

KONRAD GŁOMBIK
University of Opole

Alojzy Marcol (1931–2017) and moral theology in the service to a life of faith

Alojzy Marcol died on 25th March 2017. He was a retired professor of moral theology at the Faculty of Theology at the University of Opole and for many years a lecturer and rector at the Seminary of the Diocese of Opole in Nysa.

Alojzy Marcol was born on June 4th 1931 in Nędza near Racibórz in Upper Silesia. After his education at the primary school and after high school finals he studied philosophy and theology at the Seminary of Opole Silesia in Nysa and Opole in the years 1952–1957. On June 23th 1957 he was ordained a priest by Bishop Franciszek Jop in Opole. In the Autumn of 1957 he began his study of moral theology at the Catholic University in Lublin, graduating as a master. In September 1960 Alojzy Marcol began his lectures of ethics and moral theology at the Seminary of the Diocese of Opole in Nysa. Two years later, in November 1962, he became PhD of theology on the basis of the work on objectivity of moral values by Johannes Hessen written by Professor Władysław Poplatek at the Catholic University in Lublin. Reviewers of his doctorate were Professor Stanisław Olejnik and Bishop Karol Wojtyła. Between the years of 1977–1983 Alojzy Marcol was the Rector of the Higher Seminary of the Diocese of Opole in Nysa. In 1983 he became Professor of Moral Theology at the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw. His habilitation took place in May 1987 on the basis of a study about the narrative theology by Joseph Wittig. Since 1974 Marcol was a member of *Societas Etica* and the Association of Moral Theologians and Social Ethicists of the German speaking circle. In the years 1990–1996 Marcol was president of the Association of Polish Moral Theologians. After the foundation of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Opole in 1994 Marcol became Professor of Moral Theology in Opole and was the

chair of the Department of Moral Theology, Social Ethics and Spirituality which he led up until his retirement in 2002. As a retired professor Marcol taught moral theology at the Higher School of Philosophy and Theology in Heiligenkreuz near Vienna. He died in Nysa where he lived and was buried in Nędza his home place.

Alojzy Marcol was a teacher and educator for many generations of priests of the dioceses Opole and Gliwice and a professor and promoter of 18 doctorates by Polish moral theologians. As a theologian Marcol worked during and after the Second Vatican Council and conducted his teaching and publications in the spirit of this council. Among the themes of his many publications are the historical text like the thinking of Johannes Hessen, the narrative theology by Joseph Wittig and the protestant ethics. He has publicized two important handbooks: on Catholic sexual ethics and on the sacrament of penance and reconciliation and the script on the methodology of the preparing of master works, which became popular throughout Poland. Other interests of his study were the theme of social ethics as in the ethics of war and peace and global ethos as well as political ethics and bioethical themes. He translated two books by German theologians into the Polish language namely: *Political ethics* by B. Sutor and *Which certainty gives me the conscience?* by E. Schockenhoff. Marcol was, in this way, a bridge between German and Polish theological thinking. At the Opole Faculty of Theology he organized international conferences on questions of bioethics which brought famous moral theologians together especially those from the German speaking countries, and in Warsaw he was the editor-in-chief of the journal *Studia Theologica Varsoviensia*. For many years Marcol was a member of the Bioethics Commission of the Regional Medical Chamber of Opole.

Professor Marcol was for many Polish moral theologians a trusted adviser and for many a relevant reviewer. He was respected in the community of his own diocese, amongst the Polish moral theologians and recognized and treated as a partner in the society of German theologians. His well-balanced opinions were comprehensible both by lay people and theologians, by people without theological education and by physicians. He not only shunned liberal opinions but despised some conservative points of view also. He kept balanced positions in his teaching and in his activities and he respected every human being.

Marcol was sure that the moral theologian ought to conduct his study according to the teachings of the Church and felt obliged to be focused on the actual situation of modern receivers. The transmission of this moral message takes place between these two poles in a field full of tensions. The moral theologian cannot allow to forfeit his beliefs and neither can he tolerate that as a result his firm lecturing would close the gate to a life of faith. The moral theologian should look for ways that

make it possible to accept the Christian message so that it proves to be useful for daily life (A. MARCOL, *W kręgu wartości chrześcijańskich. Wybór artykułów*, Opole 2006, p. 119). This was the belief of Alojzy Marcol which characterized his life and his activities. This conviction is a message of his life for the next generation of moral theologians.

