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THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CULT IN LVIV DURING THE PERIOD OF 1945–1991

Abstract

The article presents selected aspects of the social and religious life of the Roman Catholic community of Lviv in the Soviet Union over the years 1945–1991. The Catholic Church in the Polish territories annexed by the USSR was subordinated to communist legislation, which fought religion and spread atheism. Ecclesiastical structures were dismantled, and the clergy and believers were repressed. Despite this, the Church as a community of believers continued and used various opportunities for continued activity. The article presents the attitudes of the Lviv clergy towards the Soviet authorities and their covert pastoral activity among the faithful. Particular attention was paid to the clergy who became symbols of the Lviv pastoral care after World War II. They were priests: Karol Jastrzębski, Stanisław Płoszyński, Zygmunt Hałuniewicz and Rafał Władysław Kiernicki, a Franciscan.

Keywords: Lviv; Lviv cathedral; Soviet Ukraine, priest Karol Jastrzębski, Rev. Stanisław Płoszyński; Rev. Zygmunt Hałuniewicz; Rafał Władysław Kiernicki

Introduction

The aim of this article is to characterise the social and religious life of the Roman Catholic community in Lviv in the Soviet Union between 1945 and 1991. Based on collected materials and witness accounts, it shows the Catholic Church's activity in the hard reality of the communist regime, using the Lviv cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary as an example. The church existed

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in the Soviet Union as a private institution which the state authorities sometimes (not always) allowed to employ clergymen as ‘workers’. Thus, while discussing the religious cult or the pastoral care at the Lviv cathedral, the activity of priests who served in this church between 1945 and 1991 should be examined. In that period the Lviv cathedral church was not only a place to practice the cult, but also a place to cherish Polish tradition and culture, which the authorities uprooted and doomed to oblivion, as with religion.

1. The Catholic Church in the communist Soviet system

As in the entire Soviet Union, the Church in the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic in the period 1945–1991 was subject to the regulations of the constitution from 10 July 1918 (Chapter 2, Art. 13), which stated that for the purpose of securing real freedom of conscience for the workers, the Church was to be separated from the state and the schools from the Church. That legislation enabled the state instances to effectively combat the Church. Each citizen had the right to anti-religious activity, which enjoyed the full support of the state. The Church was treated as a private association registered by parish committees, called *dvadtsats*.¹ They functioned as the only association under Soviet law allowed to manage the religious cult, but they did not have any legal personality to administer Church property. Everything which was connected with the cult and the Church was regulated in unilateral agreements established by the state and executed in accordance with its will.²

The atheist state of the Soviet Union made it difficult for so-called cult servants to perform their service. Each activity of a priest or the faithful was practically under the control of the authorities. The cult and pastoral care were limited, or sometimes even made impossible, by a shortage of priests that resulted from the nationalisation of Church property, the closure of churches and the persecution of priests and the faithful. Nevertheless, the authorities were unable to stop the citizens’ religiosity. On the contrary, the more severe the persecutions were, the more ardent the faithful were in leading a religious life.

The prohibition of religion lessons and worship for people under the age of 18, along with the liquidation of religious sites, left children and youths without

¹ Cf. J. Szymański, *Dwadcatki – organy wykonawcze organizacji religijnych w sowieckim systemie represji (Obwód Winnicki na Podolu, 1944–1964)*, “Roczniki Teologiczne”, 50 (2003) fasc. 4, pp. 175–180; W. Osadczy, *Kościół katolickiego na Ukrainie dole i niedole. Doświadczenie, dzień dzisiejszy, problemy i perspektywy*, in: *Kościół katolicki na Wschodzie w warunkach totalitaryzmu i posttotalitaryzmu*, eds. A. Gil, W. Bobryk, Siedlce–Lublin 2010, pp. 87–108.

² Chapter 2, article 13 of the Constitution of Bolshevik Russia passed after the October Revolution on 10 July 1918 states the following: “For the purpose of securing to the workers real freedom of conscience, the church is to be separated from the state and the school from the church, and the right of religious and anti-religious propaganda is accorded to every citizen”. A. Bosiacki, *Utopia, władza, prawo. Doktryna i koncepcje prawne “bolszewickiej” Rosji 1917–1921*, Warszawa 1999; J. Wołczański, *Ksiądz Biskup Jana Olszański. Duszpasterz – Patriota – Człowiek*, in: *Pasterz i twierdza. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana księdzu biskupowi Janowi Olszańskiemu ordynariuszowi diecezji w Kamieńcu Podolskim*, ed. J. Wołczański, Kraków-Kamieniec Podolski 2001, p. 9.

access to the Church. Therefore, what was left in practice was catechism in the family. Sacral places were adapted for secular purposes and frequently damaged. For example, workshops, stables or warehouses were set up in them. In many cases they were changed into screening rooms or houses of culture or entertainment. This very fact had a negative impact on young people, since it led to the existence of sacral places disappearing from their consciousness and to them getting accustomed to new meeting places and typical events of a secular – or sometimes even directly anti-religious – nature, for example, when churches were transformed into museums of atheism. Places of worship were liquidated in the area of Soviet Ukraine with equal ardour as in other republics of the union.³

Because the Latin-rite archbishop of Lviv, Eugeniusz Baziak,⁴ was forced by the NKVD to leave in 1946, there was no Catholic bishop in Soviet Ukraine. Before leaving, Archbishop Eugeniusz Baziak appointed the parish priest from Zolochiv, Rev. Jan Cieński, vicar general for the Lviv archdiocese. The Church there was under the jurisdiction of the Latin-rite Catholic bishop residing in Riga, from where graduates of the local theological seminary were despatched to perform pastoral work in the Soviet Union. The limitation of the Roman Catholic bishop's jurisdiction in western Ukraine was not the most serious problem experienced by the local parish of the Latin rite. The systematic and uncompromising liquidation of parishes and the repression of the clergy were more painful. Those processes occurred successively: when a priest was arrested and deported to a labour camp, the administrative authorities immediately closed the church, thus liquidating the parish.⁵ In 1939 the Lviv deanery included 17 parishes, four chaplaincies, eight

³ R. Dzwonkowski, *Religia i Kościół katolicki w ZSRS 1917–1991. Kronika*, Lublin 2010, pp. 33–37.

⁴ Eugeniusz Baziak (1890–1962) – Lviv metropolitan bishop, apostolic administrator and ordinary in Cracow. In 1908 he started theological studies at the Lviv University. After the ordination in 1912 he worked in the parish of Zhovkva, in 1917 he became the army chaplain, and since 1919 he worked as the prefect of the theological seminary in Lviv. In 1921, after obtaining a Ph.D. in theology, he took over the duties of vice-rector of the seminary and was a teacher of religion in the teachers' college. In 1931 he became the provost of the collegiate church in Stanyslaviv, and in the following year the protonotary apostolic. In 1933 he became the anointed bishop. As the Lviv suffragan, he held the office of the theological seminary rector, he was the diocesan assistant of the Catholic Action and the custodian of the Metropolitan Chapter. In 1944 he became the coadjutor bishop of archbishop Bolesław Twardowski, after whom he took over the management of the diocese and transferred the seat of the Lviv administration to Lubaczów. In 1951 he also became the coadjutor bishop of Cracow, and – in case of the death of the ordinary (cardinal A.S. Sapięha) bishop in Cracow, he was to become the apostolic administrator of the Cracow archdiocese with the power of the diocesan bishop. Indeed, after cardinal A.S. Sapięha's death, on 13 December 1956 he took over the function of the apostolic administrator of the Cracow archdiocese. Next pope John XXIII appointed E. Baziak the ordinary in Cracow. He died in Warsaw. M. Rechowicz, *Baziak Eugeniusz*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka* (further referred to as EK), vol. 2, eds. F. Gryglewicz, R. Łukaszczyk, Z. Sułowski, Lublin 1985, col. 127.

⁵ Out of 400 parishes in the Lviv archdiocese in 1939, seven remained in the period of the Soviet regime: Lviv – cathedra, Lviv – St. Antony, Borszczów, Hałuszczyńce, Stryj, Szczercz, and Zolochiv. W. Urban, *Archidiecezja lwowska*, in: *Życie religijne w Polsce pod okupacją 1939–1945*

churches and monastic chapels and nine other churches. In total, there were 38 churches (32 – Будз).⁶ In 1945, the Soviet authorities in Lviv left four Latin churches for the purposes of the cult, earlier called *urbs catholicissima*: the cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary,⁷ the church of St Antony from Padua in Lychakiv, St Mary Magdalene Church and the church of St Mary of Snow.⁸ After 1962, only two churches were left: the cathedral and the church of St Antony.

Considering religion, Lviv was more differentiated than other cities of East Małopolska (Lesser Poland region). According to the census from 1931, 63.5% of its population used the Polish language, 24% Yiddish and Hebrew and 11.3% Ukrainian or Ruthenian. A similar situation characterised religious stratification,

⁶ B. Modzelewska, W. Osadczy, *Lwów. I Miasto*, in: EK, vol. 11, ed. E. Ziemann, Lublin 2006, col. 307; K. Будз, *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква у Галичині (1946–1968): стратегії виживання та опору у підпіллі*, Київ 2016, p. 125.

⁷ The cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Lviv – established in 1412 by John XXIII within translocation of the metropolitan seat from Halych to Lviv. Consecrated in 1481. The image of Our Lady of Grace was worshipped there. It was in front of this very picture that king John Casimir made the so-called Lviv vows in 1656. In 1756 the picture was placed on the main altar, and on 11 May 1776 it was crowned with papal crowns by archbishop Waclaw Hieronim Sierakowski. On this occasion the Lviv cathedral was announced as the Shrine of Our Lady of Grace. After World War II the picture was brought to Poland, and in 1974 it was placed in the main altar of the Pro-cathedral in Lubaczów. In 1980 the picture was subjected to restoration and placed in the treasury of the Wawel cathedral. A copy of the image meant for the pro-cathedral in Lubaczów was crowned in Jasna Góra in 1983 by John Paul II, while the second copy – from the Lviv cathedral – was crowned by the pope in Lviv in 2001. M. Бучек, *Парафії, костели та каплиці. Львівська область*, vol. 1, Львів 2004, p. 149; J. Mandziuk, *Z dziejów archidiecezji lwowskiej*, “Saeculum Christianum”, 2 (1995) no. 2, pp. 40–41; I. Platowska-Sapetowa, *Cudowny Obraz N.P. Maryi Łaskawej z Archikatedry Lwowskiej w Prokatedrze w Lubaczowie*, Rzeszów 1991, pp. 7–18; J. Wołczański, *Bazylika Metropolitalna obrządku łacińskiego we Lwowie*, “Radość Wiary”, (2001) no. 1 (29), p. 10; S. Frucht, *Lwów, Lwów–Wrocław* 2003, p. 34.

⁸ The church of St. Antony from Padua – built in 1630 for conventual Franciscan monks in the suburbs of Lychakiv, on St. Antony hill in Sucha Wola. Following the Josephinian reforms, the cloister was dissolved. In 1786 the parish from the nearby church of St. Peter and St. Paul was transferred to the church and since then it was managed by the Franciscan monks. After they were forced to expatriate, in 1946 only a Franciscan Father Rafał Kiernicki (1912–1995), provost of the Latin cathedral of Lviv, was left in the city. Thanks to him Franciscans from the parent Province of St. Antony and Blessed Jakub Strzemię from Cracow arrived in Lviv, where they perform pastoral service in the parish. B. Kaczorowski, *Zabytki starego Lwowa*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 82–86.

The church of St. Mary Magdalene and the Dominican monastery in Lviv – built in 1600. The friars were involved in pastoral care there until the dissolution following the Josephinian reforms. The church was left at the disposal of the Lviv metropolitan bishop and it performed the function of a parish church, with a provostry built nearby. The church served the faithful until 1945. It was re-opened in 1946. Pastoral care was performed there by Rev. Zygmunt Truszkowski (1876–1949), Fr. Marcin Karaś (1910–2003), Fr. Rafał Kiernicki OFM Conv (1912–1995), Rev. prelate Zygmunt Hałuniewicz (1889–1974), the latter of whom in 1962 received a ban on celebrating the Holy Masses. The church was left in the hands of the Lviv Polytechnic University. A student club and later a “House of chamber and organ music” were organized there. Since 2001 paid holy services are held in St. Mary Magdalene church.

where a small percentage of Armenian and other religions, especially evangelical ones, should be taken into consideration. Catholics of the Latin rite predominated in Lviv, although the city was also the seat of the Greek Catholic metropolitan archbishop, the Church which had the most members in the province. After World War II Greek Catholics were most numerous, whereas the Jewish communes disappeared almost completely after the mass murder of the Jewish population, who had comprised more than 20% of the inhabitants of Lviv before the war.

Outlining the religious situation of the city from the pre-war times, through the two occupations, until the post-war period creates the background for describing the pastoral care among the Roman Catholic population of Lviv, who largely identified themselves as Polish.

2. The Lviv cathedral as the last bastion of Polishness in Lviv

The Latin cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was the largest centre of religious and patriotic life in Lviv, where the Polish national identity was cherished. It was one of the two churches in the archdiocese which remained permanently open. The cathedral housed the most precious historic memorabilia, and the Latin rite united the bond of the Eastern Borderlands (Kresy) with the Republic of Poland.⁹

Important roles in the history of the Catholic Church in the Eastern Borderlands were played not only by the bishops of Lviv, namely St Józef Bilczewski (1900–1923), Bolesław Twardowski (1923–1944) and Eugeniusz Baziak (1944–1951), but also by the indomitable priests persecuted by the Soviet authorities, the latter making it difficult for them to pursue religious and educational activity or prohibiting it outright. Most priests became victims of repression by the NKVD and left the Soviet Union. Many clergymen were deported to labour camps.¹⁰ There is a need, therefore, to remember those priests of the Lviv archdiocese who did not leave for Poland after 1945 and who remained in the land of their forefathers to serve the local believers.

a) Promoter of the Divine Mercy cult – Rev. Karol Jastrzębski

After the war, the first provost (1946–1948) of the cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Lviv was the canon priest Karol Jastrzębski.¹¹ He was born in Ternopil in 1882, where he graduated from secondary school.

⁹ S.S. Nicieja, *Cmentarz Lyczakowski we Lwowie w latach 1786–1986*, Wrocław 1988.

¹⁰ The numbers of the Roman Catholic clergy in the area of the Lviv diocese were dramatic. Out of 805 priests performing pastoral service in 1939, only 22 were left after World War II, and in 1984–6: Fr. Rafał Kiernicki OFM Conv. (1912–1995), Rev. Ludwik Kamilewski (1946–2019), Rev. Kazimierz Mączyński (1928–1996), Rev. Marcján Trofimiak (ur. 1947), bishop Jan Cieński (1905–1992), and Rev. Augustyn Mednis (1927–2007). J. Wołczański, *Między zagładą a przetrwaniem*, Kraków 2005, p. 10.

¹¹ Cf. M. Muzyka, *Ks. Karol Jastrzębski 1882–1966. Katecheta, duszpasterz, promotor kultu Bożego Miłosierdzia w Archidiecezji Lwowskiej*, Lwów–Kraków 2017; Z. Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie od 1939 roku*. Part 1, “Cracovia Leopolis”, (1996) Yearbook 2, no. 2(6), p. 15.

In 1902 he joined the theological seminary in Lviv and finished philosophical and theological studies at Jan Casimir University. After his second year of studies, he was sent to the Theological Faculty of the University of Innsbruck for further studies. However, he did not obtain a doctoral degree because of a failing grade on the exam. In 1906 he was ordained as a priest. He worked as a vicar and a teacher of religion in Berezhany, Brody and Stanyslaviv. In September 1912 he started to work as a teacher of religion in a vocational girls' school named after Henryk Sienkiewicz and in a similar school for boys named after Mary Magdalene. He was also the chaplain for the Carmelite sisters in Czarnieckiego Street.¹²

After World War II he was one of the six Latin-rite priests working in the Lviv area. For two years he performed the duties of cathedral parish administrator. After Father Rafał Kiernicki took over the provosty in the cathedral, Rev. Jastrzębski devoted himself to pastoral work in the cathedral parish. As the provost of the parish from 1946 to 1948, he organised the religious life of the faithful, the church liturgy and ministry of the Holy Sacraments. He was also involved in the work of a canteen for the poor at the cathedral parish. After the communist authorities tightened up their religious policy in 1949 and prohibited children and adolescents from pursuing pastoral activity and priests from dispensing the Sacraments to them, Rev. Jastrzębski focussed on working with older believers, who he visited in their homes with the Sacramental services. His greatest merit was introducing and propagating the Divine Mercy service in the Lviv cathedral, which occurred even before it was officially established in the Catholic Church.¹³ Rev. Jastrzębski introduced the practice of saying the novena in the cathedral church. Every Thursday after the Holy Mass of the Holy Sacrament, a prayer to Divine Mercy was read, after which a procession was held with the Holy Sacrament inside the church. This service is still practiced in the Lviv cathedral today.¹⁴

The sentiment for the Divine Mercy cult was born in Rev. Jastrzębski during his stay in Vilnius, where he had met Sister Faustina Kowalska before the war. In the communist times, this service enjoyed great popularity among the faithful, and the Thursday novenas gathered about 1,500 believers.¹⁵ The priest became a promoter of the Divine Mercy cult in the Lviv church.¹⁶

¹² J. Wołczański, *Katalog grobów duchowieństwa i siostr zakonnych obrządku łacińskiego i grekokatolickiego na Cmentarzu Janowskim we Lwowie*, "Nasza Przeszłość", 88 (1997) p. 266.

¹³ Faustina Kowalska (1905–1938) – a Saint from the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, a mystic, a propagator of the Divine Mercy cult. In 1925 she joined the congregation. Sister Faustina's revelations started on 22 February 1931 in Płock, and Jesus ordered her to commission His painting with the words "Jesus, I trust in You". The picture was painted in 1934 in Vilnius. The next order that Jesus gave was to establish the liturgical feast of Divine Mercy on the first Sunday after Easter. In 1935 Jesus conveyed the content of "The Chaplet of the divine Mercy" and in 1937 He told her to have the so-called Hour of Mercy established, i.e. the prayer at the hour of His dying – at 3 p.m. In 1993 Sister Faustina was beatified, and on 30 April 2000 canonized. E. Siepak, *Kowalska Faustyna. 1. Życie, 2. Objawienia prywatne*, in: EK, vol. 9, ed. A. Szostek, Lublin 2002, col. 1085.

¹⁴ Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie*, part 1, p. 16.

¹⁵ An account by Rev. Ludwik Kamilewski, Łuck 9 IX 2019 (author's own collection).

¹⁶ An account by Janina Zamojska, Lwów 15 XII 2007 (author's own collection).

In July 1955 Rev. Jastrzębski was the only Latin-rite priest in Lviv.¹⁷ Father Ignacy Chwirut¹⁸ from St Antony church was on holiday in the Carpathians and Father Rafał Kiernicki was in hospital. On 26 August 1956 Father Karol Jastrzębski celebrated the golden anniversary of his priesthood. The preacher of the anniversary, a Jesuit monk from Szczerc, Father Ludwik Seweryn,¹⁹ spoke of his outstanding merits, including his catechetical work and emphasised the fact that he had initiated the services to Divine Mercy. The preacher closed his speech with the words: ‘If not for Divine Mercy, we would not be here anymore’.²⁰

An important feature of Rev. Jastrzębski was his openness to the needs of others. He continuously supported the poor and families with many children. His pastoral and catechetical work was characterised by conscientiousness and accuracy. He was widely respected and liked for his attitude, which was full of dignity, good manners and proper treatment of others, even if someone should show him hostility. His principle was that while meeting an official he already knew, he took off his hat first when greeting them. He was said to be a good priest since he took

¹⁷ Z. Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie od 1939 roku*. Part 2, “Cracovia Leopoli”, (1996) Yearbook 2, no. 3(7), p. 14.

¹⁸ Ignacy Chwirut (1887–1973) – a priest of the Lviv archdiocese, canon general of the Metropolitan Chapter in Lviv. He studied philosophy and theology in the years 1908–1912 at the theological seminary in Lviv, where he was ordained as a priest by archbishop Józef Bilczewski. As a newly ordained priest he started to work in the parish of Zaleszczyki. In 1913 he became the secretary of archbishop J. Bilczewski and held this function until the death of the latter in 1923. He performed the same function with archbishop Bolesław Twardowski in the years 1923–1929. He was the head of the publishing company “Biblioteka religijna” (Religious Library). On 4 January 1945 he was arrested by the NKVD on charges of publishing a magazine “Gazeta Kościelna” (Church gazette) with anti-Soviet articles and of expatriation propaganda. He was sentenced on 26 December 1946 to 5 years of labour camp and deprivation of civil rights. He left prison at the beginning of January 1950 and arrived in Lviv. It was only after he reported his presence in the building of St. Antony parish, in May 1953, when he received a permission to perform the cult and start the provost’s duties. According to the opinion by the Soviet authorities, “He did not show any activity nor did he say any sermons”. Due to the condition of his health, in June 1969 he transferred the provost’s duties onto Rev. Kazimierz Mączyński, who came to Lviv from the Riga diocese. He died after a long illness in 1973 and was buried in the Janowski Cemetery. P. Olechowski, *Między ołtarzem a gabinetem partyjnym. Kościół rzymskokatolicki w sowieckim Lwowie w latach 1953–1959 w świetle raportów pełnomocnika Rady ds. Kultów Religijnych w obwodzie lwowskim*, “Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość”, 16 (2017) no. 1 (29), pp. 182–186; *Sanktuarium Świętego Antoniego*, <https://antoni.lviv.ua/pl/ksieza-w-nieprzerwanej-sluzbie/> (accessed: 26.02.2021).

¹⁹ Seweryn Ludwik (1906–1970) – a Jesuit. He joined the congregation in 1922. He studied philosophy in Cracow and Engenhoven in Belgium, theology in Lublin, where in 1934 he was ordained as a priest. Until the war he worked in Rev. Mieczysława Kuznowic Male Dormitory. During World War II he worked in Kolomyia. In 1945 he was imprisoned and deported to Siberia, and next to Kazakhstan. After being freed in 1955 he settled down in Shchyrets near Lviv, where he was the provost until his death. He helped in pastoral work in Lviv churches and in the churches near Lviv. He died in Lviv. He wrote a brochure *Prawda na ciężkie czasy* published by Jesuits in Cracow. *Seweryn Ludwik*, in: *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564–1995*, ed. L. Grzebień, Kraków 1996, p. 612.

²⁰ Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie*, part 2, p. 14.

care of people's piety and spread the service to Divine Mercy – during the times when people prayed fervently to God for mercy.²¹ One of the memories shows Rev. Jastrzębski as a seemingly inconspicuous, but extremely sociable figure who performed liturgical chants well.

He is remembered as an intelligent priest who knew how to arouse trust and respect, among both the faithful and the officials of the local state authorities. His popularity in the city was so remarkable that one day when he was walking down the street, a tram driver stopped his tram and invited Rev. Jastrzębski aboard. The priest followed the rule that one should always stand by their beliefs in relation to all, even enemies of religion. One should express one's convictions calmly, arguing through comparisons to everyday life, or even jokes or anecdotes. As a priest he strived to win people over to faith, God and the Church.²²

It should be emphasised that during his pastoral service in Lviv, Rev. Jastrzębski was never punished for his activity by the courts. This does not mean, however, that he was never called by the NKVD for interrogation or to the office of the plenipotentiary of the Council for Religious Cults in the Lviv district. When he went there, he was always accompanied by at least two other people, even elderly ladies. He believed that this made a certain impression on the local officials, which was at times even funny: 'he, an elderly man, and two elderly women beside him'. During those interrogations he was asked standard questions concerning the church, which he answered in an intelligent and joking manner. For example, when asked about his relations with the Apostolic See he answered, 'And what does the Apostolic See know of me, who is here? There are a lot of us, and I was not distinguished by anything whatsoever.' During those 'meetings' he consistently refused to answer extensively, and for this reason he was treated as an apolitical person and a religious fanatic who did not pose any threat to the communist authorities. He referred to the officials as 'Mr Minister', he bowed to the functionaries that he met, he did not get involved in unnecessary discussions – thereby avoiding intense polemics or quarrels – and he tried to conduct conversations in a relaxed atmosphere, sometimes even answering the more difficult questions with a sense

²¹ An account by Janina Zamojska.

²² Rev. K. Jastrzębski was acquainted with a well-known Ukrainian opera singer (soprano) Solomiya Krushelnytska (1873–1952), daughter of a Greek Catholic priest whom he had known earlier. Her debut was in the Lviv opera in 1892, she performed in the Warsaw Opera 1898–1902, the Paris Opera and in Buenos Aires. In 1910 she married marquis Cesario Riccioni. She performed on the Milan stage of La Scala, where she was the first to play the roles of Salome and Electra in the operas by R. Strauss. In 1920, being at the top of her fame, she left the opera stage for ever and devoted the rest of her life to chamber music. In August 1939 she settled down in Lviv for good and there she received the professor's title and conducted vocal classes in the Lviv Conservatory. Because of her indifference to religion, Rev. K. Jastrzębski tried to get her closer to Church and faith, but to no avail. He was worried that the daughter of a clergyman had an indifferent, and even disrespectful attitude towards religion. An account by J. Zamojska, Lviv 15 XII 2007 (author's own collection).

of humour. In this way the officials accepted the priest's flattering remarks, did not treat him too seriously and eventually, due to his age, lost interest in him.²³

In the last years of his pastoral service in the cathedral, for health reasons Rev. Jastrzębski limited himself to celebrating only the Holy Mass and the service in the confessional.²⁴ After 1965 he did not take part in the parish life of the cathedral, and he celebrated the Holy Mass in his flat. He died on 7 January 1966 in Lviv. He was buried in his family tomb in Janowski Cemetery. The funeral ceremony was held on 11 January and was conducted by Rev. Zygmunt Hałuniewicz. In his sermon he emphasised Rev. Jastrzębski's merits in parish pastoral work and his faithfulness to the priestly vocation and to serving the faithful according to his personal motto: 'I serve God'.²⁵

b) Propagator of the cult of Divine Mercy – Rev. Stanisław Płoszyński

Rev. Karol Jastrzębski was aided in his pastoral service by Rev. Stanisław Płoszyński.²⁶ We can learn from the post-war memories of him that he was a priest with a deep passion. In his pastoral work and service he was very demanding, but showed a good heart. He conducted religious instruction for the children whom he prepared for the First Holy Communion, and he organised the solemn celebration when they received this Sacrament, and the confession beforehand. He was called the apostle of the youth because he conducted catechetical meetings in the open churches of Lviv: St Antony cathedral, St Mary Magdalene Church and the Church of Our Lady of Snow. His involvement in the Lviv cathedral was recognised by the plenipotentiary for religion as non-ecclesiastical, which led to the Sunday religious meetings with the youths being discontinued and the charity kitchen for the poor being closed, since the communist authorities decided that it served the cause of recruiting the faithful.²⁷

Rev. Płoszyński's endeavours in the field of patriotic education cannot be overlooked. He put a lot of effort into making the children, youths and elderly people with Polish roots familiar with and cultivate the customs and traditions of the Polish nation. That is why he believed that the liturgy should use the Polish

²³ Wołczański, *Katalog grobów duchowieństwa i siostr zakonnych*, s. 266; An account by Janina Zamojska.

²⁴ An account by Janina Zamojska.

²⁵ Z. Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie od 1939 roku*, part 3, "Cracovia Leopoli", (1996) Yearbook 2, no. 4(8), p. 19.

²⁶ Stanisław Płoszyński (1914–1949) – a priest from the Lviv archdiocese. He received the holy orders in Lviv in 1939. During World War II he worked as a vicar in the parishes of Sniatyn and Holohory. In February 1944 he was arrested by the NKVD but in the same month he was freed and since 25 September 1944 he worked as the administrator of the parish in Powitno, also working in the parish of Byalogiria. In the years 1945–1949 he worked in the Lviv cathedral as a vicar. He mainly focused on working with the youth, cooperating in this respect with Rev. Jan Olszański, then a priest of the parish of Our Lady of Snow in Lviv. He died in Lviv and was buried in the Janowski Cemetery in the Jesuit tomb. *Płoszyński Stanisław*, in: R. Dzwonkowski, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego represjonowanego w ZSRS 1939–1988*, Lublin 2003, pp. 488–489.

²⁷ Ibid.

language only, which was also prohibited by the Soviet authorities. This mainly referred to saying the homilies, as the liturgy of the Holy Mass was in Latin.²⁸

In the Soviet times the Latin cathedral was also visited by the faithful of the Greek Catholic Church who did not wish to convert to the Eastern Orthodox religion. Within his possibilities, Rev. Płoszyński performed pastoral care among the Ukrainians. Greek Catholics gathered in houses or in the cathedral as signing groups to pray in the Ukrainian language. However, Rev. Płoszyński was decisively opposed to that practice since the use of a language other than Polish in the cathedral created the danger of the church being closed. This is why during a sermon he announced a prohibition on praying in Ukrainian. It needs to be pointed out that in the post-war years the atmosphere among Poles was anti-Ukrainian. This was caused by the living memory of the murders committed in Volhynia and Podolia, which influenced the mutual relations between Poles and Ukrainians, even in terms of religion. Some of the Roman Catholics were understanding of the fact that Ukrainians used their church and appreciated the attitude of the priests there. With the passage of time, the atmosphere became more open.²⁹

Rev. Płoszyński died on 25 March 1949. His funeral was a huge religious manifestation of the Catholic population of the city, which included more than ten thousand believers, including Greek Catholics. The funeral procession from the cathedral to Janowski Cemetery was so large that it stopped the city trams. That was one of the last manifestations of Poles in Lviv after World War II.³⁰

c) A Lviv biritualist – Rev. Zygmunt Hałuniewicz

Another notable figure of the Lviv church was Prelate Zygmunt Hałuniewicz. He was born on 27 June 1889 in Rohatyn, in the Stanyslaviv voivodeship (now the Ivano-Frankivst district). After passing his school exams, he joined the theological seminary in Lviv, simultaneously studying at John Casimir University. He was ordained as a priest on 30 June 1912 by Archbishop Józef Bilczewski.³¹

As a newly ordained priest, he was sent to the parish in Pieniaki, where he worked as a vicar and religion instructor. In 1916 he took on parallel duties in St Antony parish in Lviv and as a minute-taker in the Metropolitan Curia in Lviv.

²⁸ An account by Janina Zamojska.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ W. Osadczy, *Kościół wyznawców. Kapłani archidiecezji lwowskiej obrządku łacińskiego w latach 1945–1991*, in: *Prorocy Europy Środko-Wschodniej XX wieku*, ed. S.C. Napiórkowski OFMConv, Lublin 2009, p. 187; Wołczański, *Katalog grobów duchowieństwa i siostr zakonnych*, p. 258.

³¹ Józef Bilczewski (1860–1923) – Lviv metropolitan bishop. He received education in Kęty, Wadowice and Cracow, where he was ordained as a priest in 1884. He worked as a vicar in Mogiła near Cracow. Then he worked in Vienna, Paris and Rome. He was professor of John Casimir University in Lviv, and in 1900 he became its rector. On 17 December 1900 he obtained a nomination to be the Lviv metropolitan bishop. He was anointed on 20 January 1901. As the bishop of the archdiocese he established a number of parishes, developed sacral architecture, pursued educational and charitable activity. He contributed a lot to the development of the Eucharist cult. In 2001 he was beatified, and on 23 October 2005 canonized. J. Machniak, *Abp Józef Bilczewski. Pasterz Kościoła Lwowskiego*, Kraków 2001.

In 1919 he was transferred to the Lviv cathedral, where he performed the duties of a vicar and curial notary. In 1921 he was appointed chancellor of the curia, a position he held until 1945. He cooperated with Archbishops Józef Bilczewski, Bolesław Twardowski and Eugeniusz Baziak. In the curia he held the functions of referendary, synodal judge and pro-synodal examiner. He received the dignity of a general canon of the Metropolitan Chapter of Lviv.³²

After the Soviet Union annexed the eastern voivodeships of the Republic of Poland in September 1939, Rev. Hałuniewicz was subjected to repression by the communist authorities. On 26 November 1945 he was arrested on charges of cooperating with the Gestapo and engaging in anti-Soviet activity. He was also accused of establishing an anti-Soviet nationalistic organisation called ‘Miecz i Krzyż’ [Sword and Cross]³³ and keeping anti-Soviet literature. On 19 June 1946 he was sentenced to 10 years in a labour camp, five years of deprivation of civil rights and forfeiture of property. Despite the efforts of the Soviet authorities, the charges against Rev. Hałuniewicz for which he was arrested did not have any probative value,³⁴ even according to the NKGB.³⁵ The authorities confiscated his books³⁶ and burnt the Polish emblem. His flat was taken over by an MGB agent. In 1946 Rev. Hałuniewicz was deported to a labour camp in Donbas, where he worked in a quarry, and then to a labour camp in Medvezhyegorsk for ‘medical treatment’, which meant being freed from physical work. Rev. Hałuniewicz was then sent to a labour camp in Szczerbakow-7 and in 1948 to a labour camp in Miliushino. He was freed on 29 April 1955, and by 2 May had returned to Lviv. It was written in one of the memories from those times: ‘In the wave of misfortunes a very happy

³² *Hałuniewicz Zygmunt*, in: Dzwonkowski, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego*, p. 253; T. Madała, *Polscy księża katoliccy w więzieniach i łagrach sowieckich od 1918 roku. Materiały do słownika biograficznego*, Lublin 1996, p. 61; J. Wołczański, *Kapłani męczennicy. Świadkowie wiary kościoła lwowskiego ksiądz kanclerz Zygmunt Hałuniewicz (1889–1974)*, “Radość Wiary”, (1999) nos. 3–4 (23–24), p. 17.

³³ In January 1945 Romuald Jałbrzykowski, archbishop of Vilnius, and Adolf Szelażek, bishop of Lutsk were arrested. Archbishop E. Baziak was at that time the only Polish bishop with his jurisdiction in the area of the USSR, and he could be imprisoned by the NKVD any moment. This is exemplified by the case of Lviv canon Rev. Z. Hałuniewicz, who was arrested in November 1945 and accused of establishing, with archbishop E. Baziak, an anti-Soviet nationalistic organization “Miecz and Krzyż” on the order of the Polish government in exile. The organization was a secret formation, one of a few hundred of other in Poland, which was of anti-Soviet character. J. Baziak, *Wygnaniec, tulacz a może Ikar*, Bydgoszcz 2019, p. 25; J. Wołoszyn, *Podstawy antysystemowe młodzieży w wybranych państwach socjalistycznych Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w latach 1945-1956 – zarys problematyki*, “Rocznik Instytutu Europy Środkowo Wschodniej”, 18 (2020) fasc. 4, p. 209.

³⁴ *Hałuniewicz Zygmunt*, Dzwonkowski, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego*, p. 253; *Wołczański, Kapłani męczennicy. Świadkowie wiary kościoła lwowskiego*, p. 17.

³⁵ The People’s Commissariat for State Security (1941–1946, parallel with the NKVD); in 1946 the NKVD and the NKGB were joined and renamed as MGB - Ministerstvo gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti SSSR (Ministry for State Security of the USSR).

³⁶ The minutes included seven items of rather enigmatic titles, without any place or year of confiscated editions.

event was the return of Prelate Zygmunt Hałuniewicz from the camp.³⁷ On 15 July 1955 he was registered in St Mary Magdalene parish, where he worked until 22 October 1962, when the church was closed by the authorities.³⁸

Rev. Hałuniewicz took on pastoral work in St Mary Magdalene parish after the death of Rev. Zygmunt Truszkowski (†6 November 1949).³⁹ Speaking the Word of God, he was always very well prepared and his sermons were refined;⁴⁰ he was also concerned about the people's needs and shortages. He worked in the Lviv cathedral, where he helped Rev. Jastrzębski, who had health problems. Although he himself was not in very good health, he generously performed his service among the sick and the dying when Fr. Rafał Kiernicki was not allowed by the Soviet authorities to fulfil his pastoral functions in the Lviv cathedral. During this 'suspension', Rev. Hałuniewicz took over the provost's duties in the cathedral.

In his pastoral work as the provost of St Mary Magdalene church, and later in the Lviv cathedral, Rev. Hałuniewicz joined other priests from the local churches in secret sacramental and pra-liturgical service (blessing the Easter food, the Easter palms, holy pictures and rosaries) and allowed Greek Catholic priests to hear the confessions of their believers in the cathedral basilica.⁴¹ His time in labour camps had an effect on his health. He had problems with his kidneys and heart and was diabetic.⁴² He died on 30 March 1974 of pneumonia. The funeral took place on 2 April. The funeral mass was celebrated by Rev. Jan Cieński⁴³ from Zolochiv,

³⁷ Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie*, part 2, p. 13.

³⁸ *Hałuniewicz Zygmunt*, in: Dzwonkowski, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego*, p. 253; Małała, *Polscy księża katolicy w więzieniach i łagrach*, p. 61; Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie*, part 2, p. 13.

³⁹ Zygmunt Truszkowski (1876–1949) – a Vincent de Paul congregation missionary. He joined the congregation after medical studies. He received the holy orders in 1901 in Cracow. He worked in the Lviv archdiocese, and then in the area of Cracow. In 1919 he joined the diocesan clergy and undertook work in military pastoral care. During World War II he was the dean of army chaplains in Lviv 1943–1944. In the middle of 1945 he was arrested by the NKVD and in a group trial of the clergy in Lviv on 25 February 1946 he was sentenced to 10 years of labour camps. After he proved his personal acquaintance with Lenin, who had borrowed money from him, he was immediately set free. Then he was registered as the provost of St. Mary Magdalene church, where he performed pastoral care for three years. He died in Lviv and was buried in the Lychakiv Cemetery. *Truszkowski Zygmunt*, in: Dzwonkowski, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego represjonowanego w ZSRS 1939–1988*, Lublin 203, pp. 601–602.

⁴⁰ Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła*, part 2, p. 14.

⁴¹ Будз, *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква*, p. 126; Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie*, part 3, p. 22; Wołczański, *Kapłani męczennicy. Świadkowie wiary kościoła lwowskiego*, p. 19.

⁴² Z. Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie od 1939 roku*, part 4, "Cracovia Leopoldis" (1997) Yearbook 3, no. 1(9), p. 13.

⁴³ Jan Cieński (1905–1992) – provost in Zolochiv, bishop *in pectore*. In 1928 he graduated from the Agricultural University in Dublin and signed up for law studies at John Casimir University in Lviv, which he interrupted in 1933 and entered the local theological seminary. He was ordained as a priest on 26 June 1938 in Lviv. As a newly ordained priest he became the vicar in Zolochiv and performed the functions of the parish administrator and provost since 26 November 1938 till his death. During World War II he gave a hiding to the Jews and the Polish inhabitants of Zolochiv thus

bishop *in pectore*. Catholics of two rites participated in the funeral of their priest. After the obsequies, Greek Catholics sang the panikhida.⁴⁴ Rev. Hałuniewicz was buried in Janowski Cemetery in the Jesuit tomb, next to Rev. Ignacy Chwierut and Fr. Ludwik Seweryn, witnesses of the most difficult times for the Church and the clergymen of Lviv. After the death of Rev. Hałuniewicz, only one priest was left in the Lviv cathedral: Fr. Rafał Kiernicki.⁴⁵

While he was alive, Rev. Hałuniewicz made endeavours to be vindicated in court. On 4 April 1955 a KGB official decided that the charges from Articles 54–11 against the priest had been groundless. However, he was not fully vindicated until 28 June 1993, 19 years after his death.

d) Martyr of the confessional – Father Rafał Władysław Kiernicki

Władysław Kiernicki was born on 3 May 1912 in Kułaczkowce, near Kolomyia. In 1930 he joined the conventual Franciscans, adopting the name of Rafał. He spent his novitiate in Łagiewniki, near Łódź. On 4 October 1934 he took his perpetual vows,⁴⁶ and he was ordained as a priest in 1939. As a newly ordained priest he undertook the duties of a confessor of nuns, and starting in 1940 he was also the curator of the Lviv circle of ‘Juventus Christiana’.⁴⁷ Additionally, he lectured at secret secondary school lessons. During World War II, under the pseudonym of ‘Dziunio’ he belonged to the military conspiracy. He was the head of V/K Inspec-

saving them from mass slaughter; he was the chaplain of the local inspectorate of the Home Army. After the war he remained in his home in Zolochiv and performed the pastoral service despite the chicanery he experienced. Thanks to the efforts of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Rev. J. Cieński became a secret bishop (*in pectore*) in 1962. It not was until 30 September 1967 that he was consecrated in secret in Gniezno by the Primate of the Millennium. Bishop J. Cieński secretly ordained a few Greek Catholic priests and probably two Roman Catholic ones. He died in Zolochiv on 26 December 1992 and was buried on the parish cemetery.

⁴⁴ Panikhida – a liturgical service for the dead in the eastern Churches. It consist of psalms, Ectenias (prayer of the faithful), hymns and prayers modeled on the scheme of matins with a kontakion for the departed, and Memory Eternal. During the celebration of panikhida burning candles are placed on a small table and at the end of the service candles are also lit by the faithful and *koliva* is blessed by the priest. It is wheat with honey, which is next consumed. H. Paprocki, *Panichida*, in: EK, vol. 14, ed. E. Gigilewicz, Lublin 2010, col. 1214.

⁴⁵ Sokolnicka-Izdebska, *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie*, part 4, p. 13.

⁴⁶ M.B. Kuczyńska, “Nazywano Ojca Szaleńcem Bożym”. *Bp. Władysław Rafał Kiernicki OFMConv. Duszpasterz i zesłaniec (1912–1995)*, “Zesłaniec”, 64 (2015) p. 26.

⁴⁷ *Iuventus Christiana* – an association of the Catholic academic youth. It was established in Warsaw in 1921. Its assumptions were deeper knowledge of the truths of faith and practicing them in personal and social life through meetings in co-educational groups under the supervision of a priest and since 1926 also under the supervision of a lay person. The basis of its members’ self-education was the Holy Scripture commented by all participants of the meetings. The association’s organ was a periodical “*Iuventus Christiana*”. In 1939 it was the most numerous academic catholic organization. After the outbreak of World War II it renewed its activity in December 1939. After arrests in 1940 the association was dissolved. Since then the link between its members was the appointed the Ideological Council, which renewed the activity of conspiracy circles. The organization ceased to exist by virtue of a state decree from 25 August 1949. S. Gajewski, *Iuventus Chistiana, Iuventus*, in: EK, vol. 7, eds. J. Duchniewski et al., Lublin 1997, col. 564–565.

torate of the city of Lviv ZWZ (Union for Armed Struggle) of the Home Army, and from March 1944 he headed the Department of Conspiracy Communications V/L Lviv. On 31 July he was arrested in Lviv and was sent to a camp in Kharkiv,⁴⁸ where he remained from September 1944 to March 1945. There he took an active part in issuing a handwritten conspiracy paper called *Semper Fidelis*.⁴⁹

In March 1945 he was directed to a camp in Diaghilev-Ryazan; in June 1947 he was transferred to a prison camp in Ryazan, and then to a camp in Cherepovets (Vologda district). Since the beginning of 1948 he was interned in a prison camp in Gryazovets. In those camps he pursued conspiracy pastoral activity among the prisoners of various nationalities. The authorities in some labour camps sometimes gave the priest permission for pastoral service. Then he dispensed sacraments and organised courses on religious knowledge.⁵⁰

At the beginning of April 1948 Fr. Kiernicki was freed from the prison camp and returned to Lviv. There he undertook pastoral work in the cathedral, and the following year he was registered as its provost.⁵¹ He was a man of great energy, pastoral enthusiasm and engagement. He often said about himself that he suffered from 'the illness of activism'. It sometimes happened that in the course of a single day he celebrated five funerals, heard the confession of 200 penitents or celebrated a few Holy Masses.⁵²

The schedule of Fr. Kiernicki's typical day can be gleaned from the testimonies concerning his service:

Before 6 a.m. he was already in the confessional; at 7.30 the Holy Mass with a short homily; after the Holy Mass office matters in the cathedral vestry; after arranging the matters, the confessional again with the Holy Communion dispensed every half an hour until 12 o'clock⁵³; then visiting the sick (not infrequently did he cover hundreds of kilometres, e.g. Lutsk, Rivne or Stanyslaviv); funerals, organisational meetings with his closest associates and altar boys; at 5 p.m. he sat down in the confessional and was there until the evening service at 7 p.m.⁵⁴

Very often he fell asleep in the armchair in the vestry, so tired was he.... In all of this nobody was able to explain how such an ill man as he was had so much strength to perform his service. He had undergone three kidney operations,

⁴⁸ Kuczyńska, "Nazywano Ojca Szaleńcem Bożym", s. 30.

⁴⁹ Kiernicki Władysław, in: R. Dzwonkowski, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego represjonowanego w ZSRR 1939–1988*, Lublin 2003, s. 318.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Osadczy, *Kościół wyznawców*, s. 191.

⁵² M. Skowyrza, *Jubileusz sześćdziesięciolecia śmierci arcybiskupa metropolity Bolesława Twardowskiego i dziewiąta rocznica śmierci bpa Rafała Kiernickiego*, "Radość Wiary", (2004) no. 7 (43), s. 7.

⁵³ Sometimes as many as 1,000 sacramental breads were dispensed. Cf. J. Krętosz, *Katedra obrządku łacińskiego we Lwowie i jej proboszcz o. Rafał Kiernicki OFMConv w latach 1948–1991*, Katowice 2003, p. 74.

⁵⁴ An account by Ludwik Kamilewski.

three volvulus surgeries and three varicose vein surgeries in addition to having a heart condition.⁵⁵

In 1958 Fr. Kiernicki was deprived by the Soviet authorities of the right to perform pastoral activities. At that time he officially worked as a caretaker in Strytskyi Park and as a night watchman in the sanatorium in Holosko. In his free time he performed secret pastoral – mainly sacramental – work, thus exposing himself to frequent legal consequences. It was not until seven years later, in 1965, when he returned to pastoral work⁵⁶ as a so-called ‘servant of the cult’.

In 1961 he wrote in a letter to the provincial superior:

I am still working in the nights. I feel useful and needed by people. This gives me satisfaction. My health is all right. I sometimes miss the peace, but to have it one would have to be born in another epoch. I live from day to day, without knowing what tomorrow brings. I never complain. On the contrary, I consider these conditions the romanticism of my life.⁵⁷

Father Rafał was regarded as a prisoner of the confessional,⁵⁸ to the service of which he devoted himself fully.⁵⁹ Thanks to this, the faithful again had the possibility to live in God’s grace, and through his advice and recommendations they received proper spiritual balance.⁶⁰ The monk was a tireless minister of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Not paying attention to distance, he regularly visited the sick and the elderly before the first Friday of the month, according to an address list of Lviv and its vicinities.⁶¹ He was the only priest in Lviv to visit patients in hospital.⁶²

An outstanding characteristic of Fr. Kiernicki’s pastoral service was the pastoral care of children and adolescents.⁶³ He took special care to prepare them well for confession and First Holy Communion. He organised groups of female instructors of religion,⁶⁴ whose task was to teach prayer, the catechism and God’s

⁵⁵ J.M. Paluch, *Ojciec Rafał*, “Cracovia Leopoldis”, 7 (2001) no. 3 (27), p. 12.

⁵⁶ Kuczyńska, “*Nazywano Ojca Szaleńcem Bożym*”, p. 33.

⁵⁷ Skowyrza, *Jubileusz sześćdziesięciolecia śmierci arcybiskupa metropolity Bolesława Twardowskiego*, p. 7.

⁵⁸ Osadczy, *Kościół wyznawców*, p. 197.

⁵⁹ An account by Ludwik Kamilewski.

⁶⁰ Krętosz, *Katedra obrządku łacińskiego we Lwowie*, p. 73.

⁶¹ An account by Ludwik Kamilewski.

⁶² Madała, *Polscy księża katolicy w więzieniach i łagrach sowieckich*, p. 80.

⁶³ Since the Soviet law prohibited catechization of children and the youth up to 18 years of age.

⁶⁴ The best known and distinguished in this work were sisters Irena and Jadwiga Zappe. Zappe Irena (1919–2013) – b. in Zaleszczyki. In 1938 she began studies at John Casimir University in Lviv which she finished in 1941. In September 1939 she took part in the defense of Lviv as a scout medical orderly. Since 1942 she was involved in conspiracy activity in the Home Army. Since 1952, together with her sister Jadwiga, she organised the teaching of religion, the Polish language and history in their flat in addition to helping the poorest, e.g. through providing them with food and clothes. In 1976 the Zappe sisters were accused of conducting illegal catechesis and anti-state activity. The investigation did not indicate any “organised activity financed from abroad”. Irena Zappe died on 4 July 2013 in Lviv. IPN, *Irena (1919–2013) i Jadwiga Zappe*, <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/konkursy-i-nagrody/nagroda-kustosz-pamieci/2008/24256,Irena-19192013-i-Jadwiga-Zappe>.

commandments to children where they lived, so that they could later go to confession and receive the Eucharist in full awareness.⁶⁵ In 1974 he received help from Rev. Ludwik Kamilewski,⁶⁶ who performed his service in the Lviv cathedral till January 1991. On 6 January 1991 Fr. Rafał was appointed the titular bishop and the suffragan of the archbishop of Lviv, Marian Jaworski. In his memoirs from 1991 he wrote, ‘I took up work in the cathedral in 1948. So I finish my 43rd year of work. When I arrived in the cathedral, one of the two priests said “Put on your cassock and go to the confessional!” And so it began.’⁶⁷

In recognition of the merits that Fr. Kiernicki had in church and in pastoral work, he was rewarded with the Partisan Cross, the Gold Cross of Merits with Swords, the Gold Medal Guardian of Places of National Memory, the Decoration of Honour Meritorious for Polish Culture and the Włodzimierz Pietrzak Special Award.⁶⁸ During his pilgrimage to Poland, Pope John Paul II said in Lubaczów on 3 June 1991 in reference to Father Rafał’s service: ‘For so many years and decades, through so much suffering and humiliation, [he was] a faithful servant of this treasure, this sign of the Church identity, which is the ages-old Latin cathedral of Lviv’.⁶⁹ Father Kiernicki died on 23 November 1995. He was buried in the crypt of the Lviv cathedral, to which he had devoted 46 years of his life and work.⁷⁰

A sign of a certain breakthrough in the Soviet Union was the fact that on 24 May 1984 Pope John Paul II appointed Rev. Marian Jaworski, a true-born Lviv inhabitant – at that time the rector of the Pontifical Theological Academy in Cracow – apostolic administrator in Lubaczów, the bishopric of the ‘Lviv Archdiocese in Lubaczów’. In August 1987, on the order of Archbishop Jaworski, his secretary Rev. Marian Buczek went on a ‘private’ visit to Lviv. He was warmly greeted by the provost of the cathedral, Fr. Kiernicki and Vicar Rev. Ludwik Kamilewski. Rev. Buczek celebrated the Holy Mass in St Joseph chapel, with the

html (accessed: 4.07.2019); K. Szymański, *Duchem zawsze młoda*, “Kurier Galicyjski”, (2016) no. 7 (251), p. 25.

⁶⁵ An account by Rev. L. Kamilewski.

⁶⁶ Ludwik Kamilewski (1946–2019) – born in Kazakhstan in a Polish family deported in 1943 who returned to Połonny. After finishing school and military service he joined the theological seminary in Riga, Latvia, where 26 May 1974 he received the holy orders. He was a vicar in the Lviv cathedral. He helped the Catholics to get back the churches in the Lviv and Volhynia districts in the 1990’s, for example in Manevychi, Olyka, Tsuman, Berestechko, Lubieszów and Zhytomyr (St. Wenceslaus church, where for 17 years he was the provost, and St. Sophia cathedral). In March 1991 he became the first provost after the war of the cathedral parish named after the Holy Trinity and Sts. Spostles Peter and Paul in Lutsk. In the years 1991- 2000 he was the Lutsk Dean and the Dean of the Zhytomyr deaconry. He died in Lutsk and was buried on 24 January 2019 in his family town of Połonne. L. Kamilewski, *Odrodzenie Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego w obecnym dekanacie luckim (1989–1997)*, in: *Polacy i Kościół rzymskokatolicki na Wołyniu w latach 1918–1997*, ed. L. Popek, Lublin 1999, pp. 109–112.

⁶⁷ Osadczy, *Kościół wyznawców*, p. 196.

⁶⁸ *Kiernicki Władysław*, in: Dzwonkowski, *Leksykon duchowieństwa*, p. 319.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Vitold-Yosif Kovaliv, *Odrodzenie struktur Archidiecezji Lwowskiej pod koniec XX wieku*, “Wołanie z Wołynia”, 18 (2012) no. 5 (108) – B, wrzesień-październik 2012, p. 25.

door of the cathedral closed. He was able to celebrate the Mass at the main altar of the cathedral together with Rev. Kamilewski only once. The Lviv priests said the name of Bishop Marian from Lubaczów in the canon of the Holy Mass, as they were aware of the fact that he was their superior.⁷¹

Regardless of the difficulties experienced by the Church in the communist period, the pastoral work was continued in Lviv. In order to support Fr. Kiernicki, who was already at an advanced age, priests from Poland or ordained in Riga came on private invitation in the 1970s.

After WW II ended, the hardest years began for the faithful, including Lviv and the Latin cathedral. The latter, as the mother of churches in the diocese, was threatened with closure, and the clergymen experienced chicanery and terror from the new Soviet authorities. Among the clergymen struggling to keep this church working, the provost, Fr. Kiernicki, played a special role, becoming a legend of the Lviv pastoral work. On 4 May 2012 his beatification process began in the Lviv Latin cathedral.

Conclusions

When the consecration of the first post-war bishops took place on 2 March 1991, many asked themselves if it was really happening. The newly consecrated bishops included Rev. Markijan Trofimiak and Fr. Rafał Kiernicki. During one of the funeral liturgies Fr. Rafał asked, ‘Will there still be anybody to bury me?’ This memory becomes characteristic on the historic day for the Catholic Church, the city of Lviv and the local Catholics: when Fr. Kiernicki, surrounded by a large group of clergymen in the crowded cathedral, was anointed bishop.

When the Soviet authorities took over Lviv in 1944, the Catholic Church was destined for annihilation. This did not happen, however. The revival of the Church, its vitality, the persistence of the faithful and the heroism of the priests who stayed and served the Church faithfully – not infrequently paying for it with punishment, harassment, imprisonment and deportation – are a phenomenon for many. All these factors certainly contributed to the extraordinary history of the Church in the Lviv area.

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KULT RZYMSKOKATOLICKI WE LWOWIE W LATACH 1945–1991

Streszczenie

W artykule przedstawiono wybrane aspekty życia społeczno-religijnego rzymskokatolickiej społeczności Lwowa w Związku Sowieckim w latach 1945–1991. Kościół katolicki na ziemiach polskich przyłączonych do ZSRS został podporządkowany prawodawstwu komunistycznemu, które walczyło z religią i szerzyło ateizm. Struktury kościelne zostały zlikwidowane, a duchowieństwo i wierni poddani represjom. Pomimo tego Kościół jako wspólnota wierzących trwał oraz wykorzystywał różne możliwości do dalszej działalności. W artykule ukazano postawy lwowskiego duchowieństwa wobec władz sowieckich oraz ich niejawną aktywność duszpasterską wśród wiernych. Szczególną uwagę skupiono na duchownych, którzy stali się symbolami lwowskiego duszpasterstwa po II wojnie światowej. Byli to księża: Karol Jastrzębski, Stanisław Płoszyński, Zygmunt Hałuniewicz i Rafał Władysław Kiernicki, farnicyszanin.

Słowa kluczowe: Lwów; katedra lwowska; Ukraina sowiecka; ksiądz Karol Jastrzębski; ksiądz Stanisław Płoszyński; ksiądz Zygmunt Hałuniewicz; Rafał Władysław Kiernicki