feelings and causes coming into being the divisions based upon deep mutual dislike. In both these cases it is action damaging the common good of our fatherland.

NECESSITY OF GREATER INVOLVEMENT
IN POLITICS

26. Christian responsibility for the fatherland, for community and the state together with its all structures and institutions demands political involvement. We want to remind that “in order to achieve their task directed to the Christian animation of the temporal order, in the sense of serving persons and society, the lay faithful *are never to relinquish their participation in ‘public life’*, that is, in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas, which are intended to promote organically and institutionally the *common good*”⁴⁰. The right and duty of participation in the politics apply to all and everybody, although forms of this participation, plains on which it is done, may be different. Democracy gives broad opportunities and one should use them. Unfortunately, a lot of noble, right and competent people are terrified by low level of the political culture and therefore avoid involving in the politics, protect against taking service on behalf of the political community. Meanwhile as instructs John Paul II: “charges of careerism, idolatry of power, egoism and corruption that are oftentimes directed at persons in government, parliaments, the ruling classes, or political parties, as well as the common opinion that participating in politics is an absolute moral danger, does not in the least justify either scepticism or an absence on the part of Christians in public life”⁴¹. Their presence finds the deepest justification in the neighbour love. Benedict XVI in the encyclical *Caritas in veritate* emphasizes: “To love someone is to desire that person’s good and to take effective

⁴⁰ John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, no 42.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

steps to secure it. Besides the good of the individual, there is a good that is linked to living in society: the common good. It is the good of “all of us”, made up of individuals, families and intermediate groups who together constitute society. It is a good that is sought not for its own sake, but for the people who belong to the social community and who can only really and effectively pursue their good within it. To desire the common good and strive towards it is a requirement of justice and charity. To take a stand for the common good is on the one hand to be solicitous for, and on the other hand to avail oneself of, that complex of institutions that give structure to the life of society [...]. The more we strive to secure a common good corresponding to the real needs of our neighbours, the more effectively we love them. Every Christian is called to practise this charity, in a manner corresponding to his vocation and according to the degree of influence...”⁴². The involvement understood in this way makes heavy ethical demands on participants of the political scene. According to the catholic social teaching the politician should be guided by the right conscience and the virtue of: prudence, bravery, moderation and justice.

27. According to the teaching of Vatican II the man “has in his heart a law written by God; to obey it is the very dignity of man; according to it he will be judged. Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a man. There he is alone with God, whose voice echoes in his depths. [...] In fidelity to conscience, Christians are joined with the rest of men in the search for truth, and for the genuine solution to the numerous problems which

⁴² Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, no 7.

arise in the life of individuals from social relationships⁴³. The fidelity to conscience should be crucial criterion of the political involvement.

The political prudence is expressed in searching suitable means to realization of taken goals. Unless main goals of the political activity like peace, freedom, justice gain general acceptance, as much the means of achieving these goals are differentiated, because they are connected with competition of interest and opinions. The virtue of prudence demands from the politician such action which takes into consideration a dignity of the human person and one's rights. A measure of ethical quality of the politics is a concern for the common good of all citizens in prudent selection of means and methods of political action.

28. It is known however that efforts of politicians and specific solutions proposed by them are considered as essential for interest of the common good, meet with resistance. Mostly, it is opposition of those who are not interested in the common good but in the private good, good of own party, community or professional group. Moreover, the solutions requiring the sacrifices are never popular in the eyes of public opinion. In these circumstances the fidelity to fundamental beliefs and fight over implementation of them require bravery virtue from the politician. In particular that temptation of popularity, conformity with the political correctness and adaptation to expectations of the public opinion and management of the party is always very strong.

⁴³ Vatican II, Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world *Gaudium et spes*, no 16.

Past years show how necessary for the politicians is the moderation virtue which means resignation from using all possible means in the dispute with political opponent. The goal even the best lofty does not justify using the means which are in clearly contradiction with the moral conduct. The moderation virtue induces to rational compromise, and even to accepting proposals of political competitors, if such proposals due to discussions would turn out better than own ones.

The common practice of realizing exclusively own interests of one's party and its supporters, without taking into account interests of others who may be have no own political representation, are not enough organized, is required to remind the justice virtue. This virtue demands from the politician so that he has in mind, on account of the common good, also interests of other social groups.

29. There is quite common conviction that the politics is based upon a lie. Incomprehensible for majority of citizens the political game, lack of transparency, not keeping the electoral promises, hiding the true goals of conducted politics – all this makes that whole political class, in particular exercising the authority is suspected of manipulating the truth, hiding the truth or simply of lie. Saying that the “authority lies” already has become part of our vocabulary. In the meanwhile a great importance is trust of citizens in elected representatives. In order to gain this trust, and then to keep, one should be truthful, properly inform citizens, electors and do not lead them with promises as regards the facts and true intentions of one's actions.

Virtue ethics in the political life is a necessity at present. It is the only way to improve political culture of our

country and to good function of the democracy. In situation of the political competition, continuous fight for the electors' votes the politician of high ethical awareness can be afraid of that he has no chance for a success. There is such danger and it is very real but finally everything depends on the electors. They decide for whom they cast one's votes. We appeal to the whole community and to each individually to vote always for persons who do not show disrespect to the political virtues and moral rules. At the same time we make a request to the politicians so as to improve bravely moral standards of the public life and not being scared of introducing the political virtues in it. Only in this way conducted politics will not discourage citizens from taking part in the political life. We express approbation and recognition to all of those who take the public service and make it in the spirit of moral responsibility.

COMING TO COMPROMISES

30. For many members of interests the politics is an art of achieving all of that what could be obtained on the way of mediation and compromise. They attribute so great importance to the practice of mediation and coming to compromises that is defined by them as institutionalized art of compromise. One could agree with view which attributes a great importance to coming to compromises in going in for politics because thanks to them one can solve the conflicts of interests peacefully. But statement that coming to compromises always leads to social development is attributing to this practice importance which cannot be logically and historically justified. On the contrary, coming to compromises lead once in a while to a decline in morality.

Will from the practice of coming to compromises result development or decline it depends on types of these compromises and their contents.

Unfortunately, today it is very often mixed up the politically necessary compromise in practice of peaceful coexistence of citizens with the compromise on the question of faith and truth. Therefore we want to remind the Christian politicians of the fact that putting down the values and principles does not lead to a progress. It is only blurring the differences and feigning the agreement because of opportunism or cowardice. A compromise has ethical limits. They are appointed by these actions which are wrong in all conditions.

RIGHT OF THE CHURCH

31. We appreciate the fact that rules of the pluralistic community do not predict any special place for the Church. The Church is treated as one of many institutions, as one of the social sub-systems and its teaching – as one of proposals on the market of the systems of values or ideologies competing with each other. But refusal of the right to taking part of the Church in public life is not acceptable. It is clearly seen in intensifying attempts in reducing a role of the Church to closely religious sphere, and religiousness to the sphere of private life. Calling into question teaching the religion in school, a lack of tolerance for religious symbols in public places, continuous attacks on the cross in school, hospital and now in the Sejm – these are only some examples of veiled discrimination of the believers under the banner of the secularism of the state and the right to freedom of artistic expression.

We remind that the believer has a right to confess one's religion, individually or collectively, in public or in private. The Church has the right to take part actively in public affairs. Moreover, at all times and in all places: "the Church should have true freedom to preach the faith, to teach her social doctrine, to exercise her role freely among men, and also to pass moral judgment in those matters which regard public order when the fundamental rights of a person or the salvation of souls require it. In this, she should make use of all the means – but only those – which accord with the Gospel and which correspond to the general good according to the diversity of times and circumstances"⁴⁴.

32. The democratic system of the state gives possibility of active participating of all citizens in public affairs. The Church thinks highly of democracy but pays attention to the fact that it has to be counted with the rights and values of the man. If the democracy does not be based on any values then there will be short of the criteria for an assessment of conduct of the ruling class. Whatever it does that will be considered as right, because it is democratic, but against its decision there will not be appeal. The rights and values create restrictions in accomplishing the will of individual or whole social groups. The majority governments that are restricted for nothing can lead straight to the tyranny. "As history demonstrates, a democracy without values easily turns into open or thinly disguised totalitarianism"⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, no 76.

⁴⁵ John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, no 46.

V. NECESSITY OF CHANGES IN THE WAY OF UNDERSTANDING THE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

THE MAN AS SUBJECT AND GOAL OF ECONOMIC LIFE

33. One of the most important statements of the Church social teaching “is that [...] the subject and the goal of all social institutions is and must be the human person which for its part and by its very nature stands completely in need of social life”⁴⁶. It results from the fact that it is “the value in self and by itself” and for the sake of its dignity requires to be treated in this way. History showed that in the liberal economic system neither in communism the man was not treated as the principle, subject and goal of the economic activity. Nowadays in Poland, after collapse of communism, there is a danger of spreading the ideology of free market capitalism in radical form, with all its negative effects for the human being. It sounds especially alarming that the central position of the man in the economic activity was substituted by money. Such tremendous desire of having money, so big, which none of man is able to spend during his life was one of the reasons of current crisis of economy and values.

⁴⁶ Vatican II, Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world *Gaudium et spes*, no 25.

Under these circumstances it is important how good and effective is the state. "Economic activity, especially the activity of a market economy, cannot be conducted in an institutional, juridical or political vacuum. On the contrary, it presupposes sure guarantees of individual freedom and private property, as well as a stable currency and efficient public services. Hence the principle task of the State is to guarantee this security, so that those who work and produce can enjoy the fruits of their labours and thus feel encouraged to work efficiently and honestly. The absence of stability, together with the corruption of public officials and the spread of improper sources of growing rich and of easy profits deriving from illegal or purely speculative activities, constitutes one of the chief obstacles to development and to the economic order"⁴⁷.

The state should also protect the human rights within the field of economy. The central position of the man in the economic life demands so that whole economy and finances, and not only some sectors, as tools in service of the man were used in ethical way. Right intention, transparency and searching good economic results are reconcilable and they are never to be separated⁴⁸.

EMPLOYER AND BUSINESSMAN

34. It was appeared a lot of misunderstandings concerning the status, role and function of the businessman in history. As a matter of fact the businessmen always were accompanied by atmosphere of dislike. Action at variance with ethical rules always did harm – and still does – to an

⁴⁷ John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, no 48.

⁴⁸ Cf. Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, no 65.

image of the businessman. Awareness of this fact becomes more and more common also among businessmen. Maybe, that is why one could be observed now larger sensitivity to the human affairs in companies managed by them and associating the economic success of the companies with observance of the ethical rules. Unfortunately, actions within the range of CSR (*Corporate Social Responsibility*) are still not much popular in Poland the businessmen often do it to improve the image of their companies, and not out of the goodness of one's heart.

The businessmen, owners and the management boards of companies who in their activities are directed by ethical rules and trying to respect dignity of their workers are worthy of recognition. We encourage them to form different kind of the associations, also the associations of catholic businessmen, in which they will find support for efforts of work humanization in their own or managed by them companies.

35. Unfortunately, in the economic life of our country, there are a lot of companies, for which it is not important that, how and by what means their financial result, i.e. profit is obtained. The problem is not care of the profit because only good financial result gives the company a chance of surviving in the competing market, possibility of development, ensures work, so also the means to live on for employed workers and their families. The problem is examples of actions pitting in dignity of the man and his rights. A lot of them are located within the frames of the binding law, and however in the matter of fact they are unfair. Employment contract can be itself unfair. „If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accept

harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice.”⁴⁹ It is also unacceptable and unfair treating the worker, lack of reaction for his overworking and exhaustion, making him to work free of charge overtime, making him to work on Sunday and holidays in the situation when character of work does not require it. To use mobbing it is not acceptable.

36. The world of work expects today businessmen who are characterized by social responsibility. Such a businessman is characterized by care of individual man, good work organization, cooperation between people, in a word – creating the good atmosphere in the company. He should also require and support at the same time creative work of the workers, continuous training and improving the qualifications. He should aim at that so as the worker becomes in due time active and conscious partner in the company. Finally, the businessman should affirm a person of each worker, regardless of his position in the company. If the need arises he should be ready to direct conversation and hearing out each worker. This way of management does not have to mean sentimentality nor weakness, but rather is to express trust to the worker and to his feeling of responsibility. The workers from their side are obliged to recognize authority of their superiors and loyal and active cooperation.

WORKER

37. Among many human activities a work is fulfilment of earthly vocation and is “a fundamental dimension of hu-

⁴⁹ Leon XIII, *Rerum novarum*, no 45.

man existence on earth”⁵⁰. Today, in the face of high unemployment, we are much better aware of value and importance of the work in our life. It is not the task of the Church to analyze scientifically changes, which occur in the world of work and production, and their possible results. “The Church considers it her task always to call attention to the dignity and rights of those who work, to condemn situations in which that dignity and those rights are violated, and to help to guide the above-mentioned changes so as to ensure authentic progress by man and society”⁵¹.

There is no doubt that after 1989 a lot of has been made in our country within the range of rights of worker, but taking one’s turn to speak “philosophy of fast profit at all cost” can lead and often leads to violate the dignity and rights of workers. Therefore we appeal to employers for respecting the dignity and rights of each worker, and to the authorities for effective protection of these rights. At the same time we turn to workers, so that make their work diligently, honestly, responsibly, caring for proper atmosphere of work, friendliness and solidarity.

38. Particular evil that touches the man of work is unemployment. In 2001, we devoted to this issue the separate social document entitled: *Out of concern for the culture of life and work*. There is no need to repeat all contents included over there, but we want to emphasize strongly that a question of suitable employment of all people capable of working we have deeply at heart. We feel in pain a lack of work for many young people, often having the diplomas of higher education. Under these circumstance one sho-

⁵⁰ John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, no 4.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, no 1.

uld ask a question, whether our schools and universities appropriately prepare them to situation on the market. We are convinced that a care of equipping the young people with competences necessary on the market of work should affect on change of the education way that would be corresponded with today requirements.

We are aware of difficulties connected with solving the problem of unemployment, but let's notice that one cannot explain everything with the economic crisis and rights of the market. Therefore we appeal, to all authorities responsible for whole direction of the working policy, for suitable actions. One should be paid attention to the solutions successfully used in different countries that in truth do not remove finally the problem of unemployment but are conducive to create new working places.

NEW ECONOMICS

39. Already for several dozen of years the social teaching of the Church has been encouraging as to "Every effort must be made to ensure that the enterprise is indeed a true human community, concerned about the needs, the activities and the standing of each of its members"⁵². According to John XXIII "This demands that the relations between management and employees reflect understanding, appreciation and good will on both sides. It demands, too, that all parties co-operate actively and loyally in the common enterprise, not so much for what they can get out of it for themselves, but as discharging a duty and rendering a service to their fellow men. All this implies that the workers have their say in, and make

⁵² John XXIII, *Mater et magistra*, no 91.

their own contribution to, the efficient running and development of the enterprise”⁵³.

To this idea refers Paul VI in the encyclical letter *Populorum progressio*⁵⁴ and John Paul II in the encyclical letter *Centesimus annus*, in which he states that the purpose of enterprise is not only making the profit, “but is to be found in its very existence as a *community of persons* who in various ways are endeavouring to satisfy their basic needs, and who form a particular group at the service of the whole of society”⁵⁵. Benedict XVI voiced his opinion similarly when unambiguously states that: “business management cannot concern itself only with the interests of the proprietors, but must also assume responsibility for all the other stakeholders who contribute to the life of the business: the workers, the clients, the suppliers of various elements of production, the community of reference”⁵⁶. It does not exclude however significance of the economical account. Because the Church recognizes positive role of the profit: “When a firm makes a profit, this means that productive factors have been properly employed and corresponding human needs have been duly satisfied”⁵⁷. The most valuable property of enterprises is however the man and therefore he cannot be treated evenly with capital.

The suggestions included in the social documents of the Church so that the human relationships dominating in the business firm to shape following the example of hu-

⁵³ John XXIII, *Mater et magistra*, no 92.

⁵⁴ Cf. Paul VI, *Populorum progressio*, no 28.

⁵⁵ John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, no 35.

⁵⁶ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, no 40.

⁵⁷ John Paul II, *Centesimus annus*, no 35.

man community, are directed not only to workers who are connected by joint goal and based upon bonds resulting from jointly performing work, by that they are especially predisposed to create such community, but also to the businessmen and top management of the business firm. After all, the institutional and organizational actions, though very important for creating the suitable conditions, are not able themselves to make from the enterprise an association of people truly cooperating with each other. The decisive factor here is rather personal relationship between management and workers, and following on from that – appropriate way of human management. It should be guided by principle of respecting the dignity of man which does not assume e.g. making equal of all salaries, but equal recognition of the value of each worker.

40. Today, in the age of globalization, there is urgent need to shape truly human relationships, friendship, and solidarity within the frames of economic activity. Benedict XVI thinks that because of the economic-financial crisis the true challenge is implementation of the selflessness and gift logics rules into the market relations. In order to happen so, “what is needed, therefore, is a market that permits the free operation, in conditions of equal opportunity, of enterprises in pursuit of different institutional ends. Alongside profit-oriented private enterprise and the various types of public enterprise, there must be room for commercial entities based on mutual principles and pursuing social ends to take root and express themselves.”⁵⁸ Existing in different part of the world numerous organizational forms of enterprises, having also their beginning in religious initiatives show that it is possible.

⁵⁸ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, no 38.

As well in our country are successfully run businesses which shape their activity based upon motives of other than financial profit. It turns out that complete development of these new forms of the entrepreneurship largely dependent upon suitable legal and fiscal configuration; therefore there is a need of appropriate studies and works within this range.

VILLAGE – SPECIAL CHALLENGE

41. Within last 20 years a life of people living on the rural areas in our country was very changed. There is no doubt that last time – thanks to enterprises of farmers and external help – it was successful in a certain extent to modernize Polish countryside. Above all it is pleased with the fact of growth of infrastructure. In many places a part of municipal and district Road were improved. Today almost each town has got its own water supply system. It is often appeared sewage system. A lot of new schools and sport complexes have been constructed. Most of rural schools were equipped with modern teaching aids and computer rooms, which facilitate for children to get good education.

Unfortunately, for a few years we also have been observing the sudden decrease of profitability of agricultural production, what leads to serious becoming poor of many families and to a largely extent restricts a process of modernization of Polish village. Improvement of profitability in agriculture within the years 2004–2007, after accession of Poland to the European Union turned to be short-lived process. After rise in prices of many agricultural products in 2007 their decrease was observed. There is everything to suggest that this negative trend will keep for next years.

The difficult situation of farms is also increased by a rise in prices of means for agricultural production.

Worrying trends in agriculture lead directly to increasing the disproportions between incomes of families living in towns and incomes of farmers. At present average farm gains the income at the level of 70% of the average municipal household. As a result of that within the rural areas we deal with lower life level, worse medical care, less percentage of studying young people and the like. One should do everything to change this grossly unfair situation.

42. To some extent, simplifying of the procedures which would allow the farmers better using of different kinds of European Union funds could help Polish village. Inhabitants of the rural areas also need greater help in writing EU grant applications. To increase competitiveness of Polish producers on the European markets it should be supported an activity of the agricultural producers. It is recommended to make easier using the preferential credits which can be allocated by farmers for necessary investments in their households. One should also to limit the restrictive regulations which prevent farmers from producing and selling processed by them healthy food searched by consumers.

It would be recommended to accept the national restoration plan of the village and increase attractiveness of the rural areas. Therefore it is necessary reliable reflection at the social, political and economical level which would allow working out specific and long term solutions. We hope that within the next couple of years a respect for difficult

work of the farmers will go hand in hand with modernization of the village and increasing the life quality level of people living in the rural areas.

MIGRATION

43. Serious problem is so-called migration for work. It is not new phenomenon in history of our fatherland, but it has reached alarming range now. Man has the right to leave his country in searching for better life condition in other country and he has also the right to come back to his country⁵⁹. Voluntary and short-lived migration can be profitable for man, and not only in the economical but also in cultural and social aspects. Exchange of experiences, getting to know other exemplars, to be used then in his country, are unquestionable value and can create favourable conditions for development of person working abroad, and afterwards economic development of own fatherland. However, in the event of emigration is forced, for economic reasons and is of long lasting character, it should be treated as necessary evil, the more when it is connected with separation from family.

With pain and concern we observe still increasing the number of euro-orphans, i.e. children whose parents work abroad and who in the whole process of growing up and education are deprived of their presence. We understand parents' concern for being well provided for living, but we want remind that permanent presence of mother and father is more important for the child. It is irreplaceable for correct development of the child.

⁵⁹ Cf. John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, no 23.

44. Especially alarming today is so-called youth drain, i.e. process of emigration of young well educated people, who instead of increasing the good of their country are forced to searching for work abroad, frequently below their professional qualifications.

Burning issue is more and more process of emigration for economic reasons of women, especially young ones, who often are employed as unqualified labour force. Women employed on the black market are mostly deprived from the elementary human and worker's rights, and even become victims of people trade and different forms of sexual abuse. Therefore we warn women and young girls of using the services of unchecked and suspicious companies mediating in finding the work. We encourage their families to be vigilant, whether they are being unfairly treated in the place of their staying.

45. In the context of that we want to pay attention to the fact that Poland is mentioned as transit country in the women and children trafficking. Moreover this trafficking also takes place in our country. We worry over this reason and express our resolute opposition towards infringing upon the human rights and coming down the human person to the role of transaction thing. We appeal to the state authorities so as to counteract such breaking the law and react on behalf of protecting the victims. At the same time we thank you and sympathize with all institutions that take actions for victims and help to eliminate the phenomenon of human trafficking.

Man working outside their home country is exposed to a large extent of the damage in the moral sense. Pull out

from his environment, devoid of support in the family and struggling with many difficulties, submits easier to lifestyle without God. The loosening of relationship with God results in the weakening of religious life and can lead to less intensive respect for moral principles important for the human life.

Therefore with pastoral concern, we turn to all our fellow countrymen working outside the borders of our fatherland: Remain firmly in the faith, observe the God's commandments and moral principles. Be faithful to the whole of our religious heritage and national heritage, which from the beginning of our statehood are merged with one another and decide about our identity.

VI. MEDIA IN SERVICE OF THE TRUTH AND GOOD

SIGN OF TIME

46. Great importance of the mass media in our present-day life does not raise any doubts nor requires any proofs. Mass and direct transfer of information became a new quality. First Areopagus of modern world is today the world of media communication which makes that earth and humankind is the “global village”. Media have become the peculiar blood circulation of our civilization. They include and connect practically all sectors of life: culture, sport, economy, science and religion.

In the world of the digital circulation of information the Church recognizes both opportunities and threats. The media themselves are morally a neutral tool. They may be used in good and bad goals, they may contribute both to development of the man and community, and to their degradation. Ethical assessment of the media in Poland refers to the creators on the one hand, while from the other hand to all who are end users.

47. In the media world one can worry the fact that so-called audience ratings became the only indices of standards. The more (less) demand, the more (less) supply. This mechanism applies to economics and effectively changes ove-

rall economic situation on the markets of material goods. Since information became the commodity, there is more difficult about reliability in presenting the world image. Pressure on winning the advertisers and attracting the maximum number of consumers bring about that more important than facts is their attractive “packaging”. More and more often it is in effect the principle, if the facts do not match to theses of main editors or owners of media, the worse for the facts.

If behind this mechanism were only the human weakness or non-culpable competence, it would be possible to cherish hope for better times. But unfortunately, the journalists more and more become dependent on publishers and their outlook and political beliefs.

48. In development of media the Church recognizes a lot of opportunities, but also challenges⁶⁰. Many times we could be convinced how much the media contributed to promotion of the good. This is proved by the countless charities for which the inspiration and driving force were the reports showing people affected by a tragedy or victims of mass disasters. Then, we can get ourselves organized, and the human suffering ceases to be anonymous. May every field of the human activity, thanks to the media makes things easier accomplishing the common vocation for the good.

Radio and television broadcasts of the Holy Masses and religious ceremonies are of special importance for the believers. For millions of people, especially old persons and

⁶⁰ Cf. Pius XII, *Miranda prorsus*; Vatican II, Decree on the media of social communications *Inter Mirifica*.

sick they make possible to take part in important events of the Church.

THE MISSION OR BUSINESS

49. To the most often sins bothering the media world one should be recognized any kind of manipulations, in which the truth is lost. Using the half-truth, omitting of inconvenient truths, passing over in silence, selective attitude to information, partiality – such attitudes unfortunately are not unusual. Consumers of the media, however, are entitled to recognize an objective picture of reality, and not its caricature, whose source are political views of the journalist, politician or publisher. Thus, we need journalists who are able to acquire information, verify it and in objective terms transmit to the community. We do not agree on journalistic field of activity which creates the reality instead of reporting on, making comments, explaining.

50. In democratic communities the media play important control role. Classical three-sided division of the authorities in democratic systems has been efficiently supplemented by fourth authority which has influence on exercising the legislature, judiciary and executive power. Only truly free media are able to keep an eye on the authority, and reliability of the media depends on good performing of this task. Apprehensively, we look at the politicization of the public media which become more and more the propaganda tool of one of the sides of public discussion. We are also very concerned about the widespread phenomenon of brutalization of broadcasting on unusual large scale up to now. Almost every day through the media we are stunned by violence and so-called culture of pansexualism. We re-

mind employees of the media about the fact that purpose of their actions cannot be only piece of news or entertainment of dubious quality. The journalists for the sake of influence power of the tools, which they use, are responsible for ethical standards in the public life and shaping of the public opinion.

51. Fundamental principle of the journalist's work must be the truth. Striving for the truth cannot however justify heartless using of information. Not everybody is entitled to complete truth about the other. The common good requires so that persons performing the public service were a subject of media control of their actions. But still one should bear in mind the dignity and the good of specific persons and the common good. Right desire of transparency of the social life cannot be mixed with temporary need of specific communities or with ordinary cynicism, connected with a lack of elementary sensitivity.

We protest against any, intensifying lately in the show business, symptoms of pagan or even Satanist licentiousness. Public blasphemies, connected with defilement of the Bible, the Cross and other religious symbols are the act of profanation and strike the religious feelings of the believers and they are outrage of their right to religious freedom.

CALL FOR RESPONSIBILITY

52. In Poland, we observe not only the phenomenon of so-called tabloidization of the media. It also pervades beyond the media world in the strict sense of the word – into widely understood culture and as well politics. So, we en-

courage all believers to be interested in above all magazines, broadcasts and religious programs which in their content touch admittedly more difficult issues, but also more significant needs of the individuals and community from the existential and spiritual point of view.

We cannot pass indifferently close to the fact that Catholic weekly magazines are merely small percentage on Polish market of journalism. Similar regress is observed in regard to the question of reading of religious books. Maybe the time has come to look at this issue from moral reflection point of view? But, during each Holy Mass we beat one's chest also because of the negligence sins. Isn't resignation from the religious reading a serious negligence towards obligation of deepening one's faith? Let us refer to the proposals available on the market which are trying to look at surrounding world in the light of faith. Catholic journalists are equal in the talent of more than one secular magazine, but do we give a chance ourselves, in order to become convinced about their competence? On the other hand, the founders of Catholic media cannot allow themselves to lack of professionalism. Conversely, because their mission have convergent goals with the goal of the Church, they should make every effort so that their media productions were at the highest level not only in the ethical respect, but in the respect of journalist's workshop. The Church cannot pass indifferently towards the lack of school sensitivity to the phenomenon of the crisis in reading, and even attempts of diminishing its importance. Astonishing is continuous reduction of list of required readings or books which complete the historical knowledge and shape the human sensitivity, enriching the universal and national values.

Nobody is entitled to restrict the religious freedom, trying to attack on any title or broadcasting station. The Church is aware of responsibility following from the fact of using the media, but demands also recognition of this right by the state.

Finally, we make a request to the journalist's world for keeping objectivity in presenting the Church in the media. The Church counts on no leniency. We live in free democratic community, we are not afraid of honest criticism. But we recognize, however, that desires of unmasking the worrying phenomena are accompanied sometimes by a certain kind of satisfaction with exposing to ridicule.

VII. CONCLUSION

53. This document came into being out of concern for the man and the common good of our homeland. Many communities already for a few years have been interested in position of the Church towards changes in the social, economic and political life. This interest increased significantly within a period of current financial and economic crisis which set common worrying as to its scope and duration. Above all, our stand on this matter was expected by the believers, therefore we think that our “silence were in front of one’s eyes negligence of the duty”⁶¹.

Fundamental message of this document is a call for action on behalf of protection of the dignity and rights of each man in all aspects of the social life. For us, the believers, the greatest justification and motive of such involvement is example and teaching of Christ: “Believe me, when you did it to one of the least of my brethren here, you did it to me.” (Matt 25,40).

We can be proud of the fact that collectively we managed to build the democratic state and restructuring the whole economic system. Unfortunately, costs of this transformation turned out to be very high for many people. Our moral obligation is, in the spirit of solidarity and brotherhood,

⁶¹ Leon XIII, *Rerum novarum*, no 13.

to help the poor, unemployed and whole families pushed off into the brink of poverty.

Essence of the lack of sensitivity to the neighbour's needs is incomplete vision of the man, coming down him to role of usual element and a part of the social organism. Therefore in our opinion promotion of the integral image of the man is essential element of structure of the social order corresponding with its dignity.

We entreat for being guided by the moral principles in life, which not only put in order the interpersonal relationships, but also are on one's guard over the good of each human person and the whole community. That is exactly the financial crisis realized all of us, what material and moral damages are caused by disrespect of the ethical principles. Today we realize much better of the fact that each economic decision has consequences of moral character. It equally applies to politics.

We are aware of the fact that the list of issues which should be paid attention to is still long. Some of them have been merely signalled or mentioned. Undoubtedly we will back to them, the more that consultative process which was accompanied to coming into being of this document, it allowed us recognize many issues which with difficulty get through to social consciousness. Moreover, Dynamics of the social life still brings new problems raising emotions and put before us new challenges which were not able to forecast still yesterday.

In conclusion we would like to express our willingness to cooperation and dialogue with all who the same as we

are worried about integral development of the man and our homeland. We also thank you very much everybody who in any way contributed to preparing this document.

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CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION 5
- II. PROMOTION OF INTEGRAL IMAGE OF THE HUMAN PERSON 7
- III. OUT OF CONCERN FOR CULTURE 22
- IV. ETHICAL STANDARDS IN THE POLITICAL LIFE 35
- V. NECESSITY OF CHANGES IN THE WAY OF UNDERSTANDING THE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY 45
- VI. MEDIA IN SERVICE OF THE TRUTH AND GOOD 58
- VII. CONCLUSION 64