

In gratitude to the founders and editorial team

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With the passing of Rev. Prof. Józef Stala, an important chapter in the history of “The Person and the Challenges. The Journal of Theology, Education, Canon Law and Social Studies Inspired by Pope John Paul II” has inevitably come to an end.

It was Rev. Professor Stala, who first envisioned, established, and served as the driving force behind this remarkable endeavor, which over the past 14 years has grown into the journal we know today. The creation of a periodical with a theological and humanities profile – giving voice to scholars from Poland and, more broadly, Central and Eastern Europe, who had been underrepresented in the international academic discourse – was, at the time, a true phenomenon.

Only a few close collaborators are aware of the initial challenges that Rev. Józef navigated during the journal’s formative period. The early years presented natural hurdles, from administrative complexities to the gradual development of resources and institutional structures that would later become instrumental in securing the journal’s continued growth and academic standing. Nevertheless, thanks to the perseverance and immense dedication of Rev. Prof. Józef Stala and Prof. Elżbieta Osewska, it was possible not only to maintain the continuity of publication but also to steadily raise the academic quality and reputation of the journal, ultimately securing its strong position both in the Polish scholarly community and internationally. A tangible confirmation of this success is the high rating received from the Ministry of Education and Science – the highest among theological journals in Poland – which, at its peak in 2023, reached the maximum possible score in the Ministry’s evaluation.

High rankings and scores are important from an academic point of view, but the mission of the journal is what matters most. From the very beginning, “The Person and the Challenges” was conceived by Rev. Prof. Józef Stala as a journal with a clear goal, as reflected in its very title: “The Journal of Theology, Education, Canon Law and Social Studies Inspired by Pope John Paul II.” The journal’s main objective is to foster the exchange of ideas, research, reviews, and reports concerning the role of the human being in a rapidly changing world, bringing together scholars from diverse disciplines and backgrounds who are guided by the values promoted by John Paul II.

By upholding high academic standards, the journal has created a space for freedom of expression and open scholarly dialogue. While drawing inspiration from the ethical and cultural heritage of the Catholic tradition, it remains open to various viewpoints and approaches. The editorial team believes that by promoting the universal values of Western civilization, the journal offers meaningful responses to many of the challenges facing people today, regardless of their religious affiliation or lack thereof.

Fully aware of the magnitude of the work initiated by the late Rev. Prof. Józef Stala, we humbly take on the responsibility of continuing his legacy. As members of the new editorial team, we recognize the challenge of maintaining the high standards that have been set. It is with this sense of responsibility that we wish to begin our tenure by expressing our deepest gratitude and remembrance for the founder and long-serving Editor-in-Chief of “The Person and the Challenges.”

We acknowledge that, without the invaluable support of Prof. Elżbieta Osowska, this journal would probably not exist. From the very first issue to the present, Prof. Osowska was deeply involved in initiating, editing, and promoting the journal. Tirelessly navigating often complex administrative pathways, she played a pivotal role in both its establishment and development. For her invaluable assistance, we extend our heartfelt thanks. Similarly, we would like to express our profound respect and gratitude to all the other members of the editorial team for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to this scholarly endeavor.

No academic journal can exist without the generous support of the scholarly community. We extend our sincere thanks to both the national and international academic communities, who have supported “The Person and the Challenges” by undertaking the demanding tasks of reviewing articles, providing consultations, and offering expert opinions as members of the Scientific Council.

While expressing our deep gratitude to the previous editorial team, we would also like to invite all former collaborators, partner institutions, as well as new universities and research centers to continue and expand their cooperation with “The Person and the Challenges,” whether through editing, reviewing, publishing, or other forms of scholarly engagement.

We warmly invite all friends and colleagues of the late Rev. Prof. Józef, as well as everyone who values the contribution of “The Person and the Challenges” to the academic community, to actively engage in the ongoing development and enhancement of our journal.

The Editorial Board