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Solidarity as a virtue: attitudes and principles of human life in the thoughts of John Paul II from the pedagogical perspective

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SOLIDARITY AS A VIRTUE: ATTITUDES AND PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN LIFE IN THE THOUGHTS OF JOHN PAUL II FROM THE PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Abstract: For the proper functioning of society and the peaceful coexistence of different groups of people, communities and the state, it is essential to educate young people towards the readiness for mutual solidarity. In the absence of willingness to show mutual solidarity, a society can neither function properly nor live, however small this willingness may be. The common objectives of a nation, cultural heritage and tradition build awareness of solidarity within the particular society or nation. Therefore, the functionally conditioned consciousness of solidarity should be rooted and ultimately motivated by the universal solidarity of all men.

In his teaching, John Paul II deepened the motivation for solidarity as a human and Christian virtue, emphasising its social dimension. The pope drew attention to the theological understanding of solidarity, developing the theme of solidarity on the deep background of social issue and its global dimension. Young people should be educated to participate in social and cultural life in the spirit of solidarity. They should be led to realization that the welfare of the nation depends on their moral attitude, the will to survive, the fidelity to values which have shaped the history and culture of the community over the centuries. Solidarity is motivated by a natural openness of human beings to other persons with whom there is a need to cooperate in pursuit of the common good. Hence, there is a need for constant readiness to accept and complete the tasks which result from the participation of the individual in social life.

Key words: Solidarity, teaching of John Paul II, human dignity, attitude to life in service of good, educational duty.

Preliminary reflections

The concept of ‘solidarity’ is not clear. It comes from Latin words *solidare* – to make thick, to bind, and *solidum* – something which is strongly bound together. The term is derived from the concept of *in solidum*, which in Roman law meant the responsibility of one for all.¹

In the Bible, no close counterpart for solidarity can be found in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek. However, the Bible refers to the reality of solidarity, which is line with the modern sense of the term. It contains words which may be regarded as its counterparts. Greek equivalents of the words that describe the reality of solidarity are:

- *Metecho, metoche, metochos* – which evoke ‘aspect of participation’,
- *Koinonia, koinoneo, koinonos* – these terms evoke directly ‘aspect of the community’, and indirectly, ‘a unit that takes part in it’.

In the various parts of the Letter to the Hebrews, allusions to the reality of solidarity can be noticed:

- Hebrews 1:9 – takes the theme of Christ as the foundation of solidarity,
- Hebrews 3:1 – refers to the vocation as a basis for solidarity,
- Hebrews 3:14 – the author stresses the need to participate ‘in Christ’ to the end,
- Hebrews 6:4-6 – the theme of participation in the Spirit,
- Hebrews 5:13 – supernatural reality is the foundation of God’s solidarity with His people, vocation of Christians to the Kingdom of Heaven, a warning against the consequences of the lack of foundation of solidarity,
- Hebrews 10:32-35 – theme of solidarity with the suffering in the community,
- Hebrews 13:3 – call for solidarity with imprisoned brothers,
- Hebrews 13:7-18 – call for solidarity in the community.²

The definition of solidarity is rooted in the Gospel: ‘Bear one another’s burdens’ (Galatians 6:2). Solidarity is ‘one and one’, never ‘one against the other’. ‘There can be no fight stronger than the struggle of solidarity. [...] There can be no programme of fight over a project of solidarity’ (JP II, Gdańsk speech on 12 June 1987).³ Tadeusz Styczeń writes ‘the truth about us «forces» us to the choice of communion in the truth about us, that is the radical love one to another. [...] Never rival, never the enemy!’.⁴

The term ‘solidarity’ has appeared in the documents of the Church – but not until the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1964) was proclaimed by the Second Vatican Co-

¹ J. Wyciśło, *Solidarność jako zasada kształtująca i regulująca życie społeczne*, [in:] *Solidarność zasadą życia społecznego*, (eds.) M.A. Krąpiec, J. Miodek, W. Świątkiewicz, J. Wyciśło, Instytut Tarnogórski, Tarnowskie Góry 2000, p. 13.

² P. Kasiłowski, *Solidarność w Liście do Hebrajczyków*, Series Bobolanum 1, Warszawa, 2002, pp. 24, 201, 246.

³ C. Ritter, *Do źródeł solidarności*, “ETHOS” 52(2000)3, pp. 255–256.

⁴ T. Styczeń, *Wolność w prawdzie*, [in:] *Wprowadzenie do etyki*, (ed.) T. Styczeń, Catholic University of Lublin (KUL), Lublin 1993, p. 87.

uncil and the teaching of John Paul II, which proved to be decisive for the use of the term. The concept of ‘solidarity’ in the historical aspect means to be ‘ready to engage for the common goals or for the goals set by others, which are perceived as a threat but at the same time as full of values and justified. It also means supporting the fight against threats, especially injustice’.⁵

The following four elements are recognized as important in the term ‘solidarity’:

- A commitment to a common goal,
- Co-operation and shared responsibility,
- Communication with the community,
- Action directed to the needs of other people.⁶

The implementation of solidarity in social life:

- emphasizes the responsibility of all people,
- does not negate the right to take one’s own interest into account but requires shared responsibility,
- always obliges taking into account the purpose of the common good,
- commits members of human communities to cooperate in the performance of common tasks,
- calls for the use of the natural ties of the community for the good of the organization of the society.⁷

The principle of solidarity is a principle of so-called duty, since the interrelational commitments result in mutual commitments of the community to individuals, commitments of the communities and individuals to the whole society, and commitments of the society to individuals and communities. Therefore, this principle emphasizes the responsibility of all individuals for each other and the mutual obligations in a variety of social institutions. It applies both in the family and in the country, as well as political and religious communities. No man exists without connection to some community. The principle of solidarity does not negate individual right to pursue one’s own interests. It does not preclude the conflict between different interests, but requires shared responsibility, mutual respect.⁸ This principle contains the duty of individuals, societies, nations and countries to cooperate to achieve common good.⁹ A feature of modern society is the growing awareness of the interdependence between people and nations. However, awareness of the interdependence raises responsibility, which in turn forms the basis of solidarity as a way of life and action. John Paul II wrote the encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (SRS 5) with an emphasis on the

⁵ P. Kasiłowski, *Solidarność w Liście do Hebrajczyków*, op. cit., p. 13.

⁶ Ibid., p. 22–23.

⁷ J. Wycisło, *Solidarność jako zasada kształtująca i regulująca życie społeczne*, op. cit., p. 16.

⁸ B. Sutor, *Etyka polityczna. Ujęcie całościowe na gruncie chrześcijańskiej nauki społecznej*, Kontrast, Warszawa 1994, pp. 41–42.

⁹ F.J. Mazurek, *KNS – status metodologiczny i główne obszary*, [in:] *KNS podstawowe zagadnienia z życia społecznego i politycznego*, (eds.) K.S. Fel, J. Kupny, Księgarnia św. Jacka, Katowice 2007, p. 25.

principle of subsidiarity, wishing to continue the teaching of the encyclical *Populorum progressio* written by the Pope Paul VI and to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of its publication. Pope John Paul II took this encyclical point concerning the notion of development and noted that we are called to re-examine the concept of development, which should not be limited to the satisfaction of material needs by increasing wealth without taking into account the suffering of the majority, the main motivation of which is the selfishness of individuals and nations (SRS 10).¹⁰ According to the words of John Paul II, the social doctrine of the Church is an independent category. It is the exact formulation of the results of in-depth reflection on the complex realities of human existence in society carried out in light of faith and church tradition and in the international context. The primary objective of such reflection is to interpret these complex human realities, determining their conformity or non-conformity with the Gospel teaching on man and his vocation both mundane and transcendent; therefore, it directs Christian behaviour. Hence, this teaching does not belong to the field of ideology, but to theology and, in particular, moral theology (SRS 41).

Solidarity as a moral virtue in the teaching of John Paul II

John Paul II introduces a definition of solidarity. It can be defined as the virtue of social justice and is based on the ‘strong and firm will to work for the common good’ (SRS 38). It is the ethical response to ‘the fact of interdependence, understood as a system determining relationships in the contemporary world’ (SRS 38). This confirms the belief that the proper depth of human solidarity is not only a matter of the common good and awareness of this good. The deeper dimension of solidarity is revealed in humanity and personal dignity. Authentic ‘Solidarity helps us to see «the second» not as a tool, whose work capacity and physical strength can be exploited at low cost and then, when no longer useful rejected, but as someone resembling us, as our help, making him or her equal to each participant of «life banquet», to which God invites all people equally’ (SRS 39).

Pope John Paul II in the encyclical *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (SRS 38) shows that solidarity is at the same time becoming more accepted and understood, also as a moral obligation. Therefore it takes on the character of the virtue of solidarity. Virtue is a tendency to act in accordance with the socially applicable moral code. The meaning of the term includes willingness.¹¹ The concept of virtue was established on the basis of ancient philosophy, and was then adopted and extended. The name virtue was used to describe human attitude ordered in a moral way to do good. This faculty has

¹⁰ More in: H. de Noronha, *Urzeczywistnienie sprawiedliwości w mesjańskim roku jubileuszowym a społeczne posłannictwo Kościoła*, trans. F. Mickiewicz, “Communio” 25(2005)4, p. 102.

¹¹ A.S. Reber, *Cnota*, [in:] *Słownik psychologii*, (eds.) I. Kurcz, K. Skarżyńska, PWN, Warszawa 2000, p. 111.

been achieved through conscious and voluntary performance of acts which are morally good, or as a result of internal changes. Reaching her, man perfected himself internally.¹²

The terms ‘virtue’ (Greek *arete* – the best; Latin *Virtus*), ‘virtues’ or ‘courage’ refer to some personal traits of man, a permanent disposition for proper action, a kind of faculty, thanks to which we do something properly and well in terms of moral good. Particular virtues are only a manifestation of one chief virtue – wisdom, or practical sense or prudence (Greek *phronesis*)¹³ – connected to a given aspect of life. Happy, in fact, is the one who has the greatest good and the greatest good is virtue. Socrates believed that all evil comes from the lack of awareness – no one will do what is evil deliberately and with full awareness. Knowledge is the sufficient condition of virtue, is the same as virtue. Virtue is the only good that is self-sufficient.¹⁴ The concept, which is now used by the science of man, is not so much the concept of virtue, but rather the concept of attitude. It is therefore said, alternatively, that human solidarity is a virtue – or more – an interpersonal attitude. The nature of the components of attitude can be determined by extracting the affective component (our feelings about the subject matter), the cognitive (what we think of it), and the behavioural (what we would like to do, how would we like to behave in the face of what is the object of attitude).¹⁵

Solidarity is the condition and factor of building peace among nations together with justice and love. Solidarity should therefore be understood as a deliberate compliance in the implementation of specific plans which are morally good. Love is a sense of responsibility for ‘you’ rooted in the ‘I’. There is no responsibility for oneself without responsibility for the others. Responsibility is the participation in the fulfilment of the other ‘I’. Solidarity with other people in the experiences which determine their fate, shape from the very depth the responsibility for one’s own fate. Man experiences self-fulfilment always when he loves, and only when he loves. A person gives oneself a chance to self-fulfilment only when he or she offers such chance to the others. Truth

¹² E. Zapolska, *Cnoty teologalne i kardynalne*, “Universitas”, Kraków 2000, p. 9.

¹³ With time, virtues become a general term for the characteristics of a man living in the most perfect way possible, that is, someone who knowingly and duly fulfills the functions specific to the nature of man. Such an understanding of virtue has become a basic category of ancient ethics. Since human activity in general can be divided into a theoretical activity (cognitive) and practical, diagnostic and ethical virtues are distinguished. Diagnostic virtues are related to cognition and examples are wisdom, understanding-intuition, the ability to gain scientific knowledge and intelligent creativity – art. Ethical virtues are related to action; the main virtues of ethics include: justice, temperance and fortitude. During the formation of Christian doctrine, prudence, justice, courage and moderation were named cardinal virtues, the virtues which are most general, the most important in life. In modern times, the concept of virtue no longer plays a significant role in ethics and is limited to the educational aspect. Sometimes, it has virtually disappeared. In contemporary moral philosophy, with the increased interest in the tradition, the ancient concept of virtue once again becomes the key concept of ethics. See: J. Jaśtał, *Cnota*, [in:] *Słownik filozofii*, (ed.) J. Hartman, Aureus, Kraków 2004, pp. 31-32.

¹⁴ W. Tatarkiewicz, *Historia filozofii*, vol 1, PWN, Warszawa 1968, p. 81.

¹⁵ S. Nowak, *Pojęcie postawy w stosowanych badaniach społecznych*, [in:] *Teorie postaw*, (ed.) S. Nowak, PWN, Warszawa 1973, p. 25.

and freedom are like interior space and also the inner wings which raise up personal human subject and on which it rises and remains at the level of its dignity.¹⁶

The experience of solidarity therefore has a profound ethical dimension. It can be understood only in the perspective of good which is born in freedom and liberty. Solidarity does not need to be imposed and must not be imposed. It arises spontaneously, as it is an expression of good will. Józef Tischner stated:

When solidarity is born, awareness raises, and then speech and word appear – then that which was hidden comes to light too. All our mutual relationships become visible. Then a man wears on his back the burden of another person. Solidarity talks, calls, shouts, makes sacrifices. Then the neighbour's burden is often greater than one's own.¹⁷

From the beginning of his pontificate, Pope John Paul II began to proclaim to the world the message of faith: faith which has a unifying character in relation to all the other acts undertaken by a man, faith able to make a spiritual transformation in the world. The purpose of faith is a representation of Christ and His work in the world to achieve participation with Him in eternity. Faith grows and strengthens in specific acts of love. Love as a total gift of oneself is the fulfilment of faith.¹⁸ The attitude of love, which is to be a witness of love, is also the ability to perceive the presence of God in the faces of the people around us and to feel the sense of connection with our brothers, to identify what is positive in the other man, to solidarity with him and to reject the temptations of self-interest (cf. John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte* NMI 43). In such a way it will be possible to expand a communion between people and nations on Earth, in other words to spread what the Pope called the civilization of love, life, peace and solidarity.¹⁹

In the encyclicals of Pope John Paul II, yet another aspect of the understanding of solidarity can be found. The Pope, believing that humanity is one big family, treats solidarity as a socio-cultural fact. Solidarity is therefore a common action of many subjects of social life in a situation calling for overcoming existing social anomie, namely breaking of social bonds resulting from the dissolution of social norms. This social anomie is further deepened by the lack of social stability (the so-called proletarian case in *in Laborem exerces*). Solidarity therefore requires the unchanging attitude of serving your neighbour, respecting his or her human dignity. Solidarity requires reflection in terms of the progress an individual makes on his or her way of life. Solidarity accompanies a person on his or her life journey unequivocally shows how,

¹⁶ T. Styczeń, *Solidarność wyzwala*, KUL, Lublin 1993, p. 23.

¹⁷ J. Tischner, *Etyka solidarności oraz Homo sovieticus*, Znak, Kraków 1992, p. 10.

¹⁸ J. Krolikowski, *Otwartość historii na przełomy w Chrystusie. Udział papieża Jana Pawła II w przełomach końca XX wieku*, "ETHOS" 13(2003)3, pp. 245, 254.

¹⁹ W. Seremak, *Droga do urzeczywistnienia się w życiu poszczególnych wiernych i całego kościoła „Pożądanego owocu Jubileuszu roku 2000” (NMI 59) w świetle listów apostolskich Tertio millennio adveniente i Novo millennio ineunte*, "Roczniki Teologiczne" 50(2003)5, pp. 21-41.

among other values, the development of an individual progresses. This is why it is not possible to be in solidarity with the people devoid of conscience.²⁰

John Paul II believed that

a special mission and vocation of the laity is to express the Gospel through their lives, and thus to provide the ferment of the Gospel in the reality in which they live and work [...]. This requirement is not limited to one's own family, or even to the nation or to the state but by a certain order it includes all humanity, so that no one can remain indifferent to the fate of the other members of the human family. (*Centesimus annus*, 51)

John Paul II has shown us how to work together for the common good, not only in one small community, but also in a broader sense. The Pope pointed out that

the recognition of the social solidarity of the human family requires responsible building on what unites us. This means a real and unconditional promotion of the equal dignity of each person as a human being endowed with fundamental and inalienable rights. This applies to all aspects of our lives: both personal life and our life in a family, in the community to which we belong, as well as in the world. When you really realize that we are brothers and sisters in a common humanity, then we will be able to shape our attitudes towards life in the light of that solidarity which unites us. This is especially true in everything that relates to the basic and universal, issue whose name is peace.²¹

The task of the Christian and the family spirit is the saturation of all areas of human life, individual and social with the spirit of the Gospel.²² When the authorities issue unjust regulations, 'we must obey God rather than men' (Acts 5: 29).

In a letter to the laity, Pope John Paul II said:

The urgent and responsible task of the laity is to bear witness to these human and Gospel values, which have an intrinsic relationship to political activities, such as: freedom, justice, solidarity, faithful and selfless devotion to the common good, simple lifestyle, preference of actions for the benefit of the poor and the least. This requires that the laity become more and more enlivened by the spirit of the real participation in the life of the Church, and more and more aware of its social doctrine. In the fulfilment of this task their proximity to the Christian communities and their pastors will be a constant support. (Post-Synodal Apostolic annotation *Christifideles Laici*, LC 42)²³

The Church criticizes the lifestyle of the people oriented only on consumerism. John Paul II pointed out important aspects of the human mission on the planet Earth.

²⁰ J. Wyciśło, *Solidarność jako zasada kształtująca i regulująca życie społeczne*, op. cit., p 11-12.

²¹ Jan Paweł II, *Orędzie na XX Światowy Dzień Pokoju „Rozwój i solidarność: dwie drogi wiodące do pokoju”*. Watykan, 8 grudnia 1986 r., „L'Osservatore Romano” (1987)1, p.3.

²² B. Przybylski, *Kościół w ekonomii Bożej*, „Ateneum Kapłańskie” 66 (1963)2, p. 36.

²³ Jan Paweł II, *Wychowanie jest pierwszym i zasadniczym zadaniem kultury (Przemówienie w siedzibie Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych do Spraw Oświaty, Nauki i Kultury (UNESCO), Paryż 2.06.1980)*, [in:] *Wychowanie w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II (1978–1999)*, (ed.) S. Urbański, Instytut Badań Naukowych Szkoły Wyższej im. Bogdana Jańskiego, Warszawa 2000, p 131.

He was always concerned with the concepts of man and cared about a true good of a person (CA 36) lest the man who is obsessed with the desire of consumerism has not lost his humanity, has not been overcome by the new form of alienation. The Pope warned against improper consumption of natural resources, which is destructive to the environment (CA 37-39). However, he believed and taught that authentic development and lasting peace together with respect to men and creation are possible. The Holy Father called for the development of the international community in the spirit of solidarity (SRS 39-40). The Pope reminded that the globalization of the market should be balanced by the development of the global culture of solidarity; globalization requires the creation of a new culture, new rules and new global institutions.²⁴ John Paul II often urged Christians to form the proper relationship to material goods, and not to forget the poverty in which many human beings live, as well as to adjust your lifestyle to the requirements of fraternal solidarity.²⁵

It should be stated, after John Paul II, that all dimensions of human existence, also a cultural one, are based on three ethical principles: truth-trust-community. The existence of particular persons (individuals) and the nation depends on their presence in social life 'Educating a nation and creating culture is only possible 'in truth and love''.²⁶

Solidarity and human freedom

Solidarity is the work of rationality and freedom of human being – a person. The encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* is a document in which Pope John Paul II, with a remarkable sense of the tragic situation of the world, wrote even of the ruins of the freedom of modern man, who loses 'not only the mystery of God, but also the mystery of the world and its existence' (EV 22). Absolute freedom should not be realized as an only value: it should be accompanied by other objective values of existence, as without them lawlessness becomes a form of freedom. Therefore, freedom is a fundamental feature of human existence, an objective value, which combines with other values such as: truth, dignity, duty, vocation, and responsibility. Freedom manifests itself in the choices that are made and in action rooted in self-determination, in spiritual activity, in reaching the truth. The very idea of freedom bears the mark of Christian origin. Without reference to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the story of human struggle for freedom remains incomprehensible, and the very human desire for liberation is at risk of failure.²⁷ Achieving a mature, responsible freedom is possible through love, which,

²⁴ J. Bajda, *Globalizacja w ujęciu Jana Pawła II*, "ETHOS" 59–60(2002)1/2, p. 143.

²⁵ Jan Paweł II, *Globalizacja solidarności wymaga kultury solidarności* (Jubileusz Rolników, 11 XI 2000), "L'Osservatore Romano" 22(2001)2, p. 31.

²⁶ A.L. Szafranski, *Jan Paweł II: myśli o Ojczyźnie*, [in:] *Polska teologia narodu*, (ed.) Cz. Bartnik, KUL, Lublin 1988, p. 276.

²⁷ E. Sienkiewicz, *Wolność wartości osoby*, "Społeczeństwo" (2004)1, p. 121.

as pointed out by Pope John Paul II, is the fulfilment of freedom.²⁸ Freedom and responsibility are one of the main problems of ethical reflection on the ontological foundation of human activity. Nowadays, this problem is of particular importance.²⁹

Contrary to the pluralism of the ‘truths’ of human life proposed today, there is only one truth which is supported by divine authority. The problem of the availability of this truth is connected with the mystery of the ‘speech’ of God and human words that God has made a carrier of His Revelation. The truth or falsehood of human existence is determined by the personal choice between what is right and what is wrong. Pope John Paul II wrote about this truth in his encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*: ‘in the depth of his heart man always longs for absolute truth about human life and happiness [...], his search for the meaning of life proves it even deeper’. Pope John Paul II teaches: ‘for a person, good is existence in the truth and doing the truth’ (VS, 84). Only God is good and He is the reason of all duties – *In Deo principaliter omni debiti causa*. This was the primary domain of antiquity, until the turn toward modernity. Without this highest reference: ‘*in Deo*’, the truth about God falls, values and moral principles fall and arbitrariness begins. The reference to the purposefulness of good and to the purposefulness in general is made through the transcendence of conscience.³⁰

Pope John Paul II on 28 June 1992 in St. Stanislaw church in Rome in his commentary to the Letter of Galatians (5, 13) – ‘be servants to one another in love’ – said:

How much Poles need this lesson of freedom today [...]. Nowadays, the phantom of ‘golden freedom’ appears, which does not build, but destroys (Galatians 5:15) – ‘But if ye one another bite and devour, take heed that ye be not consumed’, the words of the Apostle evoke sad associations in us today. True freedom is not built this way – there is only one way: ‘be servants to one another in love’.³¹

John Paul II reminded the listeners in his catecheses that lay people participating in the activities of the church are called to bear witness in the world. Temporal order is to help people to achieve the ultimate goals, and also has its own inherent value. Hence, people living in it should help one another in a spirit of justice and charity. Lay people are to take actions of educational character aimed at overcoming selfishness, rivalry and revenge, building respect for brotherly love between people, solidarity, justice, respect for human dignity, culture and everything that constitutes its value.³²

²⁸ M. Rybka, J. Sławek, M. Wrześniewska-Pietrzak, *O „nie-byciu-wolnym”, czyli rozumienie wolności w homiliach Jana Pawła II*, “Polonistyka” (2009)9, p. 57.

²⁹ More in: U. Ostrowska, *Wolność jako wartość edukacyjna*, “Kultura i Edukacja” (1998)4, p. 275.

³⁰ J. Krucina, *Moc wiążąca między prawem a moralnością*, [in:] *Filozofia prawa a tworzenie i stosowanie prawa: materiały Ogólnopolskiej Konferencji Naukowej zorganizowanej w dniach 11 i 12 czerwca 1991 roku w Katowicach*, (ed.) B. Czech, Instytut Wymiaru Sprawiedliwości, Katowice 1992, p. 114.

³¹ *Homilia kard. S. Dziwisza 2 IV 2006*, “L’Osservatore Romano” 27(2006)5, p. 46.

³² A. Bławat, *Nauczanie Jana Pawła o świeckich we wspólnocie chrześcijańskiej*, “Collectanea Theologica” 35(1997)4, pp. 135-136.

Solidarity of community – universal culture

In light of this recognition, there is also a relationship between culture and personality, because culture is based on personality as the most significant value. Values require constant effort, but they are also weapons for a man, indicating what destroys and what perfects him. Pluralism is the basic fact of culture that organizes all aspects of life; it becomes a basis for dialogue. Marek Szulakiewicz writes:

Cultural necessity of dialogue results from the loss of absolutisms and universalisms [...]. The end of the great theories, the loss of ontological unity, the presence of multiple systems of world orientation have become the way of dialogue, which means exploring the possibilities of coexistence, often conflicting and competing schemes to explain the world.³³

There is a need to make a trial to reconstruct the value of Polish culture, of what was valued in the past and is today. The crisis of contemporary culture is claimed (no patterns, no value systems, dissemination of inconsistent and even contradictory values, as well as negative values). The crisis is not equal to the collapse of culture, contemporary culture changes but is still alive, it calls for new interpretations and products. Over the centuries, Polish culture has been connected with the European, the task of reinterpretation of the concept of 'national values' can be undertaken by replacing it with the concept of 'cultural values'. The basis for this conversion and identification is a belief that in the 'Europe of homelands' national values were created together with culture, and that the history of our culture is the history of various undertakings connected with achieving good.

In terms the Pope used, 'the nation is a great community of people who are united by various ties, but above all by culture. Nation exists through culture and for culture' (Address to UNESCO, Paris, 2 June 1980). In the words of the Pope,

a nation is determined by two elements: a community that is not a collectivity, but it is a real community, therefore it is the community of people united by a common action directed to a specific purpose. The second element is a national culture, which consists of many ingredients, including history, morality, religiosity.³⁴

To the Holy Father, a nation is cultural community and shapes men due to the fact that it is the subject of culture. 'If for the sake of culture's future, you have to call for human right to be more, it follows that in the same line you should put the right of the Nation. This right must be put at the heart of culture and education'. Speaking about the rights of the nation, the Holy Father 'is referring to the right to independence, cultural identity, the right to preserve and develop cultural heritage, the right to na-

³³ M. Szulakiewicz, *Obecność filozofii transcendentalnej*, Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 2003, p. 54.

³⁴ Jan Paweł II, *Encyklopedia Nauczania Społecznego*, (ed.) A. Zwoliński, PWE, Radom, 2005, pp. 306-307.

tional culture. The ideal of culture is integral culture encompassing many dimensions of human existence³⁵. Morality is the value which unites man and culture, since the task of culture is conscience-awakening leading to the civilization of dignity and freedom. The universality of culture – basing it on universal cultural values – is also a guarantee of its truth, humanism and national identity. Culture, as well as reflection on it, is a living and current issue.³⁶

The nation is a subject of culture; in turn, culture itself is an area of diverse human interaction and becomes the foundation of the social system. One cannot exist without the other. The Second Vatican Council emphasized: ‘Culture is a feature of the human person. There is no other way to full humanity than through culture’ (GS 53). This statement was expanded on by John Paul II, when he said, ‘culture is the factor through which man as a man becomes more human, through which he «is» to a greater degree. Only man is the author and creator of culture and only man expresses himself through it and confirms himself in it’. According to John Paul II, culture in the individual dimension is a specific ‘mode of human existence’, it is ‘entirety of values and means by which a man expresses the richness of his personality in all its dimensions’, and ‘human communication with other people and most of all communication between man and God’.³⁷

Solidarity and human dignity

Man – the creator and the recipient culture – has never been destroyed so much, but also has never been defended in such a way as today. Man, creator of culture, is currently threatened by the action of sects, pseudo-legal actions, and the existence of mendacious pseudo-scientific doctrine promoting a new lifestyle characterized by hedonism and exploitation. All this is a consequence of a false and deformed understanding of man which is fashionable today. Is it possible to preserve one’s identity in the present situation of chaos, crisis and the pressure from unifying trends? The condition of this possibility is the postulate of greater activity and ability to make choices; in other words – being the subject of culture. Christian tradition has made firm the belief that man is a person, has been created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). Through culture man rises to the highest ideals expressed in the fullest possible way in the person of Jesus Christ. Man reaches his or her self-fulfilment in action which contributes to the development of the human person. Man’s ultimate goal is eternal life, that supernatural element which commits a person to even greater

³⁵ J. Majka, *Katolicka Nauka Społeczna „Studium historyczno-doktrynalne”*, Polski Instytut Kultury Chrześcijańskiej. Fundacja Jana Pawła II, Rzym 1986, p. 375.

³⁶ B. Truchlińska, *Kultura i wartości*, “Ruch Filozoficzny” (2001)1, pp. 15-18.

³⁷ Jan Paweł II, *W imię przyszłości kultury. Do przedstawicieli UNESCO Paryż 2 czerwca 1980*, [in:] *Jan Paweł II, Wiara i kultura. Dokumenty, przemówienia, homilie*, (eds.) M. Radwan, T. Gorzkula, K. Cywińska, Polski Instytut Kultury Chrześcijańskiej. Fundacja Jana Pawła II, Rzym–Lublin 1988, pp. 64-87.

temporal activity.³⁸ John Paul II used to speak of man as an individual and as a human being in society. He developed original human anthropology, which has Christ in its centre, Christ ‘fully reveals man to man himself’ (RH 8). It is a vision of a man rooted in the Christian faith. The Pope also believed that the basic experience of man is the experience of his own activity. The Holy Father proposed the rule *agito, ergo sum* in the place of Cartesian thinking subject (*cogito ergo sum*). Through action man comes to know the true nature of human existence as a free, creative and responsible entity. As a free and rational creature man is called to make decisions and as an intelligent being he must acknowledge the truth, the highest truth which is Jesus Christ. The Pope recognizes that the root of human dignity lies in the ability to progress from an ordinary interest in reality to encompassing what is objectively true and good.³⁹

Man depicted as a person in the meaning of Christian culture is a man who exists, lives, and works through his soul, because every person has its origin in God. Life of man is a life of a person in the image and likeness of the Personality of Godhead. Man himself must grow interiorly in his life here on the Earth by his rational and responsible decisions. A person has ties with the world but transcends both the world and his own acts. Living in a society as a personal being, man is not just a circle in a social machinery, but determines himself ‘from the inside’ by the voluntary and rational adoption of social rights.⁴⁰ Pope John Paul II points out that

freedom is the great gift of the Creator, since it is to serve a person and his self-fulfilment, which is made real through the gift of self and openness to the others [...]. Freedom denies itself, tends to self-destruction and the destruction of others, when it no longer recognizes and respects the constitutive bond that connects it with the truth. (EV 19)

Man cannot attain true freedom without truth, without understanding the nature, the purpose of his existence. The less he knows and understands, the less freedom he has. According to the Pope, ‘when truth is excluded, freedom is not freedom. It is a sham. It is even enslavement’. Freedom demands the truth, Christ expressed it in His words ‘Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free’ (John 8:32). Before a man is mature enough for an informed and responsible use of freedom, he must be protected from evil and introduced into the world of values. Education for the truth is awakening and strengthening of the desire to become what one should be, to strive for self-perfection.⁴¹

³⁸ J. Piątek, *Kulturotwórcze elementy antropologii*, [in:] *Kultura a nasze istnienie*, (ed.) J. Łukomski, “Jedność”, Kielce 1999, pp. 59-61.

³⁹ W. Kluj, *Teologiczne podstawy dialogu międzyreligijnego w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II*, “Collectanea Theologica” 68(1998)2, p. 94.

⁴⁰ M.A. Krapiec, *Osoba w chrześcijańskiej kulturze*, [in:] *Solidarność zasadą życia społecznego*, (eds.) M.A. Krapiec, J. Miodek, W. Świątkiewicz, J. Wycisło, Instytut Tarnogórski, Tarnowskie Góry 2000, pp. 7-10.

⁴¹ W. Starnawski, *Wychowanie do prawdy – powinnością szkoły*, “ETHOS” 69(2006)3, pp. 78-79.

Therefore, a man – a person – is a subject of culture. Culture is to serve full development and perfection of man. Man is a ‘first and foremost’ fact of culture, it is such a person who is ‘spiritually mature’ and can educate himself and others. Only such a man is the primary ‘cultural fact’ since education is the first, essential and general task of culture. Therefore, moral culture should be regarded as ‘the first and fundamental’ dimension of culture, and such moral culture that shapes the ‘virtues of individual, social and religious life’.⁴²

Education in the spirit of solidarity

Culture and education are closely dependent on each other, which was indicated by John Paul II. Man can only live a truly human life in culture. Without the intellectual and moral order there is no order in action. The skill to choose what is good and to act freely should be taught. Cooperation with the grace of Christ – the educational process of internal rebirth – commences with transforming the way of thinking and changing and old lifestyle into a new one. This process was called *Metanoia* (Greek *mat* – transformation, *noos* – mind, intellect, *neosis* – cognition) by St. Paul when he wrote:

you were to put aside your old self, which belongs to your old way of life and is corrupted by following illusory desires. Your mind was to be renewed in spirit so that you can put on the New Man that has been created on God’s principles in the uprightness and holiness of the truth. (Eph 4:22–24)⁴³

Axiological knowledge that determines the direction of the actions which are undertaken should be at the core of the theory of education and educational interactions. Actions and their motives are dependent on adopted concept of value and *vice versa*: formation of young people takes place in the context of experienced values and cultural heritage. Value is some kind of idea thanks to which we can regard a given material object, person or trait as valuable. The variety of approaches to values or to the ways in which values are understood results in numerous concepts. Recognition of the value is a favourable condition for the emergence of specific motivation and specific human aspirations. The mere pursuit to put value into practice is in a sense a value itself, but there are values which often are, in fact, antivalues. Education is a very conscious choice of values and determination of their hierarchy as the direction of one’s own conduct.⁴⁴

The value which is the aim of pedagogy is to answer the question: Who is a man and what is his place among created beings? A man is a person who possesses his di-

⁴² Z. Stachowski, *Inkulturacja w ujęciu Jan Pawła II*, “Euhemer” (1991)3, pp. 78.

⁴³ S. Kunowski, *System chrześcijański wychowania*, [in:] *Pedagogika katolicka. Zagadnienia wybrane*, (ed.) A. Rynio, Oficyna Wydawnicza Fundacji Uniwersyteckiej KUL, Stalowa Wola–Lublin 1999, p. 49.

⁴⁴ J. Gajda, *Wartości w wychowaniu*, [in:] *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, (ed.) T. Pilch, vol. 7, „Żak”, Warszawa 2008, pp. 40–41.

gnity and value (not received from other people), which is the highest and absolute in the world of created beings, which has its own purpose. That is why education, which takes place not only in the family but also in schools, is an education to be the person whom a man becomes by opening himself to good, truth and beauty and participating in the values, as well as reflecting preferences in accordance with their hierarchical system: from the lowest values, through spiritual values, towards absolute ones.⁴⁵

The words of Christine Chałas should be quoted:

There is no education without values. Education without values becomes an empty bell which, despite being strongly set into motion, does not yield the sound we expect. Education must lead to the core of humanity, which is the content of a person's life, his integral development, which ultimately is determined by the realization of the highest values and striving for the Absolute.⁴⁶

Truth, freedom, life, peace, tolerance, justice and love are the values by which a man relates to a man. Following them, a man seems gradually to find and realize his humanity. According to Vladislav Stróżewski 'The idea of humanity assumes [...] that man is a being facing values and destined to realize these values – if only he really wants to be a man'.⁴⁷ All education is aimed to enable a man to become more and more human. Education is the development of humanity. What takes place at school is communication, the completion of man's formation, and shaping his worldview in accordance with the truth of his conscience. The future of countries depends on the number of people who will be mature in this way. The nation is like the people who create it; it is like families in which people are educated.⁴⁸

According to John Paul II, it is in a person and in culture where solidarity should be sought. He says that solidarity is the expression of each human being; it is a confirmation of his humanity. Man creating culture creates himself. Man also creates culture in communion with others. Culture is an expression of interpersonal communication and interaction, since it is created on the basis of the common good, which becomes available to all mankind. The task of young people is to care for cultural heritage, which can be forgotten or lost. The shape of social life depends on a kind of being a man will become. Pope John Paul II referred to this relationship when he spoke to young people. One of the most important messages of John Paul II to the youth were the words spoken at Jasna Gora in 1983, and repeated at Westerplatte in 1987:

You must demand from yourselves, even though others would not demand from you [...] Each one of you, young friends, also finds in his life his own 'Westerplatte'. A kind of challenge one must accept and fulfil. A kind of just

⁴⁵ M. Straś-Romanowska, *Wartości a wychowanie*, "Kultura i Edukacja" (1993)1, p. 12.

⁴⁶ K. Chałas, *Wychowanie ku wartościom. Elementy teorii i praktyki*, Vol 1, "Jedność", Lublin–Kielce 2003, pp. 41-42.

⁴⁷ W. Stróżewski, *Filozofia wartości*, "Znak" (1965)4, p. 399.

⁴⁸ J. Kownacka, *Wychowanie patriotyczne w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II podczas pielgrzymek do Ojczyzny*, "Studia Theologica Varsoviensia" (1997)1, pp. 217-244.

*cause one cannot stop to fight for. A kind of duty one cannot abandon. One cannot 'desert'. Finally – a kind of order of truths and values one must 'maintain' and 'protect', like this Westerplatte. Maintain and protect in himself and around himself. Protect – for himself and for other people.*⁴⁹

The principles of solidarity in the service of Europe's good – conclusion

The Church, through the numerous statements of the Holy Father John Paul II and many documents of the Holy See, has given a clear sign of the commitment to the world's problems and seeking dialogue not only with Christians, but also with all people of good will. The richness of the pontificate of John Paul II

should be fully internalized by local churches, that is by all of us, the new evangelization leading to the civilization of love should take place [...], the aim of which is revival of Christian roots and new inculturation of the Gospel in Europe, together with making the voice of the Church more clear in a pluralistic society.⁵⁰

In his apostolic letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, which was devoted to preparations for the Great Jubilee of the year 2000, Pope John Paul II proposed specific forms of implementing international solidarity. Among other things, he considered his duty to call for 'the reduction, if not total elimination, of the international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations' (No. 51). He spoke about the reform of the world monetary system in order to ensure greater stability of interest rates and exchange methods (see SRS 43). The pope called for respecting the principle of solidarity, especially in the distribution of wealth and power, so that the people from poorer countries can not only meet their basic needs, but also develop gradually and effectively (see RH 16).⁵¹

The need for mutual solidarity not only concerns the efforts to distribute external goods fairly and the fight for civil rights. The rich issues of mutual assistance and protection from harm as far as moral and spiritual goods are concerned must not be excluded from the range of solidarity. One such issue is the need for mercy. From the perspective of Christian ethics, various actions and decisions in the field of social, political and economic life should be assessed according to the extent to which they take the poor into consideration. The question should be asked to what extent these actions and decisions turn out to be useful and give a chance to be active. The Biblical option for the poor aims at overcoming the limitations so that each member of the society had the opportunity to participate in social life. This option directs attention to the feelings of rejected people, to their distress, humiliation, to the harm they expe-

⁴⁹ W. Sroczynski, *Duszpasterskie aspekty młodości*, "Studia Paradyskie" (1993)3, p. 103.

⁵⁰ J. Mariański, *Religia i Kościół między tradycją i ponowoczesnością. Studium socjologiczne*, "Nomos", Kraków 1997, p. 333.

⁵¹ K. Dadak, *Globalizacja a nauczanie społeczne Kościoła*, "ETHOS" 59–60(2002)1-2, p. 205.

rience and to structural injustice. This Biblical option in favour of the poor gives the remedy: it obliges people who are rich to give assistance, to share and to make real effective alliances which foster solidarity.⁵²

The social movement called 'Solidarity' has led to profound political changes in Poland and in other parts of the world. The emergence of this movement was accompanied by a very vivid and strong religious awareness, as well as deepened theological thought. The moral revolution of 'Solidarity' in Poland and the liberation of India from the rule of the colonial system⁵³ are events in the field of politics which show the inadequacy of its materialist interpretation, and call for the reference to the axiological vision of human nature. These events, thanks to culture and axiological truth about man, indicate the spiritual factor as an important issue in political actions. Events are closely connected by their axiological content and should be understood as a historical manifestation of the transcendent truth about man. Concern for a human being in the social world he created shows the relationship between the politics and matters of spirit.⁵⁴ Without 'Solidarity' there would be no self-government understood as active participation in social and political life which realizes a program that recognizes the most important values: family– local community – homeland; a Christian system of values, traditions, patriotism, freedom, and independence, as well as honesty in public life. The nation is a natural entity in social reality. The concept of the nation is included in the group of concepts concerned with human life itself. The people should live in the truth. The idea of the Polish nation is the thought contained in these words:

Polish people living and integrated by the self-awareness of Catholicism and history, defending these values and national self-determination growing on their basis, the nation of Poles, living on Polish soil and abroad, open to the pluralism of other nations and beliefs making it complimentary with European and human universum.⁵⁵

In 1979 the pope made a profession of faith on Victory Square in Warsaw:

For man cannot be fully understood without Christ. Or rather, man is incapable of understanding himself fully without Christ. He cannot understand who he is, nor what his true dignity is, nor what his vocation is, nor what his final end is. [...]. The history of the nation is above all the history of people. And the history of each person unfolds in Jesus Christ.⁵⁶

⁵² J. Salij, *Solidarność jako zadanie*, "Communio" (1981)1, p. 57.

⁵³ 'Satyagraha' in India in the times of Mahatma Gandhi is a moral action to improve the human being as the subject of all the political, social and economic life.

⁵⁴ A. Wierzbicki, „Satyagraha” i „Solidarność”. *Wydarzenia odległe i bliskie*, "ETHOS" 51-52(2000)3-4, pp. 141.

⁵⁵ W. Chudy, *Aspekty narodu polskiego*, "ETHOS" 49-50(2000)1-2, p. 288.

⁵⁶ Jan Paweł II, *Nie można usunąć Chrystusa z historii człowieka (Homilia w czasie mszy św. Na placu Zwycięstwa 2 VI 1979 r.)*, [in:] *Nauczanie papieskie, II (1979)*, Vol. 1, Pallotinum, Poznań–Warszawa 1990, p. 599.

The strength of 'Solidarity' can be found in the axiological principle of humanity. John Paul II drew attention to the axiological and moral dimension of that strength – 'Polish worker called for his rights with the Gospel in his hand and a prayer on his lips' – a revolution that refers to the Christian culture of the Polish nation. It was during his first pilgrimage to Poland that the pope made anamnesis of cultural identity, revealing the humanistic and Christian (Christ's) sense of Polish identity.⁵⁷

The pope, from the beginning of his pontificate, began to proclaim to the world the message of faith, which has a unifying character in relation to all other acts that man undertakes, faith not accepting compromise, faith able to make a spiritual change in the world. The purpose of faith is representing Christ and His work in the world to achieve participation with Him in eternity. Faith grows and strengthens in specific acts of love. Love as a total gift of self is the fulfilment of faith.⁵⁸ The attitude of love, which means being a witnesses of love, is a significant feature of a spirituality of communion, which is also the ability to recognize the presence of God in the faces of the people around and feeling relationship with one's brothers and sisters, perceiving what is positive in another man, solidarity with him and rejecting the temptations of self-interest (cf. Pope John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte* NMI 43). The attitude of love will also enable the expansion of communion between people and nations, in the pope's words, of the civilization of love, life, peace and solidarity.⁵⁹

Solidarity is needed in today's unifying world. Solidarity is essential both within individual countries and in the process of the unification of the two parts of Europe. Solidarity is also necessary in the context of contemporary globalization of various continents. Nowadays, the term 'solidarity of the whole human family' is used. Pope John Paul II stated: 'It is necessary, for the sake of future generations, for the new Europe to be based on the foundation of these spiritual values which form the inner core of its cultural tradition' (Homily at the mass celebrated at the peak of Jasna Góra, Czestochowa, 15 August 1991). Furthermore, he stated: 'the Gospel is indispensable for the recovery of culture, it is essential to make possible the building of a truly peaceful future for Europe and to the world' (to the participants of the symposium organized by the Council of European Episcopal Conferences, the Vatican, 25 April 2002).⁶⁰

The hope John Paul II proclaimed is the realization that our fate depends not only on external factors, which are often beyond our control, but above all on our moral

⁵⁷ Jan Paweł II, *Moc świadectwa* (Przemówienie do pielgrzymów z diecezji szczecińsko-kamieńskiej. Jasna Góra, 18 VI 1983 r.), [in:] *Jan Paweł II, Pokój Tobie Polsko! Ojczyzno moja! Znow na polskiej ziemi*, Kuria Biskupia, Lublin 1984, p. 73.

⁵⁸ J. Krolikowski, *Otwartość historii na przełomy w Chrystusie. Udział papieża Jana Pawła II w przełomach końca XX wieku*, op. cit., p. 245.

⁵⁹ W. Seremak, *Droga do urzeczywistnienia się w życiu poszczególnych wiernych i całego kościoła*, op. cit., pp. 21-41.

⁶⁰ G. Grochowski, *Jan Paweł II o Europie. Wybór myśli*, Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne, Sandomierz 2003, pp. 61-62.

attitude, our will to survive, our fidelity to the values, as well as our solidarity with our neighbours and other nations.

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SOLIDARNOŚĆ JAKO CNOTA MORALNA. POSTAWY I ZASADY ŻYCIA W MYŚLI JANA PAWŁA II Z PERSPEKTYWY PEDAGOGICZNEJ

Streszczenie: Dla właściwego funkcjonowania życia społecznego i pokojowego współżycia różnych grup, osób, społeczności i państwa nieodzowne jest podjęcie zadania wychowania do gotowości wzajemnej solidarności. Żadne społeczeństwo, bez nawet najmniejszej gotowości do wzajemnej solidarności nie jest zdolne do właściwego funkcjonowania, a nawet do życia. Wspólne cele danego narodu, dziedzictwo kultury i tradycji budują świadomość solidarności w ramach konkretnego społeczeństwa czy narodu. A zatem każda świadomość solidarności uwarunkowana funkcjonalnie powinna być zakorzeniona i ostatecznie umotywowana uniwersalną solidarnością wszystkich ludzi.

W swym nauczaniu papież Jan Paweł II pogłębiał motywacje solidarności jako cnoty ludzkiej i chrześcijańskiej, akcentując społeczny wymiar solidarności. Zwracał uwagę na teologiczne rozumienie solidarności, rozwijając problematykę solidarności w głębokim tle kwestii społecznej o wymiarze globalnym. Należy wychowywać młodzież do uczestnictwa w życiu społecznym i kulturalnym w duchu solidarności. Uświadamiać, że dobro narodu zależy od ich postawy moralnej, od woli przetrwania, od wierności wartościom, które w ciągu wieków kształtowały historię i kulturę wspólnoty. Solidarność umotywowana jest naturalną otwartością człowieka, jako istoty społecznej, na drugą osobę, z którą współdziałać należy w dążeniu do realizacji dobra wspólnego. Niezbędna jest stała gotowość do przyjmowania i wypełniania tych zadań, które są konsekwencją uczestnictwa jednostki w życiu społecznym.

Słowa kluczowe: Solidarność, nauczanie Jana Pawła II, godność człowieka, postawa życia w służbie dobru, powinność wychowawcza.

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