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THE PARISH OFFICE IN THE AUSTRIAN PARTITION AND ITS DOCUMENTATION AT THE TURN OF THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

Abstract

The Catholic Church fulfilled important tasks in the administrative structure of the Habsburg monarchy. They were carried out basing on the parish network as well as state and church regulations. For their fulfilment, an efficient parish office was necessary, which, using appropriate forms, registered various information about the pastoral activity and life of the congregation. The article presents the principles of the organization of offices, registry and archives in Catholic parishes of the Austrian partition at the peak of their development at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The goals and methods of keeping vital records books and other forms of parish documentation as well as the rules of official correspondence were discussed. The basis for the study was the manual for running a parish office for the clergy, written by Rev. Alojzy Jougan, a professor at the University of Lviv in 1912, in which the formal, legal and practical-pastoral principles of running a parish office were discussed.

Keywords: parish office; parish archives; parish books; Church in the Austrian partition

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Introduction

In the second half of the 18th century the Church administrative structures were included in the process of rebuilding the Habsburgs' state in the spirit of Enlightened absolutism. In consequence, in the monarchy the Church became one of the institutions of an autocratic state. A special role was played by the parish, which

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became an important element of the administrative structure of the state and its control over the subjects – while remaining the local centre of religious life. Due to this situation, the formal, administrative and legal aspects of the parish clergy grew in importance. This led to the development and professionalisation of parish offices, which – having existed for centuries – had to undergo thorough changes in order to face up to the tasks resulting from the situation of Church structures in the state of Enlightened absolutism.[1]

The parish office was the junction of two administrative systems, namely Church and state systems. As it performed tasks within both areas, it was thus subjected to Church and state regulations. The mutual relations in this field changed over time and depended on the religious and sociopolitical transformations occurring in the 19th century. As a consequence of those processes, at the end of the 19th century, the parish office in the Habsburg state achieved a high level of organisation and professionalism in realising the clerical services of the parish for tasks designated both by Church and state authorities.

The Polish land incorporated within the Austrian state as a result of the partitions became an integral part of it and underwent the same processes taking place in the whole Habsburg monarchy. This also referred to the organisation of religious life and the situation of Church structures within the state. The subject of this article is the organisation of parish offices in Galicia (Eastern Europe) and the kinds of documentation produced as a result of their work during the peak development at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The research on parish offices in the Polish area is abundant. Synthetic analyses of the history of parish offices can be found in the work of Robert Kufel and Tomasz Moskal.[2] Piotr Rachwał and Janina Gawrysiakowa, in their publications based on an analysis of birth and death registers, discuss issues pertinent to research on the natural movement of the population.[3] Among the studies on parish offices in the Austrian partitioning zone, articles by Bolesław Kumor are worthy of attention, discussing Austrian regulations in reference to birth and death registers.[4]

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[1] J. Krętosz, *Józefiński proces budowy Kościoła państwowego na terenie monarchii habsburskiej w okresie rządów cesarza Józefa II (1780–1790)*, "Śląskie Studia Historyczno-Teologiczne", 29 (1996) pp. 41–44.

[2] R. Kufel, *Kancelaria, registratura i archiwum parafialne na ziemiach polskich od XII do początków XXI wieku*, Zielona Góra 2011; T. Moskal, *Historia ksiąg metrykalnych kościoła katolickiego na ziemiach polskich*, "Archiwariusz. Biuletyn Archiwum Archidiecezjalnego w Poznaniu", (2005) no. 1, pp. 55–82.

[3] P. Rachwał, *Ruch naturalny ludności rzymskokatolickiej w Lubelskiem w świetle rejestracji metrykalnej z lat 1582–1900*, Lublin 2019; idem, *Księgi metrykalne z czasów zaboru austriackiego w archiwach parafialnych w Lubelskiem – regulacje prawne, stan zachowania*, "Rocznik Lubelskiego Towarzystwa Genealogicznego", 6 (2015) pp. 306–325; J. Gawrysiakowa, *Grupy wyznaniowe ludności w Lubelskiem w XIX wieku*, Lublin 1992.

[4] B. Kumor, *Przepisy państwowe i kościelne dotyczące metryk kościelnych w zaborze austriackim (1800–1914)*, "Przeszłość Demograficzna Polski", 7 (1975) pp. 93–107; idem, *Metryki parafialne w archiwach diecezjalnych*, "Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej", (1966) no. 14, fasc. 1, pp. 65–75.

The basis of this article is a textbook meant for the clergy and written by Rev. Alojzy Jougan,[5] professor at the University of Lviv. It is a publication of pastoral character, with the formal and legal inclination that is so strong in Austria. The majority of the author's attention is focussed on the practical aspects of office work. The beginning of the book provides a thorough discussion of Church and state regulations on running a parish office and particular kinds of parish documentation. Further on, there are occasional references to specific examples of regulations. The rules presented in the book and concerning the organisation of the office, and above all the typology of parish documentation, are extremely valuable since they were discussed alongside legal cases and practical indications that were characteristic of the epoch. Rev. Alojzy Jougan's manual is also of special significance for the subject of this article because it shows the formal, legal and practical/pastoral aspects of running a parish office and keeping parish documentation at the moment the institution was being organised, i.e. at the end of the 19th century.

The structure of the article reflects the research objectives, which include only some selected aspects of the broader subject presented in Rev. Jougan's manual. First, there is a discussion of the organisation of a parish office and the related register and archives, followed by a presentation of issues connected with keeping parish record books and other parish documentation; finally the characteristics of parish official correspondence are analysed.

Parish office, registration and parish archives

The organisation of a parish office depended on a number of factors. However, despite considerable differentiation resulting from the size of a parish and the number of faithful and clergymen, the parishes had the same scope of formal rights and duties and mostly performed identical tasks set for them by the Church and lay authorities. Parishes in Galicia were usually rural and thus had a similar profile of constituents. For the most part, Rev. Jougan directed his remarks on the practical conditions of organising a parish office to the clergy in such a typical rural parish.

First, he drew attention to the fact that the parish office was to be organised within the parish itself and usually occupied 'one of the parish rooms'. Therefore, it was not a typical office space intended for contact with clients, and the appropriate conditions for office work were to be created by properly adapting it. Next, Rev. Jougan enumerated the typical and necessary equipment of a parish office:

> The most important piece of equipment is the table (desk), a cross on it, with two candles (to receive the possible manifestation oath). In addition to this, a shelf for books and files together with the desk in the form of a top section with divided sections, or a cupboard placed separately from the desk (next to it).[6]

As follows from this, by 'desk' the author meant a place for office work, a desk typical of Austrian offices, whose top section consists in rows of compartments

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[5] A. Jougan, *Kancelaria parafialna czyli zbiór przepisów kościelnych i państwowych dla urzędów parafialnych, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem ksiąg metrykalnych*, Lwów 1912.

[6] Ibid, p. 787.

for files. The files could be collected in a separate cupboard where materials necessary for the proper functioning of the office were found in addition to the current documentation.

> In this cupboard there should be Church or state ordinances, consistorial circulars or official diocesan magazines, books of civil laws (codes), journals of state and national laws, textbooks for canon and marital law, office textbooks, application forms, schematisms, a diary, address books, a list of localities in Galicia to find a post office or a district in case a certificate will have to be written or the parish priest should be notified of the place of birth, wedding or death of a given person.[7]

Due to the importance of files connected with marital matters, which 'usually require a separate division', a special place in the top section was delineated. Files related to current matters of the parish office should be 'sorted out according to the content and placed in a portfolio with a proper inscription (e.g. legitimation protocol, birth and death certificates, etc.)'. Prepared in this way, they were to be placed 'in separate sections of this cupboard or the top section'.[8]

The basic aid in the current office work was the correspondence log, called a record of activities (*protocollon gestionis*). All official correspondence, issued documents and certificates were registered there. The rules for keeping the log did not differ from a typical correspondence log. The registration of each document included the successive number, the date it was received or dispatched, the sender and a summary.[9]

The top section should contain only the documents connected with the current work of the parish office. Documentation concerning closed cases was to be collected separately in the register.

> Letters sent to the parish office as well as concepts (notebooks) of letters sent from the office are collected at certain time intervals and transferred to the so-called register, which is a separate locked cupboard with shelves and sections [*Fach*] and correspondingly to the content placed in the related fascicle or a separate portfolio in the sections of the register, equipped with the proper inscription and grouped according to some order so that they can be easily found.[10]

Files in the register were to be placed horizontally and loosely in order to avoid any damage to the documentation. That is why particular divisions on the

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[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

[9] "To record any official documents, both those that were received and those that were sent or those supposed to be sent, each parish office should have a protocol of activities (protocollon gestionis) or a diary (diarium), where those documents are entered according to the current number, together with the date they were received (praes.) or sent (exp.), their short summary and – possibly – destination (addressee). The most convenient form of the protocol of activities would be such where the incoming documents would be placed on one side, and expedition of the official documents – on the other. Nowadays, however, all offices make use of forms (tabular) of the protocol of activities – without any division of the office activities into the two categories." Ibid., pp. 787–788.

[10] Ibid., p. 789.

shelves of the register (*Fach*) were to be deep enough to fit a typical sheet of paper: 'A cupboard designed for them should be 45 cm deep, while the sections should be about 30 cm high and wide.' They included the subject index and alphabetic registry, 'with marked content and persons'. Files were to be ordered by subject in the register.[11]

The cupboard including the register was to be properly protected. It was not to be placed near chimney flues, which frequently leaked and posed a fire hazard from the sparks they emitted. Dampness was equally dangerous, which is why the cupboard was not to be placed near the outer walls of the parish building and space was to be left to allow free air circulation. The cupboard was to be locked with a key accessible only to the parish priest. A corridor was an improper place for the cupboard, since unauthorised people could get hold of documents or information stored there. The best place was the parish office or the adjoining room. This facilitated the use of the collected files during office work and additionally protected the documents, as the office itself was to be locked at all times.[12]

The register was supposed to be distinguished from the parish archives: 'it was a part of the register but the most important one and this is why all regulations and objections concerning the register should be referred to the archives even to a greater extent.' It was a separate part and served as a place to collect the most important documents, mainly death and birth certificates. A detailed list of the files to be kept in the parish archives was included in a circular of the Lviv consistory from 1896.[13]

Both Church and state authorities appreciated the importance of the proper organisation of parish archives. The Church supervision consisted in the dean's annual inspections of the archives' condition and content. Likewise, the Lviv governorship issued an ordinance according to which new parishes established with state funds were to find a proper place for the archives 'so that it will not be flammable, with a domed ceiling and equipped with an iron door and wooden shutters.'[14]

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[11] A. Jougan enumerated the following subject groups of files: "The parish register should hold at least the following fascicles with the files of 1) buildings, 2) religious brotherhoods, 3) foundations, 4) mortgage matters, 5) pre-marital protocols, dispensations and general marital matters, 6) legitimation of illegitimate children, 7) statistical lists; 8) money collections, 9) vicars' matters, 10) cemetery matters, 11) patronage matters; 12) matters of birth and death records, 13) school matters, 14) care and orphan matters, 15) vicarage matters, 16) incomes, burdens and rights of the parish, 17) canonical visitations, 18) governmental, and 19) consistory decrees, 20) order of holy services, 21) organist's matters, 22) conversions and apostasies, 23) separations in civil courts, 24) agreements concerning religious upbringing of children, 25) circulars and pastoral letters, 26) dean's orders, etc." Ibid., pp. 790–791.

[12] Ibid., p. 793.

[13] "(…) both old and new erection and donation documents, papal bulls, papal briefs, chronicles, old files and historical documents as important for the church or the parish, e.g. diplomas, contracts of sale, lease, foundation acts and letters, maps and ground sheets, inventories, agreements changing certain burdens (servitudes) into capitals, mortgage copies, securities, insurance policies, declarations of income, etc." Ibid., pp. 794–795.

[14] Ibid., p. 795.

Record books

The most important part of the documentation kept in a parish office was the record books. According to Rev. Jougan, 'the most important duty of the office, and at the same time one of the main agendas of a parish office, is keeping Church books, parish books or record books.' According to the regulations, he included among these books records of persons who were christened, married and deceased, emphasising that 'these books are both a Church and a state institution.' He said that record books 'are the property of the Church' and that by keeping them the Church does a great service to the state and the society'.[15]

According to Rev. Jougan, the significance of record books for the state's administration was that they contained information that was important because of the 'secular legal relations'. For this reason,

> entries in parish books had served the state's goals for a long time and the parish books themselves were considered to be registers of the marital status and also received *in foro civili* the force of public documents, whereas keeping record books was included within the cases of public administration.

Keeping record books was considered to be 'one of the office activities' and the clergymen who were concerned with it had the status of 'state officials of the registry office'.[16]

According to Jougan, the fact that record books kept by parish priests had the status of evidence for state authorities was of significant pastoral importance. He emphasised that

> in the present relations the parishioners' need to refer to the parish office in cases pertaining to registers is frequently their only link in the field of pastoral care, which fact creates a convenient opportunity to establish and maintain a mutual spiritual bond between the priest and the people.[17]

During the 18th and 19th centuries, the state authorities issued many specific regulations on how to keep record books.[18] The most important, though not the first, was the imperial patent from 20 February 1784, which ordered that 'record books should be kept (*in folio*) in a tabular form with rubrics.' Hieronim Wyczawski emphasised that it was in Austria where unified forms of record books were introduced. Those experiences were used by Church institutions in the Polish areas of the other partitioning zones.[19]

Rev. Jougan drew attention to the fact that owing to the use of forms, it was easier to capture potential mistakes and to find the necessary information: 'This arrangement is convenient because if the captions of particular rubrics in the heading were observed, complete entries could be made, possibly without any errors.' The patent from 1784 included models of forms with specifications on the content of

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[15] Ibid., p. 34.

[16] Ibid., p. 35. It was already during the rule of Maria Theresa and Joseph II that record books obtained the status of public documents, cf. p. 308.

[17] Jougan, *Kancelaria parafialna*, p. 36.

[18] Gawrysiakowa, *Grupy wyznaniowe ludności w Lubelskiem*, p. 33.

[19] H. Wyczawski, *Przygotowania do studiów w archiwach kościelnych*, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska 1989, p. 278.

particular rubrics and the rules for keeping them.[20] This was important since the parish priest who made an entry in the record book bore full responsibility for its content. Church and state authorities reminded the clergy of this responsibility throughout the 19th century; for example, the Lviv governor in a decree from 6 October 1837 wrote that

> entries in record books are to be made by clergymen, who should do it by themselves, without delay and observing the binding regulations in this respect. In these activities parish priests are the officials of the registry office and they are responsible for each case of untruth, whether it be illegible writing, a mistake or additional entries.[21]

The author combined a discussion on keeping books of baptisms (*liber baptisatorum*) with an extensive lecture on Church and state regulations to explain the importance of this particular sacrament at the religious and secular levels. He explained who was entitled to administer it and make entries in the record book. He referred to state orders forbidding priests of other rites or 'servants of another Church' to administer sacraments or to document them for believers from outside of their confessional group. Breaking this prohibition would render them invalid on the forum of state law.[22]

At the same time he discussed a number of state ordinances referring to the sacrament of baptism, including those which ordered parents to have their legal offspring baptised: 'a child has to follow parents in Catholic religion, and therefore baptism and an entry in the book of baptisms is compulsory.' If the administration of a baptism was not proven with a proper entry in the *liber baptisatorum*, state regulations were infringed: 'By withholding a report on a child's baptism, parents also hamper the full execution of state regulations, e.g. statistical lists of youths eligible for military service.' Likewise, 'a Catholic father's refusal to have his child baptised is usually considered to be an abuse of parental power.' If such a situation took place, relatives could make claims before a secular court to have this father fulfil the obligation of baptising the child.[23]

Making an entry in the book of baptisms was associated with the need to confirm the marital status of the parents: 'In practice, the principal rule should be adopted that all entries in the record books, and in particular of those born and baptised, should be made only on the basis of reliable documents, so – mainly – the certificate of the parents' wedding.' Oral declarations of parents or midwives were

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[20] Jougan, *Kancelaria parafialna*, p. 47.

[21] Ibid., p. 49.

[22] A. Jougan quotes a fragment of the law from 25 May, 1868: "Superiors, servants or members of the Church or a religious association should abstain from performing divine service in relation to the members of another Church or religious association which service was not requested by those entitled. An exception may occur only in individual cases, when the competent clergymen or servants of another Church or religious association ask to have the act which is their duty performed, or when statutes or regulations allow the performance of this act. Besides these cases, such an act is considered ineffective, and the authorities should deal with it in the proper manner on the request of the affected private person or religious association." Ibid., pp. 130–131.

[23] Ibid., pp. 132–133.

not sufficient in establishing the legitimacy of the offspring, while 'false or wrong testimonies of the parties in making an entry in the record books were not usually attributed by the authorities to the parties' guilt, but as negligence or carelessness on the side of the persons keeping the records.'[24]

Information on baptism was to be entered directly in the record book. Using previously made rough copies was inadmissible:

> This is the requirement of governmental regulations, which are not familiar with rough copies at all (…). Official entries of birth and baptism certificates were to be made in the same record book *Baptisatorum* (not in rough copies) in a tabular form, according to the sheet and the rubrics officially determined.[25]

The sheet of the book of baptisms binding at the beginning of the 20th century consisted of 13 columns. Each entry included the following pieces of information: the successive number of the certificate, the name and function of the minister of the sacrament and in separate fields the date of the child's birth and baptism, their place of birth (address), the child's names, parents' religion, child's gender and legitimacy (or illegitimacy). Further information concerned parents and the circumstances of their marriage, as well the surnames of the godparents and their place of residence. The last field contained a space for remarks.[26]

The set of rubrics in the sheet in most cases was sufficient for noting the birth and baptism. In non-standard situations (mixed marriages, the baptism of foundlings, missing information about the father, etc.), the parish priest was obliged to prepare additional documents or undertake additional explanatory proceedings. A discussion of those situations and the rules concerning how to note them in the *liber baptisatorum* was found in extensive passages of the publication by Rev. Jougan. For example, for mixed marriages it was necessary to prepare a declaration that the child would be brought up Catholic, which was to be signed by both parents. In the case of foundlings, the parish priest along with the authorities of the commune had an obligation to attempt to establish parenthood. If that proved impossible, the names of the people who had decided to raise the child were entered as parents. At the same time, the parish priest made a note in the rubric for 'remarks'. If a widow gave birth to a baby within 10 months of her husband's death, the name of the deceased was entered as the father, while a baby born later received the mother's maiden name.[27]

The Church always guarded the religious character of marriage very strictly. This was also binding in the Habsburgs' state. As stated by Piegzie, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution hastened a partial secularisation of marital law in Catholic Austria, too. The imperial patent from 1 June 1811 proclaimed the Austrian civil code (*Allgemeines Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch*), which considered the confessional nature of marriage in different Churches and confessional associations

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[24] Ibid., pp. 135–136.
[25] Ibid., p. 142.
[26] Ibid., p. 144.
[27] Ibid., pp. 154, 180, 196.

but also provided for a limited possibility of civil marriages and divorces.[28] The code from 1811, which was begun by the patent of Joseph II in 1783, developed the secular model of marriage as an agreement between two people contracted in a definite form in order to realise some objectives provided by law (e.g. mutual help and giving birth to offspring). In 1908, Zoll emphasised that although many of the regulations concerning marriage in Austrian law were based on the domestic law of religious associations, eventually they drew their binding force from the norms established by the state legislature.[29]

After Austria concluded the concordat (1855), the emperor issued a marriage patent, which suspended some of the provisions of the code from 1811 in relation to Catholics and strengthened the influence of the Church on the marital relations of its members. After the war with Prussia in 1866, the regulations concerning marital law, which had been suspended after the concordat, and the competences of state courts in marital matters were restored (marital law from 25 May 1868).[30]

This state of marital law was in effect in Austria until the fall of the empire. Rev. Jougan discussed this in his textbook, and although he assessed the provisions of the law from 1868 critically,[31] he clearly stated in the chapter with the meaningful title 'Are civil marital laws binding for parish priests?' that a parish priest who did not fulfil the obligations following from the law had to take into consideration the sanctions of state law.[32]

Contracting a marriage was preceded by numerous office activities and procedures (engagements and banns) which were to be performed by the parish priest before he would allow the marriage and make an entry in the book of weddings (*liber copulatorum*). Those activities were to be documented in the form of a pro-

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[28] A. Piegzik, *Przeszkody małżeńskie w ustawodawstwie dzielnicowym II RP*, "Folia Iuridica Universitatis Vratislaviensis", 5 (2016) No. 1, pp. 36–37.

[29] A. Karabowicz, *Małżeństwo cywilne z konieczności (Notzivilehe) w Galicji w latach 1868-1918*, in: *Prawo blisko człowieka. Z dziejów prawa rodzinnego i spadkowego*, ed. M. Mikuła, Kraków 2008, pp. 60–61.

[30] Ibid., pp. 61–62.

[31] "The beginning of the constitutional era in Austria was soon followed by aspirations to exclude marriages from the authority of the Church, and even to introduce civil weddings. – Those aspirations were partly realized in the so-called May law from 25 May, 1868 (…). This law in part secularized marriage since it left § 75 which kept the church form, and legalized the civil form only in exceptional cases which deserve consideration, i.e. it accepted and enabled Catholics and dissenters – under certain conditions – to get married in front of the civil authority, which means that it introduced so-called marriage of necessity." Jougan, *Kancelaria parafialna*, pp. 332–333.

[32] A. Jougan quoted the literal wording of the corresponding regulations: "The provisions of the civil law: § 78 c.l. If the bride and the groom do not submit a written testimony after the properly announced banns, or if the persons mentioned in §§ 49–52 and 54 do not present a permission required to get married, or if those whose age of majority is not visible do not submit a baptism certificate or a written certificate of their majority, or if another obstacle occurs for their marriage, then under no circumstances can the priest wed them until the bride and the groom submit the necessary certificates and remove all obstacles. The ceremony of the wedding performed by the priest against the provisions of § 78 has the feature of a police trespass and the political power is competent to initiate criminal proceedings." Ibid., p. 374.

tocol which – together with all attachments – was to be carefully kept in the parish archives.

The requirements concerning the proper entry in the book of weddings were established in both state and Church regulations. The oldest ordinance in this respect was the imperial patent from 8 February 1784, the main content of which was binding throughout the 19th century. It stated that the books of weddings were aimed 'to preserve a lasting proof of the contracted marriage' and that the entries should be made personally by 'the superior of the parish' in 'the book specially intended for this purpose.' It was also determined what information should be included in an entry in the book of weddings.[33] At the end of the 19th century, the form of *liber copulatorum* contained seven main rubrics: the successive number, the date of the wedding, information about the spouses, a list of witnesses, the minister of the sacrament and remarks. Rubrics designated for information about the bride and groom were divided into four sections: name and surname, religion, age and marital status.[34] Church regulations concerning an entry in the marriage book were most fully established in the decree *Ne temere* of the Congregation of the Council from 2 August 1907.[35]

The part of the entry with information about those being wedded was extended the most. It included not only names and surnames, but also addresses and – in the case of military men – a detailed military assignment. Information about the parents of the wedded couple, including whether and when they died, was to be provided. In the case of adopted persons, the surname of 'the adoptive father or the maiden name of the adoptive mother' as well as the previous family name of the adopted person were to be recorded.[36]

The rubric 'remarks' was to include information on the documents used in the office's preparation for the wedding, and the original copies were to be placed in the parish archives. The most important included certificates of the bride's and groom's baptisms, certification of their addresses, certification of banns and any dispensations received. The most documents were required when the groom was a military man, in which case numerous permissions had to be obtained from military and state authorities.[37]

After contracting the marriage the original documents were not to be returned to the parties or even lent out since 'the wedding documents serve as appendixes to prove the observed legal proceedings in marriage contraction.' Even state authorities

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[33] "The entry should contain the name and surname, age, residence, status of the spouses, together with a note whether they were or were not married before, then the name and surname as well as the status of their parents and witnesses, also the day when the marriage was contracted, and finally the name of the priest in front of whom the permission was solemnly declared. Besides, the documents by virtue of which the existing obstacles were removed had to be enumerated". Ibid., p. 616.

[34] Ibid., p. 622.

[35] J. Dohnalik, *Forma kanoniczna zawarcia małżeństwa – spojrzenie historyczne i postulat reform*, "Annales Canonici", 14 (2018) fasc. 11, pp. 189–190.

[36] Jougan, *Kancelaria parafialna*, pp. 625–626.

[37] Ibid., pp. 630–632.

were not allowed to release the original copies without the consent of the national government in Lviv. Full documentation related to the contraction of marriage had to be kept by 'the competent parish priest of the newlyweds, who officiates the wedding or assigns a delegation.' The same minister was obliged to make an entry in the marriage book of his parish. In the case of weddings officiated on the basis of a delegation in another place, the parish priest of the latter was obliged only to keep the certificate of the delegation.[38]

Referring to the death book (*liber mortuorum*), the parish priest was obliged to enter all cases from the area of the parish. This also referred to deceased individuals who had not resided permanently in the given area. Besides the natural deaths, other deaths such as stillbirths or violent deaths (accidents or suicides) as well as deaths of convicts were to be entered. Registration of deaths applied to all deceased people regardless of whether they received a Church funeral or were refused one.

The official form of the death book was determined by the imperial patent from 1781; it included the date and location of the death, the name and surname of the deceased, their religion, gender and age and the cause of death.[39] The decree from 1784 made it possible to add information regarding extreme unction, which the Church authorities had requested. Information on this fact was to be placed in the rubric for 'remarks' and no separate rubric could be designed for this purpose nor could this information be sent to secular authorities. In the light of Joseph's legislation, the *liber mortuorum* was to be a state document above all else. At the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, this book comprised ten columns. Information about the name of the minister of the Church funeral was added if one had taken place. In other cases, the rubric was left empty.[40]

If an exhumation was performed, the 'remarks' were to include the date and the reason. Information on the death of military men in active service was to be found in military records. An ordinance of the state authorities from 1869 forbade including information on the civil marriage of deceased persons. Despite the state nature of *liber mortuorum*, Rev. Jougan recommended that 'remarks' should include information that was important for the Church, e.g. refusals of Church funerals, with the reason provided. If Church celebrations were allowed during the funeral after a suicide, then the cause was also to be provided. Most frequently, this was a medical statement of insanity at the moment of the suicide.[41]

Other forms of parish documentation

Apart from record books, numerous other books were created in parish offices throughout the 19th century. These were supposed to facilitate the functioning of the parish office. Initially, their content and forms of recordkeeping varied and were dependent on the practice of a given office. Over time, particular bishops ordered specific parish books in their dioceses, and they even established the forms. The most extensive list of such parish books, including 27 entries, was the instruction

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[38] Ibid., p. 633.
[39] Rachwał, *Księgi metrykalne z czasów zaboru*, pp. 313–314.
[40] Jougan, *Kancelaria parafialna*, pp. 703, 706.
[41] Ibid., pp. 704–705.

of the dean's visitations for the Lviv archdiocese of the Latin rite from 1996.[42] The importance of the information collected in particular books varied and there were likely some parishes that did not keep the complete set. Although the majority of the parish documentation from these groups was described as 'books', the form of recordkeeping changed over time. The technique of gathering loose documentation concerning a given issue into portfolios (case files) slowly developed and card indexes appeared.[43]

Documentation related to keeping record books was considered of the greatest importance. This was, for example, the bann book (*liber bannorum*), which comprised 13 rubrics, the first of which was the successive numbering of banns announced in the parish. Eight rubrics included information about the engaged couple: the names and surnames of the bride and groom and their parents, their occupation, age, marital status, confession and place of residence, as well as the name of the parish. Three rubrics contained information concerning the date of banns and the rank of the Church holiday (Sunday or another holiday). The last rubric, 'remarks', was intended for later annotations, such as the date and place of the wedding or the place where the newlyweds had settled down. Detailed state regulations required that the marital status of the engaged couple (e.g. maiden or widower) be given not only in the bann book, but also when the banns were announced; for persons adopted in childhood, the family name of the mother and the previous family name of the adopted child were provided next to the name of the adoptive father.[44] An ordinance from the Lviv consistory obliged parish priests to keep other parish books and lists connected with the administration of the sacrament of marriage, e.g. the *liber denegatarum copulationum*. This book recorded information about individuals who had been refused a Church wedding, including the canonical cause. Certain obstacles in getting married which were found in Church law is not apply in cases of a civil wedding.[45] Separate lists held information about married couples who had received the permission of the civil court for a separation,[46] and the so-called 'private *liber copulatorum*' was a register of marriages contracted on one's deathbed or without a priest present, following the procedure established in the decree *Ne temere.* Those marriages could not be entered in the official *liber copulatorum*. The 'register of unmarried mothers' was of a different character. It included the true names of mothers of foundlings if the parish priest was able to ascertain them. The Lviv consistory categorised these as confidential books, which were not even to be kept in the parish office but in separate parish archives.[47] They contained information which was important for religious and Church reasons and which was not to be placed in the official record books.

The next group of parish books served the purpose of registering selected events from the religious life of believers and pastoral activities. The most important

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[42] Ibid., p. 853.

[43] Kufel, *Kancelaria, registratura i archiwum parafialne*, p. 50.

[44] Jougan, *Kancelaria parafialna*, p. 392.

[45] Karabowicz, *Małżeństwo cywilne z konieczności (Notzivilehe) w Galicji*, p. 63.

[46] Jougan, *Kancelaria parafialna*, p. 202.

[47] Ibid., pp. 862, 868.

was the book of visits to the sick (*liber visitationis infirmorum*), which had eight columns in its standard form. The information was recorded by year and included the successive numbering of visits within a given year, the day of the visit, address and name and surname of the sick person. The rubric titled '*provisus*' was divided into four columns whose headings referred to the kind of service: confession, holy communion, last rites and general absolution. The minister usually marked the ordained ministry with a slash placed in the corresponding places. The final two columns were for possible information regarding the time and cause of death. Another important book of this type was a register of confirmations (*liber confor-matorum*). It contained the successive number and date, the name, surname and age of the confirmed person, the name of the minister and the place of the sacrament. It is worth noting that addresses of the confirmed were not provided in this book.[48]

Rev. Jougan writes that the aim of the *liber status animarum* was to show

the state of the parish according to the pastoral statistics and thus making a list of the whole families of all parishioners, with the names and numbers and indicating the changes that had taken place with time, or considering the increase (of weddings and births) or losses (deaths).

The *liber status animarium* was supposed to be a summary of entries scattered in record books and other documentation in order to show in one place the changes occurring within the parish. The proper keeping of this book was expected to aid the organisation of pastoral activity and the work of the parish office, while serving as reports for the secular and ecclesiastical authorities. Filling in *liber status animarum* was especially recommended during the Christmas pastoral visits. Different forms of keeping this book were recommended in particular parishes – most frequently by the names of the inhabitants or the numbers of houses in particular villages. The efficient use of information gathered in this way required numerous indexes, the most important being the index of names. The format for this book recommended by Rev. Jougan included eight columns. The first one provided the house number in the given village, then a list of people in the households with the specification of kinship and affinity (wife, children, in-laws, etc.). Entries in the further columns referred to religion and rite, dates of birth, wedding, death and confirmation. The last one contained remarks. The author made a note of the fact that in larger cities the register *status animarum* was increasingly often kept in the form of a card index. However, he did not devote more attention to this form of documentation.[49]

A separate group were the registers connected with parish preaching. Those included the book of journeys (*liber excursionum*) and the books of sermons and preaching (*liber catechesium et concionum*). They were also forms. In the first one the parish priest entered the dates of journeys to the villages in the parish aimed at teaching the catechism to children, youths and adults. Teaching took place occasionally and was not related to school catechesis; it usually took place in the villages which were most distant from the parish church, where the be-

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[48] Ibid., p. 854.
[49] Ibid., p. 857.

lievers participated in the parish services more rarely. The practice supplemented their religious knowledge and improved the contact between them and the parish priest. The other book included the subject of sermons with the date and rank of the church feast they were associated with.[50]

Traditionally, the parish chronicle (*liber memorabilium*) enjoyed much respect. While emphasising its importance, Rev. Jougan referred to the tradition of me-diaeval cloister chronicles, and he even argued that 'in the past chronicles were written in Polish parishes very carefully.' He recommended that while making them, 'tact, prudence and common sense be employed to decide what notes will bring benefit to the successors in the parish and to all people.' He warned against partiality and claimed that the chronicle was to become 'the index and the key to the history of the parish'. It was for this reason that he recommended describing the history of the parish, chapels and the parsonage in addition to copying the documents that confirmed bestowals and the state of Church property, including the new funds. The chronicle was also to include descriptions of both Church and secular events.[51] His expectations regarding the content of the chronicle seem to have been very high, which created the threat of the information in other books and Church registers being copied.

Liber ordinationum is derived from the tradition of registering the orders of the bishop and the consistory given to the parishes. The duties of the parish priest included copying them in a separate book with the aim of keeping such a copy in the parish. In the 19th century the bishops' orders were increasingly printed in diocesan periodicals for the clergy.[52] Thus, the parish priest's duties were simplified, since his obligation was to 'collect' the incoming periodicals 'and gather them into yearbooks and bind them so that a complete set was found in each parish.' However, in the thicket of regulations and other content in the diocesan yearbooks, it was not easy to find the necessary order, which is why keeping the *liber normalium* was recommended. It was a tabular list of ordinances in chronological order with information on the subject of the ordinance, its summary and a reference to the printed issue.[53]

The book of liturgical foundations (*liber missarum fundatarum*) included a list of Holy Masses to be said with the intentions designated by the funders. That was a long-term obligation placed on the successive parish priests of a given parish. In return for the incomes from the long-term investments, their duty was to say the Holy Mass with specific intentions on defined dates, in defined numbers and within the established liturgical frames.[54] Due to the long-term nature of those duties, they were under special supervision of the ordinary as well as the state, which imposed taxes on this type of foundation. That is why the description of the foundation in the book had to specify all obligations on the part of the Church

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[50] Ibid., pp. 860–862.

[51] Ibid., pp. 858–860.

[52] Kufel, *Kancelaria, registratura i archiwum parafialne*, pp. 52–53.

[53] Ibid., pp. 857–858.

[54] B. Walicki, *Fundacja mszalna pamięci ks. Stanisława Nyrkowskiego*, "Rocznik Kolbuszow-ski", 13 (2013) pp. 103–105.

and the incomes from the foundation. Entries in the book were not only a form of control over the foundation's obligations. Over time, the purchasing power of the income that parish priests received from the provisions decreased, so they demanded fewer obligations from the consistory. Such a decision, however, involved proceedings specified in the Church and state regulations. Founding agreements and entries in this book could serve as the basis of claims from the Church and the descendants of the funders.[55]

The book of liturgical intentions (*liber stipendiorum manualium*), which included the list of current intentions, had a similar character but documented the stipend responsibilities of the clergy. The proper entry was to include the information on who requested the Mass, what the intention was, what stipend was assigned for the priest and when the Mass was said.

Current incomes and expenditures of the parish were noted in the *liber rationum ecclesiae*. It registered the incomes from the movable and immovable property of the parish, including the parishioners' donations for holy services. A full list of those incomes was to be placed at the beginning or at the end of the book. Based on the entries in this book, an annual specification of the incomes and expenditures of the parish were to be made after each calendar year. The clergymen's personal incomes from *iura stolae* were noted in a separate book, *liber proventus ex iurae stolae*. The books referring to financial matters were the subject of scrutiny by the Church and state authorities.[56]

Official letters and office style

The parish office in Austria kept extensive correspondence with the Church and secular authorities of various levels, as well as with organisations and private people. In his textbook, Jougan devoted much attention to this area of activity of the parish priests and to the specific Church office style. He called it 'the pastoral style', whose rules were to be kept by the parish priests while preparing official correspondence. He divided the rules of this style into internal and external ones. The external rules included first of all the need to provide accurate information and to avoid 'biased colouring, or deliberate omission of the whole truth, with no doubt that it was a disgraceful thing to present a matter in a false manner.' The conciseness and clarity of narration and the simplicity and precision of language were also mentioned within the internal forms. Observing them served the purpose of maintaining the dignity and respectability of the clergyman and the office he held.[57]

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[55] Jougan, *Kancelaria parafialna*, pp. 863–865.

[56] Ibid., pp. 866–867.

[57] "Priestley dignity must be also reflected in written correspondence, especially official correspondence. Therefore, all crude, joking or sarcastic words or expression should be excluded. Who received an order which is difficult to agree with, he is allowed to make a demonstration but any offensive words should be avoided. Referring to the superior authority, your own opinion is to be presented only as a personal view, and not as an unshakeable conviction. Who is forced to make a complaint against another person or to defend themselves from charges should remember that using baseless accusations or insult rather speaks against themselves." Ibid., p. 870.

Observing the external forms of handling official correspondence served 'office order'. Each document was to be prepared first in the form of a detailed concept, on which the final copy was based. The concept was to be kept in 'the files of the register' as proof of the correspondence dispatched. Rough copies could be made on any kind of paper, but the dispatched documents were to be written on proper quality paper, depending on the importance both of the matter and the addressee. Final copies were to be made on the whole sheet of paper, as a half sheet was only admissible for certifications and receipts. There was a particular permanent scheme of arranging the elements pertaining to the form and subject matter of the document:

> The principal line, which is an invocation to the authority referred to in the document, is written with a certain space from the top across the whole sheet[;] below the invocation, usually on the right side a little above the text of the correspondence, the name of the office and the location and date are placed[;] on the left on the same level as the correspondence itself, the reference is provided, which is the shortest possible summary of the matter: parish priest N.N. asks for a leave, gives a report on religious education, etc.[58]

If the document included enclosures (*alegata*), it was to be added whether they were to stay with the addressee or to be returned to the sender's office. It was recommended that authorised copies be used as enclosures, lest the original documents leave the parish office. In case of a number of various enclosures, they were to be bound with a 'metal clasp or a thread' and 'their numbered list' was to be provided in the content. The basic way to secure correspondence was using proper envelopes, which were 'to be sealed and registered when important documents were sent'. Sending a letter without an envelope was dissuaded, even if they were properly folded and sealed, as such a form did not guarantee secrecy of the correspondence.[59]

A great deal of attention was devoted by Rev. Jougan to a discussion on the typology of the documents sent. As the most important, he described letters, requests, applications, appeals, protocols, copies and duplicates. Each kind of document was briefly discussed in the manual, with information on which matters it referred to and what the specific forms of its style and terminology were.[60]

The author devoted the greatest attention to the rules of preparing letters to the consistory. In fact, the recommendations of the Lviv consistory in this matter from 1886 were referenced. Paper measuring 34×21 cm was to be used. A so-called *rubrum*, or *regest* (register), was to be placed on the back of the sheet with the application: who the author was, who the matter was directed to and what it concerned. The consistory also recommended that only one matter be discussed in one letter directed to the diocesan authority. The register, along with the rule 'one letter, one matter', made the task of assigning the incoming correspondence easier.[61]

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[58] Ibid., p. 871.

[59] Ibid., p. 872.

[60] Ibid., pp. 872–875.

[61] "One application should not deal with a few matters since it makes it impossible to divide the matters between particular department heads and delays the settlement as one head has to wait for

If the matter discussed by the parish priest referred to earlier correspondence with the diocesan authorities, the text should refer to those earlier letters and should list their numbers when the document was sent from the consistory's office. This information was also to be repeated in the external register. This made it easier for the officials to find prior documents in the consistory. The original copies of documents referred to by the parish priest were not to be enclosed.[62] The official procedure was to be used in the correspondence with the consistory, apart from urgent matters – such as requests for dispensations and those connected with the secrecy of confession – which were to be directed via the dean's office.[63]

Parishes, within their duties, also contacted state offices of various levels (e.g. district office [*starosty*] or ministries). The Austrian state authorities frequently mentioned the autonomous status of Church offices towards the state ministration:

> the relation between *starosty* offices and the dean's or parish offices is neither equal nor subordinate, so in mutual official relations both these offices should keep the polite forms which are usually practiced by persons who do not depend on each other.

For this reason, governmental authorities called the attention of all levels of state administration and recommended that correspondence with Church offices should avoid the forms of orders and ordinances and should rather use the form of a notice or an appeal. While referring to the titles of the clergy, the polite forms of address 'reverend' or 'venerable' were recommended, while requests for the priest's reply were to be preceded by 'would you kindly' or 'would you be so kind'. As a norm of reciprocity, the Lviv consistory ordered priests to use the official titles and names of offices and officials as well as to observe the general polite forms of address.[64]

According to the recommendations of the consistory, the language to be used within the Church structures 'between the clergymen of the Roman Catholic rite' was Latin. Greater variety was possible in relations with the lay authorities, which followed from the equality of the languages of the emperor's subjects: 'having granted the right of citizenship to all languages in the state, the government gave the clergy all freedom concerning the choice of the official language with an exception of entries and certificates.' To facilitate contact, Rev. Jougan recommended the Polish language when corresponding with lay authorities and German for military authorities and all state offices outside Galicia.

Rev. Jougan devoted little attention to the issues connected with authorising documents prepared in the parish office. In the chapter on issuing certificates, the

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another. For these very reasons matters, even if related, should be submitted separately. However, a few matters can be sent in one envelope, in separate applications, but only to the Consistory; matters directed to the state authorities cannot be joint in one envelope as this makes office handling difficult and causes delay." Ibid., p. 876.

[62] "The appeal itself, which is referred to, is not to be enclosed as an addendum since it should remain in the office files in the registration. After all, its concept is in the office of the authority which issued it." Ibid, p. 877.

[63] Ibid., p. 878.

[64] Ibid., p. 879.

author recommended that the parish seal be imprinted next to the parish priest's signature: 'It [the seal] should be clean, at least so that the inscription within the ring, or the emblem (figure) engraved in the middle will be printed on the seal clearly and legibly.' He advised against using wafer seals or wax seals because they are 'fragile and breakable', while he recommended the use of 'colouring liquid (tincture) for the seals made of India rubber or metal'.[65]

Conclusions

Parish offices in the Habsburg monarchy were important institutions in both the Church and state administration. For this reason, their organisation, competences and documentation were stipulated by state and Church regulations. The Catholic monarchy took advantage of the possibilities provided by the Church structures in the field of supervising important areas of social life. The ongoing processes of change in the society – such as laicisation – brought about changes in many areas of state administration, including matters handled by parish offices. Sometimes Church and state regulations and procedures competed with each other against this background. The Catholic state tried to consider the ecclesial approach in conflicting issues, but was ultimately guided by the raison d'état and issued regulations referring to the rules of keeping record books as state registers or the work of parish offices in tasks assigned by the state, for example. In such situations the Church authorities acknowledged the state's interests and, if necessary, had the parish priests keep additional registers to collect the information that could not be noted in the public books yet was important for religious reasons. Despite the potential conflicts, this dependence on two headquarters positively affected the development of parish offices and developed respect towards both legal orders among the parish clergy. This analysis of the recommendations in the textbook by Alojzy Jougan presents the high level of organisation in parish offices when handling the tasks resulting from Church and secular ordinances. Whether and to what extent those requirements were successfully realised at the proper level in particular parishes remains an open research problem.

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[65] Ibid., p. 93.

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KANCELARIA PARAFIALNA W ZABORZE AUSTRIACKIM I JEJ DOKUMENTACJA NA PRZEŁOMIE XIX I XX WIEKU

Streszczenie

Kościół katolicki spełniał ważne zadania w strukturze administracyjnej monarchii habsburskiej. Były one realizowane w oparciu o sieć parafialną i przepisy

państwowe oraz kościelne. Dla ich realizacji niezbędna była sprawnie działająca kancelaria parafialna, która w odpowiednich formach rejestrowała zróżnicowane informacje dotyczące życia wiernych i działalności duszpasterskiej. W artykule zostały przedstawione zasady organizacji kancelarii, registratury i archiwum w parafiach katolickich na terenie zaboru austriackiego w szczytowym okresie ich rozwoju na przełomie XIX w XX wieku. Zostały omówione cele i sposoby prowadzenia ksiąg metrykalnych i innych form dokumentacji parafialnej oraz zasady korespondencji urzędowej. Podstawą opracowania był podręcznik prowadzenia kancelarii parafialnej dla duchowieństwa, autorstwa ks. Alojzego Jougana, profesora uniwersytetu we Lwowie z 1912 r., w którym omówione zostały formalno-prawne i praktyczno-duszpasterskie zasady prowadzenia kancelarii parafialnej.

Słowa kluczowe: kancelaria parafialna; archiwum parafialne; księgi parafialne; Kościół w zaborze austriackim