

Fr. Paweł Tarasiewicz

The John Paul II Catholic University
of Lublin, Poland

PHILOSOPHY IN SEMINARIES*

A student's life in the seminary presently goes through in the context of globalization.¹ One of the main features of this global interaction is the paradoxical difficulty of coming to know the truth – which is difficult not only for a candidate for the priesthood, but also for every other person. The human person, on the one hand, is exposed to a wide possibility of coming across a multiplicity and diversity of views, which are usually considered to be a sign of the cultural richness of humanity and a great source for personal enrichment. On the other hand, these same views – because of their multiplicity and diversity – go beyond people's ordinary capacity of understanding, and thus cause a sense of helplessness, frustration and confusion.² It seems, therefore, that a man in the globalized world,

* Original Polish edition: "Filozofia w wyższych seminariach duchownych," *Człowiek w Kulturze* 21 (2009-2010): 141-154.

¹ In this paper, candidates for the priesthood are called not only alumni, clerics and seminarians, but also students. See Karol Klauza, ed., *Zasady formacji kapłanskiej w Polsce* (Częstochowa 1999), 69: "Speaking about the seminary as a community in which a person experiences the reality of the Church, we cannot overlook the fact that this community has the characteristic of an institution of higher education. It is important for the Church and for the Catholic society to strengthen the nature of academic studies in seminaries."

² Cf. Ireneusz Stolarczyk, *Dylematy globalizacji* (Tarnów 2003), 123-126. We can also identify the particular attitude of nihilism, linked to the lack of hope in finding the ultimate truth, see John Paul II, *Fides et ratio* (Rome 1998), no. 46: "Its adherents claim that the search is an end in itself, without any hope or possibility of ever attaining the goal of truth. In the nihilist interpretation, life is no more than an occasion for sensations and experiences in which the ephemeral has pride of place. Nihilism is at the root of the widespread mentality which claims that a definitive commitment should no longer be made, because everything is fleeting and provisional."

and particularly a candidate to priestly ordination, can find a personal support in philosophy, whose essential task is to provide professional assistance in meeting the typically human need of seeking and attaining the truth.³

In the context of the above situation, this article attempts to answer the question of whether or not an alumnus of the priestly formation in the seminary needs philosophy, and if so, what kind and why?⁴

Is Philosophy Needed?

Modern man usually pushes philosophy into the corners of his life. He rarely feels the need to develop intellectual skills which would allow him to contemplate the truth and discover the ultimate meaning of life. He treats himself – with ever greater conviction – as a *homo faber*, who loves to acquire specialized knowledge and use it instrumentally as a means to achieving short-term goals, especially a career that involves material gain or political power. In this way, the value of universal knowledge and wisdom become something incomprehensible and foreign to him.⁵

By shoving philosophy onto the back burner, the modern man accepts tacitly a fact that his most important existential issues remain without rational solutions. Being unable, however, to ignore questions such as “Where am I from?” or “Where am I headed?,” he tries to give a positive answer to them using non-philosophical sources. He is mostly satisfied with the positions of fideistic proposals, which in principle renounce sensi-

³ Cf. John Paul II, *Fides et ratio*, op. cit., no. 3: “Men and women have at their disposal an array of resources for generating greater knowledge of truth so that their lives may be ever more human. Among these is *philosophy*, which is directly concerned with asking the question of life’s meaning and sketching an answer to it. Philosophy emerges, then, as one of noblest of human tasks.”

⁴ Asking whether we should do philosophy is a classical philosophical problem. See Aristotle, *Protrepticus*, transl. by Doug S. Hutchinson, Monte Ransome Johnson: “to do philosophy means to investigate this very thing, whether one should do philosophy or not [...] and it also means to pursue philosophical study” (www.protrepticus.info/recon2013i1.pdf – access: Oct 26, 2013).

⁵ Cf. John Paul II, *Fides et ratio*, op. cit., no. 47; Gabriel-Marie Garrone, “O nauczaniu filozofii w Seminariach,” transl. by A. Pilorz, *Studia Philosophiae Christianae* 1 (1974): 256.

ble intellectual arguments,⁶ or scientific achievements that, although they value the intellect, are competent only in a certain partial truth because of their methodological limitations.⁷

Today's candidate for the priesthood does not ignore the need to know the truth. Quite the contrary. When explaining his vocation, he expresses the conviction that it comes from Jesus Christ, who says of Himself: "I am the Truth," and who teaches his disciples with the words: "You will know the truth, and the truth shall set you free."⁸ Moreover, the seminarian recognizes that, in Jesus of Nazareth, God has revealed to man not part but the fullness of truth about Himself.⁹ Seminary alumni, therefore, do not belong to the group of skeptics, agnostics or people satisfied with a partial truth. If, however, they give up the practice of philosophy as the road leading to universal truth, it seems that they are inevitably condemned to a kind of fideism.

Fideism of a modern seminarian clearly refers to the attitude of the Christians of the first centuries of the Church, who – knowing the Gospel – saw no need for practicing philosophy. Since the Good News proclaimed by the apostles provided a comprehensive reply to their questions about the ultimate meaning of life, the first Christians used to regard philosophical

⁶ See Zdzisław Chlewiński, "Fideizm," in *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii*, vol. 3, ed. by Andrzej Maryniarczyk (Lublin 2002), 427: "Given the impossibility of achieving absolute certainty in acquiring knowledge of the truth through the help of human intellectual effort or to overcome skepticism and agnosticism, fideism allows for, as a specific source of certainty, the extra-rational factor. Turning to non-intellectual reasons, according to fideists, it creates a greater sense of security, because it frees us from doubt and the difficulty of personal search."

⁷ Cf. G. M. Garrone, op. cit., 258: "Philosophy does not have its own subject: it has been absorbed and replaced by positive natural sciences and humanities. These are directed towards true and real problems, which arise with the help of methods currently recognized as the only appropriate ones. This attitude stems from positivist, neopositivist or structuralist trends."

⁸ J. 14: 6 and J. 8: 32. On supernatural sources of the priestly vocation see: *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Vatican 1993), no. 1578.

⁹ Cf. John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* (Rome 1990), no. 5; and *Dominus Iesus* (Rome 2000), no. 6: "Therefore, the theory of the limited, incomplete, or imperfect character of the revelation of Jesus Christ, which would be complementary to that found in other religions, is contrary to the Church's faith. Such a position would claim to be based on the notion that the truth about God cannot be grasped and manifested in its globality and completeness by any historical religion, neither by Christianity nor by Jesus Christ."

speculations on the subject as quite redundant. The goal of the Christian life was not the search for truth, since Truth came to them in Its fullness; rather the goal was to preach to other men the message of salvation in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.¹⁰ Similar, then, to the Christians in the beginning of the Church, seminarians in our times live also in the truth which they receive through divine revelation. This truth is not a result of the work of human reason, but a ready-made content, which is an undeserved gift, an expression of God's love and encouragement to conversion.¹¹

The fideistic stance seems to be based on the belief that the revealed truth "defends" itself without the use of philosophy. Such an assumption, however, is only possible as a result of an over-interpretation of doctrine. It is true that the Church teaches that man's proper response to revealed truth is the obedience to faith, which implicitly denotes the complete submission of the human mind. But this obedience draws its strength from both supernatural and natural sources. The natural source undoubtedly includes (1) the credibility of a person, which is the author (God) or a mediator (man) of the revelation, and (2) the compliance of the proclaimed message with the personal nature of its addressee which is man. Although these conditions are not sufficient, they are nevertheless necessary for the act of faith to be a personal act that is conscious, voluntary and responsible. Fideism, in turn, ignores these natural reasons for obedience to the faith and seems to maintain that the adoption of God's truth is made only by supernatural grace. Thus, admitting the exclusive competence of grace in justifying religious belief, the fideistic interpretation sets the *ordo fidei* against philosophy and so contributes to a serious distortion of the personal dimension of human life.¹²

¹⁰ See John Paul II, *Fides et ratio*, op. cit., no. 38. Cf. Z. Chlewinski, op. cit., 427: "Fideism already appeared in the philosophy of the ancient Sophists and in the early patristics period (Tertullian). Undermining the value of reason was the reaction of Christians to pagan philosophy;" and Piotr Jaroszynski, *Człowiek i nauka* (Lublin 2008), 98: "The consequence of aversion towards antiquity is therefore rejecting philosophy, which Christian culture should not have any room for. This trend is present in Christianity at all times and up to the present day."

¹¹ Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, op. cit., no. 15.

¹² On the obedience of faith see: *Dominus Iesus*, op. cit., no. 7. On the specificity of the act of faith see: Mieczysław A. Krapiec, "Wiara," in *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii*, vol. 9, ed. Andrzej Maryniarczyk (Lublin 2008), 750-751.

The fideist is generally characterized by a strong bias against reason.¹³ He seems, however, to realize that rationality is an inalienable sphere of human activity. He seeks, then, to totally subordinate reason to the domain of religious belief, whenever the latter so requires. A Polish fideist, in turn, seems to possess an additional attribute in the form of being convinced that faith is more perfect the more clearly it goes beyond the subduing of the reason and tries to renounce it at all, and that this is the faith the Church expects him to have. On this basis, he believes that the only faith which deserves recognition is the one which is absolutely obedient to the extra-rational religious inspirations, that any rational discussions about faith threaten it with distortion and heresy, that the irrational and sentimental nature of faith is a specific feature of the Polish mentality, etc.¹⁴

Fideism, however, should not be accepted, even if it actually connects man with the truth. For under the guise of humility and obedience to religious authority, it conceals thoughtlessness, laziness and aversion to mental exertion. It causes humans feel threatened by rationality and abstain from answering the question of the reason for their faith; all they have to say is: "I do not know, I simply believe!" Fideism therefore leaves the religious truth without justification and makes it vulnerable so that its pro-

¹³ Aversion towards reason seems to be a manifestation of the impact of Protestant teaching, according to which: "Reason has an exclusively pragmatic value, it is for use in earthly life. God has given it to us only to govern on earth, that is to say that it has power to legislate and order everything regarding this life, like drinking, eating, and clothes, as well as what concerns external discipline and a respectable life. But in spiritual things it is not only 'blind and dark,' it is truly 'the whore of the devil.' It can only blaspheme and dishonour everything God has said or done" (Jacques Maritain, *Three reformers: Luther, Descartes, Rousseau* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970), 32). Thus, fideism is incompatible with classical philosophy, according to which man is that which reason makes him. Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (Benziger Bros. edition, 1947), I, 76, 1: "According to the Philosopher, *Metaph.* viii (Did. vii 2), difference is derived from the form. But the difference which constitutes man is *rational*, which is applied to man on account of his intellectual principle. Therefore the intellectual principle is the form of man."

¹⁴ Cf. Jacek Woroniecki, *U podstaw kultury katolickiej* (Lublin 2002), 29-33. See especially the fragment on the claim of Stanislaw (Piaśt) Szczepanowski: "A Pole is inclined to act religiously, but impatient to make holy things the subject of speculation. Therefore, scholastics for a Pole are like peas against the wall. [...] Nor do I know any other people with whom there is such a bottomless lack of awareness of any theological arguments and even abhorrence of all philosophizing on the matter" (*ibid.*, 33).

ponent is exposed to both theoretical errors and practical abuses. It even exposes man to the influence of occultism and theosophy, distorts his understanding of reality, and degenerates interpersonal love and mutual responsibility.¹⁵

It would seem that an effective remedy for fideism is theology. Such a hope can be raised by its etymology (Greek: *Theos* – God, *logos* – reason), as it suggests the important role of reason in the doctrine of the supernatural revelation of God. It does not follow, however, that contemporary theological studies generally recognize the need for speculative reasoning. Just the opposite. Most often, they consider philosophical inquiry to be a useless word game and therefore forgo it in favor of philological and historical methods.¹⁶ Also they often eliminate philosophy at its very roots in the name of the so-called dehellenization of theology.¹⁷ Thus, the attempt to overcome fideism by such an approach to theology seems unlikely to succeed.

The consequences of fideism are not limited to the individual life of a seminarian. If the modern seminary student abandons typically philosophical methods of seeking universal truth, he must face the outgrowth of his fideism which can meet him now or in his priestly future. For instance, without philosophical justification for the veracity of his faith, he will not be able to engage in rational dialogue with the non-believer. This limits the effectiveness and scope of his future priestly mission in a pluralistic society where the issues of philosophy are revealed at every turn, and by which he could offer a true hierarchy of goods which conditions appropriate human actions and make a significant contribution to a more complete humanization of the world and its culture.¹⁸

¹⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 33-36

¹⁶ G. M. Garrone, *op. cit.*, 258.

¹⁷ See Benedict XVI, *Faith, Reason and the University. Memories and Reflections* (Regensburg 2006): “[...] I must briefly refer to the third stage of dehellenization, which is now in progress. In the light of our experience with cultural pluralism, it is often said nowadays that the synthesis with Hellenism achieved in the early Church was an initial inculturation which ought not to be binding on other cultures. The latter are said to have the right to return to the simple message of the New Testament prior to that inculturation, in order to inculturate it anew in their own particular milieu.”

It seems that the modern cleric faces the alternative of building his religious faith on the basis of fideism or connecting it with philosophy that respects the personal nature of man and enables intelligent dialogue with the world. If, however, he chooses philosophy, he will have to answer the question of whether any kind of philosophy is able to meet these expectations?

Which Philosophy?

Since there is no public teaching of philosophy in Polish secondary schools, alumni most often encounter it for the first time in the seminary. Seeking answers to the question “What is philosophy?,” they particularly turn their attention to the history of philosophy, which seems to be the most appropriate source of knowledge on the subject. Unfortunately, this is not always a reliable source. Its value to a large extent depends on the method of delivering lectures. Teaching the history of philosophy on the basis of an objective presentation of the individual – often conflicting – philosophical thinkers, schools and positions can generate within a cleric the belief that the area referred to as the *love of wisdom*, having many diverse definitions that allow for a wide variety of conclusions to the problem, implicitly accepts and promotes relativism.

Teaching the history of philosophy can prevent the spread of relativism only through consciously accomplishing two objectives. It cannot rely solely on the transmission of information about previously formulated problems and philosophical views.¹⁹ Its parallel task should also be educat-

¹⁸ G. M. Garrone, op. cit., 259-261. See especially: “There is no doubt that the most fundamental philosophical issues to a greater extent than ever before are now the center of people’s attention, projecting onto all aspects of culture – on literature (novels, essays, poetry), theater, film, radio, television, and even on songs. Perennial dilemmas of the human heart come rushing back: the meaning of life and death, the meaning of good and evil, the basis of values, dignity and rights of the human person, the confrontation of cultures and their spiritual heritage, scandal due to suffering, injustice, oppression and violence, nature and the law of love, order and disorder in nature, the problem of education, authority and freedom, the direction of historical development and progress, the mystery of what is beyond the grave, and finally – as a key moment among so many other issues: God, His existence, His personal character and providence” (ibid., 259).

¹⁹ It seems that this is what some limit the task of the history of philosophy to. E.g. see Jacek Wojtysiak, *Pochwała ciekawosci* (Krakow 2004), 17.

ing a student in a well-conceived criticism of these positions, for the purpose of eliminating errors and searching for truth.²⁰ This twofold task of the course is a formal guarantee that the study of the history of philosophy will not only contribute to the seminarian's knowledge of philosophical problems and their attempted solutions which have appeared throughout the history of human thought, but also encourage him to launch his own investigation for answering the question which of those solutions are closest to the truth, the objective state of affairs.²¹ In other words, the lecture on the history of philosophy should introduce the alumnus with different philosophical doctrines, so that he "will hold on to what is proven to be true therein and will be able to detect the roots of errors and to refute them."²²

The seminary student should receive, along with the history of philosophy, preparation for practicing philosophy itself. Although the art of philosophy cannot be reduced to the craft of erudition in over-viewing what others have said about a given topic, the history of philosophy is an indispensable support to the seminarian in his own dealing with the problems of the real world so that – when confronting and assessing encountered solutions – he can seek to develop his own understanding of reality.²³

For the seminarian, the existing world of real beings is therefore not only a criterion for evaluating views presented during lectures on the history of philosophy, but above all, the subject of his own philosophical investigations. Therefore, as in auxiliary sciences, history plays a major role, as among *strictly* philosophical disciplines, it is metaphysics which fulfills an essential function. In accordance with the mandatory rules of priestly formation in Poland, lectures on the classical philosophy of being should introduce the alumnus to the rational and ultimate explanation of reality by demonstrating first causes of whatever exists. The importance of these

²⁰ See Henryk Kieres, *Człowiek i cywilizacja*, (Lublin 2007), 16: "Such study is a prerequisite for the elimination of bad philosophy, pseudo-philosophy leading human thought and action astray into a pseudo-culture."

²¹ Cf. Zdzisław Pawlak, "Nauczanie filozofii w Wyższym Seminarium Duchownym we Włocławku w ostatnim dwudziestopięcioleciu XX wieku," *Studia Włocławskie* 11 (2009): 368.

²² Second Vatican Council, *Optatam totius* (Rome 1965), no. 15.

²³ Cf. G. M. Garrone, op. cit., 263.

lectures is, however, far greater than the mere presentation of metaphysical concepts, problems, solutions, methods of reasoning and their justification. Philosophy of being is taught in seminaries because it surely helps to build a foundation for a rational worldview of the seminarian, facilitate him his future studies in systematic theology, and advance his critical and mature perspective on contemporary philosophical trends.²⁴

Why Philosophical Realism?

The essence of philosophical realism consists of its rationality, universality, and above all its sensibleness which respects the nature of beings existing in reality. Non-realist trends in philosophy, even if they aspire to know the universal truth, omit the necessary link with the nature of the real world. They equate the truth proclaimed by their assertions with its utility, its obviousness, its common consent or its compliance with the claims previously recognized to be true.²⁵ What in realist philosophy depends on the nature of being, non-realist philosophies make dependent on apriori criteria of knowledge, which are to determine the correctness of thinking. Thus, they expose human knowledge to the interference of myth or utopia.²⁶ Correct thinking is not a cognitive activity, but merely an organizing of the world of intentional beings, which consists of both the notions acquired through the sensible experience, as well as the ideas virtually created and modified by the work of the mind itself. The final result of correct thinking is a consistent system of statements, which – if it ignores the truth

²⁴ Karol Klauza, ed., *Zasady formacji kapłanskiej w Polsce*, op. cit., 158-159. Cf. Second Vatican Council, *Optatam totius*, op. cit., no. 15: "In the very manner of teaching there should be stirred up in the students a love of rigorously searching for the truth and of maintaining and demonstrating it, together with an honest recognition of the limits of human knowledge. Attention must be carefully drawn to the necessary connection between philosophy and the true problems of life, as well as the questions which preoccupy the minds of the students. Likewise students should be helped to perceive the links between the subject-matter of philosophy and the mysteries of salvation which are considered in theology under the higher light of faith."

²⁵ Cf. Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz, *Zagadnienia i kierunki filozofii* (Kety-Warszawa 2004), 22-25.

²⁶ See two entries by Henryk Kieres: "Mit," in *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii*, vol. 7, ed. Andrzej Maryniarczyk (Lublin 2006), 279-290; and "Utopia," in *Powszechna Encyklopedia Filozofii*, vol. 9, ed. Andrzej Maryniarczyk (Lublin 2008), 619-626.

in the classical sense, as *adaequatio rei et intellectus* – may take on a mythological or utopian form.²⁷ Therefore, the basic reason for which a seminary alumnus needs realist philosophy is its specificity. By this means, the seminarian is able to recognize and proclaim the doctrine of the Church in a sensible way, while at the same time protecting it from the effects of mythology and utopianism.²⁸

By its nature, realist philosophy leads the seminarian to a deeper knowledge of the world, God and man. Thanks to it, he is in a position to: (1) independently draw necessary objective truths out from contingent reality, (2) sensibly and rationally justify the affirmation of the personal Absolute as the Creator of the universe, and (3) formulate an anthropology that respects the personal nature of human existence directed toward eternal life. Exploring the mysteries of realism, an alumnus discovers the innate symbiosis between the natural truths of philosophy and the supernatural truths of faith. At the same time, he comes to know that the specificity of Judeo-Christian revelation is absolutely incompatible with any relativism – epistemological, moral or metaphysical – as well as materialism, pantheism, immanentism, subjectivism or atheism.²⁹ Therefore, on the way to obtaining a philosophical education, the future priest acquires an intellectual formation that substantially affects his theological studies.³⁰

²⁷ Cf. Henryk Kieres, *Trzy socjalizmy* (Lublin 2000), 60-61.

²⁸ Realist philosophy inherently protects culture against mythology and utopianism. See Henryk Kieres, *Człowiek i sztuka* (Lublin 2006), 155-167; and Paweł Tarasiewicz, "The Principal Assignment of Philosophy in Culture," transl. by Jan R. Kobylecki, *Studia Giloniana* 1 (2012): 133-146.

²⁹ G. M. Garrone, op. cit., 263-264. See also Z. Pawlak, op. cit., 368; and John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (Rome 1992), no. 52: "A crucial stage of intellectual formation is the study of philosophy, which leads to a deeper understanding and interpretation of the person, and of the person's freedom and relationships with the world and with God. A proper philosophical training is vital, not only because of the links between the great philosophical questions and the mysteries of salvation which are studied in theology under the guidance of the higher light of faith, but also vis-a-vis an extremely widespread cultural situation which emphasizes subjectivism as a criterion and measure of truth: Only a sound philosophy can help candidates for the priesthood to develop a reflective awareness of the fundamental relationship that exists between the human spirit and truth, that truth which is revealed to us fully in Jesus Christ."

³⁰ On the relationship between philosophy and theology see: Stanisław Kaminski, "Teologia a filozofia," *Summarium* 16/17 (1987/1988): 167-186, Mieczysław A. Krapiec, *Filozofia*

Moreover, the need for philosophical realism during seminary formation comes from the missionary nature of Christianity. The task of a seminarian, like all Catholics in the world, is to spread the faith in Jesus Christ through his conscious witness of word and deed.³¹ In carrying out this task, particularly helpful for the candidate to the priesthood is realist philosophy that – in shaping his attitude of love for the truth – allows for a better understanding of his own faith and a more effective communication of the truth of the Gospel to those who do not yet know about it.³²

A seminarian's education in philosophical realism is also justified by the nature of the priesthood itself. The priest is not only a witness, but a teacher of the faith too. He should therefore be distinguished by his broad and deep understanding of the message that he proclaims in word and deed. For this reason, an alumnus during his intellectual formation should develop his proficiency in knowing God, prepare himself to receive the light of His thoughts, and create a spiritual union with God in his life.³³ Effective help in this regard is realist philosophy. On the one hand, it ensures the certainty of the truth which the cleric recognizes as the basis of his personal and total commitment to Jesus Christ in His Church. On the other hand, in discovering and justifying the truth, it serves to preserve the identity of the future priest and his commitment to missionary and apostolic activity.³⁴

Another argument in favor of philosophical realism concerns the circumstances in which the priestly mission of proclaiming the truth in today's world is carried out. Even now the future priest competes with relativism, subjectivism and eclecticism which are increasingly widespread

w teologii (Lublin 1998), Berthold Wald, *Filozofia w studium teologii*, transl. by J. Jakuszko (Lublin 2006).

³¹ Cf. Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes* (Rome 1965), no. 11. *Nota bene*, just as Buddhism and Islam, Christianity is a missionary religion and directs its message to all people. While Buddhism, however, is cosmocentric and Islam is theocentric, Christianity is rather an anthropocentric religion, which seems to be confirmed by God, "who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven [...] and was made man" (The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed).

³² See John Paul II, *Fides et ratio*, op. cit., no. 5; Karol Klauza, ed., *Zasady formacji kapłanskiej w Polsce*, op. cit., 150.

³³ Cf. Karol Klauza, ed., *Zasady formacji kapłanskiej w Polsce*, op. cit., 107.

³⁴ Cf. John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, op. cit., no. 52.

in the culture. Representatives of relativism claim that what is true for some may not be true for others. Supporters of subjectivity consider the mind to be the only source of knowledge, and so they are unable to accept the metaphysical truth that comes from a real, existing being. Thirdly, representatives of eclecticism, who profit from a variety of philosophical views, do not care either about whether these views are consistent and systematically connected with each other, or about whether they are compatible with Christian truth.³⁵ In this context, realist philosophy, because of its universal, sensible and rational nature, is an effective defense of the dogma of truth proclaimed by the Church.

Conclusion

The purpose of the above reflections was an attempt to answer the question concerning whether or not philosophy was needed in seminaries. In light of the above analysis, it can be concluded that philosophical studies for future priests are a serious alternative to the fideistic positions often adopted by Catholics. First, the presence of philosophy in the seminary curriculum is supported by the need for building intellectual foundations of the religious faith professed by a cleric; the faith which cannot do without reason and abstain from justifying the rationale of its content. Secondly, an equally important reason for introducing the alumnus to the mysteries of *love of wisdom*, especially in area of the classical philosophy of being, lies in giving him a better understanding of human nature and the surrounding reality. In this way, he acquires a reasonable belief that the human mind is able to know the objective and universal truth, including the truth about God as the Ultimate Cause of all that exists. As a result, he is able to enter into an intelligent dialogue about the truth with an increasingly globalized world.³⁶

Transl. by Jan Kobylecki

³⁵ Cf. *Dominus Iesus*, op. cit., no. 4.

³⁶ Cf. John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, op. cit., no. 52.

PHILOSOPHY IN SEMINARIES**SUMMARY**

The author attempts to answer the question concerning whether or not philosophy is needed in seminaries. In light of his analysis, it can be concluded that philosophical studies for future priests are a serious alternative to the fideistic positions often adopted by Catholics. The presence of philosophy in the seminary curriculum is supported by: (1) the need for building intellectual foundations of the religious faith professed by a cleric; the faith which cannot do without reason and abstain from justifying the rationale of its content; (2) the need for introducing the alumnus to the mysteries of the classical philosophy of being which can equip him with a better understanding of human nature and the surrounding reality. In this way, the seminarian: (1) acquires a reasonable belief that the human mind is able to know the objective and universal truth, including the truth about God as the Ultimate Cause of all that exists; (2) is able to enter into an intelligent dialogue about the truth with an increasingly globalized world.

KEYWORDS: philosophy, seminary, philosophical realism, faith, reason, priest, Christian philosophy.