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PERSONALISTIC CONCEPT OF MORAL FORMATION*

A b s t r a c t. Personalistic moral formation is universal because it refers to the truth about man as a person. It leads first to Christian values, but in principle it refers to something fundamental, i.e., to the inner capacities specific to every human being, believer or not. This is why the concept of the person occupies a very important place in the foundations of personalistic moral formation. The individual decisions of the moral formation process depend on it. Moral formation, then, appears to be the most prosopoic way of transmitting values, i.e., shaping a person of high quality. A special role is played here by a person who, as it has already been stressed, is a cognitive model, a method of constructing knowledge, and above all a place and a way of connecting the human person with the Person of Christ. Personalism correlates with the whole nature of morality. It is a method that brings the truths of faith and morality closer to the existence of a particular person; it makes them close to his mind and heart and respond to the deepest needs of a person's life. Furthermore, the personalistic moral formation is not limited to the ways of transmitting faith and morality but will seek ways of self-comprehension, self-interpretation and self-upbringing of the students and ways of understanding the contemporary world, history, life, community, culture in light of the Person of Christ.

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Nowadays, there is a noticeable return to personalistic thought. Personalism, as a path of reflection, is gaining more and more recognition. It can be assumed that this tendency, as it was the case in the early twentieth century in Europe, attempts to find a way out of the impasse that contemporary man finds himself in. Perhaps it was the fact that personalism sought to confront specific

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problems of people in the complexity of their existence that made us constantly come back to it and seek “refuge” in it.¹

It is a fact that the contemporary educational processes are aimed at the human person, influenced by a culture given to anti-humanism, anti-anthropology, dehumanization, desacralization, and depersonalization. In the context of excessive naturalism and anti-humanism, there is a need to “set out” to rescue the truth about the human person and save the truth *about oneself* and *within oneself*; to save the truth about man as a person is to prevent the collapse of the entire socio-cultural reality in which humanity develops and lives. This is made possible by personalism, which has developed a holistic and methodologically adequate view of the human person. It assumes that in order to demonstrate the entire complex phenomenon of the person, that is, the immanent and transcendent nature, we should interpret the entire reality—the earthly and the eternal one—with respect to the person.

This is why the concept of the person occupies a very important place in the foundations of personalistic moral formation. The individual decisions of the moral formation process depend on it. The truth about man is not only a collection of information about his origin and existence, but above all a process of reading him as a person.² Therefore, we should bear in mind that personalism will support the entire complex and multifaceted formation process. The personalistic concept of moral formation appears today as an antidote to the present-day anthropological and cultural crises.

1. THE SYSTEM OF PERSONALISM

Personalism as a realistic, holistic and universalist system starts with the person and treats them as a key and method for the interpretation of the entire reality. Starting with the person, it plays the role of a system which not only defines man as a person, describing her dignity, communicability, dialogic aspect or relations, but also goes in depth, explaining any created and uncreated reality in light of the mystery of the person. Personalism sees moral formation in a personal reality because salvation and sanctification—despite

¹ Cf. Bogumił GACKA, *European Personalism* (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Ekosystem-Dziedzictwo Natury, 2014).

² Cf. Teresa ZUBRZYCKA-MACIĄG and Piotr GOLISZEK, “The Personal Aspect of the Moral and Axiological Upbringing of Children and Adolescents,” in *Lubelski Rocznik Pedagogiczny* 39, no. 2 (2020): 32.

taking place through signs and symbols in reality—occur in the world of Divine and human persons.³

The study of moral formation calls for the application of adequate personalism, which is not fragmentary and does not reduce the fact of man and his person, and in all reality. There might also be incomplete or “commercial” personalisms. It should be noted that nowadays personalism has become a fashionable line of reflection, which sometimes poses the danger of blurring its meaning.

When undertaking the task related to the proposal of a personalistic concept of moral formation, it is necessary to reflect on the basis of the three types of Polish personalism developed by the so-called Lublin School: integral personalism (Thomist-Augustinian) developed by Wincenty Granat,⁴ phenomenological personalism (Thomist-phenomenological) of Karol Wojtyła⁵ (John Paul II⁶), and universalist personalism (personalism system and prosopology) of Czesław S. Bartnik.⁷ Their Christian and realist nature makes their scientific approach to man as a person and to the elements of reality complete, integral and universal. In the spirit of Christian realism, they highlight the union of the human person with the Divine Persons, stressing that the human

³ See the following by Czesław S. BARTNIK: *Studies in Personalist System* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007); *Personalizm* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2013); *Szkice do systemu personalizmu* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2006); *Osoba i personalizm* (Lublin: Standruk, 2012).

⁴ See the following by Wincenty GRANAT: *Personalizm chrześcijański. Teologia osoby ludzkiej* (Sandomierz: Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne w Sandomierzu, 2018); *Osoba ludzka. Próba definicji* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2006); *Fenomen człowieka. U podstaw humanizmu chrześcijańskiego* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007).

⁵ See the following by Karol WOJTYŁA: *Considerations on the Essence of Man: Rozważania o istocie człowieka* (Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu; Rome: Societa Internazionale Tommaso D’Aquino, 2016); *Wykłady lubelskie* (Lublin: TN KUL, 1986); “Osoba i czyn,” in *Osoba i czyn oraz inne studia antropologiczne*, ed. Tadeusz Styczeń et al. (Lublin: TN KUL, 2000); “Człowiek jest osobą,” in *Personalizm* 1 (2001): 59–64; “Podmiotowość i ‘to, co nieredukowalne’ w człowieku,” *Personalizm*, no. 4 (2003): 11–20; *Rozważania o istocie człowieka* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 2003); “Personalizm tomistyczny,” in *Personalizm*, no. 6 (2004): 57–66.

⁶ See the following by JOHN PAUL II: Encyclical Letter *Redemptor Hominis*, March 4, 1979; Encyclical Letter *Dives in misericordia*, November 30, 1980; Encyclical Letter *Laborem exercens*, September 14, 1981; *Apostolic Exhortation Familiaris consortio*, November 22, 1981; Encyclical Letter *Dominum et Vivificantem*, May 18, 1986; Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, December 30, 1987; Encyclical Letter *Veritatis Splendor*, August 6, 1993; Encyclical Letter *Evangelium vitae*, March 25, 1995; Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, September 4, 1998.

⁷ See the following by Czesław S. BARTNIK: *Studies in Personalist System* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007); *Personalizm* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, editions from 1995, 2000, 2008, 2013); *Hermeneutyka personalistyczna* (Lublin: Polihymnia, 1994); “Dlaczego personalizm,” *Personalizm*, no. 1 (2001): 7–8; “Personalizm uniwersalistyczny,” *Personalizm*, no. 2 (2002): 51–61; *Szkice do systemu personalizmu* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2006); *Osoba i personalizm* (Lublin: Standruk, 2012); “*Osoba*” w filozofii i teologii (Lublin: Standruk, 2017).

person transcends the “here and now” and enters the natural and supernatural level, which are closely interlinked.

Universalistic personalism seems to perform its task to the full in theology. It serves to construct scientific theology, provides methods, allows linking religious and theological data with the whole personal life of man and the Church. The personalistic method is capable of defending morality against mythologization and formalism, but it makes it alive, personal, part and parcel of one’s personal life, pragmatic and at the same time universal, open and unfolding for every person, both believer and non-believer. On a moral formation level, systemic personalism seems to be a perspective of connecting religious empiricism with the world of the spirit, of bringing the students closer to the whole personal life, both human and divine, individual and social, moral and axiological. It explains religious content in a personal way, imparts reason, reveals the depth and rationality of religious mysteries, opens the space of freedom of the personal world.⁸

Moral truths transmitted to students in the perspective of personalism will aim to demonstrate that man is fully explained and completed in the personal reality of God. At the same time, the guiding line of the approach does not stop at the theoretical and general ontological and methodological assumptions but proves that personalism gives a coherent interpretation of the reality of Christianity, and therefore implies its application potential.⁹

For systemic personalism, the starting point for scientific research is the phenomenon of the person, the most obvious and accessible to our human internal and external experience, and the direct object and subject of cognition. The personalism system takes this phenomenon of the person as the key to interpreting, understanding and knowing the created and the Uncreated, personal and non-personal reality. For personalism as an integral system, the person, from the substantive point of view, is the fundamental reality, while from the methodological point of view, the person defines the direction of thinking and understanding. In short, it is a method and basis for praxeology and the transformation of the world. Therefore, in light of the person seen as a value, ontology, methodology, epistemology, theory of culture and all reality are built into systemic personalism.¹⁰

⁸ Czesław S. BARTNIK, “Teologia personalistyczna,” *Studia Nauk Teologicznych PAN* 1 (2006): 57–64.

⁹ Cf. Piotr T. GOLISZEK, “Communicating Faith Through Catechesis,” *Studia Pastoralne* 9, no. 9 (2013): 62–74.

¹⁰ Cf. Vittorio POSSENTI, *Osoba nową zasadą* (Lublin: Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, 2017); Vittorio POSSENTI, *Il nuovo principio persona* (Rome: Armando, 2013); Czesław S. BARTNIK, *Osoba i personalizm* (Lublin: Standruk, 2012), 11–47.

The person determines the content and methodology of educational and formative processes. This is the line of personalism, for which the person has the status of a method and provides the methodological and epistemological key. All reality, including morality, may be recognized, comprehended and interiorized by the human being as a person. Man also becomes a reality among them, but precisely as a person. Ultimately, the person is a meeting point of the content, experience and life stories provided by morality. The person is likewise a “method” of ordering all that. Everything becomes a reality in the person. Without her, Christianity and morality would be a mythology; thanks to the person, morality serves the human person and the social person (community). Hence the person is the principal criterion of morality. In this sense, personalism and its methodology may serve moral formation. Both in moral formation theory and in praxis, the person indicates the direction of solutions and actions. It seems to be the prism through which all reality is perceived: the supernatural one and the earthly one, external and internal, personal and impersonal. The person, therefore, is the standard of synthesizing the material and the spiritual world. The personalistic method imparts professionalism, universality and praxeological tangibility to the entire area of moral formation activity, in both its praxis and theory.¹¹

Taking advantage of the accomplishments of personalism, one should bear in mind that it is neither an ideology, nor individualism, nor collectivism, nor spiritualism. Nor is it an exclusively anthropological description of the human being. It is first and foremost a proposed reflection on the human being and the world within the personal approach. Man as a person is not seen here as but one of the elements of reality, but as a starting point for all reflection. This model of perception and interpretation applies likewise to religious reality. Sanctification and salvation occur through signs and symbols and relate to the Divine and human persons. It is the person who helps comprehend all created and uncreated reality, on condition that the phenomenon of the person will be recognized by the mind in light of the Revelation. Hence Christ and His teaching invariably provide an inspiration for personalism. As a result, this is an open system, which imposes nothing, prescribes nothing and forces nothing; nor does it exclude anything or preclude any way completely. It is instead a guideline for every thinking human person. Personalism naturally tends to refer any science, reflection, interpretation, and pastoral praxis like

¹¹ Grzegorz BARTH, “The Hermeneutics of the Person,” in *Hermeneutyka osoby* by Grzegorz BARTH (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2013), 318–19.

moral formation, to the person, sincerely appreciating the person's value and recognizing her mystery.¹²

2. PERSONALISTIC METHODOLOGY

The personalism system, moreover, has its own personalistic methodology, based on the analysis of the person as the most obvious phenomenon, on the cognitive research of non-personal existence and relations between them, and interpretation of the entire reality in light of the value of a person. This method also has a praxeological character, which concerns the action, development, creativity, and personalization of man and the world. This method is determined by the very essence of the person in the sense of subsisting being; therefore, the examination of reality in the light of the mystery of the person is possible on three levels: material, spiritual, and unifying and transcending. The person as the highest, "third" kind of being, besides matter and spirit (body and soul), "summarizes" and "merges" the two previous ones. The person is also the overarching synthesis of the three research planes and therefore cognition enables man's cognitive transcendence and discovery of the sense of existence. Without the person it would be difficult to discover and understand religious reality. The category of the person helps to recognize that Christianity is above all a world of personal relationships, where salvation and sanctification take place in the world of the Divine Persons and human persons.¹³

Without the person not only the material world but also the spiritual world, including God Himself, could not be known. Any personal and non-personal reality, created and Uncreated, makes sense only within a personal relation. This mutual harmony is possible thanks to the person, who is a methodological and praxeological category. On the one hand, it allows us to learn, interpret and create thought and concepts; on the other hand, it is an action, an act, causality. The person is therefore the highest measure of the morality and moral formation.

The very nature of morality, which exists only in the world of persons, indicates the particular value of the human person in moral formation. This is the key to understanding all that determines the full magnitude of man, his humanity and his vocation. The person here is the elementary key to the interpretation of the whole complex process of moral formation, which should help to

¹² Czesław S. BARTNIK, "Universalistic Personalism," in *Studies in Personalist System* by Czesław BARTNIK (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007), 37–52.

¹³ Czesław S. BARTNIK, *Metodologia teologiczna* (Lublin: Pracownia Poligraficzna PKLO, 1998).

transform human life into a “new life,” into a life of fullness.¹⁴ A person always remains a being, constantly representing the supreme value. In moral formation, it is the person who is both the point of departure and the destination. This process should start with the person to ultimately lead to the person. Formation makes sense only when it serves the person and leads to their full, ultimate fulfilment.¹⁵

Therefore, realistic personalism is a vision not only of existence, culture and society, but also of all praxeology, including education and upbringing.¹⁶ It is a direction that sees man as a person, and everything else that is supposed to serve man, interprets and creates in the light of this phenomenon—the person. Invariably, as a system it is open to the reality of the world of the person. It is the discoverer of the person and its promoter. Although it is a scientific direction, it is also a method of praxis, i.e., a way of life and action. It somehow stands “in the way of the person” and accompanies the person. Hence, it is an effective method of interpreting the truths of faith and Christian morality and binding them to human life by shaping the mind, will, character and personality. It touches directly on the very fact of God’s coming down to man, God giving of Himself to man. It reaches out towards the reality of Christianity in man, that is, the Person of Christ. Universalistic personalism, on the one hand, reveals the personalistic character of morality and, on the other, contributes to the actualization of the personal encounter of morally formed people with Jesus Christ.¹⁷

“The favorable effect, resulting from accepting the aforementioned paradigm, consists as well in the fact that a person, wishing to get to know its own

¹⁴ “The basis of personalistic moral formation must be a man as a person and his unquestionable and irrefutable dignity. In fact, the person is neither denied nor reduced, because only the person possesses within themselves what is irreducible, what is discovered and understood only in terms of subjectivity. In order to fully understand a human and, through education, to ‘make’ them fulfil themselves, one must stop at what is irreducibility in them, exceptional and unique in every man. Therefore, in moral education, it is necessary to focus on the truth that a human is a human being a person. Only such a perception gives a true and complete picture of a human being; of a person who is a full in-self and an out-of-self being; of a unique and unrepeatable being,” see Teresa ZUBRZYCKA-MACIĄG and Piotr GOLISZEK, “The Personal Aspect of the Moral and Axiological Upbringing of Children and Adolescents,” *Lubelski Rocznik Pedagogiczny* 39, no. 2 (2020): 33.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Cf. E. ALBERICH, “Articolo per il 50° di ‘Katecheta’ Alla ricerca di un nuovo ‘paradigma catechetico.’ Riflessioni sulla situazione della catechesi in Europa,” *Między tradycją a współczesnością. I Krajowy Kongres Katechetyczny*, ed. Aleksandra Bałoniak and Jan Szpet (Poznań: Wydział Teologiczny UAM, 2008), 383–95.

¹⁷ Grzegorz BARTH, “Ku całościowej wizji osoby ludzkiej,” in *Katecheza a osoba. Wybrane zagadnienia z metodologii personalistycznej w katechezie*, ed. Piotr T. Goliszek (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2010), 67–77.

essence, realizes its own act of naming what does not originate in itself, but is an action of another person, and ultimately of God Himself. The direction in question signifies the approval of what results from *humanum* and, at the same time, has the hallmark of the transcendence designated by its divine (*divinum*) origin and goal. The tying of both these elements was again realized in the person of Christ. In *analogia Christi* there is a clear revealing of the structure of a symbol understood as a ‘unity of sense’ and ‘semantic distance’. The human nature of Christ and any other human being is defined by something that it itself is not; by the anticipation in the Other, namely the Divine Person. By that, it is personified (*enhipostasis*) in order to fully show its values and developmental abilities. In its deepest existential sense, the principle of *enhipostasis* is a calling for a change in one’s own life by showing openness toward the other. This intuition is perfectly conveyed by a Trinitarian concept of *perichōresis*, which means the mutual permeation and mutual gift of the Divine Persons. It leads to the understanding of the person as a trialogic being, that is, determined by the triple polarity: I-you-we (they).”¹⁸

The human person, without a reference (in this case through morality) to the Tri-Personal God, disappears.¹⁹ Personally, it is important to have a positive relationship with God. Therefore, moral formation is so highly personified. It is founded on the Person of Christ as the sole donor of moral law, the purpose of life and the source of the gifts that await a response on the path of moral life. Development and moral maturity are born as a response arising from an encounter with Jesus Christ, as the ontological consequence of living in communion with Him. This is because Christ is the sole source of “new life,” the new quality of being, and the high measure of human existence as a person. A “new life in Christ” makes man ontologically a “new creature.”²⁰

Moral formation, then, appears to be the most prosopoic way of transmitting values, i.e., shaping a person of high quality. A special role is played here by a person who, as it has already been stressed, is a cognitive model, a method of constructing knowledge, and above all a place and a way of connecting the human person with the Person of Christ.²¹ Personalism correlates with the whole

¹⁸ Grzegorz BARTH, “The Hermeneutics of the Person,” in *Hermeneutika osoby* by Grzegorz BARTH (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2013), 318–19.

¹⁹ Cf. VATICAN II, *Gaudium et Spes*, December 7, 1965, no. 36.

²⁰ Cf. Piotr T. GOLISZEK, “Personalistic moral education in catechesis,” in *Roczniki Teologiczne* 64, no. 11 (2017): 126.

²¹ The Christocentric trait of moral formation provides all the potential wealth of the humanity of individual students to be actualized in an increasingly mature personalized humanity. Moral formation built on the foundation of Christ is to lead man to maturity, to help him become an ever

nature of morality. It is a method that brings the truths of faith and morality closer to the existence of a particular person; it makes them close to his mind and heart and respond to the deepest needs of a person's life.

3. PERSONALISTIC MORAL FORMATION

The personalism used in the personalistic concept of moral formation as an intellectual system helps to learn, study, and interpret all reality in the personal perspective and then, in the same perspective, to translate theory into practice. This demonstrates the praxeological nature of personalism. Basing of moral formation on this system helps adequately order data, create a general vision of actions, attempt to provide a synthesis of the material, and reach out to the most profound truths. Its merits include moreover objectivity and dynamism. Its major features are religious realism, knowledge of Christianity and a sense of reality. The personalistic approach helps read the faith and morality as real, living and related to a particular life of a particular human being. Hence this system may effectively support moral formation. Furthermore, the personalistic moral formation is not limited to the ways of transmitting faith and morality but will seek ways of self-comprehension, self-interpretation and self-upbringing of the students and ways of understanding the contemporary world, history, life, community, culture in light of the Person of Christ.

The personalistic direction of moral formation involves a paradox. It is only a proposal, and it must remain as such, and at the same time it becomes a necessity in a sense, even if only because of the reductionist cultural conditions. This direction—and this is probably its greatest asset as well as its challenge—realistic in that it takes into account every student as such. This means that on the one hand moral formation is directed towards the comprehensive personal and moral development of each individual a student, and on the other hand it takes into account the real difficulties appearing on this path, not excluding failure. Personalistic moral formation is universal because it refers to the truth about man as a person. It leads first to Christian values, but in principle it refers to something fundamental, i.e., to the inner capacities specific to every human being, believer or not.

Raising man morally does not stop at the intellectual and phraseological level of teaching the student but penetrates the ontological and axiological

fuller, perfect person, and to fulfil his capacities and talents. This is the achievement of genuine, positive moral maturity, corresponding to human and Christian dignity. Cf. *ibid.*, 130.

depths. For personalistic moral formation “a person is a reality earlier than his action,”²² because “a person is a primordial being, a certain primordial whole,”²³ a phenomenon offered directly to man as an experience. The person, then, is no “void” to be “filled” by moral formation. Rather, moral formation reveals in the person the gift of the Creator. It brings out what is *in potentione* part and parcel of a person’s inner world, in their entire humanity, existence and unique history. This does not amount to the development or building of a person, as if they have not existed and “been” before. The person exists *in se* and *per se*. One needs to offer them favorable conditions for the implementation of all the layers potentially inherent in the individual man–person and to accompany them in self-creation and self-upbringing, to help manifest the person’s essence and sense.

Moral formation, leading a student towards a personal union with Jesus Christ, consists mainly in demonstrating the current value of the Person and Gospel of Christ in everyday life and in following the way indicated by Him. At this point, it is worth mentioning the thought of John Paul II, who in his encyclical letter *Veritatis Splendor* appreciates the principle *sequela Christi* and explains that “following Christ is thus the essential and primordial foundation of Christian morality.”²⁴ This indicates a highly personalistic character of moral formation, based on an in-depth relationship of the human person with the Person of Christ, on the idea of imitation–identification with the *Redemptor hominis*, Who is the key to the person’s reality and understanding.²⁵ Therefore, the goal of moral formation is the transmission to and development in the student of an attitude of Jesus the Teacher; it is in His Person that the mystery of man finds its explanation and in Him man finds the most appropriate way of Christian morality. Moral formation should become the way of a “new life” (Rom 6:4) in Christ (cf. CCC 1607). Thanks to Him, man finds in himself the original “image and likeness” of his Creator and strives to become a “new man.”²⁶ A living tie with the Person of the Word Incarnate merges the personal worlds of God and man. Moreover, Christ becomes the interpreter of the human person and the subject of self-awareness. This tie with Christ leads a student to seek particular guidelines for conduct based on

²² Cf. Marek DZIEWIECKI, *Osoba i wychowanie. Pedagogika personalistyczna w praktyce* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Rubikon, 2003).

²³ Czesław S. BARTNIK, *Szkice do systemu personalizmu* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2006), 23.

²⁴ JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Veritatis Splendor*, August 6, 1993, no. 19.

²⁵ JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptor Hominis*, March 4, 1979, no. 10.

²⁶ Cf. Piotr T. GOLISZEK, “Personalistic moral education in catechesis,” in *Roczniki Teologiczne* 64, no. 11 (2017): 127–28.

the professed faith and morality. Faith and morality are the choice of God, the re-evaluation of life in the light of the revealed truth, the source of activity and commitment, or “the transformation of the person to the depths of his heart.”²⁷

The formation of religiousness and the moral formation are seen by personalism in personal realities. Personalism not only sees the person as the highest value, but also recognizes the person as the basis of all human values and principles. It stresses the subjectivity of man in relation to culture, socio-political life, law, work, and the coherence between the rights of the individual and society. It questions the principles of anarchy of individualism and collectivism. It penetrates the areas of civilization and defines its prosopoic path so that it serves the purpose of the development of man and societies, a counterbalance to the attitudes of nihilism and technicism. It becomes the principal force of the transformation of societies and an inspiration and project for the future, offering an integral vision of civilization based on and with the help of the phenomenon of a person.²⁸

In the context of the truth about the human being perceived as a personal being, the proclamation of Christian morality should not consist in conveying the claims of the God who demands, but in proclaiming the message of the God who loves, His love being lavished on man. The personalistic approach to moral formation consists in the fact that man will not be regarded as merely an executor of God’s law, but as a co-steward of the world, invited to seek the truth *of himself* and to multiply good *in himself* for the sake of others, in order to be a reflection of God’s love.²⁹

Knowing the truth and doing good enables one to realize his humanity and to “become” himself. Moral formation teaches not only how to be good, but also is good in itself because it teaches man to be even more human and more fulfilled. It does not teach obligations, but rather implants into the identity of the student what improves him and makes him perfect and brings out in him what lies within him as latent and potential.³⁰ The personalistic concept of moral formation points to the personal order and opposes the concept of formation as an organized technique of influencing the student. The deliberate and conscious interaction with the help of well-thought means and accompanying the student through

²⁷ BENEDICT XVI, Apostolic Letter *Porta fidei*, October 11, 2011, no. 10.

²⁸ Czesław S. BARTNIK, “From Humanism to Personalism,” in Czesław S. BARTNIK, *Studies in Personalist System* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007), 19–35.

²⁹ Cf. Piotr T. GOLISZEK, “Personalistic Moral Education in Catechesis,” in *Roczniki Teologiczne* 64, no. 11 (2017): 132–33.

³⁰ Cf. Anna SZUDRA, “Dialogiczna etyka wychowawcza,” supplement to *Pedagogia godności. Elementy etyki pedagogicznej* by Wojciech CHUDY (Lublin: TN KUL, 2009), 222.

authentic personal being and witness is, therefore, one of the preconditions for a personalist formation rooted in the person's metaphysics.³¹

Moral formation in the personalistic sense is not focused on idolizing the law and legalism. Nor is it about enforcing obedience to norms and duties or moralizing but is rather based on respect and acceptance of the human person. The role of educators is then to help children and young people to bring out their capacity for doing good. It is the most personal work that leads to a new quality of humanity and a high level of human existence as a person.³²

The personalistic character of moral formation therefore does not focus on conveying an ethical and moral code, but on helping the pupil to achieve the fullness of humanity. A moral man is one who has become so because he has properly activated his own humanity. The process by which a man validates his own humanity is an expression of his personal life and the activation of his moral potential.³³

It should be emphasized that personalistic moral formation, i.e., the process of transmitting moral and ethical standards, the teaching of the principles of moral life, should be so implemented in a way which ultimately results in the good of the person. According to Andrzej Derdziuk: "The good of the person is what makes one become more self-reliant and affirms his personal dignity by perfecting his own nature."³⁴ This involves a transition from a reistic to a personalistic perception of moral life as a free response to the Revelation and Divine Love; it is a shift from a humanity subordinated to nature to a humanity modelled on the Person of Jesus. The Person of Christ is here the perfect model of a fulfilled person because "the Creator of the world has shown in Christ the full ideal of the human person and, so to speak, has given mankind an instruction manual for a person's humanity."³⁵ In this way, through moral education in catechesis, an individual creates himself as a person. A moral life contributes to the person's being the most human, the most fulfilled and the most perfect being of all creation.³⁶

³¹ Piotr T. GOLISZEK, "Personalistic Moral Education in Catechesis," *Roczniki Teologiczne* 64, no. 11 (2017): 133.

³² Teresa ZUBRZYCKA-MACIĄG and Piotr GOLISZEK, "The Personal Aspect of the Moral and Axiological Upbringing of Children and Adolescents," in *Lubelski Rocznik Pedagogiczny* 39, no. 2 (2020): 31.

³³ *Ibid.*, 32–33.

³⁴ Andrzej DERDZIUK, *Teologia moralna w służbie wiary Kościoła* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2010), 129.

³⁵ Andrzej DERDZIUK, "Wkład teologii moralnej w katechetyczny przekaz wiary" in *Catechetica Porta Fidei*, ed. Andrzej Kiciński and Piotr T. Goliszek (Lublin: Natan, 2012), 44.

³⁶ Piotr T. GOLISZEK, "Personalistic Moral Education in Catechesis," in *Roczniki Teologiczne* 64, no. 11 (2017): 138.

Religious realism, a sense of Christian reality and a sense of reality are important features of Christian personalism. Therefore, it is not only pure intellectualism, but also praxeology. In personalism, it is the person who appears as a praxeological category, because the person is an action, deed, agency, creativity, so it is a measure of praxis and the ultimate rationale of action. Only the person enables action in the right sense; moreover, the person is a category marking the line of practical action.

The personalistic concept of moral formation appears as an essential postulate for our culture to take Christian responsibility for man by turning to the human person, by opening to his existence, making us aware that God is the God of men and that He offers every man a chance to live his humanity to the fullest. Therefore, everything must be done to ensure that in the transmission of the Christian message and morality the person is the most important (before the thing, before the conveyed content, and before the didactic method). Moral formation, which helps man to reach the integral truth about himself, becomes more convincing for the modern world.

The personalistic concept of moral formation develops in order to serve man in the concrete uniqueness of his existence, so that man can progress in self-understanding and self-improvement, and finally fulfil himself as a person. It can be said that the personalistic character of moral formation, nowadays marked by anti-Christian tendencies and by the depersonalized and anti-humanistic culture, comes to the aid of the saving truth about the human person.

To sum up, it should be stressed that the considerations discussed here are the personalistic concept of moral formation, arranged in a personal way and ultimately for the sake of the person. The proposed reflections do not provide definitive and final solutions. Like personalism, which is not a closed and completed system but a dynamic and open one, the above issues from the field of moral formation only open up a certain perspective. Furthermore, the human person, who is not finally realized in their time dimension, but continuously “becomes” and constantly “happens,” shows that the thought built around the person and inspired by them is naturally perspectivist. Hence, reflection on moral formation, built around the human person and inspired by it, is perspectivist and open by nature.

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PERSONALISTYCZNA KONCEPCJA FORMACJI MORALNEJ

Streszczenie

Formacja moralna o charakterze personalistycznym jest uniwersalna, ponieważ odwołuje się do prawdy o człowieku jako osobie. W pierwszej kolejności prowadzi do wartości chrześcijańskich, ale zasadniczo odnosi się do czegoś podstawowego – do wyposażenia właściwego każdej osobie ludzkiej: wierzącej czy niewierzącej. Dlatego w podstawach personalistycznej formacji moralnej bardzo ważne miejsce zajmuje koncepcja osoby. Od niej zależą poszczególne rozstrzygnięcia procesu formacji moralnej. Formacja moralna jawi się zatem jako najbardziej prozopoiczny sposób przekazywania wartości, czyli kształtowanie człowieka wysokiej miary. Szczególną rolę pełni tu osoba, która jest modelem poznawczym, metodą konstruowania wiedzy, a przede wszystkim miejscem i sposobem zespolenia osoby człowieka z Osobą Chrystusa. Personalizm koreluje z całą naturą moralności. Jest metodą, która zbliża prawdy wiary i moralności do egzystencji konkretnego człowieka; sprawia, że stają się bliskie dla jego umysłu i serca oraz odpowiadają na najgłębsze potrzeby jego życia. Ponadto formacja moralna o charakterze personalistycznym nie ograniczy się do sposobów przekazywania treści wiary i moralności, lecz będzie poszukiwać dróg samorozumienia, samointerpretacji i samowychowania wychowanków oraz sposobów rozumienia świata doczesnego, dziejów, życia, społeczności, kultury – w świetle Osoby Chrystusa.

Słowa kluczowe: osoba; formacja moralna; personalizm; moralność; człowiek.