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Dear Readers

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“The Church [...] has never lost her awareness of having received a specific task from Christ; the task that makes His mission ever real.” The quote comes from the article opening the 140th issue of *Nurt*, “Idea of mission before the Second Vatican Council” (p. 8), by the late Fr Władysław Kowalak SVD († 2015). Theological structure of that awareness is made of missiology – a relatively young discipline of theology and a subject Fr Kowalak devoted his life to. His passion for it helped him to make it into a solid academic course of study. We are proud to publish one of the last works of that great Polish scholar of missiology; work that already belongs to the canon of missiological studies.

In the current issue we focus on three separate themes: history of mission, theology of mission and theology of religion. In the first part the reader may follow the history of the evangelisation of the Slavs from the times of Sts Cyril and Methodius to the paradigm shift in the theology of mission with the promulgation of the decree *Ad gentes*. The articles about the mission initiatives of the pontifical college in Braniewo (from the 16th to 18th centuries), and the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church in Japan in the 19th century, may be especially revealing.

In the part devoted to the theology of mission the reader can enter into the mission world of pope Francis. His utterings, often marked by imprecision, emotions, colloquialisms and simple comparisons, are a real challenge for theologians accustomed to more systematic expositions. Francis’ missiology is simple: “I am Christian; therefore, I am missionary.” There are also articles about some of the consequences of inculturation in Congo and Paraguay and a slowly emerging attitude of the Church towards the Post-Christian world. An essay on the “return of the liberation theology” is especially a thought-provoking one.

The third and final part of the presented issue does not point to an (expected?) synthesis of the two preceding ones. The pointer to a proper interpretation is the following question: Do mission and dialogue function in a “state of a conciliar dualism?” Notwithstanding a remarkable amount of theological reflection since the times of the Vatican II, the matter is not settled. An example of the Chinese convert Wu Jingxiong 吳經熊 confirms the saying that where a Christian reflection on non-Christian religions is concerned, the only simple things are hypothesis...

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