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Anna Suska-Zakaszewska*

The Idea of Bringing Up Children and Young People in the Teachings of Blessed Father Bronisław Markiewicz

Idea wychowania dzieci i młodzieży w nauczaniu błogosławionego ks. Bronisława Markiewicza

Abstract: Blessed Father Bronisław Markiewicz (1842–1912) is one of the precursors of care and education pedagogy, being professionally equipped to work with young people. He founded the Society of Restraint and Work and the male and female Congregation of St Michael the Archangel. His concept and educational system were based on two virtues: restraint and work, as well as deep religious formation, love and conditions as close as possible to the family environment. He took care of poor, abandoned children, children from dysfunctional families and orphans. The main assumption of Markiewicz's institutions was to provide pupils with the conditions for integral development and upbringing, as well as with constant assistance until they became independent. This article presents the biography of the clergyman and the educational ideas that he implemented in his institutions.

Keywords: Bronisław Markiewicz, restraint and work, education, care, children, young people.

* Anna Suska-Zakaszewska (ORCID: 0000-0002-0334-0807) – PhD, assistant at the Institute of Pedagogy at the Zamość University; contact: annasuska1994@wp.pl.

The 19th and 20th centuries were a very difficult time for the Polish nation. The socio-economic situation of Poles under partitions led to a family crisis. Farther (Fr) Bronisław Markiewicz lived and worked in the Przemyśl diocese, which was part of Galicia. During his priestly ministry, he observed various environments and gathered people around him, both young and old. He saw how many children were poor, abandoned, orphaned and exposed to demoralization. He was also aware that they would decide the fate of the country in the future, so he wanted to take care of them. During his time in Italy, he met Fr John Bosco and gained experience in working with neglected teenagers, which he used in his later activities. While in Galicia, he decided to create his own congregation, whose main motto was restraint and work. He aimed to create appropriate conditions for children and young people for comprehensive and integral development, taking into account the formation of Christian, social and patriotic attitudes and practical preparation for a profession and life in society.

This article presents the profile of Fr Markiewicz as a priest, educator and social activist influencing the development and upbringing of children and teenagers, as well as his care and educational activities. It also describes the forms and methods he used to influence the development of his pupils' characters and personalities.

The most important facts from the life of Fr Markiewicz

Markiewicz was born on 13 July 1842 in Pruchnik.¹ His parents were Jan and Bronisława Marianna Markiewicz (née Gryziecka). He came from a middle-income family and was the sixth of 11 children.² Wanting to provide for his fam-

1 A small town located in the Przemyśl region, near the city of Jarosław in the Małopolska Voivodeship. The south of the country, that is, the lands annexed to Austria, was called Galicia. Currently, Pruchnik is located in Jarosław County in the Podkarpackie Voivodeship. W. Michułka, *Łogostawiony ks. Bronisław Markiewicz. Wychowawca opuszczonej młodzieży i założyciel zgromadzeń zakonnych św. Michała Archanioła*, Marki 2005, p. 17.

2 He had four brothers: Michał, Władysław, Stanisław Erazm, Dominik and six sisters: Karolina, who died when she was only two months old, Cecylia and Domicela, who died of typhus while growing up, Antonina, Paulina and Maria, who got

ily, Bronisław's father was engaged in merchantry and agriculture. Moreover, he served as mayor of Pruchnik three times, which may prove that he was respected and trusted by the local community.³ In the Markiewicz family, the parents tried to guarantee their offspring a truly Christian upbringing and higher education. The eldest son, Michał, was a teacher in a middle school in Rzeszów and Chyrów, Władysław and Dominik were lawyers in Kraków, Stanisław Erazm was a merchant with a spice shop in Lviv and the youngest of the brothers, Bronisław, was a priest. In addition to a solid education, all the sons were characterized by deep faith and piety and actively participated in various areas of Catholic life.⁴

Fr Markiewicz attended primary school in his hometown and, having graduated, he continued his education at the middle school in Przemyśl.⁵ He was a very diligent student because he knew it was his duty to acquire knowledge, not just a certificate. His attitude and abilities made him an exemplary student, with the best grades and recognition among the local teachers. Therefore, he passed his secondary school leaving examination with distinction. Even though Bronisław did not have any learning difficulties, in the last years of middle school, he had a crisis of faith, probably because of teachers who conducted classes preaching rationalism and ridiculing religion, which was contrary to the values and teachings he learned in his family home.⁶ As an 18-year-old boy, he faced spiritual dilemmas, but one of Joseph Conrad's short stories helped him overcome these. He remembered this time as follows:

... I fell to my knees and began to pray aloud: 'If you exist, God, make yourself known to me and I will be ready to do everything for you.' And

married and started their own families. T. Jankowska, *W stulecie śmierci kochanego ojca młodzieży błogosławionego księdza Bronisława Markiewicza*, Warszawa 2012, p. 18–19.

- 3 T. Śliwa, *Błogosławiony ks. Bronisław Bonawentura Markiewicz (1842–1912)*, Przemyśl 2014, p. 10–11.
- 4 W. Michułka, *Błogosławiony ks. Bronisław Markiewicz*, p. 19–20.
- 5 J. Marecki, *Kościół katolicki na ziemiach polskich na przełomie XIX i XX wieku ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem sytuacji społeczno-politycznej w Galicji*, in: *Stulecie kanonicznego zatwierdzenia Zgromadzenia Świętego Michała Archanioła. Kontekst historyczny, społeczny i prawny*, ed. R. Kamiński, Warszawa-Kraków 2021, p. 66.
- 6 T. Jankowska, *W stulecie śmierci kochanego ojca młodzieży*, p. 19–20.

at that moment, the Lord God filled me with great inner light, which made me believe in everything that the Holy Church gives us to believe and on the same day, I confessed my whole life.⁷

This event did not make Bronisław want to become a priest. His ambition was to study at university and eventually become a teacher. However, the ongoing January Uprising made him think about a military career but he abandoned his previous plans after an extraordinary experience. On 3 May 1863, his friend Józef Dąbrowski visited him to borrow money. He told him about an unknown boy, about 16 years old, who spent a night at his host's place. In the morning, the young man began to foresee events that would take place in the future, but some had already come true. He predicted events such as the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, Bismarck's rule, the persecution of the Church, the outbreak of World War I and the election of a Pole as pope. In addition, he mentioned a priest, his activities on behalf of the people, prisoners and children, as well as his trip to the south, during which he would meet a great man of God and then found a religious congregation. Initially, young Markiewicz did not identify this prophecy with himself, but this conversation encouraged him to enter a theological seminary to prepare people for the events that were soon to come.⁸

- 7 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców młodzieży opuszczonej oraz wskazówki do rozwiązania kwestyisocjalnej*, vol. 2, Miejsce Piastowe 1912, p. 331; S. P. Maciątek, *Żywot ks. Bronisława Markiewicza: założyciela zakładów wychowawczych dla sierót i opuszczonej młodzieży*, Kraków 1934, p. 21.
- 8 In historiography, there are two versions presenting the event of 3 May 1863. According to the first version, both Bronisław Markiewicz and his colleague Józef Dąbrowski were witnesses to the predictions of the unknown boy. In turn, the second version describes the conversation as only between the young man and Dąbrowski, who reported this meeting in detail to Markiewicz. There are two documents available about this event, namely: in Miejsce Piastowe, written down by Fr Bronisław and in Jazłowiec – described by Dąbrowski. Both scenes are almost identical, but during his testimony for the beatification process of John Bosco, Markiewicz confessed under oath that it was his friend who witnessed the event. T. Jankowska, *W stulecie śmierci kochanego ojca młodzieży*, pp. 25–27; W. Michułka, *Błogosławiony ks. Bronisław Markiewicz*, pp. 25–30; S. P. Maciątek, *Żywot ks. Bronisława Markiewicza*, pp. 22–26; T. Śliwa, *Błogosławiony*, pp. 12–13.

In the autumn of 1863, 22-year-old Bronisław entered the Theological Seminary in Przemyśl, where he studied philosophy and theology and obtained the necessary spiritual formation. Four years later, he completed his studies and on 15 September 1867, he was ordained a priest by Bishop Antoni Józef Manastyrski (1803–1869).⁹ From 1867 to 1873, he served as a vicar in the Harta parish and the cathedral parish in Przemyśl. He conducted not only pastoral but also catechetical activities. He founded the Brotherhood of the Scapular of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose aim was to popularize the abstinence movement. In addition, he visited hospitals, prisons, poor families and the ill, and also established contacts with teenagers and looked for children who, for various reasons, such as poverty or parental neglect, did not participate in religious classes. In his activities, he did not forget about students and the educated class. He believed that it was necessary to improve the education of the clergy to fight materialistic views and raise young people in the Christian spirit. Therefore, having received permission, in October 1873, he started philosophical studies at the University of Lviv and a year later, moved to the University of Kraków, where he acquired knowledge in fields such as philosophy, history, literature and pedagogy.¹⁰

From 1876 to 1884, he was a parish priest in the Gać parish and then in the Błażowa parish. He also became a lecturer at the Theological Seminary in Przemyśl where he lectured on homiletics and pastoral theology. The culmination of his scholarly work was the book entitled *O wymowie kaznodziejskiej* [On the Meaning of Preaching], published in 1898.¹¹ In 1885, Markiewicz went to Turin, Italy, where he met Fr John Bosco. Fascinated by Fr John Bosco's activities, he decided to join the Salesian congregation. He completed a one-year novitiate and took perpetual vows, thanks to which he performed various pastoral functions and gained experience in working with young people. After seven years in Italy, on 28 March 1892, he received permission and returned to Galicia where he became the parish priest in Miejsce (currently Miejsce

9 C. Kustra, *Działalność edukacyjna Towarzystwa „Powściągliwość i Praca” w latach 1898–1949*, Olsztyn 2005, pp. 41.

10 T. Śliwa, *Błogosławiony*, pp. 15–18.

11 C. Kustra, *Działalność edukacyjna*, pp. 41–42.

Piastowe). He conducted not only priestly service but also comprehensive educational activities for children and young people.¹² Shortly after his return, he established the first Salesian institution, which was located in a wooden rectory and brought together poor boys. It is worth mentioning that their number was systematically increasing, which is why Fr Bronisław decided to build a new brick rectory and developed the wooden one for his pupils, calling it 'Fr Bosko's Facility in Miejsce'.¹³ Having been removed from the list of members of the Salesian Society, on 18 April 1898, he decided to establish the secular Society of Constraint and Work, whose patron was Saint Francis de Sales. In the same year, the first issue of the magazine *Powściągnąć i Praca* [Constraint and Work] was published, the editor of which was Fr Markiewicz.¹⁴ Experiencing various difficulties, he turned to the ordinary in Przemyśl to approve a new (male and female) congregation called the Congregation of St Michael the Archangel. Ultimately, he did not live to see its approval because he died on 29 January 1912, while the decree establishing the congregation appeared only in 1921. His beatification process began in 1958 and the ceremony itself took place on 19 June 2005 in Warsaw.¹⁵

Fr Markiewicz's care and educational concept

Markiewicz's university education, extensive pastoral, social and educational activities, perception of the family crisis and the low standard of living of the inhabitants of Galicia, as well as the experience he gained during

- 12 R. Z. Dziewit, *Dzień za dniem z Błogosławionym Bronisławem Markiewiczem. Myśl na każdy dzień*, Miejsce Piastowe 2011, pp. 12; M. A. Chrapek, *Rodzina zaprzyjaźniona jako kontynuacja założeń systemu wychowawczego bł. Bronisława Markiewicza*, w: *Drogowskazy wychowania*, eds. S. Wilk, A. Kiciński, A. Łuczyński, M. L. Opiela, A. Smagacz, Lublin 2012, p. 270.
- 13 S. Wilk, *Błogosławiony ks. Bronisław Markiewicz a św. Jan Bosko*, in: *Stulecie kanonicznego zatwierdzenia*, p. 97.
- 14 I. Szewc, *Program wychowania przedszkolnego wg systemu pedagogicznego błogosławionego Bronisława Markiewicza „Kosz malin”*, Miejsce Piastowe 2012, p. 20.
- 15 G. Stanek-Czerny, *Powściągliwość i praca – systemem wychowawczym bł. ks. Bronisława Markiewicza propozycją dla współczesności*, „Pedagogia Ojcostwa: katolicki przegląd społeczno-pedagogiczny”, 11 (2015) no 2, pp. 87–88.

his time in Turin, encouraged him to take care of children and young people who came from poor, violent or dysfunctional families as well as abandoned children and orphans.¹⁶ In his opinion, the family is the most appropriate and significant educational environment and the main point of reference for a young person.¹⁷ This is also confirmed by the words that Blessed Bronisław addressed to parents:

Dear parents, remember that you should start raising children as early as possible and that the first six years of a child are the most important in their upbringing,¹⁸

... at home, we set before our children models of perfection and encourage them to imitate them. A child's mind is like a clean, unwritten page, but it is sensitive and soft, like wax. Whatever we give them easily sticks to them and stays there for years to come, and often even for eternity. Therefore, children should be helped with the greatest care to create ideals because the ideals given to them are to be their guiding stars throughout their lives; and we know that not all stars can be guides, and some of them can even lead them astray.¹⁹

The main goal of the society he established was to proclaim the glory of God and work for the good of society through acts of mercy and the improvement of the society's members.²⁰ The Michaelite strived to provide his pupils with conditions for physical, mental, emotional, social, religious, moral and spiritual development because their future, and thus the history of the nation, was closely related to how children were brought up and prepared for a profession

16 T. Bąk, *Michalicka koncepcja wychowania*, „Roczniki Pedagogiczne”, 5 (2013) no 2, pp. 140–141.

17 K. Radzik, *Błogosławiony ksiądz Bronisław Markiewicz: kapłan, wychowawca, społecznik*, in: *Wychowanie i edukacja w kontekście społeczności lokalnej: PWSTE w hołdzie swojemu patronowi bł. Ks. Bronisławowi Markiewiczowi*, ed. J. Mierzwa, Jarosław 2013, p. 16.

18 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców młodzieży opuszczonej oraz wskazówki do rozwiązania kwestyisocjalnej*, vol. 1, Miejsce Piastowe 1912, p. 147.

19 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 2, pp. 333–334.

20 C. Kustra, *Działalność edukacyjna*, p. 46.

and childhood is the best time for the formation of a child's personality.²¹ He based his concept and educational system on two Christian virtues, restraint and work, and deep religious formation.²²

The first key pillar is restraint, which the Michaelite defined as 'the virtue that restrains our natural drives and the associated temptations and pleasures in accordance with the light of reason'.²³ He considered this the most important virtue, calling it the mother and foundation of all virtues. Its scope covers the whole person, that is, the volitional, sensual and intellectual spheres. Restraint covering the will involves exercising decisiveness, while restraint in the area of the senses makes it possible to master and refine drives, passions and inclinations, thus shaping a holy and noble character. In turn, in the area of intellect – reason –restraint enables people to properly manage themselves, so the effort they make ensures the achievement of systematicity, which is crucial when working on oneself. According to Fr Markiewicz, it is a virtue that comes from God and plays an educational role. For it to be developed, an active religious life is necessary, including prayer, meditation and the examination of conscience, and on the other hand, mortification, that is, various types of sacrifices. In addition, he was convinced that a restrained life would lead to eternal salvation, but students should be guided by purity, temperance, sobriety and humility.²⁴

Work is the second basic value in Makiewicz's concept. It was the foundation for pupils' development and a means to maintain the facility. He said that work 'is necessary for maintaining life, necessary for health, necessary for maintaining morality, necessary for human happiness'.²⁵ He also emphasized that children should be introduced to various activities gradually and toughened so that they would not experience disappointment in the future:

21 T. Bąk, *Koncepcja wychowania w ujęciu Błogosławionego Księdza Bronisława Markiewicza*, in: *Wychowanie i edukacja*, p. 28.

22 S. P. Maciątek, *Żywot ks. Bronisława Markiewicza*, p. 85.

23 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 2, p. 1.

24 C. Kustra, *Powściągliwość i praca w wychowaniu chrześcijańskim*, in: *Wychowanie chrześcijańskie: między tradycją a współczesnością*, ed. A. Rynio, Lublin 2007, pp. 852–853; M. Kałwik, *Istota i specyfika duchowości michalickiej*, in: *Stulecie kano-nicznego zatwierdzenia*, pp. 168–170.

25 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 2, p. 244.

You need...to accustom a child to work: first, occupy them with play, then with fun based on work (let them do whatever they want) and finally, with real work – often repeating to them, when they begin to be lazy, the words of the Holy Scripture: ‘He who does not work, neither shall he eat’ ...a child should be trained as early as possible, they should be trained to it with hard work, so that later life does not overwhelm them or hurt them too much.²⁶

Fr Markiewicz based work on God and perceived it as a means to eternal happiness, which is why he strived for it to be sanctified by love. He believed that everyone was obliged to work.²⁷ In his Society, he emphasized good organization and the appropriate division of work, considering factors such as the age, abilities, preferences, interests and possibilities of each pupil.²⁸ Thanks to this approach and the freedom to choose an activity, the pupils did not treat it as a compulsion but were aware that it was their common property.²⁹ In his teaching, the Michaelite pointed to three types of work: physical, mental and spiritual. He promoted the first the most and also defined it as manual, bodily work, which is ordered by God. He therefore put farm work first. In turn, mental work equips a pupil's mind with new content from various scientific disciplines, thus allowing them to combine the knowledge acquired with their practical skills. Finally, spiritual work means making every effort and striving for salvation. Moreover, it was a means of developing a moral attitude. As a result, Fr Markiewicz emphasized that this type of work should be started as early as possible and that children and young people should be able to distinguish between good and evil.³⁰

In addition to these virtues, religion, which was the basis of moral life, played an important role in Fr Bronisław's educational concept. He used to say that:

26 Ibidem, pp. 244–245.

27 C. Kustra, *Działalność edukacyjna*, p. 61.

28 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 1, p. 162.

29 S. P. Maciątek, *Żywot ks. Bronisława Markiewicza*, p. 89.

30 R. Stojeczka-Zuber, *Założenia systemu wychowawczego ks. Bronisława Markiewicza (1842–1912)*, „Kieleckie Studia Pedagogiczne i Psychologiczne”, 11 (1996) pp. 35–36; I. Szewc, *Koncepcja wychowawcza bł. Bronisława Markiewicza jako drogowskazy wychowania na dzisiejsze czasy*, in: *Drogowskazy*, p. 303.

...religion is not only a part, but the basis of moral life and so the first duty of parents and educators is to instil it deep in the heart of a child.... Only religion gives a person the strength to live a moral life.³¹

The Society emphasized practicing the Holy Sacraments, frequent prayer and daily Holy Mass, thanks to which the pupils had a sense of God's presence. Being in front of the tabernacle, they found the best Father and Guardian, and participation in the Holy Mass made them realize that God accompanied them in life and was a witness to what they thought, said and did.³² Fr Markiewicz believed that religion was a tool for gaining religious maturity and affirming an appropriate system of values and that no science could replace faith and spiritual work. Therefore, to achieve this goal, divine and human help is necessary, that is, an educator should serve as a role model by imitating Christ in his everyday life. The importance of young people's religious formation was related to Fr Markiewicz's belief that a well-established religious upbringing shapes values, which in turn influence attitudes and decisions, constituting the basis on which a mature society can be built.³³

The upbringing process in the Michaelite's concept of education

As already mentioned, Fr Markiewicz repeatedly emphasized and was aware that the upbringing and development of a child begins in the family environment. Seeing the situation of Polish families, he decided to respond to the needs of society and young people and thus made his facility as similar to a family as possible.³⁴ To bring the family environment closer to his pupils, he stressed the role of an educator in his educational system, who was 'a father, a mother, a master, a friend, a greatest benefactor after God, the maker of his pupils' future, the indivisible, in one word, everything'.³⁵ Moreover, he involved each

31 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 2, p. 257.

32 M. A. Chrapek, *Rodzina zaprzyjaźniona*, p. 274.

33 P. Przybylski, *Egzemplaryzm wzorcowy w ujęciu ks. Bronisława Markiewicza*, „Resovia Sacra”, 28 (2021) pp. 509–513, DOI: 10.52097/rs.2021.499-524.

34 K. Radzik, *Błogosławiony ksiądz Bronisław*, p. 16.

35 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 1, p. 168.

student in the ongoing life of the facility, including in various types of work, cultural events and cooperation with the local population. As children and teenagers participated in many activities outside the facility and had contact with the environment and society, a positive impact on their development and independence could be seen. Moreover, they were prepared to live in the same conditions in which they were expected to live later on. However, to properly carry out the educational process, the priest carefully selected educators who had a direct impact on the formation of the pupils' characters.³⁶

Being a practitioner, Fr Markiewicz had high expectations of educators and made sure that those who would be responsible for the upbringing of great characters were characterized by the purity of life, educational predispositions, as well as appropriate knowledge and qualifications, among others. The lack of at least one of these features indicated that the person was not a good educator.³⁷ Moreover, staff working with children and young people should be emotionally mature, able to provide pupils with love that is enough for their needs and also be distinguished by kindness, patience, selflessness, diligence and thinking from a long-term perspective.³⁸ In his concept, he emphasized that educators should focus on a subjective approach to students, emphasizing their freedom, equality and individuality.³⁹ Therefore, the priest paid attention to getting to know each student individually and treating them as an adult with their own unique personality. The task of educators was to meet the basic needs of children and young people, maintain constant contact with them and ensure their well-being.⁴⁰ He wrote:

Educators...of abandoned children...replace their parents, worry about their food, clothing, housing, state of mind, education and future lifestyle, they eat with them, they suffer from poverty together with them, suffer

36 Cz. Kustra, *Zasady wychowania w koncepcji opiekuńczo-wychowawczej bł. Ks. Bronisława Markiewicza (1842–1912) jako źródło inspiracji i motywacji do działalności duszpastersko-wychowawczej*, „Edukacja. Terapia. Opieka”, 4 (2022) p. 114, DOI: 10.52934/eto.168.

37 B. B. Markiewicz, *Trzy słowa do starszych w narodzie...*, Marki 2000, pp. 112–113.

38 I. Szewc, *Program wychowania*, s. 25; I. Szewc, *Koncepcja wychowawcza*, pp. 296–297.

39 T. Bąk, *Michalicka koncepcja*, p. 153.

40 R. Stojeczka-Zuber, *Założenia systemu wychowawczego*, p. 33.

the consequences of poverty, sometimes bordering on misery, and work for them all day long.⁴¹

He also used to say that an educator ‘... if possible, should always be with his pupils. He should never leave them without proper care and supervision. The more he stays among them, the more successful his fruits will be.’⁴² Direct contact and the constant presence of educators in their pupils’ lives allowed them to observe them in various situations and thus, better understand and influence their psyches. Additionally, each educator was responsible for keeping records of votive attendance, in other words, each child had their own card on which the educator noted down his characteristics, behaviour and attitudes. Then, they were carefully interpreted so that the staff could thoroughly familiarize themselves with the pupils’ behaviour and select appropriate educational means and methods.⁴³

Love was the overriding principle that guided the educators in Markiewicz’s Society. It was the foundation for creating an atmosphere conducive to achieving the planned goals. The students were surrounded by love, care and attention from the teaching staff and older colleagues from the facility. This organization compared itself to a family home in which members influence, care and love each other.⁴⁴ Fr Markiewicz was aware that his institution brought together children and young people who did not experience the closeness of their loved ones and were often left to their own devices. Moreover, due to frequent violence, they lived under constant pressure, suppressed their feelings and closed themselves off from interpersonal relationships. As a result, they were deprived of the basic need, which is to be loved and to be able to love. This is why it was so important to create a warm and family atmosphere that would enable these young people to grow up properly. The priest identified love with kindness, thanks to which a teacher was transformed into a friend whom students

41 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 1, pp. 168–169.

42 Idem, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 2, p. 310.

43 R. Stojeczka-Zuber, *Założenia systemu wychowawczego*, p. 33.

44 C. Kustra, *Działalność edukacyjna*, p. 135–136.

could trust and entrust their concerns. He often emphasized that true education is impossible without love.⁴⁵

Markiewicz's concept of education was not only based on prayer, study and work but the day was also planned in such a way that each student had free time and could devote it to play or recreation to consolidate and strengthen the innate need for movement. The educators' duty was to indicate the time and place of rest and provide initiatives, necessary things, resources and tools, such as balls, strings, rings, stilts and paper. The activity undertaken should be free, spontaneous and release all physical forces. The founder of the institution pointed out that the students had to be guaranteed various forms of entertainment because, as he used to say, 'to forbid young people to laugh and have fun is to want spring to bear autumn fruits'.⁴⁶ He also claimed that if students were under constant pressure caused by work and study, they would look for relaxation themselves, regardless of whether it was appropriate or not. In turn, isolation from respite and rest would deprive them of their natural need, which is contrary to their upbringing and does not have a beneficial effect on their development. Therefore, various forms of free time were organized in Miejsce Piastowe, including music classes, theatre performances, walks and trips, the editing of magazines and newspapers, sports and reading.⁴⁷

The first free-time activity offered was music classes, during which an orchestra was established. It was present during all national celebrations, anniversaries, festivities, feasts, as well as trips and performances. Thanks to this, the young people developed their love for their homeland and had a sense of national pride and the opportunity to experience what was sacred and beautiful. Markiewicz pointed out that music is a pedagogical means that educates the minds of young people, provides them with appropriate entertainment and thus eliminates bad thoughts and counteracts dangerous desires and sins.⁴⁸

The next proposed type of activity was theatre classes, which helped develop friendly relationships. The time during which the pupils prepared theatre

45 T. Bąk, *Koncepcja wychowania*, p. 31.

46 R. Stojcka-Zuber, *Założenia systemu wychowawczego*, p. 41.

47 Ibidem, pp. 41–42.

48 W. Michułka, *Błogosławiony ks. Bronisław Markiewicz*, pp. 126–127.

performances was a great impulse for intellectual, cultural and aesthetic development. The facility's theatre performed not only nativity and passion plays, but also, for example, those based on famous Polish works of literature, such as *Balladyna*, *Irydion*, *Dziady* [Forefathers' Eve] and *Pan Tadeusz* [Sir Thaddeus], as well as national dramas, such as *Bolesław Śmiały* [Bolesław the Bold] and *Obrona Częstochowy* [The Defence of Częstochowa]. The young people did not only stage religious or national works; various comedies and pantomimes were also performed. The theatre cooperated with the orchestra and choir and presented their performances not only in but also outside the facility. This made it possible to meet the cultural and educational needs of pupils and shape their personalities in religious, national, moral and social spirits.⁴⁹

The third option for spending free time included walks and trips, which usually took place on Sunday afternoons. All students participated in this activity. Moreover, they were accompanied by the orchestra during such trips. They would walk near Miejsce Piastowe. The students then had the opportunity to get to know each other and see the beauty and mystery of many places. It was a time not only of contact with nature but also of fun for the entire educational institution.⁵⁰

The editing of magazines and newspapers was another equally important form of relaxing activity for children and teenagers. Through this, they could present their thoughts, beliefs and positions. Initially, wall magazines were published, but these were followed by regular magazines over time. Among the popular teenage magazines were *Nasze Życie* [Our Life] and then *Zakładowiec* [Facility Member]. While middle school students wrote specialized magazines entitled *Świt* [Dawn] and *Start*, primary school graduates issued *Nasz Duch* [Our Spirit]. The magazines reflected the atmosphere of the institutions and were also a testimony to the pupils' mental involvement. Publishing activity enabled students to develop their interests and passions and formed their character and worldviews.⁵¹

Reading was another way to relax. Markiewicz's institutions were equipped with libraries, reading rooms and cultural common rooms that were available

49 C. Kustra, *Działalność edukacyjna*, p. 125.

50 R. Stojęcka-Zuber, *Założenia systemu wychowawczego*, p. 41.

51 *Ibidem*, pp. 41–42.

to both teaching staff and students. The libraries offered youth literature and historical, nature, adventure and other types of novels and the reading rooms had magazines and games, such as chess, draughts. The possibility of using these resources allowed children and teenagers to deepen their knowledge about God, man and the world. Moreover, it contributed to the development of their worldviews, personalities and even life attitudes.⁵²

Fr Bronisław's mottos were the foundation of the educational methods used in his institutions. Some were taken from Fr John Bosco and others were composed independently by the founder of the Society. The following methods were used in Markiewicz's institutions: upbringing through work, setting a personal example, verbal and anticipatory methods, as well as upbringing through religion.⁵³

The first and key method in Fr Markiewicz's concept was upbringing through work, which, in his opinion, 'ennobles man, develops their moral and physical strength and their entire individuality'.⁵⁴ Therefore, each student should be introduced gradually, given the opportunity to choose an activity, and attention should be paid to the benefits for both him and his surroundings. By such inclusion, 'the child develops sensitivity to the work of other people, they will learn to respect the work itself and the people whose work we use, and they will understand that idleness is a crime against themselves and society'.⁵⁵ Educators should ensure good organization of work, that is, adapt it individually to each child, considering their interests and predispositions and avoid monotony in favour of teamwork. Referring to the Holy Family, Fr Markiewicz stressed manual work and farm work in particular. This was not only agriculture but also gardening, horticulture, forestry, beekeeping and animal breeding. The students appreciated these types of duties because, on the one hand, they were varied and, on the other, they noticed that their implementation was truly democratic. Educators and students worked, ate meals and rested together. As a result, a sense of connection, belonging, friendship and community was

52 C. Kustra, *Działalność edukacyjna*, p. 127.

53 M. Bojarska, *Błogosławiony ksiądz Bronisław Markiewicz patron PWSTE w Jarosławiu*, in: *Wychowanie i edukacja*, p. 55.

54 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 1, p. 209.

55 *Ibidem*, vol. 2, p. 236.

formed, which additionally motivated them to perform hard work. Having support and awareness of joint action, they felt much less effort. In addition to fieldwork, various workshops and ateliers were also established in Miejsce Piastowe to prepare young people for practical professions. The most popular were the locksmith and carpentry workshops.⁵⁶

The second method – setting a good example – was that each teacher had the task of teaching by setting a good example and being an authority for their students.⁵⁷

The verbal method, also known as ‘evening talks’, played an equally important role. It involved short talks led by a teacher and often by Fr Markiewicz himself. It was not only monologue but also dialogue. The topics of the conversations concerned on going everyday issues. The founder of the facility repeatedly pointed out that children and teenagers needed verbal contact. Therefore, it was necessary to speak to them in an understandable way, appropriate to the young people’s mental development. The method was used to constantly strengthen the morality of the students and prepare them for life in society. Achieving this goal was possible thanks to the teacher’s appropriate and thorough preparation for the ‘evening talks’.⁵⁸

Another key method used in Markiewicz’s system was the anticipatory method, also known as the preventive method, that is, familiarizing the pupils with the laws and regulations of the facility, as well as being under the 24-hour care and control of the educator. The basis of this method was religion and reasonable love, and thus the exclusion of all shameful punishments or the use of lighter ones as rarely as possible. Fr Markiewicz pointed out:

The anticipatory method allows the educator to win the heart of the student, whom they can effectively guide not only during the upbringing period but even when they hold an important position in society. You can achieve more with love than with severity.⁵⁹

56 R. Stojcka-Zuber, *Założenia systemu wychowawczego*, p. 37.

57 Ibidem, p. 38.

58 Ibidem, pp. 38–39.

59 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 2, p. 309.

Only a Christian could make this method bring any results. Therefore, the priest had high expectations of educators. He expected them to be constantly present with the pupils – during work, meals, rest, study, sleep and play. This enabled them to get to know the pupils, gain their trust and, as a result, influence their attitudes and behaviour. Markiewicz believed that:

... with this method, the educator must 'become everything' for each of their pupils. The supernatural love that fills their heart will make all work easy and pleasant for them; this will make their pupils show true love and true respect for them.⁶⁰

It is also worth mentioning that while assisting the pupils, the teachers acted as guardians, guides, caretakers, educators and friends, but under no circumstances could they force children to practice religion. The preventive method used a system of rewards and punishments, which combined both pleasant and unpleasant effects with good and bad deeds. However, they were not to be applied arbitrarily, but prudently, justly and rightly, and should also be similar to natural rewards and punishments; adapted to a child's age and temperament and based on the principle of gradation – from the lightest to the more severe. Fr Bronisław specified three types of rewards: 1) showing satisfaction of an educator through words, gestures or looks; 2) praising expressed in words; and 3) the actual reward – expressing appreciation with an action, for example, by giving a book. He emphasized that punishment can only be given when the educator is sure that the student committed an offence intentionally and with premeditation. He strongly recommended not using punishments under the influence of emotions, for mistakes and defects that resulted from nature and were independent of the student, as well as those that were physically or mentally harmful, such as beating on the head or kneeling. Corporal punishment is not an appropriate means for the integral development of a young person, therefore, it should be replaced with reinforcements that will encourage students to self-educate based on Christian virtues.⁶¹

60 Ibidem, p. 313.

61 Ibidem, pp. 295–306; R. Stojęcka-Zuber, *Założenia systemu wychowawczego*, pp. 39–40.

In turn, the method of religious upbringing, or upbringing through religion, was the basis of Fr Bronisław's educational system. He wrote:

Only upbringing based entirely on true religion is capable of developing brave and great characters, that is, people who strictly adhere to constant principles and achieve great things...true faith revealed by God can reconcile the rich and the poor, the superior and the subordinate, a nobleman and a peasant.⁶²

The methods developed by Fr Markiewicz were characterized by simplicity and based on religion, subjectivity, community, work, play, the authority of educators, a family atmosphere and direct and constant contact with educators. By combining work, study and prayer, he created conditions for children and young people for integral development and practical preparation for life and the profession of their choice.⁶³

Conclusions

Blessed Fr Bronisław Markiewicz is one of the educators of action. In his pastoral and educational activities, he focused not only on publications but also on his actions towards other people. He worked for children and young people, putting them at the centre. He was characterized by simplicity, diligence, modesty, restraint and piety and promoted these features in his care and educational concept. In addition, his system was consistent with the one created by Blessed John Bosco but adapted to the needs and conditions of Galicia at that time.⁶⁴

The activity carried out by the clergyman influenced the development of Polish pedagogical thought. Currently, his concept remains up to date and it is worth using it in the upbringing process, in both the natural environment – the family and the institutional environment – educational institutions. Nowadays, children and teenagers focus on having rather than being. Moreover,

62 B. Markiewicz, *Przewodnik dla wychowawców*, vol. 2, p. 268.

63 K. Radzik, *Błogosławiony ksiądz Bronisław*, pp. 18–19.

64 R. Stojeczka-Zuber, *Założenia systemu wychowawczego*, p. 44.

they are exposed to numerous threats that may cause uncertainty and dilemmas and, consequently, a loss of the sense of meaning in life. By referring to the ideas and methods used by Fr Markiewicz, educators can meet educational challenges and inspire young people to work spiritually, physically and mentally because such work brings about goods that help meet human needs and build a Christian community.

Streszczenie: Bł. ks. Bronisław Markiewicz (1842–1912) jest jednym z prekursorów pedagogiki opiekuńczo-wychowawczej, mającym przygotowanie zawodowe do pracy z małoletnimi. Założył Towarzystwo „Powściągliwość i Praca” oraz męskie i żeńskie Zgromadzenie Św. Michała Archanioła. Jego koncepcja i system wychowawczy bazowały na dwóch cnotach: powściągliwości i praca oraz głębokiej formacji religijnej, miłości, a także warunkach, jak najbardziej zbliżonych do środowiska rodzinnego. Otoczył troską dzieci biedne, opuszczone, pochodzące z rodzin patologicznych oraz sieroty. Głównym założeniem markiewiczowskich zakładów było zapewnienie wychowankom warunków do integralnego rozwoju i wychowania oraz stałe asystowanie im, aż do usamodzielnienia się. Niniejszy tekst jest próbą przedstawienia biografii duchownego, a także idei wychowawczej, którą realizował w swoich placówkach.

Słowa kluczowe: Bronisław Markiewicz, powściągliwość i praca, wychowanie, opieka, dzieci, młodzież.

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