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OF FAITH IN THE LIGHT OF *GEISTLICHE
TEXTE I AND II* OF SAINT TERESA BENEDICTA
OF THE CROSS (EDITH STEIN)**

INTRODUCTION

Edith Stein is one of the greatest figures of the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, who permanently contributed to the history of science, the Church, her country and the nation. Her inborn habitual personal features, enriched by the natural and supernatural self-development, contributed to the fact, that being less than 51 years of life Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (this name Edith Stein adopted since entering the Carmelite Monastery in Cologne in 1933) is considered as a person who – in the name of truth – condemned herself, together with her sister Róża, to death of a martyr in Auschwitz-Birkenau on August 9, 1942¹. The coherence of her ideas with her own life is a huge testimony

¹ One of the more detailed descriptions of the life and work of Edith Stein is presented by A. U. Müller, M. A. Neyer, *Edith Stein. Das Leben einer ungewöhnlichen Frau. Biografie*, Düsseldorf 2002; a biography in the perspective of works, see G. Chojnacki, *Relacyjność osoby ludzkiej. Studium antropologiczno-teologiczne pism Edyty Stein (Teresy Benedykty od Krzyża)*, Poznań 2015, 16-75; the most up-to-date table with the most important information from the life of Edith Stein, as well as all the more important *post mortem* events concerning her, see *Edith Stein-Lexikon*, M. Knauf, H. Seubert (ed.), Freiburg-Basel-Wien 2017, sp. 12-14.

of the possibility and reality of leading such a life, and at the same time a research field, which has become the subject of many biographical studies and publications. Currently, the most comprehensive and critical work is the series *Edith Stein-Gesamtausgabe* (hereinafter ESGA), published by the Herder publishing house: Freiburg-Basel-Wien, under the chief editor of Hanna-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz. Since 2000, 27 volumes have been published so far, and the publication of the 28th volume has been planned for the first half of 2019². The Polish translation of this series, which I have entitled *All Works of Edith Stein* (hereinafter *Edyty Stein Dzieła Wszystkie* EDZW) has been published by the Discalced Carmelites Publishing House since 2002, and up to now 10 volumes have been already published³.

Because volumes 19 and 20 of ESGA: *Geistliche Texte I and II* have not been released yet in Polish translation, I would like to present in this study their significance, undertaking an analysis of the problem of the unity of faith and morality, pointing to the theological and moral implementation of the Stein's indications with regard to spiritual life. Ulrich Dobhan (editor of both volumes) emphasizes the necessity of their interpretation through the prism of other important publications on spiritual life, such as the *Drogi poznania Boga* or *Wiedza krzyża*⁴. The volume *Geistliche Texte I*⁵ consists of four parts:

² *Edith Stein-Lexikon*, M. Knauf, H. Seubert (ed.), Freiburg-Basel-Wien 2017, 15-19.

³ Cf. <https://wkb-krakow.pl/51-edyta-stein> (10.03.2019).

⁴ U. Dobhan, *Einführung zu den Bänden 19 und 20*, in: ESGA vol. 19, VII-XXII, Cf. VII. „In den beiden Bänden 19 und 20, die den gemeinsamen Titel *Geistliche Texte* tragen, sind Texte Edith Steins versammelt, die – von wenigen, allerdings nicht unwichtigen Ausnahmen abgesehen – nach ihrem Eintritt in den Kölner Karmel am 14. Oktober 1933 verfasst wurden. Die großen *Geistlichen Schriften*, wie *Wege der Gotteserkenntnis* und *Kreuzeswissenschaft* bilden auf Grund ihres Umfangs und ihrer Bedeutung innerhalb der ESGA eigene Bände (17 und 18), andere durchaus auch *geistliche Schriften*, wie *Die Seelenburg* und *Eucharistische Erziehung* sowie *Wege zur inneren Stille* oder auch *Eine Meisterin der Erziehungs- und Bildungsarbeit: Teresia von Jesus*, wurden in die Bände 11/12, 13 bzw. 16 aufgenommen, da sie in enger Beziehung zu den dort versammelten Schriften Edith Steins stehen“.

⁵ Freiburg-Basel-Wien 2009, XXXI and 263.

1. *Vorträge und Aufsätze (lectures and articles)*, 2. *Texte zu Geschichte und Persönlichkeiten des Karmel (texts on the history and personalities of Order of Carmelites)*, 3. *Rezensionen (reviews)*, 5. *Nachrufe (posthumous memories)* 1. Whereas the volume *Geistliche Texte II*⁶ contains 5 parts: 1. *Persönliche Notizen und Exerzitien*), 2. *Ansprachen und Betrachtungen*, 3. *Gebete und Gedichte*, 4. *Theaterstücke*, and 5. *Liturgische Texte*⁷. These publications confirm that Edith Stein remains a “born phenomenologist”⁸ in her phenomenological investigations concerning contemplation and mystical experiences⁹, although both Edmund Husserl and Roman Ingarden rather tolerated than affirmed this change in her philosophical workshop¹⁰.

This aim determines the structure of the present study, which will oscillate around the idea of development of spiritual life through

⁶ Freiburg-Basel-Wien 2007, XXII and 405.

⁷ Table of contents of this volume: ESGA vol. 20, V-X.

⁸ S. Courtine-Denamy, *Trzy kobiety w dobie ciemności. Edith Stein, Hannah Arendt, Simone Weil*, Warszawa 2012, 25. According to her friend Hedwig Conrad-Martius, she herself could be considered a “born phenomenologist”. Phenomenology fascinated her “because of explanatory work, in which she finds her own cohesion and because from the very beginning one can forge the armor he needs only by himself”. She will also say that the phenomenological language is her “native philosophical language”.

⁹ A. U. Müller/M. A. Neyer, *Edith Stein. Das Leben einer ungewöhnlichen Frau. Biografie*, Düsseldorf 2002, 241: “Auf dem Boden einer sich der Kontemplation öffnenden Phänomenologie will Edith Stein drei große Bereiche zusammenführen: erstens die neuzeitliche Philosophie, die nach den Grundlagen sicherer Erkenntnis sucht (Erkenntnistheorie), zweitens die abendländische Denkgeschichte, die nach dem Sinn von Sein, d. h. dem (letzten) Zusammenhang, fragt und nach der Einheit von allem, was ist (Ontologie), und drittens die christlich-jüdische Spiritualität”.

¹⁰ C. M. Wulf, *Edith Stein – Phänomenologin im Grenzbereich zwischen Philosophie und Theologie*, in: *Grundbegriffe und phänomene Edith Steins*, Knauf M./Seubert H. (ed.), Freiburg-Basel-Wien 2018, 28-29. “Auch Ingarden war nicht bereit, Steins Übergang zu theologischen Inhalten zu tolerieren, doch er sieht gleichzeitig, dass sie ihrem Grundinteresse treu bleibt. Husserl bedauerte die Konversion seiner Schülerin und die daraus erwachsende Neuorientierung. Dennoch sieht er durchaus die Möglichkeit, theologische Forschungsergebnisse phänomenologisch zu reintegrieren”.

cooperation with God's grace and development of the virtue of faith, then focusing on the analysis of the dichotomy of faith and morality proposed by Stein, which refers to interesting topics of pedagogical guidance, recommendations on how one can avoid the dichotomy or remove it from the life of God's child if it has already occurred. However, first and foremost it intends to point out the features of the spiritual soul described by her, which is the precondition of living in the spirit of faith and the one that has its origin in faith¹¹.

1. WHAT IS SPIRITUAL SOUL?

After the defense of the doctoral dissertation concerning the problem of empathy as an intersubjective phenomenon¹², Edith Stein is considering writing a habilitation dissertation dedicated to the phenomenon of psychophysical causality and phenomenological grounds for practicing humanities, which she already mentions in her doctoral thesis. The soul and the body as an indivisible *compositum* are elements constituting a human being. From the point of view of psychophysical causality, the soul considered as substance becomes evident in individual psychic experiences and is manifested in the essence of impressions, which is why one can in this context define the relationship between the soul and the body as the foundation of the soul in the body.

It is rooted in the body, creating with it an individual that can be recognized on the basis of psychological experiences. It is the man considered as a psychophysical individual who is the subject of impressions, and his soul is essentially a source of life¹³.

¹¹ Due to the fact that polish translation of ESGA volumes 19 and 20 is missing, I will quote the fragments of the original work in the footnotes.

¹² *O zagadnieniu wczucia*, ESDZW vol. 5.

¹³ *Ibidem*, 132. "The soul as a substantial unit manifesting itself in individual mental experiences – as shown by the sketched phenomenon of «psychophysical causality» and the essence of impressions – is founded in the body, it creates, together with it, a «psychophysical individual»".

Stein, however, does not limit herself only to psychophysical causation but goes further in her reflection, attempting to describe the spiritual acts that will remain to be investigated when we leave the sphere of experiences that affect the functions of the body. Using examples derived from emotional life, such as “our heart stops beating «out of joy»”, “it” squeezes “out of pain, it palpitates in anxious expectation and takes our breath away”¹⁴, Stein attempts – with the help of the method of phenomenological reduction – to free herself from the cause-and-effect relationship of the body and soul and to study pure spiritual acts, which she illustrates by referring to the example of the human-God relationship: “It should be admitted that God is happy for the repentance of the sinner, not feeling heartbeats or other «organic sensations» (Investigation that is possible regardless of having faith in existence of God)”¹⁵.

In the subsequent stages of her discourse concerning soul, Stein explores the dimension of the soul in the essential and functional perspective in a more extensive way: “The spiritual soul, enters into the unity of human nature in the central and dominating place. It gives the whole person a personal character and authentic individuality; it permeates thus all its aspects”¹⁶. With regard to essence, the spiritual soul is the central and dominant point of human nature, which makes all parts of man enter into a relationship with it, and it penetrates all its aspects. Considered by assuming the substantive-functional perspective, the spiritual soul attributes personal and individual character to the whole of man’s being, in accordance with the definition of the person proposed by Boethius: *naturae rationalis individua substantia* or the one of Richard of Saint Victor: *naturae intellectualis incommunicabilis existentia*. Therefore, explicating the essence and tasks of the spiritual soul, Stein remains in connection with the great Christian tradition, which in the context of Christolo-

¹⁴ Ibidem, 132.

¹⁵ Ibidem, 133.

¹⁶ *Budowa osoby ludzkiej. Wykład z antropologii filozoficznej*, in: ESDZW vol. 14, 192.

gical discourse used the concepts of *prosopon* and *persona*, meaning originally masks in the ancient theater until the definitions of such a concepts as personality and individuality were created¹⁷. As part of her practice in mystical phenomenology, Stein, who on the day of vesture in the Carmelite Order takes the name Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, uses the concepts characteristic of the mystical teaching of Teresa of Jesus and John of the Cross to explain the relationship between the outside world and the spiritual soul:

The soul, when drawn “outside”, does not transcendents itself, it only distants itself from its interior, and thus makes it available to the outside world. The impressions from the outside may attract its attention accordingly to the “weight”, value and significance which they have for themselves and with regard to the soul and consequently they deserve to be received in proper deep dimension of it.

There exists, therefore, a real measure by means of which the soul receives them. It does not have to sacrifice a position which is located deeper: because the soul is regarded here as a spirit, and its “fortress” is a spiritual kingdom, here the laws are completely different than those from the outer space; staying in its depths, in the interior of its inner kingdom, the soul rules it completely and can move to any “place” located within it – not leaving “its proper place”, i.e. a place of peace¹⁸.

The theory of the dynamism of the spiritual soul, which remains in its core immovable, and at the same time reacts to external stimuli, demonstrates in a vivid way the spiritual life of a human being. On the one hand, what strikes us in this representation is the autonomy of soul, which reacts in an adequate way to the “weight” of the stimuli that affect it – depending on their nature, as well as their significance

¹⁷ The authors of commentaries on the works of Edith Stein rightly point out that she emphasized the importance of analyzing the concept of the core of man, cf. A. A. Bello, *Zeit / Ewigkeit*, in: *Edith Stein-Lexikon*, M. Knaup / H. Seubert (ed.), Freiburg-Basel-Wien 2017, 413. “Aufgrund ihres irdischen Lebens ist die menschliche Person zeithaft, doch sie kann sich dahingehend entscheiden, dem zu folgen, was in ihrem Kern enthalten ist”.

¹⁸ *Wiedza Krzyża. Studium o św. Janie od Krzyża*, in: *ESDZW* vol. 18, 220-221.

with regard to the soul. On the other hand, the susceptibility of the soul to external impulses indicates the sensual and spiritual unity of man and the inalienable anthropological components that each of us has been granted due to the fact that we have been born as human beings. The soul internalizes what directly affects it, but it does so with the measure it establishes, “reigning” in its kingdom. Teresa of Jesus uses the term “fortress” whose reception is characteristic feature of mystical thought of Edith Stein. The atmosphere of peace which is noticeable in the fortress and internal ordering is to bring harmony to the spiritual and physical constitution of man. The timeliness of the spiritual life of man, i.e. the presence of the spiritual soul in every part of the human structure, reminds us how important it is to avoid all dualities with regard to the anthropological perception of man.

A very important element of the description of the spiritual soul is the definition of its core, t.i. the deepest place in its “fortress” This place is defined by freedom. The soul in its deepest dimension is capable of having the holistic perception of its existence and from this position it can freely decide about it.

That’s why man’s spirituality is connected with his freedom to such an extent, the spiritual man is free in the most superior way, because the ability to capture the essence of his existence by himself and the ability to decide about himself confirms the degree of his consciousness and the commitment of free will¹⁹.

In Zurich in 1932, Edith Stein presented a lecture entitled *Lebensgestaltung im Geist der heiligen Elisabeth*, written a year earlier in the period of a very advanced activity, during which she gave lectures at many national international conferences and symposia. According to Stein, the spirit of a man who affects other people is immortal and eternally alive. The spirit shaping life and works of man leaves a lasting mark in them. Stein describes this mark as the “mysterious existence” in the works inherited, which “cannot be regarded as dead

¹⁹ Ibidem, 221. “The deepest point is also the place of its freedom, a place where it can capture all its existence and decide about it”.

monuments”²⁰. The spirit of their author is present in them, the spirit of the inspirer, which can shine with the light of inspiration, when the life of man and his work will be perceived and applied by people with open souls, to light a fire of creativity in them and become a forming force. Metaphors referring to the images of the causative spirit and the fire or stars falling from the sky, that stimulate and guide people are characteristic of both ancient and medieval thought, especially when talking about the action of mythical gods and the idea of a Judeo-Christian God.

It should be added that the spiritual soul of man is open to the activity of grace and God due to the possibility of faith of a man understood as a content and as an act.

2. FAITH CONSIDERED AS CONTENT AND AS AN ACT

There is a general conviction popular among experts in the field of faith that there exist its two aspects, expressed in following distinction: *fides quae creditur* and *fides qua creditur*²¹.

²⁰ *Lebensgestaltung im Geist der heiligen Elisabeth (1931)*, in: ESGA vol. 19, 31. “Denn der Geist ist lebendig und stirbt nicht. Wo er einmal am Werk war, Menschenleben und Gebilde von Menschenhand zu gestalten, da hinterlässt er nicht nur tote Denkmäler, sondern führt darin ein geheimnisvolles Dasein, wie eine verborgene und wohlbehütete Glut, die hell aufflammt, leuchtet und zündet, sobald ein lebender Hauch darüber hinstreicht. [...] Aufgeschlossene Menschenseelen sind der Stoff, worin er zündet und zur formenden Kraft wird”.

²¹ I refer reader to the description of this distinction by J. Bujak, *Fides quae creditur, or the relation of faith and reason*, “Colloquia Theologica Ottoniana” 1 (2014), 8: “We usually distinguish faith as an attitude of personal trust in God (*fides qua creditur*) from the revealed truth that is the subject of faith (*fides quae creditur*). *Fides qua creditur* means the active presence of God in me that transforms me and leads me to communion with God. This active presence comes from God, He is its source, but it also includes the man’s response to God’s grace, t.i. faith. This faith establishes an existential relationship with God, built on trust, hope and adoration. The attitude of a believer towards God can be described as «I believe in You» or «I believe You». *Fides quae creditur* is about what I believe, doctrines that have

Believing in God and have faith in God are two inseparable aspects of the faith that has been adopted and put into practice. It is Edith Stein, to whom we owe the definition of faith, which includes both the cognitive-intellectual sphere as well as the voluntary-emotional sphere of a human being.

“What is supposed to initiate religious formation is, after all, a life of faith, and faith is not a matter of imagination or devotional feelings, but an act of the intellect (although it cannot be regarded as a rational perception) and a voluntary acceptance of the eternal truth; if it is a full, well-formed faith, then it is one of the deepest acts of a person in which all its powers participate. Sensual impressions and imagination stimulate reason to act and are necessary as a starting point for it to operate; movement of feelings is an instinctive act, which encourages the will to consent to their content and is regarded therefore as a valuable help. However, if we limit ourselves to those two aspects, that is if intellect and will are not called to achieve its highest level, then no authentic and faithful life will be possible”²².

During the retreat, in which Stein participated in 1937, she emphasizes with all conviction the relationship of man’s faith with confidence, developing the theme of *fides qua creditur* of faith, which makes us active and which becomes the reason for the development of the connaturality of virtues. If we do not offer ourselves completely to God, we see that our actions are subject to many errors, despite all the commitment of reason, our own experience and knowledge of Revelation. It is enough to make an examination of conscience regarding our prayers, actions resulting from the necessity of expressing brotherly love to others and our failure to overcome our laziness, so that we feel that we do not live in the spirit of truth about God’s creative power that activates what is

been passed down in Revelation or through which I try to understand, explain my existential relationship with God. *Fides quae* is based on the personal experience of faith, on the *fides qua*, which in its turn is expressed in the *fides quae*”.

²² *Zadanie kobiety w prowadzeniu młodzieży do Kościoła*, in: ESDZW vol. 13, 344-345.

good in us. We are supposed to act not only by receiving power from God, but God is supposed to act in us and through us. In this way, man can experience his development through convergence of individual virtues and synergy of accepted gifts²³.

Naturally, in order to experience *fides qua creditur*, one must take into consideration man's cognitive abilities, because for Stein "faith is not a matter of imagination or devotional feelings, but an act of the intellect"²⁴. In 1931, she emphasizes in her meditation – written in the form of an essay – *Das Weihnachtsgeheimnis* the need to "transpose" the existential experience of the Feast of the God's Incarnation into the experience of faith: "When the Christmas Gospel and Christmas with its gifts and the mysterious charm of the Holy night initiates a relationship with Mary and a Jesus' child and attracts hearts of the faithful to them, then the desire for a closer and deeper knowledge of them will arise in the faithful. And then comes the time when it is necessary to introduce the faithful into the mysteries of the Incarnation and the sublime vocation of the Mother of God. This is also the reason why the understanding of the significance of unification with the Omniscient powers and trustful devotion to them for the rest of one's life, is awakening in us"²⁵.

The connectivity of the sphere of feelings (in German the term *Gemüt* is used, which defines the emotional aspect of man) with

²³ *Exerzitien (22.II.-4.III. 1937)*, in: ESGA vol. 20, 34. "Vernunft, Offenbarung, eigene Erfahrung lehren uns, dass alles, das wir aus eigener Kraft tun, fehlerhaft ist. Wir sehen es, wenn wir unser Beten, Arbeiten, unsere Übung der Nächstenliebe prüfen. Gott allein ist die Quelle alles guten, wenn auch viele diese Vernunftwahrheit nicht sehen, weil sie nicht danach leben. Unsere Aufgabe ist es, schweigen und auf Ihn hören zu lernen, nicht aus uns zu sorgen, zu planen, zu handeln, sondern uns gänzlich Gottes Händen zu überlassen; wohl unsere Kräfte zu betätigen, aber nicht aus ihm, sondern so, dass Er es ist, der uns tun macht. Erst dann gibt es ein Aufsteigen von Tugend zu Tugend".

²⁴ CfR. Körner, *Ein Zuruf statt eines Nachwortes*, w: *Lebensweisheit für unsere Zeit. Edith Stein als Lehrerin der Spiritualität*, U. Dobhan/R. Koerner (ed.), Leipzig 2001, 76-77.

²⁵ *Zadanie kobiety w prowadzeniu młodzieży do Kościoła*, in: ESDZW vol. 13, 345.

the intellectual-volitional act is *conditio sine qua non* of the full act of faith. Stein describes the emotional state as „attraction of the heart”, which is the beginning of the intellectual recognition of what ultimately results in a decision. Intellectual understanding means here introducing the faithful into the mystery of the Catholic faith, mystagogical pedagogy indicating the significance of understanding that a voluntary union with the One, of whom man has achieved knowledge, is needed. At the same time, Stein warns us against the superficial – that is limited to study of the teachings of the catechism – “training” of the faithful in acquiring the content of the truths of faith: “The memorizing of misunderstood catechism theses may have devastating effects, but it is useful to penetrate the mysteries of faith”²⁶.

When a man opens himself to the grace of faith and accepts it, deciding to receive the sacrament of baptism and the unerasable sign, the seal of the Holy Spirit, then he experiences the mystery through which he can participate in the life of the invisible God²⁷. This life can be characterized by three principles: *unum esse cum Deo, ut omnes unum sint in Deo* and observance of the commandments as a sign of the acceptance of God’s love.

In the lecture *Weihnachtsgeheimnis* (1931), Stein refers to the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God in order to become aware and make the other realize the meaning of idea of being a child of God, which is tantamount to being the one and the same as God, being one and the same as the other in God and the idea of having prior love for God that enables us to be faithful to God’s commandments. All this is possible when a man – as a child of God – learns to live while being held by God’s hands. This motive of putting oneself in

²⁶ Ibidem, 344-345.

²⁷ *Eine deutsche Frau und große Karmelitin Mutter Franziska von den unendlichen Verdiensten Jesu Christi OCD (Katharina Esser) 1804-1866 (1938)*, in: ESGA vol. 19, 174. “Gott, der jeder Menschenseele ein eigenes Siegel aufgeprägt hat, verbindet auch jede in einer ganz eigenen Weise mit sich. Aus der Fülle des gottmenschlichen Lebens, die kein Menschenherz zu fassen vermag, teilt der Herr jedem ein besonderes Geheimnis mit, durch das er zu dem Unfasslichen Zugang erhält”.

the hands of God is a frequent image used by Stein, it is the elaboration of an idea about resting in God, inactivity *sui generis*, so that God can actively act in us and through us²⁸.

Such a description of the act of faith requires examination of moral implications, in the axio-normative sense of this term, in order to demonstrate that faith cannot be “dead”.

3. MORAL IMPLICATIONS

Analyzing moral implications of the Stein’s thought arising from spiritual life, one can expose them by referring to the statement included in the meditation *Verborgenes Leben und Epiphanie (6th Januar 1940)* (*Hidden Life and Epiphany of January 6, 1940*): “This is a serious indication: boundless devotion to the Lord who calls us is required of us to renew the face of the earth”²⁹.

The scheme is as follows: the call of God – man’s response, is therefore characteristic of the theology of Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, seeking a way to overcome the dualism of faith and morality, at the same time invoking the third Person of God. It is the action of this third Person that the spiritual soul of man must be subjected to. One

²⁸ *Das Weihnachtsgeheimnis (1931)*, in: ESGA vol. 19, 9. “Damit rühren wir an ein drittes signum der Gotteskindschaft. Unum esse cum Deo war das erste. Ut omnes unum sint in Deo das zweite. Das dritte: Daran erkenne ich, dass ihr mich liebt, wenn ihr meine Gebote haltet. Gotteskind sein heißt an Gottes Hand gehen, Gottes Willen, nicht den eigenen Willen tun, alle Sorgen und alle Hoffnung in Gottes Hand legen, nicht mehr selbst um sich und seine Zukunft sorgen”.

²⁹ *Verborgenes Leben und Epiphanie (6. Januar 1940)*, in: ESGA vol. 20, 126-127. “Wir leben heute wieder in einer Zeit, die der Erneuerung aus den verborgenen Quellen Gott verbundener Seelen dringend bedarf. Es setzen auch viele heute ihre letzte Hoffnung auf diese verborgenen Quellen des Heils. Das ist ein ernster Mahnruf: rückhaltlose Hingabe an den Herrn, der uns gerufen hat, das wird von uns verlangt, damit das Angesicht der Erde erneuert werden könne. In gläubigem Vertrauen müssen wir unsere Seele dem Walten des Heiligen Geistes überlassen. Es ist nicht nötig, dass wir die »Epiphanie« unseres Lebens erfahren. Wir dürfen in der Glaubensgewissheit leben, dass das, was der Geist Gottes verborgen in uns wirkt, seine Früchte trägt im Reich Gottes. Wir werden sie schauen in der Ewigkeit”.

should not forget about the need for everyday martyrdom (Stein refers to the example of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus), which is a testimony of the inseparability of faith and one's deeds³⁰.

Detailed indications result from these general statements, which always demonstrate a synthesis of one's love towards God's and towards one's neighbour at the starting point. Stein writes a brief *post mortem* memento about her confessor, Józef Schwindt, who accompanied her from the day of her baptism in 1922³¹. Unity of the opposite habitual qualities, such as severity and goodness, is possible when one loves God with the purest love. A man who loves God in such a way does not regard his devotion as external bondage, but as the content and purpose of life. A man who loves God is noble and full of responsibility, he does not treat love as a burden. Love makes him free, Stein wrote these words, quoting Duns Scotus, on the day of the celebration of the holy day of Pentecost in 1935. The relation of love with freedom is directly proportional: the more immutable love is, the more free it is. Constancy and immutability is a measure of its freedom. Love means being able to sacrifice oneself. The man who loves, offers something the most valuable that he has: t.i. himself. He has himself and can decide for himself. To love, to be free, to have oneself and be capable of deciding for oneself, these are features attributable only to the person. However, one must realize that only God can be identified with love, all others can be only characterized

³⁰ Über Geschichte und Geist des Karmel (1935), in: ESGA vol. 19, 139. "Das ist der »kleine Weg«, ein Strauß von unscheinbaren kleinen Blüten, der täglich vor dem Allerheiligsten niedergelegt wird – vielleicht ein stilles, lebenslanges Martyrium, von dem niemand etwas ahnt, zugleich eine Quelle tiefen Friedens und herzlicher Fröhlichkeit und ein Born der Gnade, der ins Land hinausprudelt – wir wissen nicht wohin, und die Menschen, zu denen er gelangt, wissen nicht, woher er kommt".

³¹ *Nachruf für Herrn Prälat Ioseph Schwind (1927)*, in: ESGA vol. 19, 234. "Strenge und Güte, Ernst und kindlicher Frohsinn, Hoheit und Demut, das waren die Gegensätze, die sich in dieser Seele zur Harmonie verbanden, hervorgewachsen aus einer Wurzel: der lautersten Gottesliebe. Ein Diener Gottes zu sein, das war der Inhalt seines Lebens, der Adel und die Pflicht, deren er sich stets bewusst war".

by love considered as an ontic trait, but they cannot be identified with love in the ontical perspective³².

Love is also related to a very important feature which is *iucunditas* (agreeableness, cheerfulness). A free man, possessing himself, should address others with agreeableness, with serenity. This virtue – as Stein emphasizes – is a measure of the assessment of other acquired virtues, demonstrating whether they are present in a life of human being and whether a person is compatible with them. On the occasion of this supervisory operation, negative features of human often reveal themselves, and by exaggerating them one can reveal and eventually overcome them. Cheerfulness should not be accompanied with malice, but only with love³³.

In addition to the imperatives implied by the virtue of love poured into us by God, Stein perceives the consecutive implications of accepting the grace of faith and growing in this virtue. Above all, she emphasizes the necessity of practicing faith. As Stein writes in *Weihnachtsgeheimnis* (1931), it is not enough to practice Christianity

³² *Pfingstsonntag. Die Person des Hl. Geist 9. VI. 35*, in: ESGA vol. 20, 19-20. “Die Liebe ist nach Duns Scotus – das Freieste, was es gibt. Und um so unwandelbarer, je freier sie ist. Was unfrei, aufgenötigt ist, das dauert nur, solange die Nötigung dauert. Wo man frei ist, da kann einen nichts hindern zu beharren. Liebe ist das Verschenken seiner selbst. Verschenken kann sich nur, was sich selbst besitzt – so besitzt, dass es über sich selbst verfügen kann. Sich so besitzen heißt aber ganz eigentlich Person sein. Wir müssen Person sein, um zu lieben. Aber es scheint, dass bei uns das Personsein und das lieben nicht dasselbe sind. Jedenfalls sind wir nicht unsere Liebe. Vielleicht ist unsere Liebe unser wesentlichstes Sein. Aber Lieben und Sein deckt sich bei uns nicht schlechthin. Gott dagegen ist die Liebe”.

³³ *Exerzitien (22.II.-4.III. 1937)*, in: ESGA vol. 20, 32. “Die Rekreation ist ein Bild des Gemeinschaftslebens. Es kommen alle von den verschiedensten Beschäftigungen zusammen, aber verbunden in dem einen Geist der Liebe. Es gehört nach dem hl. Thomas eine eigene Tugend dazu: die *iucunditas*, eine wohlwollende Heiterkeit. Sie ist ein Prüfstein der Tugend. Vorhandene Fehler werden sich hier klar herausstellen, und es ist schon ein Gewinn, wenn man sie dabei erkennt und anfängt, gegen sie zu kämpfen. Güte, Demut, Selbstbeherrschung werden sich hier besonders wohlthuend bemerkbar machen. Es soll auch ein Austausch des geistigen Besitzes sein, der alle bereichert, und eine Gelegenheit, den Geist des Hauses von den Älteren kennenzulernen und sich anzueignen”.

in incidental and occasional way, as for example on the occasion of Christmas, in order to implement the *unum esse cum Deo* principle. One cannot limit oneself to emotional sentimentality (just when we are talking about the magic of Christmas), but one has to listen to the word of God every day and internalize it. The basis of all spiritual and moral life is prayer, which Christ himself paid attention to, urging its students to practice it in all its forms³⁴.

It is twice, in the two volumes analyzed, that Stein defines prayer in order to demonstrate its essence in more precise way and at the same time to zealously practice it. Describing life of Teresa of Jesus, she mentions in the text – the title of which distinguishes itself by its very first part – *Liebe um Liebe. Leben und Werk der heiligen Theresia von Jesus* (1934) – that prayer can be regarded as the relationship of the soul with God and the highest activity of the human spirit. Prayer can be imagined as the rungs of the Old Testament ladder of James, by means of which the human spirit achieves the kingdom of God and the anticipating grace of God descends to man³⁵. Prayer,

³⁴ *Das Weihnachtsgeheimnis*, w: ESGA vol.19, 11. “Das göttliche Kind ist zum Lehrer geworden und hat uns gesagt, was wir tun sollen. Um ein ganzes Menschenleben mit göttlichem Leben zu durchdringen, dazu genügt es nicht, einmal im Jahr vor der Krippe zu knien und sich von dem Zauber der Heiligen Nacht gefangennehmen zu lassen. Dazu muss man das ganze Leben lang im täglichen Verkehr mit Gott stehen, auf die Worte hören, die er gesprochen hat und die uns überliefert sind, und diese Worte befolgen. Vor allen Dingen beten, wie es der Heiland selbst gelehrt und so eindringlich immer wieder eingeschärft hat”.

³⁵ *Liebe um Liebe. Leben und Werk der heiligen Theresia von Jesus* (1934), in: ESGA vol. 19, 76-77. “Das Gebet ist der Verkehr der Seele mit Gott. Gott ist die Liebe, und Liebe ist sich selbst verschenkende Güte; eine Seinsfülle, die nicht in sich selbst beschlossen bleiben, sondern sich andern mitteilen, andere mit sich beschenken und beglücken will. Dieser sich selbst ausspendenden Gottesliebe verdankt die ganze Schöpfung ihr Dasein. Die höchsten aller Geschöpfe aber sind die geistbegabten Wesen, die Gottes Liebe verstehend empfangen und frei erwidern können: die Engel und Menschenseelen. Das Gebet ist die höchste Leistung, deren der Menscheng Geist fähig ist. Aber es ist nicht allein menschliche Leistung. Das Gebet ist eine Jakobsleiter, auf der des Menschen Geist zu Gott empor- und Gottes Gnade zum Menschen herniedersteigt. Die Stufen des Gebots unterscheiden sich nach dem Maß des Anteils, den die natürlichen Kräfte der Seele und Gottes

according to Stein, can be regarded as an anabatic look in the face of the Eternity, a contemplation that allows one to immerse in God³⁶. When a man listens to God and meditates His word, he turns the Word into reality. Without this spiritual action, man can be considered a person that has eyes, but is not able to see³⁷.

Gnade daran haben. wo die Seele nicht mehr mit ihren Kräften tätig ist, sondern nur noch ein Gefäß, das die Gnade in sich empfängt, spricht man von mystischen Gebetsleben”.

³⁶ Über Geschichte und Geist des Karmel (1935), in: ESGA vol. 19, 132-133. “Das Gebet ist das Aufschauen zum Antlitz des Ewigen. Wir können es nur, wenn der Geist bis in die letzten Tiefen wach ist, herausgelöst aus allen irdischen Geschäften und Genüssen, die ihn betäuben. Körperliches Wachsein verbürgt dieses Wachsein nicht, und die Ruhe, nach der die Natur verlangt, hindert es nicht. »Im Gesetz des Herrn betrachten« – das kann eine Form des Gebets sein, wenn wir Gebet in dem üblichen weiten Sinn nehmen. Denken wir aber beim »Wachen im Gebet« an das Versinken in Gott, wie es der Beschauung eigen ist, dann ist die Betrachtung nur ein Weg dazu”.

³⁷ *Elisabeth von Thüringen. Natur und Übernatur in der Formung einer Heiligengestalt* (1931), in: ESGA vol. 19, 24. “Elisabeth tut eigentlich nichts anderes, als dass sie Ernst macht mit dem Glauben. Es sind die schlichten Worte des Evangeliums, die in ihr so wunderbare Wirkungen hervorrufen. Die Menschen in ihrer Umgebung kennen all diese Worte auch. Aber sie haben Augen und sehen nicht. Es fällt ihnen nicht ein, die göttliche Wahrheit in Lebenswirklichkeit umzusetzen. Und die eine, die tut, was die praktische Folgerung aus den Lehren und dem Leben des Heilands, aus den Glaubenswahrheiten der Kirche ist, wird ihnen zum Stein des Anstoßes und Ärgernisses. Was gibt dem jungen Kind die Kraft, bitteren Tadel und Spott, Einsamkeit und Verlassenheit zu tragen ohne Widerspruch und Klage, fest zu beharren gegenüber allen Widerständen und bei allem Weh, das ihrem weichen, liebevollen und liebebedürftigen Herzen geschieht, frei von Bitterkeit zu bleiben, heiter und überströmend von Liebe, so dass sie wie aus unerschöpflichen Born Liebe und Freude spenden kann? Sie weiß, dass sie in Schmach und Demütigung und Einsamkeit mit dem Dornengekrönten und Kreuzbeladenen vereint ist. Und sie weiß das nicht nur mit einem toten Wissen. Wir können nicht daran zweifeln: der Herr hat das Kind, das er hinwegnahm aus seinem Volk und aus seiner Verwandtschaft, an sein Herz genommen. Aus den nie versiegenden Quellen des göttlichen Herzens fühlt sich das Herz seiner Getreuen immer aufs neue mit Trost und Freude und himmlischen Frieden”.

Lack of adequate vision with regard to moral matters is considered by Stein a stimulus to explore the subject and the phenomenon of moral conscience. During the Lent retreat in 1937, she analyzes the essence of conscience and the consequences of its description, which she carried out by reviewing the existing knowledge about it. First of all, she regards conscience as the cognitive act of reason, which allows us to apply the moral law (God's Law and human law) to our lives, to the situations that require us to undertake a decision. Stein emphasizes the distinction between antecedent and consecutive conscience and the different way in which they operate. She also distinguishes various kinds of conscience, like, for example, erroneous conscience, adequate conscience, sensitive conscience. The implications of the formation of conscience, and above all, respect for the conscience of another human being (especially the very sensitive one) seems especially interesting. Freedom of my conscience does not imply the lack of that sensitivity towards other person. I am free due to the judgment of my conscience, but I should not make the other doubt the value of judgement of his/her conscience, states Stein. Furthermore, to have fear with regard to one's conscience, being full of humility towards it, is ultimately tantamount to acknowledging that God is superior to my conscience, although He can be regarded as representing the moral norm which is closest to me³⁸. As an example of such an uncompromising attitude towards conscience, Stein refers to Elizabeth of Thuringia, who, according to her conscience, leaves Wartburg as a place of residence that has become unfriendly to her.

³⁸ *Exerzitionen (22.II.-4.III. 1937)*, in: ESGA vol. 20, 34-35. "Das Gewissen ist das Wissen, das die Gebote Gottes auf uns selbst anwendet. Es mahnt oder warnt vor der Tat, es richtet danach. Das irrende Gewissen hört nicht auf die innere Stimme, lässt sich durch die eigenen Wünsche, Bequemlichkeit u. dgl. übertönen. Das rechte Gewissen achtet auf die Gebote und ist bemüht, ihnen treu zu folgen. Das zarte Gewissen sucht immer tiefer in sie einzudringen, wie es der 118. Ps[alm] schildert, wird dadurch geschärft und feinfühlig für das, was Gott wohlgefällig ist. – Praktische Folgerungen: keinen gering achten, der mit ängstlicher Sorgfalt seinem Gewissen folgt. Ehrfurcht haben vor dem Gewissen, das Gottes Stimme in uns ist, damit es uns Zeugnis gebe im Heiligen Geist".

The judgment of conscience is imperative, it cannot be opposed³⁹ and one must absolutely follow it. The human drama begins when the conscience generates erroneous judgments, which is why Stein points to Teresa of Jesus, who could be regarded as person representing particularly sensitive conscience (*ein zartes Gewissen*). Nevertheless, it has nothing to do with the neurotic personality disorder, but a with a sense of humility which indicates to us that the conscience can be erroneous, especially when we lose this sense of humility and adopt an attitude of overconfidence⁴⁰.

The attitude of a vigilant conscience, which can be also characterized by humility, predisposes man to undertake activities aimed at enabling other people to discover Christianity. This mission is called Apostolate by Stein and its aim is to fulfill the hidden desires of many people to know Jesus Christ – the true God and man. All people are called to this Apostolate, which consists in one's personal exploration of the knowledge of Jesus, in both historical and mystical perspective, and in sharing this experience with other people. Cognition and testimony are key words for defining the essence of the work of evangelization – says Stein – who managed to fulfill this mission, after joining the Carmelite Monastery in Cologne in 1933⁴¹.

³⁹ *Lebensgestaltung im Geist der heiligen Elisabeth (1931)*, in: ESGA vol. 19, 33. "Sie verlässt bei Nacht und Sturm die Wartburg, wo man sie nicht mehr leben lassen will, wie ihr Gewissen es ihr vorschreibt".

⁴⁰ *Liebe um Liebe. Leben und Werk der heiligen Theresia von Jesus (1934)*, in: ESGA vol. 19, 89. "Diese Bekenntnisse enthüllen uns ganz das Wesen der Heiligen: die Zartheit des Gewissens, das sich mit bitterer Reue anklagt, während niemand anders einen Flecken an ihr entdecken kann; die Glut der Liebe, die sie zu jedem Opfer für Gottes Ehre bereit macht, die Sorge um die Seelen, die sie mit aller Kraft dem Verderben entreißen und in den Frieden des Herrn führen möchte. Aber ehe es ihr vergönnt war, als Gottes auserlesenes Werkzeug großes zu wirken, musste sie noch die bittersten Leiden kosten".

⁴¹ *Karl Adams Christusbuch (1933)*, in: ESGA vol. 19, 210. "Heute wie zur Zeit Christi lebt in den Herzen der Heiden die Sehnsucht, Jesus zu sehen. Darum ist es unser vornehmstes Apostolat, ihnen Jesus zu zeigen: den historischen Jesus, wie Ihn die liebevolle Versenkung in die Quellen aufweisen kann, aber auch den

According to Stein our Apostolate is tantamount to the proclamation of the idea of communication of truth and mercy to modern man. Preparing herself – during the retreat – for perpetual vows in 1938, Teresa Benedicta of the Cross intensely explores the relationship of truth and mercy, stating that “Truth is merciful and mercy is true”. They are united in God and their relationship is manifested in the work of salvation. When a man discerns his sins and confesses them in the name of the truth about himself and when he truly believes in God’s mercy, then he liberates himself, achieving true freedom, because the freedom is a fruit of the relationship between truth and mercy. The aim of the Apostolate should be, according to Stein, to strive for an interiorization of this idea in the life of every human being⁴².

CONCLUSION

The affirmation of the mutual correlations of faith and morality, presented by Stein, constitutes her great testimony for the contemporary world and man. The directly proportional development of both dimensions of human life indicates the need to evangelize and practice their unity and to aim at overcoming all dichotomies and duality in

mystischen Christus, der gegenwärtige Wirklichkeit ist, dem wir angehören als Glieder seines Leibes, der Kirche, und der unser innerstes Leben ist”.

⁴² *Vorbereitungsexerzitien für die ewigen hl. Gelübde (10. IV. – 21. IV. 1938)*, in: ESGA vol. 20, 63. “Wahrheit und Barmherzigkeit sind sich begegnet im Werk der Erlösung. Sie sind eins in Gott. Die Entsetzlichkeit der Sünde und die Macht der Finsternis sind offenbar geworden im Leiden und Sterben Jesu. Barmherzigkeit ist es, dass wir nicht zugrunde gehen, sondern durch Seine Wunden geheilt werden, durch Seine Verlassenheit zum Vater geführt werden, durch Seinen Tod das Leben gewinnen. So ist die Wahrheit barmherzig und die Barmherzigkeit wahr. Auch in Deinem Herzen, Allerseligste Jungfrau, sind Wahrheit und Barmherzigkeit eins. Du hast Deine Augen nicht geschlossen vor dem furchtbaren Anblick des Leidens, doch Du hast Dich unser erbarmt und mit dem Herrn gesprochen: Vater, verzeihe ihnen. Wenn wir wahrhaftig sind, die Augen nicht schließen vor unsern eigenen Sünden und Fehlern, sondern sie sehen u. offen bekennen und wenn wir wahrhaft glauben an die Barmherzigkeit, dann kommt sie uns entgegen und befreit uns”.

this respect. God has granted us – in a natural and supernatural way – all bodily and spiritual potentials, so that we can live up to this task. Therefore, it is important – both in the perspective of the spiritual and moral life – to recognize these habitual abilities, and at the same time to place them all in God's hands.

Summary

In the spiritual texts contained in two volumes of *Geistliche Texte I and II* (ESGA, Vol. 19 and 20), St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein) presents the personal experience of faith in God and God, which calls man to respond to the call to live with Him in the communion of persons. Stein tries to explain the essence of deep Christianity, which she considers not only as a cultural-traditional religion, but as a daily effort to work out the time to realize the principle of *unum esse cum Deo*, in accordance with the chosen way of life vocation and its implementation. The answer to God's call is imperative, it flows from the inside of man and is not imposed on him externally.

Key words: Edith Stein, spirituality, moral imperative, faith

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