



ELŻBIETA KRZEWSKA* – WARSZAWA
RYSZARD SKRZYNIARZ** – LUBLIN

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CULT OF ST JOSEPH IN POLAND AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOSEPH SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN BIELINY

Abstract

On 30 October 1637, Bishop Jakub Zadzik (1582–1642), at the request of Krzysztof Józwik, the owner of glassworks in Kokanin and its vicinity, erected and endowed the parish of St Joseph the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Bieliny, a town lying in the property of the bishops of Kraków. The Kraków chapter approved the privileges granted by the bishop to the church and peasants. The patronage over the temple was taken over by Jakub Zadzik. Its construction began that same year. K. Józwik, as the founder, took part in everything, worked on erecting walls and took care of the church's furnishings. He bought a monstrance, solicited the installation of an organ, and allocated funds for the organist's upkeep. The construction of the temple took less than six years and on 14 June 1643, the bishop of Kraków, Tomasz Oborski, consecrated it. The article attempts to answer the question of who decided that the temple in a small town near Kielce, constructed in the first half of the 17th century, was dedicated to St Joseph Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In Poland at that time, only a few monastic churches located in large cities: Kraków, Lublin and Poznań had such patrons. Was it the decision of the Bishop of Kraków? Was the choice

* Elżbieta Krzewska – M.A. of History, Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences

e-mail: elizawieta@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9568-055X>

** Ryszard Skrzyniarz – Ph.D. habilitated, Institute of Pedagogy, the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

e-mail: skrzyniarz@kul.pl

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1732-8155>

of the patron influenced by the initiator and the builder of the new parish and church, K. Józwik?

Keywords: Bieliny; the Bishop of Kraków, Jakub Zadzik; foundation of the parish church in Bieliny; diocese of Kielce; St Joseph the Spouse; cult

On 30 October 1637 – at the request of the inhabitants of Bieliny, with Krzysztof Józwik, the owner of the glassworks in Kokanin and its vicinity, at the head – the bishop of Cracow Jakub Zadzik (1582–1642) founded and endowed the parish of St Joseph the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the town, which lay in the territory of the bishops. Information about it can be found in the parish chronicle, on a commemorative plaque inside the church and in the files of successive visitations.¹ On this basis it is possible to trace the construction of the church and the changes to its appearance. Unfortunately, there is no information there as to why a parish church in a small settlement near Kielce erected from the first half of the 17th century was dedicated to St Joseph the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Was it the decision of the bishop of Cracow? Did Krzysztof Józwik, who initiated the foundation of the new parish and built the church, have any influence on the choice of patron?

It is very likely that the church in Bieliny is the first parish church dedicated to St Joseph the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary which did not belong to any religious order in Poland. This article is an attempt to summarise the research on the development of the St Joseph cult in Poland and to present the story of the parish in Bieliny becoming the place of this saint's cult.

Beginnings of the cult of St Joseph

St Joseph, David's descendant, virgin husband of Mary, protector and educator of Jesus, a silent, modest and hard-working man who remained in the shadow of God's Mother and Her Son, was not one of the saints whose cult reached back to the beginnings of Christianity. Stanisław Józef Kłossowski wrote in the 18th century that

before the grace of the Gospel was announced, the great Patriarch Saint Joseph was taken to eternity although his glory was not announced to the whole world at once. The fame of God's Mother, Saint Joseph's bride, was spread around the world together with the Holy Catholic faith by the Apostles, then the fame of Christ's martyrs was spread by the Apostles' followers to strengthen the faith and discourage the unfaithful, while the fame of St Joseph ... was left by God to later centuries.²

¹ R. Skrzyński, *Parafia Bieliny. Zarys dziejów*, Kielce 2007, pp. 23–24.

² S.J. Kłossowski, *Cuda y Łaski za przyczyną y wzywaniem Mniemanego Oyca Jezusowego Jozefa Świętego przy Obrazie Tegoż Świętego Patryarchy W Kollegiacie Kaliskiej, uciekającym się do opieki Jego, od Wszechmocnego Boga miłościwie uczynione z procesu dwóch komissyi i zaprzysiężeń w konsystorzu Kaliskim (...) zebrane a dla większego wychwalenia Boga w świętym, dla Duchownej pociechy jednym, dla zachęcenia drugim, dla naśladowania i czytania wszystkim za dozwoleńm Duchownej Zwierzchności, Kalisz 1780, p. 2, 2v.*

Interest in St Joseph³ appeared in the 4th century among the Greek fathers of the Church, e.g. St Ephrem and St John Chrysostom, who wrote about the virginal conception of Jesus, the engagement and marriage of Joseph and Mary and about Joseph's presence at Mary's side. When the house of the Holy Family and St Joseph's grave were found in Nazareth, his 'fame' grew.⁴ In that period, in the East St Joseph was mentioned in the liturgy on the last Sunday of Advent, at Christmas, in the Feast of Epiphany and on Sunday following Christmas, whereas in the West he was worshipped in a separate liturgical feast.⁵ The cult increased when the Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, which was established in Palestine and which worshipped God's Mother, Her parents Saints Anne and Joachim and St Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary⁶ with special piety, moved to Europe (ca. 1238); then the worship of St Joseph began to spread more solemnly.⁷ Daniel Papebrock argued in *Acta Sanctorum* that it was the Carmelites who contributed most to the development of the cult of St Joseph in the West: 'Who else could have contributed to the worship of St Joseph in the West if not those who already worshipped him in Palestine?'⁸ While writing about the cult of the saint in the order, the Carmelite Benignus Józef Wanat quoted the words of Arnold Bostius, also a Carmelite, who in 1479 called St Joseph

a virgin and untouched man, a representative of eternal God, provider and most caring economist and presumed husband of Mary, the most faithful guardian and witness of Her virginity; on the example of his bride – the most earnest to save the souls and perfect in each virtue.⁹

³ The beginning of the cult was discussed by: K. Białczak, *Kult liturgiczny św. Józefa w Polsce w świetle ksiąg liturgicznych*, in: *Studia z dziejów liturgii w Polsce*, vol. 2, eds. M. Rechowicz, W. Schenk, Lublin 1976, pp. 35–37; F.L. Filas, *Święty Józef człowiek Jezusowi najbliższy*, Kraków 1979, p. 265. A bibliography of Works about St. Joseph was also written, cf. T. Fitych, *Polskie publikacje o św. Józefie w 30-letnim okresie posoborowych (1966–1996)*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie", 91 (1999) vol. 132, fasc. 1 (539), pp. 81–104.

⁴ T. Fitych, *Trójca stworzona. Nauka o św. Józefie na Śląsku*, Lublin 1990, pp. 26–27.

⁵ The oldest traces of such a feast can be found in martyrologies from the end of the 8th century and in sacramentaria from the 10th century. In the 14th century a big number of calendars, martyrologies and liturgican books was available which considered this feast and provided characteristic titles of St. Joseph: "S. Joseph Sponsi Virginis Mariae", "S. Joseph Confessoris", "S. Joseph Nutritoris Domini". R. Gauthier, *Joseph (saint): Liturgie et documents pontificaux*, in: *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, eds. M. Viller, F. Cavallera, J. de Guibert, vol. 8, Paris 1974, col. 1316–1317; Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, pp. 35–36.

⁶ B.J. Wanat OCD, *Kult św. Józefa Oblubieńca Najświętszej Maryi Panny u Karmelitów Bosych w Poznaniu*, Poznań 2014, pp. 22.

⁷ Kłossowski, *Cyda u łaski*, p. 15.

⁸ D. Papebrock, *De s. Josepho Sponso Deiparae Virginis*, in: *Acta Sanctorum – Martii*, vol. 3, Parisii et Romae 1865, p. 8.

⁹ B.J. Wanat OCD, *Kult świętego Józefa Oblubieńca NMP u Karmelitów Bosych w Krakowie*, Kraków 1981, p. 14.

However, not only the Carmelites contributed to the development of the cult of St Joseph. It was also celebrated in the orders of the Servants, Franciscans, Cistercians, Bernardines, Benedictines, Dominicans and canons regular.¹⁰

In the 14th and 15th centuries the increased interest in St Joseph was connected with the cult of relics. Attempts were made at the time to find artefacts related to him. In Perugia an onyx ring which was believed to have been given to Mary by Joseph was worshipped; in Jeanville his belt was worshipped, and in the Camaldolese monastery in Florence it was his grace. A fragment of his coat and his grave¹¹ were regarded as relics and the Nazarene house of the Holy Family was worshipped in Loreto.¹²

After the Council of Trident, the greatest propagator of the cult giving it new impetus was St Theresa of Avila (†1582), who at the age of 26 was healed through the intercession of St Joseph. She considered the saint to be the patron of her soul. Trusting his help and care, she carried out a reform of the Carmelite order. She presented St Joseph to other nuns as being effective at winning God's protection in any need:

This is extraordinary how great gifts God gave me through the intercession of this blessed Saint, from what dangers He saved me, both of the body and the soul. It seems that the Lord gave other saints the grace of supporting us in one need and this glorious Saint – and I experienced this – supports us in all, and the Lord wishes to make us understand that like he was subjected to him as the father on earth (when he was the guardian of the Lord) and St Joseph could give orders to Him, the same is in heaven where the Lord does what he asks Him for.¹³

On 24 August 1552 St Theresa devoted her first monastery, in Avila, to St Joseph; she later did the same with the others.¹⁴ Each of the monastic houses she established had to have pictures of St Mary and St Joseph. The Carmelite sisters still remain faithful to St Theresa's instructions. Her example was followed by reformed (Discalced) Carmelites. In 1581 they announced that St Joseph was the patron of the reform, and in 1590 the patron of the order.¹⁵ The regulations of the Apostolic See also contributed to the spread of the cult of St Joseph: in 1479 Pope Sixtus IV established 19 March as the date of his feast, and in 1621 Gregory XV

¹⁰ In 1324 the Servants ordered the general charter to celebrate this feast on 19 March in all their churches. By virtue of the decision of the general chapter in 1399 Franciscans extended this feast onto the whole order. A hundred years later (1498) the general chapter of Carmelites approved of the feast which they had celebrated for years. The Cistercians did the same in 1613. Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, p. 31; Wanat OCD, *Kult świętego Józefa*, p. 19.

¹¹ Filas, *Święty Józef*, p. 263.

¹² Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, p. 41.

¹³ Św. Teresa od Jezusa, *Księga mojego życia*, quoted after *Studia Eliasza. Medytacje świętych Karmelu*, Poznań 2021, pp. 149–150; Św. Teresa od Jezusa, *Dziela*, vol. I, Kraków 1962, pp. 104–106.

¹⁴ Medina del Campo (1567), Malaga (1568), Toledo (1569), Salamanka (1570), Segowia (1574), Vegas (1575), Sewilla (1575), Palencia (1580), Granada (1582), Burgos (1582). Cf. Wanat, *Kult świętego Józefa*, p. 21; Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, p. 37.

¹⁵ J. Misiurek, *Kult św. Józefa i jego wartości duchowe*, "Kaliskie Studia Teologiczne", 1 (2002) pp. 369–381; Filas, *Święty Józef*, pp. 265, 274.

raised it to the rank of feast in the entire universal Church.¹⁶ From a locally – and in a sense privately – celebrated feast in the 17th century, in a short time ‘the fame of Saint Joseph spread so widely and so far as of hardly any Saints.’¹⁷

A reflection of the popularity of St Joseph, and at the same time a way to spread his cult, were the fraternities of the saint. In Europe such a confraternity was set up in Avignon (ca. 1371) and at the Carmelite church in Cologne (1485). In Rome such a confraternity has existed since 1539.¹⁸ Inspired by the piety of St Theresa, Archduke Albert (1599–1621) and the archduchess of the Spanish Netherlands, Isabella (1621–1633) – together with Discalced Carmelites – contributed to the establishment of as many as 15 fraternities of St Joseph. In the 17th century the members included both the clergy – archbishops, bishops and prelates – and the laypeople, ‘the noblest people’,¹⁹ from all social strata.

The development of the cult of St Joseph in the Republic of Poland in the 16th and early 17th centuries

In Poland, as in the whole universal Church, the liturgical cult of St Joseph was closely associated with the cult of the Holy Family and God’s Mother. It appeared in the Polish areas along with liturgical books brought by missionaries. At the beginning of the 12th century, the benedictional, which likely comes from Regensburg and which contains the text of the blessing for the feast of St Joseph Provider of the Lord, was used in Wawel Cathedral at the beginning of the 12th century.²⁰ However, as in the rest of Europe, for a long time the saint was worshipped mainly by the clergy. In the 17th century the cult of the ‘Lord’s Provider’ began to appear among the people. Hosts of people started to learn about the history of Infant Jesus and His Mother – and through them about St Joseph – from

¹⁶ Wanat OCD, *Kult św. Józefa Oblubieńca*, pp. 20–21.

¹⁷ Kłossowski, *Cyda u łaski*, p. 15. Cf. Białczak, *Kult liturgiczny*; W. Schenk, *Der liturgische Kult des M. Joseph in Polen vom Mittelalter bis zum 17 Jh.*, “Estudios Josefinos”, 31 (1977) pp. 623–631; T. Sinka, *Kult Świętego Józefa w Polsce*, “Studia Paradyskie”, 2 (1987) pp. 311–335; J. Plota, *Kult św. Józefa w kolegiacie kaliskiej*, in: *Kolegiata Kaliska na przestrzeni wieków 1303–2003. Materiały z konferencji naukowej odbytej w Sanktuarium Świętego Józefa w Kaliszu z okazji jubileuszu 700-lecia Parafii Kolegiackiej w Kaliszu, 6 listopada 2003*, eds. G. Kucharski, J. Plota, Kalisz 2003, pp. 69–80.

¹⁸ Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, p. 39.

¹⁹ Kłossowski, *Cuda y łaski*, p. 16.

²⁰ A liturgical calendar of the Premonstratensians from Wrocław comes from the 13th century. It marks the feast of St Joseph. Liturgical books from the 14th century include a note under the date of 19 March “Joseph nutritor Domini”. It was not until the 15th century that we find complete forms on “the Lord’s provider” in missals and the prayers of canon hours in breviaries. The most popular titles were “Oblubieniec Najświętszej Maryi Panny” [The spouse of the blessed Virgin Mary], “Stróż Dziewictwa Maryi” [The guardian of Mary’s virginity], and “Głowa Najświętszej Rodziny” [The head of the Holy Family]. *Duchowość św. Józefa z Nazaretu*, ed. K.M. Chmielewski, Lublin 2003, pp. 239–253; J.N. Fijałek, *Księgi liturgiczne oraz święta i święci katedry wawelskiej z początku XII wieku*, “Nova Polonia Sacra”, 1 (1928) p. 350; F. Bracha, *Kraków w blaskach kultu świętego Józefa*, “Meteor”, 47 (1975) p. 34; F. Bracha, *Św. Józef szczególnym patronem miasta Krakowa*, “Ate-neum Kapłańskie”, 90 (1978) pp. 76–77; Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, pp. 35–36.

the *Holy Scriptures* translated by Jakub Wujek of Wągrowiec (†1597) and from the lives of saints, sermons and prayer books. It was not until the 17th century, however, when an explosion of the cult of the Holy Family's guardian took place.²¹ *Żywoty Świętych Starego i Nowego Zakonu* [The lives of the saints from the Old and New Testaments] by Fr. Piotr Skarga (†1612), a Jesuit, contained *Żywot św. Józefa Oblubieńca Matki Bożej z Pisma świętego wyłożone* [The life of St Joseph, husband of God's Mother, explained from the Holy Scripture]. Father Skarga emphasised the exceptional dignity of St Joseph, which exceeded the position of all other saints.²² He wrote that 'the Saint also has a lot of importance with God and can ask Jesus for anything. Here, on Earth, Jesus was "obedient" to him and loved him – would it change now in Heaven?'²³ Sermons also played a large role in teaching the faithful more about St Joseph. At that time the sermons about the Husband of Holy Mary said by Jakub from Paradyż (†1464), Jakub Wujek and Adam Opatowczyk (†1647), rector of the Cracow Academy, were very popular. Wujek stressed the thought about Joseph being called to protect Mary. Opatowczyk spoke about the saint as a true virgin husband of Mary and the true, though not biological, father of Christ.²⁴ The Spanish and Italian Carmelites who came to Poland in 1605 also spread the cult of St Joseph.²⁵

In the 17th century, apart from the aforementioned celebration on 19 March of the Husband of Holy Mary, the liturgical memorial included other feasts dedicated to him, namely St Joseph's Protection (the third Sunday after Easter), the Marriage of St Joseph and Holy Mary (23 January), Mary and Joseph's Expectation of Jesus' Birth (the last Sunday of Advent), the Escape to Egypt (Shrovetide Sunday, before Ash Wednesday), the Finding of Jesus in the Church (the first Sunday after Easter) and the Death of St Joseph (the third Sunday after the Assumption of Holy Mary, after St Bartholomew). Those feasts commemorated the most significant mysteries from St Joseph's life.²⁶

At the end of the 16th century, prayer books were published which contained various prayers to St Joseph meant to be said in private. There were also some that

²¹ W. Smereka, *Bibliotyka polska (wiek XVI-XVIII)*, in: *Dzieje teologii katolickiej w Polsce*, vol. 2. *Od odrodzenia do oświecenia*, part 1: *Teologia humanistyczna*, ed. M. Rechowicz, Lublin 1975, pp. 139–243.

²² Starnawski, *Nurt katolicki w literaturze polskiej*, in: *Księga tysiąclecia katolicyzmu w Polsce*, vol. 2, eds. A. Wojtkowski, C. Zgorzelski, Lublin 1969, pp. 139–243; B. Natoński, *Dzieje kultu świętego Józefa w zakonie jezuitów w Polsce 1564–1979*, in: Filas, *Święty Józef*, pp. 377–382.

²³ P. Skarga SJ, *Żywot św. Józefa Oblubieńca Matki Bożej z Pisma świętego wyłożone*, in: *Żywoty świętych Pańskich na wszystkie dni roku podług najwiarogodniejszych źródeł wyjętych z dzieł ojców i doktorów Kościoła św. / oprac. podług księdza Piotra Skargi, ojca Prokopa, kapucyna, ojca Bitschnaua, benedyktyna i innych wybitnych autorów; z uwzględnieniem świętych pańskich, błogosławionych i świętobliwych, których wydała ziemia polska aż do najnowszych czasów*, Mikołów–Warszawa 1910, p. 288.

²⁴ Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, pp. 38–40.

²⁵ Wanat OCD, *Kult świętego Józefa*, pp. 112–115.

²⁶ Białczak, *Kult liturgiczny*, pp. 73–76; C. Gil, *Z dziejów kultu świętego Józefa*, p. 233; Wanat OCD, *Kult świętego Józefa*, pp. 25–24, 32; Sinka, *Nabożeństwo ku czci świętego Józefa w Polsce*, p. 215.

were wholly devoted to the Husband of Holy Mary.²⁷ They included litanies that helped the faithful express their worship and love to St Joseph as a special patron and protector and which showed him as an infallible advocate with God in every need and as a model for life, e.g. *Litania do św. Józefa z Pisma świętego* [Litany to St Joseph from the Bible], *Litania do św. Józefa z Ojców Kościoła* [Litany to St Joseph from the Fathers of the Church] and *Litania do św. Józefa* [Litany to St Joseph].²⁸ As early as the first half of the 17th century, *Godzinki o św. Józefie* [Little office of St Joseph] was well known.²⁹ In the 17th century the first devotional songs in honour of St Joseph appeared in Polish, teaching those who sang them about the provider of Jesus.³⁰ Religious poetry was also popular, especially that which was connected with Christmas, where St Joseph frequently appeared. For example, Jan Żabczyc (†1629), author of *Symfonie anielskie abo Kolęda* [Angelic symphonies, or A carol], presented him as a cheerful old man, sometimes quite strict, standing guard at the entrance to the shed during the visit of the Three Kings.³¹ Stanisław Grochowski (†1612) wrote in *Wirydarz abo Kwiatki rymów duchownych* [A cloister garden, or Flowers of spiritual verses] that Joseph, as a guardian of Mary's purity, took care of her and Jesus, prepared the crib, listened to their requests and did as they asked. In Kasper Twardowski's (†1641) carols, Joseph is described as an elderly man, 'old Józwa', who knelt and praised Jesus lying in the hay together with the animals, cherishing the gifts from the Three Kings and lamenting upon Jesus.³²

The faithful felt closer to St Joseph, who was a poor carpenter and at the same time the guardian of Jesus and Mary, and who was known from carols and homilies in connection with 'seeking effective protection'³³ in various needs. In the 16th and 17th centuries the people of the Republic of Poland suffered greatly from destruction, robberies, epidemics, fires, crop failures and seizures of property related with the

²⁷ (Arnoldus a Jesu Maria [Kasper Melczerowicz]), *Jezus, Maryja, Józef. Septenna sacra to iest na siedem szrod o siedmiu radościach y boleściach nabożeństwo do mniemanego Oycza Słowa Przedwiecznego Syna Bożego Chrystusa Jezusa*, Kraków 1687.

²⁸ R. Gauthier, *Litania o świętym Józefie w XVII wieku*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie", 38 (1986) pp. 310–315; T. Sinka, *Litania do świętego Józefa, historia i propozycje*, "Studia Józefologiczne", 1 (1989) pp. 83–87. The Holy Office established in a decree from 1601 that only the litanies approved by the Church were allowed for use. Therefore, it can be supposed that different kinds of litanies to St Joseph were commonly said.

²⁹ Their oldest version *Officium Iozepha S. Patryarchy y Oblubieńca Nayswiętszey Panny* was printed in Cracow in 1624 and in the following years successive editions were published. Wanat OCD, *Kult świętego Józefa*, p. 124; Sinka, *Nabożeństwa ku czci świętego Józefa w Polsce*, p. 218; C. Gil, *Z dziejów kultu świętego Józefa w prowincji polskiej karmelitów bosych*, in: *Józef z Nazaretu*, vol. 2, eds. O. Stokłosa, Kraków 1979, p. 258; Sinka, *Kult św. Józefa*, p. 333.

³⁰ T. Sinka, *Najstarsze polskie pieśni nabożne ku czci świętego Józefa*, "Gorzowskie Wiadomości Kościelne", 19 (1976) pp. 330–338.

³¹ J. Żabczyc, *Symfonie anielskie*, wyd. A. Karpiński, Warszawa 1998, pp. 10, 12–13, 32–34.

³² A. Czechowicz, M. Hanusiewicz-Lavallee, *Kasper Twardowski, "Piosneczki Emanuelowe" (1619)*, in: *"Umysł stateczny i w cnotach gruntowny..."*. *Prace edytorskie dedykowane pamięci Profesora Adama Karpińskiego*, eds. R. Grześkowiak, R. Krzywy, Warszawa 2012, pp. 75–89.

³³ (Arnoldus a Jesu Maria [Kasper Melczerowicz]), *Jezus, Maryja, Józef. Septenna sacra*, pp. 64, 108.

wars with Sweden, Russia and Turkey and with rebellions. This is why they sought help and support from intermediaries and protectors.³⁴ Hope for St Joseph's help and an end to all these misfortunes quickly penetrated the society and contributed to the number of worshippers. This phenomenon was described a century later by the curate of the collegiate church in Kalisz, Stanisław Józef Kłossowski:

It is known that what makes You happy and what pleases You the most is when somebody asks You for something in need. This is why in the desire to honour your Holy Provider who asks You to show people Your favour divided between all Your Holy servants, you let your Presumed Father be the protector and defender of all needs of all the world. Keeping, as an example for us, the right to respect parents, You accept all His requests, doing everything (which is in agreement with the salvation of the one who asks) that anybody asks You through Him. The whole world knows and hears all of this and Your Holy servants who rule with you and they see the greatest rewards for this saint from You in Heaven and they see You do everything for Him, giving the grace for penance to the biggest sinners, accepting and saving them.³⁵

St Joseph's churches

One manifestation of the cult of St Joseph's development was the first churches dedicated to him.³⁶ It is difficult to establish when they appeared in Poland, but it was certainly not in the Middle Ages.³⁷ What is known is that in the second half of the 15th century St Joseph the Husband of Holy Mary was the patron of the hospital chapel in Wrocław.³⁸

It was not until the modern period that we can find churches dedicated to St Joseph. In the beginning, mendicant orders (male and female) – namely the Carmelites, the Franciscans and the Dominicans, whose churches were devoted to this saint – contributed to the spread of his patronage.³⁹ In accordance with the recommendations of St Theresa, on 2 July 1609 the Carmelite Maciej of St Francis

³⁴ Z. Wójcik, *Międzynarodowe położenie Rzeczypospolitej*, in: *Polska XVII wieku*, ed. J. Tazbir, Warszawa 1969, pp. 14–28; B. Baranowski, *Życie codzienne małego miasteczka w XVII i XVIII wieku*, Warszawa 1974; J. Bystron, *Etnografia Polski*, Poznań 1947, p. 139.

³⁵ Kłossowski, *Cuda y Łaski*, p. 3.

³⁶ The Carmelites believe that it was St Theresa who was the first to devote a church to St Joseph. However, it is assumed that the first church in honour of this saint was erected in Nazareth by empress Helen. The oldest church devoted to him in Europe was in Bologna (1129). Św. Teresa od Jezusa, *Dziela*, vol. 1, Kraków 1987, pp. 145–147; Filas, *Święty Józef*, p. 265, 274; Wanat OCD, *Kult świętego Józefa*, pp. 112–115; Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, p. 31.

³⁷ So far no such cases have been known. Examples of churches in Godowo near Rybnik, Pożarzysko near Strzegom, Krosnowice near Kłodzko and in Kwietniki near Bolkowo in Kargów Kielecki (Gil, *Z dziejów kultu*, pp. 235–248) given in the literature (Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, p. 56; H. Neuling, *Schlesiens Kirchorte und ihre Kirchlichen Stiftungen bis zum Ausgang des Mittelateres*, Breslau 1902) are not based in Medieval sources.

³⁸ W. Rozynkowski, *Św. Józef jako patron parafii i kościołów parafialnych w Polsce*, "Kaliskie Studia Teologiczne", 2 (2003) pp. 83 ff.; Fitych, *Trójca stworzona*, p. 56.

³⁹ Białczak, *Kult liturgiczny*, pp. 43–81; F. Bracha, *Kult św. Józefa w Polsce*, in: Filas, *Święty Józef człowiek Jezusowi najbliższy*, pp. 334–356; Wanat OCD, *Kult Świętego Józefa*, pp. 26–27;

(Dydak Hurtados de Mendoza) blessed a chapel for the internal use of the monks in the first cloister of the Immaculate Conception of Holy Mary. The chapel was dedicated to her.⁴⁰ It is assumed, however, that the first church bearing the name of St Joseph was the church of the Discalced Carmelites in Poznań. Its blessing and dedication took place on 21 June 1621. Earlier, in 1618, Carmelites had erected there a wooden church, also dedicated to St Joseph.⁴¹ The second church of St Joseph was located in Cracow. The Carmelites applied to the general of the order, Fr. Jan Jesu Maria, for permission to build it in 1611, because the old site near the Vistula and Prądnik rivers was frequently damaged by the spring floods of those rivers. The consecration and dedication of the new church were performed on 26 October 1636 by Bishop Zadzik.⁴² In 1622 the Carmelite sisters, who had been staying in Lublin for four years, obtained permission from Bishop Marcin Szyszkowski to erect a cloister and a church. They moved into the cloister on 10 July 1622, though the cornerstone of the church of St Joseph was not laid until 9 May 1636. Work on erecting the church lasted until 1640, and it was not consecrated until 28 August 1644.⁴³ In 1623 the Carmelites obtained permission from the bishop of Kamianets, Adam Nowodworski, to establish a monastic house in Kamianets-Podilskyi. Work on the new foundation proceeded fairly quickly and by 1638 a new cloister and a church of Madonna of the Victory and St Joseph had been built.⁴⁴ In the 1630s efforts were made for the foundation and construction of two Carmelite cloisters. On 19 September 1637 the Carmelite sisters obtained permission from the bishop of Vilnius, Abraham Woyna, and Pope Urban VIII (†1644) to erect a cloister and a church of St Joseph in Vilnius, but the construction did not start until 1655.⁴⁵ At the beginning of 1639, on the distinct request of his wife Celylia Renata, Vladislaus IV allowed the Carmelites to settle down in Warsaw, and he confirmed the new foundation with a privilege granted in Vilnius on 1 May. The monks were ceremonially introduced to the Church on 24 November, and on 28 February 1643 they took the decision to build a new church dedicated to the Assumption of Holy Mary and St Joseph.⁴⁶

Waldemar Rozynekowski writes that by the end of the 17th century the following cloister churches were dedicated to St Joseph: Bernardines (Mińsk, Wołożyn and Wschowa⁴⁷), Dominicans (Klimontów, Posin and Raków), conventual Franciscans

Fitych, Trójca stworzona, pp. 40–94; W. Rozynekowski, *Św. Józef patron kościołów klasztornych w Polsce ok. 1772 roku*, "Kaliskie Studia Teologiczne", 3 (2004) pp. 131–137.

⁴⁰ Wanat OCD, *Kult Świętego Józefa*, p. 26; Gil, *Z dziejów kultu św. Józefa*, pp. 229–266.

⁴¹ B.J. Wanat OCD, *Zakon Karmelitów Bosych w Polsce. Klasztory karmelitów i karmelitanek bosych 1605–1975*, Kraków 1979, p. 204.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 190–191.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 627–630.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 373–374.

⁴⁵ Due to a delay in construction work caused by continuous wars, the church was not consecrated until 1692 by bishop Konstanty Kazimierz Brostowski. *Ibid.*, p. 637.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 403–407.

⁴⁷ After the reformation the monks returned to the city in 1629 and settled down next to the saved chapel of St Ann. They started building a new church and a new cloister about 1638. Financial

(Bar), reformed Franciscans (Kalisz, Miedniewice, Pułtusk and Sandomierz), Jesuits (Mściśław, Wałcz and Witebsk), Discalced Carmelites (Cracow, Poznań and Warsaw), Calced Carmelites (Drohobycz), Discalced Carmelite sisters, (Cracow, Lublin, Warsaw and Vilnius), Calced Carmelite sisters (Dubno), Bernardine sisters (Cracow) and Visitation sisters (Warsaw).⁴⁸

Foundation of the church of St Joseph Husband of Holy Mary in Bieliny

All researchers agree that initially it was mostly monastic churches dedicated to St Joseph that appeared in Poland. It is difficult to determine the establishment of the first parish church not connected with any order and devoted to the Husband of Holy Mary. However, the early date of the foundation of a parish by this name in Bieliny is surprising and begs certain questions: Is this the first parish church devoted to St Joseph on Polish territory? How did this patron appear in a small town near Kielce? Was this connected with the figure of its founder, Krzysztof Józwick,⁴⁹ owner of the local glassworks?

It has not been established where Józwick came from or when he arrived. Sources say that in 1625 the bishop of Cracow, Marcin Szyszkowski, granted a privilege to him for the establishment of a glassworks near Kakonin in Klucz Kielecki, on the southern slopes of the Łysogóry mountains, and that in 1637, on the request of the village inhabitants headed by Józwick, Bishop Zadzik founded the parish in Bieliny. The baptism files of the Bieliny parish mention him as the founder of

support for the new foundation was given to the Bernardine monks by Mikołaj Tarnowiecki, a courtier of the Opaliński family, who supported the Carmelite foundations in Cracow and Poznań. About 1644 the building of the church was finished and initially the intention was to devote it to St Ann. The first altar in the presbytery of the church built in 1639 was financed by members of St Ann fraternity. Finally, however, the church was devoted to St Joseph. *Klasztory Bernardyńskie w Polsce, w jej granicach historycznych*, ed. H.E. Wyczawski, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska 1985.

⁴⁸ The list in: Rozynkowski, *Św. Józef patron kościołów klasztornych*, pp. 132–133. Here the author also included the churches of Calced Carmelites in Gdańsk, Dominicans in Klimontów and Jesuits in Wałcz. The church in Gdańsk was originally devoted to the Holy Virgin Mary, St Elijah and St Elisha, and the devotion to St Joseph began to appear in a later period, when the church became a parish church. Cf. S. Litak, *Kościół łaciński w Rzeczypospolitej około 1772 roku. Struktury administracyjne*, Lublin 1996, indexes. The erection act of the collegiate church of St Joseph in Klimontów, which was temporarily taken care of by the Dominicans, was obtained by Jerzy Ossoliński not earlier than in December 1640 and the construction began in 1643. E. Niebelski, *Klimontów miasto prywatne Ossolińskich*, Klimontów 1993. The first mentions about St Joseph church in Wałcz come from 1672. Cf. L. Bąk, *Ziemia walecka w dobie reformacji i kontrreformacji*, Piła 1999.

⁴⁹ A. Wyrobisz, *Szkló w Polsce od XIV do XVII wieku*, Wrocław 1968, p. 33; R. Skrzyński, *Bieliny w dobrach biskupów krakowskich*, "Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne", 73 (2000) pp. 399–406. Archives of the Metropolitan Curia in Cracow. AV 27, Visitatio interna et externa ecclesiarum praepositorum, parochialium, hospitalium et aliorum beneficiorum in decanatus Bodzentinensi ac Kunoviensi consistentium per me Venceslaum Hieronymum de Boguslawice Sierakowski, pro tunc episcopum Cestrensem, (...) praevis litteris innotescensibus via cursoria per R.D. Decanos directis anno 1738 die 29 Julii inchoata et successive anno 1739 die 14 mensis Junii terminata et peracta, col. 55; Archiwum Parafii Bieliny, no file no., *Kronika parafialna z 1823 r.*

the church. His name is also surprising in this context: The memorial plaque in the church presbytery names ‘St Józwa’ as the patron of the church.⁵⁰ This form of Joseph was used by the people and in Christmas songs and religious songs. A question worth posing is whether this form was the basis for the local population to dub him ‘Jóźwik’ [little Józwa], or perhaps ‘seeking the help of St Józwa’, and whether this was the name which went down in history as the founder’s surname.⁵¹ It might have been that the glassworks owner became enchanted with the figure of the saint: a simple, quiet and humble worker whom God entrusted with great things – the care over His Son and His Son’s Mother – and he honoured and respected him. Perhaps, while doing business, he travelled a lot and heard about the guild fraternities already functioning in Rome under the name of St Joseph, and desired to make this saint the patron of the church where people employed in the glassworks would pray?

Or was the decision to give the church the patronage of St Joseph taken by Bishop Zadzik? The chronicle of the cloister of the Bernardine sisters in Cracow includes a legend quoted by Fr. Romuald Gustaw. He writes that in 1627 Jakub Zadzik, then the bishop of Chełmno, received a benevolent picture of this saint from Pope Urban VIII, who propagated the cult of St Joseph. The picture shows St Joseph leading young Jesus by the hand, the latter carrying a basket with carpentry tools. When the pope presented the gift, he ordered the bishop to have a church built ‘under the name of St Joseph’.⁵² At that time there were only a few churches with this patronage. Bishop Zadzik, who was busy administering the Chełmińska diocese, working in the royal chancellery, travelling for unending peace negotiations with Sweden and Moscow and settling the continuous internal conflicts, delayed keeping his promise to the pope. The situation did not change until 1635, when he gave up the function of great chancellor and public office to start dealing with the matters of the Church as the bishop of Cracow.⁵³ As mentioned before, in 1636 he consecrated the Carmelite Church of St Michael and the Church of St Joseph in Cracow. However, he did not found them. It seems that not earlier than in 1937 was the request of the glassworks owner to issue a foundation document for the church lying within the bishop’s property an opportunity to keep the promise. Nevertheless, the issue of the picture gives rise to doubt. Why did the bishop, who co-founded the church, not hand over the pope’s gift? Is it connected with the construction of the church of the Bernardine sisters in Cracow?

⁵⁰ “Który pleban od Węgrów, Kozaków zabity / Zostawił po sobie wszystkim głos znamienity / Że jak męczennik prawy wzięto w niebie koronę / Z Józwe[m] Św. niech też nas ciągnie w tamtą stronę” [Which provost killed by Hungarians, Cossacks/Left such an eminent voice after himself/ That like a rightful martyr, He took a crown in heaven/May he also draw us in that direction together with St. Joseph] – transcription of the words on the plaque can be found in the authors’ collection.

⁵¹ The Reviewer, to whom we are greatly indebted, drew our attention to this coincidence. The problem, however, requires to be studied in detail. When writing the present article, we could not deal with it due to the difficulties connected with access to the sources and the literature.

⁵² R. Gustaw, *Klasztor i kościół św. Józefa ss. Bernardynek w Krakowie 1646–1946*, Kraków 1947, p. 161.

⁵³ J. Dorobisz, *Jakub Zadzik (1582–1642)*, Opole 2000.

Zadzik's sister, Katarzyna, whose monastic name was Teresa and who had stayed with the Bernardine sisters in the cloister of St Agnes in Cracow for years, was chosen in 1633 as the superior of the cloister for four years, and was re-elected after a four-year break. Perhaps this idea was strengthened when the Bernardine monks, who wanted to have a safe shelter in the city for times of flooding (both cloisters stood on the river), set up another small cloister in the centre of the city. For the same reasons, Sister Teresa had a desire to build a new cloister for the Bernardine sisters. Bishop Zadzik would not hear of a new foundation.⁵⁴ However, he could not decisively refuse his sister this. Father Gustaw quotes Sister Zadzikówna, writing that the bishop 'started to incline to it a little'.⁵⁵ He might have then given her the picture of St Joseph and asked her to take it to the new foundation. However, till his death his sister did not manage to persuade him to take decisive steps to realise the new foundation. Apart from the chronicle of the cloister, no sources confirm that the picture was presented to her. Zadzik's testament only spoke of two images of God's Mother which found their way to Zadzikówna. The bishop did not leave any bequest for the benefit of the new cloister, but his sister managed to obtain the means from the executors of the testament, probably from the legacy intended for church and charity purposes.⁵⁶

The matter of the consecration of the Carmelite church, the request for the erection of a parish in Bieliny and Sister Teresa's insistence on the foundation of a new cloister of the Bernardine sisters coincided with each other. Perhaps the bishop, having recalled the pope's gift, first intended to take advantage of Józwick's request and the promise given to the pope. Later, his sister's insistence complicated those plans and in consequence the pope's gift found its way to the Bernardine nuns in Cracow, where it remains today. The bishop, however, desired to keep the promise that he had given to the owner of the glassworks on the bishop's property. On 28 May 1638 the Cracow chapter approved of the privileges granted by the bishops to the peasants and the church dedicated to St Joseph the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Bieliny. The right of patronage was taken by Zadzik while Józwick saw to it that the undertaking should be carried out. That same year the construction of the church began.

Sources state that Krzysztof Józwick worked on erecting the walls and equipping the newly erected church with the proper and worthy furnishings. The inventory of the church made in 1638, which was just after the parish was founded, show that he bought the monstrance and probably a few other precious silver paraments for the church. He also made efforts to have an organ installed, and when the instrument did appear in the church he allocated funds for maintaining an organist. The construction of the church took less than six years, and on 14 June 1643 the bishop of Cracow, Tomasz Oborski, consecrated it.⁵⁷ The oldest inventory of the church in Bieliny does not provide any information regarding its permanent furnishings.

⁵⁴ H. Świąch, *Przełożone klasztoru bernardynek pw. Św. Agnieszki w Krakowie*, "Nasza Przyszłość", 123 (2015) pp. 116–117.

⁵⁵ Gustaw, *Klasztor i kościół świętego Józefa*, pp. 42–43, 161.

⁵⁶ Dorobisz, *Jakub Zadzik*, p. 260, 264.

⁵⁷ Skrzyaniarz, *Parafia Bieliny*, pp. 23–24.

Nothing is known about the pictures or the altars which were or were supposed to be there. On the other hand, we learn that there were votive plaques 'for the large altar'. There 'were 5 of them: 2 small ones and 3 embedded in the altar'.⁵⁸ It seems almost certain that Józwick also took care of decorating the church. Tradition and folk tales say that when the church was under construction, a painting of God's Mother by an unknown local master was installed there. It showed the Virgin Mary with Infant Jesus on a meadow among flowers against the background of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains. It cannot be stated with absolute certainty whether this painting was placed in the main altar or the side altar or what happened to it, but a copy of it can now be found in the central area of the church choir and is sometimes called the picture of the Virgin Mary of Bieliny.⁵⁹ A painting of the Flemish school from the second 10-days' period of the 17th century, that is, from the time when Jakub Józwick took care of the church, can still be found in the church. It was painted on two boards and shows the Holy Family standing inside a monumental church with a group of Jewish priests gathered around an altar in the distance. The upper part presents God the Father emerging from clouds and surrounded by angels, with a dove symbolising the Holy Spirit underneath.⁶⁰ The paintings might have been in Bieliny since the very beginnings of the church. In the following year four altars mentioned in the sources appeared in the church: the main altar dedicated to Saints Joseph and Matthias and consecrated on 1 June 1664, and three side altars, dedicated to St Joseph, Our Lady and St Valentine. They were consecrated on 15 September 1670 by Mikołaj Oborski, the Cracow suffragan.⁶¹

The cult of St Joseph in the parish of Bieliny was vivid. The fraternity of St Joseph was established in the new church quite early on.⁶² Pope Innocent XI permitted its establishment in the apostolic breve from 11 March 1679, while the foundation of this fraternity in the parish of Bieliny was performed on 10 April of the same year by Oborski.⁶³ It seems, therefore, that the church in Bieliny founded by Bishop Zadzik and Krzysztof Józwick was dedicated to St Joseph the Spouse of the Virgin Mary thanks to the two founders. Following the request of the inhabitants with Józwick at the head, Bishop Zadzik agreed to found a parish and have a new

⁵⁸ The Ossolineum Library in Wrocław, file no. 215/II, Acta consistorii Kielcensis coram Venerabili Matthiae Obłamkovic Vicepraep[osi]to et Officiali Kielcensi agitate (...) Anno Dni MD- CXXXV, Inventarium Apparamentorum Ecclesiae Par[ochia]lis Bielin[ensis] z 1638, col. 157–159; Skrzyniarz, *Parafia Bieliny*, p. 33.

⁵⁹ This is according to folk tales and legends concerning the church in Bieliny, in the author's collection.

⁶⁰ Skrzyniarz, *Parafia Bieliny*, pp. 101–102.

⁶¹ J. Kracik, *Konsekracje kościołów i ołtarzy w diecezji krakowskiej w XVII-XVIII wieku*, "Nasza Przyszłość", 61 (1984) p. 126. According to the visitation from the first half of the 18th century, dedications of the altars underwent changes, cf. AV 27, [1739 r.], col. 55; *ibid.*, AV 37 [1747 r.], col. 67.

⁶² The first Fraternity of St. Joseph's Protection was founded in Cracow in 1660 at the church of the Bernardine sisters and it survived until 1794. B. Kumor, *Kościelne stowarzyszenia świeckich na ziemiach polskich w okresie przedrozbiorowym. Księga tysiąclecia katolicyzmu w Polsce*, vol. 1, Lublin 1969, pp. 503–541; Gustaw, *Klasztor i kościół św. Józefa*, p. 95.

⁶³ AKMK, AV 37, col. 58.

church built on the bishop's property. When the inhabitants of Bieliny asked the bishop for a new parish, did they know which saint they wished to have as the patron of the church? Was it the bishop who wanted to do it in his property when he saw how fast the cult of St Joseph was developing and that Pope Urban VIII was a strong supporter of it? Or it might have been that both the bishop and Józwick wanted to dedicate the new church to the care of St Joseph? More research should be done concerning the owner of the local glassworks, namely who he was, where he came from, when he arrived in the area of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains and how he set up the glassworks. It seems certain that he was a great worshipper of St Joseph and tried to establish the church he had founded as the centre of this cult. St Joseph – patron of families, good death and of all those who worked in the local glassworks – and above all the ‘advocate in any need’ – was a perfect patron for the church in Bieliny. Remembering the promise given to the pope, Bishop Zadzik could not refuse to support the initiative of a local manufacturer.

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ROZWÓJ KULTU ŚW. JÓZEFA W POLSCE A SIEDEMNASTOWIECZNA FUNDACJA KOŚCIOŁA PARAFIALNEGO PW. ŚW. JÓZEFA OBLUBIEŃCA NAJŚWIĘTSZEJ MARYI PANNY W BIELINACH

Streszczenie

Dnia 30 października 1637 r. biskup Jakub Zadzik (1582–1642), na prośbę Krzysztofa Józwicka, właściciela hut szkła w Kokaninie i okolicach, erygował i uposażył parafię pw. św. Józefa Oblubieńca Najświętszej Maryi Panny w Bielinach, miejscowości leżącej w dobrach biskupów krakowskich. Kapituła krakowska zatwierdziła przywileje nadane przez biskupa dla kościoła i włościan. Prawo patronatu nad świątynią objął Jakub Zadzik. Jeszcze tego samego roku rozpoczęła się jej budowa. K. Józwick, jako fundator, czuwał nad wszystkim, pracował przy wznoszeniu murów i troszczył się o wyposażenie kościoła. Zakupił monstrancję, zabiegał o zainstalowanie organów i przeznaczył środki na utrzymanie organisty. Budowa świątyni trwała niespełna sześć lat i już 14 czerwca 1643 r. biskup krakowski Tomasz Oborski dokonał jej konsekracji. W artykule podjęto próbę odpowiedzi na pytanie, kto zdecydował, że świątyni w małej podkieleckiej miejscowości w pierwszej połowie XVII wieku nadano wezwanie św. Józefa Oblubieńca Najświętszej Maryi Panny. W Polsce w tym czasie takie wezwanie miało tylko kilka kościołów zakonnych usytuowanych w dużych miastach: Krakowie, Lublinie, Poznaniu. Czy taką decyzję podjął biskup krakowski? Czy na wybór patrona miał wpływ pomysłodawca nowej parafii oraz budowniczy kościoła, K. Józwick?

Słowa kluczowe: Bieliny; biskup krakowski Jakub Zadzik; fundacja kościoła parafialnego w Bielinach; diecezja kielecka; św. Józef Oblubieniec; kult