

Editorial

In an age of crisis, how can the way be made straighter for a person to pursue wisdom? This was one of the main issues that accompanied John Amos Comenius on his difficult journey of life. There was hope included, though, that change, if prepared well, is possible. Comenius then called himself a man of desire, because he did not cease to desire the better and to constantly strive to achieve what people desire. That is why he thought about how not to stay on the surface, but to see the essence, the core of things in the teaching process. The arrangement of his vocabulary on the basis of knowledge of nature, and not in the way of geometers (*more geometrico*) comes from it. According to his vision, it is aimed at the core of things that metaphysics, which is arranged in a way suitable for young children, reveals. Firstly, Comenius offers the acquisition of basic language skills thanks to a well-thought-out vocabulary. It was used to teach Latin in an effective way that guarantees the actual acquisition of the language – namely the ability to use the language not only passively but also actively. He was convinced that language could be mastered in this way if the learning path is as natural as possible. So, he literally turns his gaze to nature, listens to it, and finds sounds for the individual sounds of the alphabet in nature. These are introduced at the beginning of the dictionary. This also shows to every learner that the presented study material is a way to become acquainted with reality. This is the truly living reality that surrounds each of us and we are its active participating part. It is nature. If the words (*linguae*) to be understood have already been sufficiently mastered, one can proceed to the core of the words of things (*res*).

Janua linguarum reserata and after it *Janua rerum*, these are the two books mentioned here which were to safely prepare young people for life, so that they would not consider their life a labyrinth. They should have been pilgrims thinking and pondering about their own journey who, with God's help, should have reached the sanctuary. How should one prepare oneself for this life goal? Comenius sees man's preparation in acquiring wisdom, virtue, and piety. And again, he will steadfastly insist on the fact that man has natural foundations of these three elements. However, the world in Comenius's time was in crisis, so it is not possible to procrastinate. Preparations had to begin as soon as possible, in an orderly manner, without laziness, with good examples. If one is to realise the opportunity to be wise, virtuous, pious, one must practise. One cannot practise just anything, in any form. Everything depends upon good order, and this order must be natural. Nature is one of the three books that the Creator devotes to man. The world around us, in which we live, is the first school that absolutely everyone enters. It is a natural school (**physics** from Greek *physis*). Even Job witnessed that, by seeking answers in nature, the origin of everything in the Lord is witnessed (Job 12:7-9). Sensory knowledge in the natural school is followed by a higher school, **metaphysics**. In it, books are not outside but inside us, namely in our minds. It is an imprinted image of God in our minds. Innate concepts, instincts, and abilities teach, recall, stimulate. Reason, inner light or the eye of souls, contributes to judgment here. The third school is **hyperphysics**, where neither the creature of nature nor man teaches anymore. The teacher is God himself. He teaches through books inspired by the Spirit of God, through the Scriptures. Here, neither the senses nor reason teach. One is educated through humble faith. Here God himself speaks

into one's heart. As the creation of the world is attributed to God the Father, the enlightenment of minds to God the Son, and the kindling of the hearts to God the Holy Spirit, so all three earthly schools, in their unity, must be distinguished and their proper order observed. In the first school we are **ontodidaktoi**, in the second **autodidaktoi**, and in the third **theodidaktoi**. In the first case, we are educated by things; in the second case, we are educated by ourselves; and in the third case, we are educated by God. All three earthly schools are open to man by God, so that he may come to life through death entirely and completely.

But is any of the above, more than 350 years after Comenius's death, still relevant? Can Comenius's visions and his preparatory work within the reform of human affairs be inspiring even today? How can Comenius as a philosopher or Comenius as a theologian deepen the view of man which is applied in the development of today's humanities and social sciences? Such questions were asked within the preparation of the presented issue of the journal *Caritas et veritas*. It introduces the topic of *J. A. Comenius – possible inspirations after more than 350 years*.

In the first thematic article entitled *Freedom as a Means and a Goal in Comenius's Philosophy of Education*, Peter Kondrla reveals the key value of education and at the same time explains how refusal of or giving up on freedom is related to trying to rid oneself of responsibility. Education concerns the human being, therefore it always concerns the transformation of society at the same time. If society wants to be responsible, it should also emphasise freedom in education as a goal and a means. Jan Hábl in the text *Harmonia, Scientia, Economia – Three Motifs in the Western Philosophy of Education* shows the interconnection and transformation of individual historical epochs of Western culture in relation to the image of education. At the same time, he confirms the unique holistic concept of education in Comenius. The article *Joy in J. A. Comenius's Concept* by Miriam Prokešová, which (by examining the phenomenon of joy in Comenius's work) presents a less common view of the pilgrim in the labyrinth of the world to readers, is a challenge for one to really think about the essence of Comenius's efforts. Helena Zbudilová's article *Comenius's Education in the Perspective of Leisure Time Pedagogy* shows the topicality of the Moravian native and specific possible inspirations for one of the developing fields of pedagogy (but not only this). In it, this challenge to live in the school environment (that is, the environment of free space and time which enables listening to the essential challenge) is especially accentuated. In the article *John Amos Comenius in the Journals of Czechoslovak Freemasons during the First Republic Period (1925–1938)*, Ctirad Václav Pospíšil presents the result of his research of First Republic texts published by two periodicals, *Svobodný zednář* and *Die drei Ringe*. Two years before Comenius's death, his work *Unum necessarium*, based on the title page of this book, was written in the seventy-seventh year of the author's life. Referring to the words of Jesus in the story of the visit to the house of Mary and Martha (*Unum necessarium*, which Comenius put in the title of one of his most beautiful Latin writings), Tomáš Cyril Havel outlines the possibilities of (not only) contemporary religious education in Czech education in his article 'One Thing Necessary' in *Czech Education*.

We wish all readers an inspiring reading. Together with the man of desire, John Amos Comenius, we would like to express a challenge or message to all who are thinking about the reform of human affairs: *Omnia sponte fluant absit violentia rebus*.

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