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THE FAMILY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE POSSIBILITY  
OF GOOD.  
INFLUENCING THE SECURITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL  
AND SOCIETY THROUGH THE SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY  
FOR THE GOOD

**Summary:** This essay examines the problems of the family in the context of the possibility of goodness, which occurs in various forms in everyday life. The perception of responsibility for goodness has a positive effect on the security of the individual and society. The family as a specific social cell is concerned not only with the experience of freedom, but also with the shaping of responsibility on the individual and social levels. On the basis of this experience, the perspective of a good life is shown, which is also based on the authentic experience of love, happiness and holiness. When the family realizes its basic tasks, it clearly shows that it not only unites in itself different types of goods, which are necessary for the development of the individual and the society, but is also an irreplaceable good.

**Keywords:** family, security, freedom, responsibility, good life.

### Introduction

It is clear today that the family is a specific, i.e. basic social unit, by its very nature, is *a definite form of goodness* and contributes to augmenting the good in the world, a world which is often dominated by various elements of evil, which destroy both the individual man and the entire society. As there is good in the world or in the universe from the beginning, it gives these two existential dimensions a special character, i.e. such a character which allows the coexistence of a higher order which is aimed at the internal connection of mind and faith. It is sufficient only to open the *Holy Scripture* and then to read *the book of Genesis*, where the author quite clearly says that everything created is good. The human being as a special part of creation even gets the title ‘very good’.<sup>1</sup> In addition to

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<sup>1</sup> *Das Buch Genesis 1,1-31*, in: *Die Bibel. Altes und Neues Testament. Einheitsübersetzung*, Freiburg–Basel–Wien 1995, p. 4–53.

the theological view of the possibility of the good founded in *the Holy Scripture*, there are also other models in this regard. These are supported by the results of scientific analyses, especially from the field of cosmology and astrophysics.<sup>2</sup>

In the context of this ontological-modal view of the perspective of good, the family does not only appear as a specific social cell, as the classical thesis claims, but also as a service institution that pursues very concrete personal goals: *freedom, responsibility, love, good life, etc.* The efficient realization of these goals, which we shall also show in other paragraphs, contributes to a broadening of the horizon of goodness, as Pope Francis writes in *Amoris Laetitia*.<sup>3</sup> Since goodness is conceivable in various categories, which reflect the world and the universe in an orderly manner, the family is given an essential, at least two-fold, task: the family should increase goodness and show how it is possible in the form of a good life. It is thus clear that a family in which the responsibility for goodness is perceived also has a positive effect on the security of the individual and society.

The dual task of the family, determined in this context, gets a deeper reference when we point to the distinction Aristotle made in his "*Nicomachean Ethics*". Aristotle now distinguishes the actions which serve other ends, from actions which are in themselves a goal or value. For example, health is the goal of medical art, the construction of ships the aim of technical art, and victory the goal of military art.<sup>4</sup> All of these concrete actions lead to a good (*bonum utile*). They differ, however, from actions which themselves are a goal and a good (*bonum honestum*), for example, a holy and perfect life. It is therefore important to emphasize that the family, as specific social cell and service institution for human society, combines not only these two types of good resulting from action, but also represents an irreplaceable special good which gives a feeling of security to individual people and social groups.

## 1. The experience of freedom

The notion of freedom is anchored in the totality of human existence and constitutes a fundamental and indispensable condition of the democratic co-existence of all social groups, including the family. In the context of Christian reflection, the gift of freedom belongs to the nature of every human being as a creature. Thus, freedom was not only given to man, but also "entrusted" to

<sup>2</sup> See, about K. Philberth, *Geschaffen zur Freiheit*, Plumpton 1998.

<sup>3</sup> AL, n. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Aristoteles, *Nikomachische Ethik*, in: *Philosophische Schriften in sechs Bänden*, Bd. 3, Hamburg 1995, chap. I, 1094a.

him as a task, so that he could realize himself in love, devotion and service to his fellow man.<sup>5</sup> This constellation leads to the fact that the freedom of the will from the factual anthropological-ethical debate cannot be excluded. It can only be reduced to a few aspects that seem appropriate and necessary in a concrete situation. In the encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, it can be read that morality cannot exist without freedom. If the human person acts morally well, i.e. with full perception and consciousness, and possesses free and legitimate will, then the possibility opens up the path of happiness and perfection, which also leads to the truth about human and divine beings.<sup>6</sup> This experience is a complex process, the basis of which is due to interpersonal relations, which unfold beforehand in a healthy family. The family as the first social institution which introduces man into the sphere of conscious and good experience of freedom. In order to deepen the significance of this experience, it is useful to briefly consider Kant's concept of will.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant maintains that there is no immediate conflict between the laws of nature and freedom in the one and the same action of man. According to Kant, there is peaceful coexistence between determinism, i.e. the unconditional validity of natural laws, and the freedom of the will. People are not free in everything they want and do. They are not free, when they do things in harmony with their nature, which may promise them the good fortune. Men, on the other hand, are free in actions which they carry out because they are to carry them out. On the one hand, the laws of nature apply without exception in the model of Kant; on the other hand, there is also freedom of the will as a cause of a special character. However, we cannot prove this freedom of will, which is thus conceived and viewed in the metaphysical context, with empirical-scientific methods.<sup>7</sup> This does not mean, however, that Kant does not appreciate the relevance of the problem of the freedom of will in human life. In the *Founding of the Metaphysics of Morals*, we read that freedom is the property of will of all rational beings. This can be easily demonstrated not only in a Kantian system, but also in everyday life.<sup>8</sup> In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant finally establishes that freedom is the fact of reason. This also means that freedom in the context of practical reason is nothing more than the independence of freedom of will from the compulsion induced by sensuous impulses.<sup>9</sup>

The Kantian system of theoretical and practical philosophy thus clearly shows how relevant the holistic conception of the problem of will is with regard

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<sup>5</sup> RH, n. 21.

<sup>6</sup> FR, n. 25.

<sup>7</sup> I. Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Riga 21787, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> I. Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, Riga 21786, p. 44.

<sup>9</sup> I. Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, Riga 1788, p. 126.

to the anthropological perspective of the world. The point is not to regard man as a passive element of nature, but to attribute to him a special position in the whole of nature. This position is due to practical reason, which enables the good experience of freedom to fall into the experience of freedom without the destructive influence of sensuous impulses and the environment as well as in the service of other people. There is no doubt that it is precisely the family that has a special task to present the rational-altruistic model of freedom and to communicate it in such a way that the perception of individual and social responsibility can be guaranteed. This also strengthens basic security structures. This does not necessarily mean that the “Kantian ought” completely obscures the boundary of the development of the area of freedom, as pointed out by Max Scheler. This emphasizes the relevance of love by attributing to it a special position in the hierarchy of values.

Scheler’s standpoint clearly affected Karol Wojtyła’s considerations.<sup>10</sup> It became clear that love is a spontaneous act of a purely emotional nature that has a creative character and is the only alternative for viewing the human person as a means or tool for attaining various goals. Here, Wojtyła, in his reflection, comes close to the “categorical imperative” of Kant, but does not lose the “critical distance” which results, above all, from his personalistic ethics.<sup>11</sup> This is also to be seen with regard to the problems of freedom. While Kant considers freedom in the context of the duty, Wojtyła emphasizes the context of love. In the Encyclical “*Redemptor hominis*” he writes that freedom is a great gift for man, but love is the best use of this gift, especially in giving and serving the neighbor.<sup>12</sup> For Wojtyła, therefore, it was clear that the free person would have to allow such a freedom to be determined, at the same time, by self-determination. Being free means, for man, that as a person he depends on himself, both in the process of his dynamic development and in the process of experiencing his subjectivity.<sup>13</sup>

From the anthropological and ethical points of view, the family is a good, so it has the task of educating human subjects to the experience of freedom, so that the personal self-determination of human subjects is made possible. However, this self-determination is not conceivable without responsibility.

<sup>10</sup> If we are talking about Karol Wojtyła, then John Paul II is also too understood, depending on the context.

<sup>11</sup> K. Rynkiewicz, *Von der Grundlegung der christlichen Ethik zur Grundlegung der Philosophischen Anthropologie. Eine kritische Untersuchung zum Personbegriff bei Karol Wojtyła*, Berlin 2002, p. 38.

<sup>12</sup> RH, n. 21.

<sup>13</sup> K. Rynkiewicz, *Von der Grundlegung der christlichen Ethik*, p. 135f.

## 2. The seriousness of responsibility

When the human person consciously experiences their freedom, she or he does not avoid responsibility, but rather takes it seriously. It follows that there is no full freedom without responsibility, and there is also no true and unselfish love without responsibility. Responsibility is seen at many levels, including at the level of *responsible parenthood*. When Hegel writes about the family in the context of his idealistic considerations, he emphasizes the relevance of the second birth of the child, which is reflected in his spiritual education as an independent person.<sup>14</sup> From the point of view of philosophical ethics and moral theology it must also be added here that one cannot speak about the independence of the person without talking into account their ability to perceive responsibility.

The seriousness of responsibility, and therefore its particular function in the lives of individual persons and the whole society, results at least from the fact that it is inextricably bound up with freedom. Without freedom there is no responsibility. This also means that only in families where freedom is experienced without any compulsion, education can be efficiently shaped to what is called awareness of the necessity of assuming of responsibility for someone or in front of someone. It is, therefore, about personal freedom of this kind that Harry Frankfurt speaks of, for example, postulating the so-called “second-order-desires”. As is also the case in today’s classical ethical debate, Frankfurt distinguishes between *freedom of action* and *freedom of will*. The first kind of freedom owes its power to doing what one wants. The second kind of freedom, on the other hand, rests on the faculty of wishing for what one might desire. The higher developed mammals can therefore be ascribed in this sense the freedom of action if they are able to do what they wish for – obviously provided that such a mental act would also be possible with them. Animals, however, have no fortune to have “second-order-desires”, i.e. to wish that they wish to live in safety and security. This property is reserved for human beings only.<sup>15</sup>

In the face of this philosophical distinction, one could say that the seriousness of the responsibility in various forms is clearly anchored in what is called the capacity of human beings to develop “second-order-desires”. As a matter of fact, we can assert that the human person is by nature able to wish that her desire is also shown in a good and responsible action or life. Responsible action and

<sup>14</sup> G.W.F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, Frankfurt am Main <sup>5</sup>2003, § 521. Here, in Hegel, it is not difficult to see a semantic approach to a religious act, or, more precisely, to baptism, as soon as the sacramental character is emphasized.

<sup>15</sup> H. Frankfurt, *Alternative Possibilities and Moral Responsibility*, “The Journal of Philosophy” vol. 66, 1969, no. 23; see too J. Nida-Rümelin, *Über menschliche Freiheit*, Stuttgart 2005, p. 81.

life are the basis of the safe functioning of every family and society as a whole.

In this context, the specificity of *subjective* and *intersubjective dimensions of responsibility* must also be considered. The basic meaning here is the definition of the term “subjectivity”. Subjectivity thus means not only the respective attribution of responsibility to individual persons in the family, but also the inseparability of this responsibility. It is, therefore, impossible to attribute responsibility to a particular person for another person, because this would lead not only to serious legal uncertainties, but also irreversible moral consequences. In the ordinary circumstances, nobody must be directly responsible for the actions of other people, including those concerning the safety factor. Indirect responsibility, however, is conceivable – for example in a family, which is due to the specific character of the relations occurring in it and the objectives to be pursued by it. A classic example is given when the parents are held responsible for the damage caused by their children. At the same time, the family represents a space in which the intersubjective dimension of responsibility appears, which is designed and implemented at different stages of the life of its individual members – from the beginning of life to death.<sup>16</sup>

The intersubjective dimension of responsibility can become a *care* at a certain stage of interpersonal relations, i.e. the so-called “prevailing responsibility”. This view of responsibility was influenced above all by the thinking of Martin Heidegger. In his work *Being and Time*, Heidegger talks about care as the whole of the structure of being. He does not think of intentional actions or emotional states, but simply *being in the world*. Responsibility is therefore given a stable ontological basis, which is necessary to form all interpersonal relations. Therefore, it is clear that each person first has to understand their lives as “enabled” and only then as “enabling”. The individual is therefore neither the source of his existence nor the condition of his freedom.<sup>17</sup> In view of necessity of this ontological condition, every human person, family, and society as whole must always strive to provide care for holistic life, especially for the new life and life of old and sick people.<sup>18</sup> The ontological seriousness of the responsibility is also implemented in a close relationship with love.

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<sup>16</sup> W. Vossenkuhl, *Die Möglichkeit des Guten. Ethik im 21. Jahrhundert*, München 2006, p. 164.

<sup>17</sup> M. Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen 2001, § 39.

<sup>18</sup> J. Kamiński, *Troska o życie ludzkie*, in: *Duszpasterstwo rodzin. Refleksja naukowa i działalność pastoralna*, eds. R. Kamiński, a.o., Lublin 2013, p. 324.

### 3. The way of love and happiness

Love and happiness belong to ontological categories which accompany the human being in the path of his ontological development and lend him a specific positively oriented character. On the one hand, they themselves develop on the secure ontological basis; on the other hand, they are also very important for the determination of basic family tasks, in particular the care for the holiness and inviolability of human life.<sup>19</sup> As a classical and fundamental argument, the emphasis is placed on the personal character of the human being. From a phenomenological point of view, this can be done, for example, by taking into account the specific *dynamics of human beings*, as shown by Karol Wojtyła. This dynamism arises on the basis of the relation between the conscious and free action and the subject of this action.<sup>20</sup> When the conscious and free action of the human person goes to good, it can be strengthened or dissolved by the emotional act of love. On the other hand, it receives a specific shading when rational processes can then influence it efficiently.

The complexity of this situation can already be seen if the term “love” is determined more precisely from a metaphysical point of view. Karol Wojtyła faces this task in the context of the problem of responsibility. In his work *Love and Responsibility*, he assumes that love is always a reciprocal relation between persons, which is supported by their individual as well as common focus on the good. This relation can come fully to the point of sympathy, desire, benevolence, friendship, nuptial/spousal love etc.<sup>21</sup> The semantic perspective of the concept of love, on the other hand, was further developed in the encyclical *Deus caritas est*. Benedict XVI focuses on two concepts: *eros* and *agape*, emphasizing not only the existing difference between them, but also their unity. Although these two terms denote love, this is done in different ways. While “eros” is identified with the “secular love”, that is, with the love based on desire, which occurs between man and woman, foremost, it does not spring from pure thought and volition, but always has a sensible foundation which “overwhelms” the human being, so to speak, the “agape” means the love that human beings are given and is founded in faith. Thus, we have to do with the “eros” as “covetous love” (*amor concupiscentiae*) and “agape” as “giving love” (*amor benevolentiae*). While “eros” puts down the states of the “elevation/ascent” in the human person, the “agape” enables the human person to “descend” for the service of the good. Even if the hermeneutic development of the semantics of love remains

<sup>19</sup> EV, n. 61.

<sup>20</sup> K. Rynkiewicz, *Personals Grundbegriff der Philosophie Karol Wojtylas*, in: *Revolutionär, Reaktionär, Visionär? Annäherungen an Johannes Paul II*, ed. M. Klementowski, Trier 2014, p. 92.

<sup>21</sup> K. Wojtyła, *Liebe und Verantwortung. Eine ethische Studie*, München 1979, p. 63.

in the culturally different terms “eros” and “agape”, it is always to be regarded as an unchallengeable unity according to Benedict XVI. Since these two concepts complement each other, they must never be completely separated, but this was the case in many theological-philosophical debates. Love, therefore, ultimately represents one sole reality, although it is revealed on different levels. The total separation of “eros” and “agape” leads to the degeneration of love as a personal act, which also makes impossible the experience of “*caritas*”, i.e. love whose purpose is to serve the neighbour, but in a single human being as well as in a whole society.<sup>22</sup> This serving dedication also encompasses the field of security.

In view of the metaphysical-semantic complexity of the nature of love, it is therefore necessary to educate the human person responsible for the fruitful experience of love, whereby both semantic enlightening factors and fundamental values are to be included. Education of this kind should be supported by a programmatically well-developed education, which is possible in a legal form within the framework of the school system. However, education in the school cannot replace education in family, as Pope Francis emphasizes in the *Amoris Laetitia*. Francis characterizes love in the context of the everyday life of human beings by referring to the *Hymn of Love* of the Apostle Paul. He particularly focuses on married love, whose verification is that it can bear everything. Such love also requires a firm foundation in faith, in hope and in the need to do well, i.e. in “*caritas*”. Thus love, which is fruitful by nature, can always remain open for the new life as a gift of the Creator. That is to say, love is not limited to the community of spouses, but rather, by nature, always ready to build a family shaped by the feeling of security, first in an individual dimension, then in a social dimension. The family is therefore to be regarded not only as a sensual area of “procreation”, but also as an area of responsible acceptance of life as a gift of God. For every new life allows us to discover a disinterested dimension of love, which never ceases, but rather always fascinates.<sup>23</sup>

The unselfish experience of responsible love opens the way to happiness for the human person, who shows himself in moral advocacy, i.e. in being morally good. When the human person attains the status of morally good, she or he also realizes herself or himself through her or his good deeds. The pursuit of happiness belongs inseparably to every human being. Man is by his very nature incapable of not wanting happiness, although he can also understand it differently. Happiness is not the way, but the goal of all ways of man.<sup>24</sup> Thus one might well assert that happiness as the good life is also the vocation of man, similar to holiness.

<sup>22</sup> DCE, n. 8, 39.

<sup>23</sup> AL, n. 68, 118.

<sup>24</sup> K. Rynkiewicz, *Von der Grundlegung der christlichen Ethik*, p. 160f.



#### 4. The good life and the calling to holiness

If today's human being "deals with" the world, which is always carried out on many levels (ontological, cultural, scientific, religious, etc.), which are complex and interpenetrated, then it is unavoidably accompanied by *qualitative verification*. From the pragmatic point of view, we want to acquire and possess high-quality goods: reliable cars, branded clothes, comfortable furniture, etc. We expect this to improve the quality of our lives in an external way, which at the same time can influence our inner experiences. Pragmatic conditions, however, are not able to guarantee that we are happy. This also clearly shows our everyday experience. One can be rich in material terms, and yet remain unhappy. Thus it is beyond doubt that happiness is to be found elsewhere, in a good life.

If we want to answer the question, which way leads to good life, then we encounter different conceptions and models. Here we point only to a *mystical* and *ethical conception*. The classic example of a mystical conception is the theory of Saint Augustine, which is anchored in Neoplatonic philosophy, which strives to combine faith and knowledge. The program of Augustine can be described as *metaphysics of inner experience*. In order to find the truth – Augustine thought primarily of God, man has to "separate himself from the external world and return to his inner being". For there, in the interior of man dwells the truth. Thus a hermeneutic structure based on the *a priori* opposition arises: "That which is within man is higher in the hierarchy than that which is outside". The way to the knowledge of the truth is therefore not through the sensory experience, but through the pure thinking, which is based on ideas, forms, genera, rules, etc. All these elements form the basis of true human knowledge and represent the original eternal ideas in the mind of God. Real knowledge is only possible when man, who by his very nature has only access to temporal truths, attains these original ideas, which is possible only by the "*illumination process*" according to Augustine. This means that the truth of God is "irradiated" into the mind of the human person, similar to the sunlight acting on the eyes and enabling the visual process.<sup>25</sup> In the context of Augustine's theory, therefore, we can say that the good life is closely connected with the recognition of truth. However, this constellation has an effect on the structure and retention of the sense of security in the individual and in society.

The current ethical conception, which we will only formulate it in a very general way, emphasizes, on the other hand, the relevance of the efficient *resolution of conflicts*, which leads to a good life, or at least facilitates this substan-

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<sup>25</sup> Augustinus, *Bekenntnisse*, Stuttgart 2003, book X, 9, 16; see too K. Rynkiewicz, *Der Umgang mit Wissen heute. Zur Erkenntnistheorie im 21. Jahrhundert. Eine Einführung*, Frankfurt–Paris–Lancaster–New Brunswick: Ontos-Verlag 2012, p. 33.

tially. The correctness of this diagnosis is regularly confirmed by the perception of political responsibility, or the lack thereof. From an ethical perspective, therefore, a good life is not the result of the existing harmony of opposites, but of the efficient resolution of conflicts. However, there are situations where conflicts cannot be solved effectively with the help of ethical arguments. The reason is that, besides good solutions, there are also bad ones. However, the proposed solutions should be *practically coherent*. Goodness is possible in the form of a good life if the solutions of conflicts are practically coherent. However, they are practically coherent if the good life of human beings is also possible in the situation where not all conflicts can be solved. However, the conception of the practical coherence of ethical judgments presupposes the human persons also behave sensibly, i.e. that they are interested in the solution of existing opposites. The conflicts to be solved in ethics can be connected not only with the opposing conviction, but also with different goods and claims which relate to them.<sup>26</sup>

Even if the mystical and the ethical conception cannot exhaust all hermeneutical possibilities in order to plausibly show the way to a good life – for this can also be achieved on a purely scientific level, they represent two fundamental pillars in the process of dealing with the good. In this context, it is also necessary to show and convey to a concrete person the value resulting from mystical and ethical dealings with goodness. The most appropriate place is definitely marriage and the family as a community of persons. For in the marriage and the family, the first basic essential and interpersonal relations are formed, which then allow the introduction of the individual human person into the “family of mankind” and the “family of the church.”<sup>27</sup>

The good life of the human person can / should also be considered in the context of the vocation to holiness. This vocation, however, must not only be linked to the purely religious sphere, as Kant emphasized. In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant describes three necessary postulates of practical reason: (1) freedom, (2) the immortality of the soul, and (3) the existence of God. The first postulate, i.e. freedom, provides a basis without which two other postulates cannot be considered. In order to understand how /why Kant raises the “immortality of the soul” and the “existence of God” to rank of the necessary postulate, the concept of the “highest good” is to be explained. Just as man strives for full knowledge at the level of theoretical reason, he wants to see on the level of practical reason his will in absolute fulfilment. The absolute fulfilment of will is, for him, the “highest good”, to which two components necessarily belong: holiness (moral perfection) und happiness. Man first strives for holiness

<sup>26</sup> W. Vossenkuhl, *Die Möglichkeit des Guten*, p. 18.

<sup>27</sup> FC, n. 19.

(or virtue) as the perfect consistency of his will with the moral law. When he attains holiness or virtue, he can also aspire to happiness, which can only be guaranteed by God. According to Kant, therefore, holiness represents the condition “*sine qua non*” of the “highest good.”<sup>28</sup>

In the Kantian reflection on the “highest good” we can thus see an existentially stable metaphysical basis on which the essential tasks and aims of the family can be determined and justified without encountering any great difficulty. This task is also related to today’s family. Formulated in general terms is the sacred, virtuous, safe and good life. It is, however, to be asked whether, and to what degree, such a life is actually possible.

## 5. Critical reflection

In order to answer the question of whether a good life is actually possible, i.e. under the concrete circumstances of today’s world, it is necessary to consider beforehand what the present situation of the family looks like. This can be made clear by revisiting the apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*.

Pope Francis emphasizes the relevance of an *anthropological-cultural change*, which today affects all aspects of human life and therefore also requires an analytic and differentiated approach. This change, therefore, encompasses individuals, families and the whole of society and, above all, the need to redefine the area of freedom as well as the burden of distributing responsibilities and tasks evenly. This is unavoidable because the danger of spreading *individualism* increases incessantly, which not only triggers the negative dependencies and tensions in the family relations, but can also destroy them altogether. In order to prevent this danger, it is above all necessary to see the natural and cultural dynamics that appear in the process of the unfolding of marriage and family.<sup>29</sup>

In this context, the family appears as a suitable place where many diverse dependencies which poison the whole society can be prevented and overcome. The family is, so to speak, the “first oasis of security and safety”. That is why everything has to be done so that the family remains “healthy” in its structure. No one can even think of rendering a good service to society if he weakens the family as a community founded in marriage. It is the other way round, if the family is weakened, then the individual human being and society as a whole are harmed by destroying the values relevant to individual and communal life and the “original foundation of security and safety” is strongly undermined. Their power owes the family the natural ability to love and learn to love. One of the

<sup>28</sup> I. Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, p. 94, 198.

<sup>29</sup> AL, n. 26.

greatest dangers that threaten this ability of the family today is *gender ideology*. This ideology questions the difference between man and woman as well as the nature-related community. Instead, a society is proposed without the difference between the sexes, which also deprives the family of its essential anthropological foundation. Consequently, false models of education are being debated which radically differ from the natural-induced differentiation between man and woman. Human identity becomes the “slave” of the individual freedom of choice and can change in the course of time. But when you look at the well-being of man and the family, one must not ignore the logical-natural difference that exists between the “biological gender” and the “sociocultural role of gender”. Otherwise, many serious and irreversible consequences are to be expected on the universal social-anthropological level.<sup>30</sup>

Looking back at the question posed at the beginning of this section, we can now finally conclude that a good life is actually possible when the *natural development* of the family and its *assured “functioning”* are fully guaranteed. The cultural and technological changes that seem to be happening extremely quickly today can also be efficiently integrated into the process of stabilizing the family and society. It is only necessary to have a rational view of the world, a good will and a sense of shared responsibility for the common good.

## 6. Closing outlook

The family is not only closely connected with the good, but also contributes to the multiplication of the good in the world. It is a special property which, without it, the holistic and, therefore, the feeling of security guaranteeing the unfolding of the human person, as well as the existence and the legitimate functioning of the society, are not possible. The development of the human person and the existence of society can only be guaranteed if, at the same time, there is the possibility to experience freedom, responsibility, love and good life in the accompaniment of the feeling of security.

The philosophical perspective of the family, especially when viewed in the context of the good life, reveals exactly the possibility of encountering the mystery of the “*conditio humana*” with that of the disclosure of God’s will to humans. At the same time, it must also be emphasized that the critical reflection on the final questions of man and on the dimension of the mystery must remain metaphysically open. For it is always about the critique of reason in the sense that the clear limit of rational and conceptual knowledge is shown. This also affects the family and its safety.

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<sup>30</sup> AL, n. 41.

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### **Rodzina w perspektywie możliwości dobra. Poczucie odpowiedzialności za dobro mające wpływ na bezpieczeństwo jednostki i społeczeństwa**

**Streszczenie:** Autor podejmuje zagadnienie rodziny w kontekście możliwości dobra występującego w różnych formach w życiu codziennym. Poczucie odpowiedzialności za dobro wpływa pozytywnie na bezpieczeństwo jednostki i całego społeczeństwa. Rodzinie – jako specyficznej komórce społecznej – przyświeca nie tylko troska o przeżywanie wolności, lecz także o kształtowanie poczucia odpowiedzialności w wymiarze indywidualnym i społecznym. Na bazie tego doświadczenia wyłania się perspektywa dobrego życia, opartego na autentycznym przeżywaniu miłości, szczęścia i świętości. Realizując swoje podstawowe zadania rodzina pokazuje wyraźnie, że nie tylko łączy w sobie

różne typy dóbr koniecznych dla rozwoju jednostki i społeczeństwa, lecz sama też stanowi niezastępowalne dobro.

**Słowa kluczowe:** rodzina, bezpieczeństwo, wolność, odpowiedzialność, dobre życie.

### **Familie aus der Perspektive der Möglichkeit des Guten. Beeinflussung der Sicherheit des Einzelnen und der Gesellschaft durch das Verantwortungsbewusstsein für das Gute**

**Zusammenfassung:** Der Aufsatz befasst sich mit der Problematik der Familie im Kontext der Möglichkeit des Guten, das in diversen Formen im Alltag auftritt. Das Wahrnehmen der Verantwortung für das Gute wirkt sich positiv auf die Sicherheit des Einzelnen und der Gesellschaft aus. Familie als spezifische soziale Zelle kümmert sich nicht nur um das Erleben der Freiheit, sondern auch um das Gestalten der Verantwortung auf der individuellen und der gesellschaftlichen Ebene. Auf der Basis dieser Erfahrung zeigt sich die Perspektive eines guten Lebens auf, das auch auf dem authentischen Erleben von Liebe, Glück und Heiligkeit beruht. Wenn die Familie ihre grundlegenden Aufgaben realisiert, zeigt sie ganz deutlich, dass sie nicht nur in sich verschiedene Typen von Gütern verbindet, welche für die Entfaltung des Einzelnen und der Gesellschaft notwendig sind, sondern auch selbst ein unersetzbares Gut darstellt.

**Schlüsselwörter:** Familie, Sicherheit, Freiheit, Verantwortung, gutes Leben.