



SLEZSKÁ DIAKONIE
We bring light
to people in need

NEWSLETTER
2 / 2012

introduction...

Humble service

„We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends“.

The Church fulfils four basic tasks. It enables: 1. sharing fellowship with God and the neighbours (koinonia), 2. experiencing joy and praise based on salvation (leiturgia), 3. preaching the gospel of faith inspired by the Word of God (martyria) and 4. service towards the neighbour and the needy (diakonia).

It is obvious that Slezská diakonie within its agenda focuses on the last point - service towards the neighbour. Jesus empowers the believers by giving them, except skills and inherited talents, also different spiritual gifts (charisma) as it is mentioned in Romans, chapter 12, 1. Corinthians, chapter 12 and Ephesians, chapter 4.

Unfortunately, already at the time of apostle Paul, some believers misused those spiritual gifts by commending themselves, comparing with others and acquiring higher positions and higher significance. Apostle Paul was pretty aware of the fact that instead of humility and love in the Church, the space was given rather to the pride and subjective valuation and judgment which was far from the truth. Namely everything depends on who and what I myself compare with. Let me give you two examples.

When looking back and being no more young, some tend to think that they are too old and are over due for the scrap-heap. Maybe, they are surprised then when they encounter a person being thirty years older saying with demonstrative envy that she/he would wish to be in the same age.

Having salary below standard and comparing it with incomes of a director of a significant firm, one can be always unsatisfied. Another, on the contrary, when thinking of hungry people in Africa gives praise for what he/she has.

Both examples show that everything depends on the point of view and on the basic measure. There are Christians who find the determining standard in themselves. This can result in self undervaluation and depression or self overestimation, tumidity and pride looking at everybody haughtily. Those are reminded by apostle Paul: “For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.” The Scripture should become the norm and the standard revealed by Christ and apostles in the New Testament which is manifested in a loving, obedient and humble faith.

M.A. Jan Waclawek, bishop of Silesian Evangelical Church, AC.

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Slezská diakonie will create a nice place for life in Prostřední Suchá

The Counselling Centre of Slezská diakonie in Havířov is going to extend its services. From 1st of March 2012 a new project called „Prostřední Suchá—a nice place for life“ will be started. The project consists of some parts which are focused on enhancement of quality of life in Prostřední Suchá. The first activity involves a **street work programme**. The staff members of the centre will look up clients and motivate them for active participation in solving their own problems. Further, in Horní Suchá a **branch of the Civil Counselling Centre in Havířov** will be opened aiming at debt counselling and it will provide services regarding social benefits, living, property-law and interpersonal relationships. Another programme concerning **Individual Career Counselling** will motivate the clients for work on themselves in order to increase their capacity and encourage them to succeed in the labour market. A programme called **Prevention of violence in families** - will be a brand new services towards the clients. It will pick up on tradition of counselling centres of Slezská diakonie that are focused on help towards victims of domestic violence. The new programme will aim at perpetrator of violence, provide professional social counselling, individual or group therapies, training of non-aggressive ways of addressing situations, etc.

Help for the long-term sick and the dying...

In autumn 2011 Slezská diakonie launched the project „Mobile Hospice“ the aim of which is to provide support to the long-term sick and the dying and their family members in their natural setting, in hospitals or within social services. The financial support is granted by the Foundation Partnership within the Swiss-Czech Cooperation programme. In early March the training for volunteers in companionship and support for patients and the bereaved in the field of palliative and hospice care was started. The agenda of the training involved topics such as: companionship, need of the dying and the caring, work with the family and the bereaved, basics on skills in care and other. The participants of the training completed internship in the Hospice in Frýdek-Místek to the extend of 15 hours. On behalf of the Mobile Hospice project we are glad to announce you that the first 15 course attendees have successfully completed their training. A new Companionship Service has pick up on the course. Six course-leavers are willing to be the part of the new service. They are ready to visit the long-term sick in their free time and become a good support also for the caring people.

Service users participated in discussions with the European legislators

From 9th until 11th of May 2012, the 11th Meeting of People living in Poverty was held by the European Anti-Poverty Network in Brussels under the auspices of Denmark, the current presiding EU-country. A four-member delegation of representatives from the Czech Republic took part in the discussions and there were 30 countries represented at the meeting. The Czech delegates (social service users), sent by Slezská diakonie, Caritas Ostrava and Salvation Army were led by the national EAPN coordinator from Slezská diakonie. The aim of the meeting was to enable a direct mutual exchange of views between the representatives of the European legislators and people who suffer from poverty.



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Mr. László Andor, the commissioner for employment, social affairs and inclusion was the main guest of the meeting. Issues connected with living and its development between 2008 and 2012 was the central topic of the discussions. Each country represented at the meeting introduced itself by a creative presentation and there is no doubt that the Czech DVD-presentation became one the most interesting.

Social Rehabilitation Services- introduction...

Since the very beginning of its existence, Slezská diakonie has been giving a strong impact on support of social inclusion of people who from different reasons are threatened by social exclusion. Due to the new Social Service Law put into effect in 2007, Slezská diakonie was able to develop social rehabilitation services. This kind of services is focused on two target groups: people with health disabilities and the homeless.

Social rehabilitation services for people with health disabilities expanded to five towns (Bruntál, Český Těšín, Frýdek-Místek, Krnov and Třinec) picking up on the project „Equal Chances“ funded by the European Union in 2005-2008. This particular project helped analyse the needs of the current as well as the potential service users of Slezská diakonie. Based on the analysis, targets of social rehabilitation were set, the efforts of which is support of the overall social inclusion of people with health disabilities both into society and on the open labour market. Social rehabilitation for people with health disabilities is provided either in the centre or as a field service within the centres RÚT - social rehabilitation. In the centre the clients may take advantage of consultations with the professional staff trying to find the best and individual solution of their situation. The field services offer training aimed at orientation in specific setting, housekeeping, self care in the home setting, commuting to work and coping with tasks connected with their working position. Supported employment is the method used in helping those people to acquire a new working position. A significant principle of social rehabilitation is provision of training that supports independency of people with health disability to a high extent in order to make living in society possible.



interview.

HOW TO MAKE INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES HAPPEN?

Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary School of Slezská diakonie in cooperation with Slezská diakonie organized and run an international working conference in Ostrava on Innovative Approaches in Education within European context. The conference opened a discussion on inclusion of pupils into the mainstream education. Franz Wolfmayer was one of the key speakers at the conference. Here is an interview with him:

What is the position of Slezská diakonie in EASPD

FW: Slezská diakonie is the first organization in the Czech Republic that joined EASPD. Now it already has a long-term tradition of its operation in EASPD. Slezská diakonie is a significant partner for us as it became the bridge that helped us to reach the social service providers in the Czech republic. On the top of that we work with Slezská diakonie on many mutual projects.

In your lectures you often declare that it is necessary to implement inclusion. How shall we do it?

FW: Taking into account results of our work and comparing examples of inclusion in different countries reaffirmed us that support of the top-down inclusion process is the most important. If the management of the school, the founders and last but not least the state are interested in inclusion and support it, than it is the first prerequisite for a successful process of inclusion of children into the mainstream education. The point is not only that we - the social service providers are going to implement inclusion but it is also about motivating the neighbourhood in which a child with health or other handicap lives to discussions and asking the question how to help this child. The inclusion process should involve not only various levels of schools starting with a kindergarten but also parents and other subjects that impact the child.

You have just mentioned that it is essential to bring different persons to discussion on inclusion - also public services.

FW: Municipalities as such play an important role in the inclusion process as they create space in which children live. The basic condition for inclusion of people with health disabilities are suitable living conditions. 16 percent of European population have health disabilities which seems to be a significant number and public services have to take the fact into account. The OECD research has revealed that expenses incurred for social services with regard to care of people with health disabilities exceed the costs spent on education of people with handicap and inclusion. In some cases the costs may reach the same amount of money, however inclusion improves also the quality of life. It is very useful to convey the information to municipalities and regional authorities so that they can see a clear evidence of the importance of inclusion.

Do you have any recommendations on how to begin the process of inclusion?

FW: When discussing how to start with inclusion, we begin with the legislation. If the legislation on inclusion is not sufficient, inclusion will never work. It is important that there are laws that give the school principals the obligation to implement inclusion. The school principals should the parents retain the freedom to decide if their child will be included into a special education system or in an inclusive system.

Is inclusion a question of money?

FW: I think that inclusion is a question of a proper allocation of money rather than a question of money itself. To do special education system is also expensive.

Is there any good practice example within Europe where inclusion is already in place?

FW: I don't think that there is a country within Europe where inclusion successfully works

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but there are numbers of different schools in which inclusion is being realized. However the fact that a number of countries have joined the process of discussion on inclusion and that the know-how of different facilities can thus be shared and introduced, is very substantial. This kind of learning may bring along establishing the own model and the own inclusion system in a particular country. Nevertheless a real model has now come into my mind. It has a significant impact as it is based on involvement of all staff members of a school into the inclusion process. The involvement concerns not only teachers but also cleaning staff, school porters and others. All the school staff had built some kind of relationships with the pupils and this kind of model turned to be successful at children with behaviour disorder.

Can you give us any concrete example of an inclusive class?

FW: I was recently in Portugal and I visited a secondary school in which a system of seminars works. Some of the subjects are for all the students. However some of the subjects visit especially students with special needs. For such students editing mathematical expressions is too complicated and has little benefit unlike other students. It is completely normal that healthy students meet student with handicap at the school. I will give you one more example of an Austrian school in which schooling is being done by two teachers in each class. In one class there are 24 pupils, four of them are with handicap. One teacher is available only for the four children with disabilities but at the same time he/she often leads these children into joint projects and common team activities with the other children of the class. Many times it is more about the teacher's attitude than about having a special system of inclusive education. Very often acquiring new information, advice and observation is very helpful to the teachers in order to find out how to approach children with special needs.

What is your vision for the future?

FW: My vision is to create a platform where people could share their know-how, experience and knowledge concerning inclusion and also support projects which help inclusion happen.

What wish do you have for Slezská diakonie?

FW: I wish very much that funding of social services within the Czech republic would become easier. I also wish Slezská diakonie a stable financial security in order to be able to plan the future which is very essential for any organization.

