

Abstract

The casuistical manner of dealing with ethical issues goes as far as to the antiquity, and afterwards it was considerably developed in Christianity. Nevertheless from the half of the 17th century it was criticized because of abusing and due to the supposedly „unscientific“ character and subsequently it has been abandoned. The ridiculous criticism of Blaise Pascal in his „Provincial Letters“ has presented the casuistry as a way in which it is possible to justify almost any behaviour and this evaluation has remained up to the present day. In the same era the mathematization of natural sciences has led to impressive successes and the similar mathematical exactness was expected also in other fields of the human knowledge. Also ethics was concerned with seeking such abstract general principles, which were supposed to describe, cover and explain the whole field of morality. The value of casuistry was seen only as an illustration of such principles in an individual case. In my diploma thesis I attempted to rehabilitate the casuistry as an ethical method. I discussed the book of American authors Albert R. Johnes and Stephen Toulin „The Abuse of Casuistry“ from the year 1988. The presentation of this publication is one of purposes of my thesis. Then I examined the casuistry as an ethical method in cases of medical decisions about the type of treatment of patients with devastating harms of the central nervous system – whether curative or symptomatic. In the end I discussed the legitimacy and the significance of the casuistry in the ethical reasoning – from the point of view of the philosophical ethics and Christian theology.