

## Editorial

The research findings presented in the first two articles of this inaugural issue of the semi-annual journal “Theological-Historical Studies of Opole Silesia” (2025) were inspired by the teachings of Pope Francis, who passed away on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025. Both texts fall within the field of theological ethics and reflect the richness of thought of the Argentinian Pope, whose teachings have made a significant contribution to the development of Catholic moral theology.

The first article argues that Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* leads to a methodological and anthropological integration of Catholic social and sexual ethics. The authors discuss selected anthropological and methodological aspects found in *Populorum Progressio* and in Catholic social teaching, as well as teachings on sexuality, demonstrating how *Amoris Laetitia* integrates and develops elements of both social and sexual Catholic methodology and anthropology.

The next article explores the impulses in Pope Francis’ teaching that influence Catholic relational ethics – a field increasingly present in contemporary approaches to sexual ethics within the Church. The author examines three key elements of relational ethics as found in the Argentinian Pope’s teachings: a positive view of sexuality linked to the act of creation, a realistic theology of the body, and a shift from normative frameworks toward a personalist conception.

An article in the field of contemporary bioethical reflection analyzes the problem of *homo faber* – modern man as master of nature and himself – and his response to the mystery of death. The author argues that both the desire to prolong life indefinitely and actions aimed at hastening death through euthanasia reflect the same technocratic impulse. He advocates a relational and holistic approach to dying, rooted in Christian anthropology and oriented toward personal fulfillment and spiritual preparation for death.

Another text within theological ethics focuses on the concept of vocation, widely used in Catholic theology. The author analyzes its normative significance, critically reviews its theological foundations, highlights problematic theoretical and practical consequences, and outlines a proposal for a more responsible theology of vocation.

A contribution from the field of liturgical studies addresses the issue of the use of pontificals by presbyters without episcopal rank but holding a special jurisdiction in the Church. The author discusses the reasons for reforming Church discipline in this area, the documents that modified the practice of using pontificals, and the current legal-liturgical status.

A Church history article presents the beginnings of Christianity in Opole and the associated legends concerning the presence of St. Adalbert in the city and relics of the Holy Cross. Although there is no unequivocal confirmation of these claims in medieval sources, the author supports a plausible hypothesis, arguing for their credibility based on the lack of refutation in Silesian historiography and early modern chronicles.

The next article continues the history of the Dominican convent in Buda (1252–1637), a story initiated in the previous issue. The prosperity of this royal foundation was ended by the Turkish invasion of Hungary in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the ensuing exile of the convent to Nagyvárád, Trnava, and Pozsony. The death of the last Dominican nun, Barbara Verebély, in 1637 marked the end of what was once the most prestigious of Hungarian convents.

An article from the interwar period historical studies examines the post-World War I efforts to establish a diocese in Opole with a Polish bishop and to create a Polish Theological Academy. The author discusses these issues as they appeared in the Silesian press during the turbulent election campaigns to the regional and national parliaments and assesses the feasibility of these initiatives.

The following article presents the figure of Fr. Georg Hertel, who began his catechetical and pastoral work in Opole in 1936. In 1942, he became chaplain to the Franciscan Sisters of the Hospital and their patients at St. Adalbert's Hospital. He was shot in 1945 by a Red Army soldier entering the city. The author portrays him as a martyr of World War II and someone worthy of consideration for beatification.

The final two articles concern musicology and organology. The first of these supplements knowledge about the life and work of Hugo Krebs, an organ builder associated with the Świdnica region. The author discusses this figure, who in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century spent many years in Opole carrying out minor organ repairs and maintaining these instruments.

The topic of the last scholarly article concerns organ-building heritage in the parish of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Maternus in Lubomierz. The author presents the issue from a historical perspective, detailing events related to the parish's instruments against the backdrop of the local history and churches.

The section *Materials – Reviews – Reports* contains several texts. The first is a review of a book on the theology of marital vocation by Tim Zeelen. The next review discusses a book at the intersection of biblical studies and literary criticism by Edward Jakiel. A subsequent review covers Czesław Deptuła's publication on the myth of the origins of Poland as a European state, based on Gallus Anonymus' *Chronicle*. Another review examines a monograph commemorating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Diocese of Kalisz. The final two texts in this issue of the biannual journal are reports. The first one concerns a study trip of professors and students from the Faculty of Theology at the University of Opole to India in February 2025. The second report covers an international academic conference on the theme of the *Path of Reconciliation between People and Nations*, which took place at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Opole from May 29 to 31, 2025.

