

Anna Rastawicka

FATHER AND SHEPHERD



Ministerstwo
Kultury
i Dziedzictwa
Narodowego



INSTYTUT DZIEDZICTWA
MYŚLI NARODOWEJ
im. Romana Dmowskiego
i Ignacego Jana Paderewskiego



FUNDUSZ
PATRIOTYCZNY

Dofinansowano ze środków Instytutu Dziedzictwa Myśli Narodowej
im. Romana Dmowskiego i Ignacego Jana Paderewskiego
w ramach Funduszu Patriotycznego.

The original:
Anna Rastawicka
Ojciec i Pasterz
Foundation „Czas to miłość”
Częstochowa 2021

Translated by Andrew Z. Warchoń

Project realized by Fundacja Rozwoju KUL

Co-financed by / Dofinansowano ze środków:

Instytut Dziedzictwa Myśli Narodowej im. Romana
Dmowskiego i Ignacego Jana Paderewskiego w ramach
Funduszu Patriotycznego.

Publication to be distributed free of charge. / Publikacja
do bezpłatnego rozpowszechniania.

KATOLICKI
UNIwersytet
LUBELSKI
JANA PAWŁA II

KUL 1918



FUNDACJA
ROZWOJU
KUL

Life's Path

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński the Primate of Poland has remained in the memory of Poles as a statesman, defender of faith and freedom of the homeland, advocate of unconditional human dignity. In the pages of this little princess, we will see him primarily as a human being. We will get to know his life better, full of toil and struggles, which he overcame with love. Stefan Wyszyński was born on the 3rd August 1901 in the small rural settlement of Zuzela, on the border of Podlasie and Mazovia, on the Bug River. Poland was then under partitions. This area was under Russian rule. According to the order of the partitioning powers, his birth was recorded in Russian. Only Stefan's father, who was drawing up the birth certificate, because as an organist he also kept parish books, signed himself with Polish letters. He also wrote in Polish in the text of the birth certificate the name of his son - Stefan and his first and last name: Stanisław Wyszyński, as well as the details of his mother - Julianna née Karpiów.

Childhood

Stefan's family home was a refuge of security and warmth. There he learned faith in God, respect for man and love for his homeland. In the evenings, local residents used to come to his father - Stanisław Wyszyński, an organist, talking for a long time, and they sang patriotic songs. As a child, he learned to love the Mother of God and pray the rosary:

"In my house, there were two pictures hanging over my bed: Our Lady of Częstochowa and Our Lady of Ostra Brama. And although at that time I was not inclined to pray, always suffering from pain in my knees, especially during the evening rosary, which was a custom in our house, after waking up I looked for a long time at this Black Lady and this White Lady. I was just wondering why one is black and the other is white? These are the most distant memories from my past. "

At home, he learned to respect bread. He clearly remembered that he had to pick up and kiss the crust of bread that he accidentally dropped: "I remember that once a crust of bread fell to the ground, my Father told me to pick it up and kiss it. I didn't really want to do it, but I had to. I also remember being praised for kissing a crust of bread. Each gift of God must be respected in this way, because it is a gift from the homeland, the fruit of God's work and His blessing. "

Little Stefan's parents taught to be sensitive to humans. On Christmas Eve, after supper, he and his father visited an old man to whom they brought food from the family table.



1. LITTLE STEFAN WITH HIS PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

At night, little Stefan was taken by his father to repair the graves of the January insurgents in the surrounding forests. His father was a man who prayed a lot. For hours he was kneeling in front of the painting of Our Lady of Czestochowa at the church in Zuzela. Stefan also remembered the first lessons in Polish history that his father gave him from the book *24 Pictures from Polish History*. This "forbidden" book could not be taken out until late in the evening, when the Cossack patrol rushed through the village on horseback. Years later, the Primate

recalled that it was in this book that he first saw the Gniezno Cathedral, which later became very close for him.

Stefan had a great love for his mother - Julianna. Probably running a house and raising five children did not allow her to have too many moments of affection towards her children. Therefore, Stefan fondly recalled the day when he had acquired a scab. His mother then took him in her arms, put a cold knife on him, and held him in her lap. Remembering this moment, he said: "I was ready to collect bumps and scrapes more often, if only my mother would hold me on her lap". His mum sometimes took him to Urla, where she had the house that she had received as dowry.

Stanisław and Julianna Wyszyński came to Zuzela after their marriage in Prostynia. The first daughter was Anastazja (born 1900), the second was Stefan (born 1901), then Stanisława (born 1903), Janina (born 1905), then Waclaw (born 1908), who died at the age of 11, probably for meningitis. The last, sixth child - a daughter, Zofia, was born in Andrzejewo, where the Wyszyński family moved in 1910. She only lived a month. After her birth, her mother died.

The death of his mother was a most painful experience for little Stefan. The dramatic days of waiting were deeply engraved in his memory. His mother was dying for almost a month. It was a very difficult time.

Stefan was always listening to hear if the bells were ringing. It would be a sign that his mum had died.

He sat in school in suspense, awaiting the most difficult moment. Suddenly his sister entered the classroom and, turning to the teacher, said: "Papa asks for Stefan to come home". Stefan, thinking that his mother was dying, did not wait for the teacher's permission, but jumped up and was already at the door. The teacher shouted: "Sit down, you are not going anywhere." Stefan replied: "Oh, I'm just going to go." "Then you will not come back here" - threatened the teacher. "Very well, I will never come back to this school again. I'm fed up with the your teachings," replied nine-year-old Stefan. And so it was. His wise father did not force his son to return to the Russian school. After two years of private education at home, he enrolled him in the Wojciech Górski Middle School in Warsaw.

The solace for little Stefan was - as he recalled years later - the thought of the Holy Mother. His family home, both in Zuzela and Andrzejewo, was close to the church. In order to serve at Mass, Stefan quickly learned to be an altar boy using Latin. He had been aware of his calling since he was a child. At the age of eight, one morning he woke up crying. Julianna his mum asked, "why are you crying?" Stefan replied: "because I dreamed that you married me, and I am supposed to be a priest." He's known it forever. As one of the most important experiences on the way to discovering his vocation, he

recalls the night vigil on Good Friday in the church in Andrzejewo: "Almost the entire parish gathered for the last Lenton Lamentations. All three parts were sung as was the custom then, and the Way of the Cross was prayed in-between the parts of the lamentation. I stayed all night in the church, curled up by the confessional that stood at the entrance to the sacristy. I remember strongly this prayer at Christ's tomb. The experiences of that night sculpted my boyish soul, helped me discover the beauty of the path I was going to take. I believed that this was the only way for me, there cannot be any other way. "

In 1912, Stefan, at the age of 11, entered the Wojciech Górski Middle School in Warsaw. Fortunately, he did not enter the Russian state Middle School. He was proud to be a student of the Polish Górski School. He lived with his uncle in Mariensztat and travelled through Nowy Świat on his way to school every day. These were his first steps in Warsaw. "the way I remember, is that the Górski school had such great social and national authority that it evoked a kind of school patriotism. Especially in a city that had a strong state education. Passing a student in a state school cap on the street always mobilized a spirit of superiority and satisfaction. "

In middle school, Stefan was an ordinary boy, capable of various, sometimes incalculable, feats. One day, he and his friends walked over the spans of the Poniatowski Bridge which was under construction to Saska Kępa. He also did not avoid children's fights with

Russian boys over a pile of gravel in the Saski Garden. When, years later, someone was praised that he was so decent from the beginning of his life, the Primate said simply: "I was not so decent, because I cheated and copied in school".

The coming of World War I interrupted Stefan's education in Warsaw. As early as 1914, when he was sitting in a school bench, he heard the roar of cannons. In 1915, the front cut off travel from Andrzejewo to Warsaw after the summer holidays. Stefan continued his education in Łomża, at the Private Male School of Commerce, where he finished his education at the middle school level. He lived in a boarding house with Professor Kęsicki, near the Franciscans monastery.. It was a very difficult time: war, violence, hunger. The occupying authorities forbade affiliation with the scouting movement. Stefan did not obey the order. He proudly recalled that when he was caught by the Germans during a collection in the Drozdowskie Forests, he was flogged. These were, as he later said, "the first sufferings for the Fatherland".

Seminary and priestly ordination

In 1917, Stefan told his father that he wanted to be a priest. His father - as the Primate later recalled - did not express his enthusiasm, asked if he was aware of what he was deciding on. However, Stefan managed to convince his father. He agreed for his son to go to a minor seminary, that is, to the Pius X High School in Włocławek. After two years of studying and passing his High School diploma, Stefan entered the Theological Seminary in Włocławek. Here he received a solid intellectual and spiritual formation.

During the retreat before ordination, he wrote ten points as a program for his interior life. They testify to the maturity with which he entered the path of priestly service to God and man.

Time Deum.

1. Speak little - live without noise - silence.
2. Do much without fever, take it easy.
3. Work systematically.
4. Avoid daydreaming - don't think about the future, that's God's thing.

5. Don't waste your time, because it doesn't belong to you: life is purposeful and therefore every moment of it as well.

6. Inspire good intentions in everything.

7. Pray often in the midst of work - sine me nihil potestis facere [without Me you can do nothing].

8. Respect everyone, because you are inferior to them; God opposes the proud.

9. Omni custodia custodi cor tuum quia ab ipso vita procedit [Guard your heart with all strength, because from it life flows].

10. Misericordias Dei in aeternum cantabo [The Mercy of God I will sing for ever] ”.

A strengthening and warning for Stefan were the words of his grandmother - Katarzyna - uttered a few months before his ordination in 1923: “I asked her for a blessing on the priestly path. This simple woman, bidding me farewell, said: Remember, if you are a bad priest, do not show yourself to me. (...) I remember it well to this day and I will never forget it. These simple, but decisive the words given by a Christian woman were of great importance to my personal life. ”

The time of his priestly ordination was a real test of faith for Stefan. He wanted it so much, so he prepared

for it. Yet, instead of being ordained, he had to go to the hospital with the misdiagnosis of typhoid fever. It turned out to be serious pneumonia, but not tuberculosis, as some biographers say. The living conditions in the seminary were very difficult, the students were often hungry.



2. SEMINARIAN STEFAN WYSZYŃSKI

“I was ordained a priest in the chapel of Our Lady in the Cathedral Basilica in Włocławek. I was ordained alone - on 3rd August 1924. My colleagues were ordained on 29th June and I went to the hospital on that day. However, it was a happy circumstance because thanks to this I was able to receive my ordination in the chapel of Our Lady. When I came to the cathedral, the old sacristan, Mr. Radomski, said to me: Father, with such health, I think we should go to the cemetery rather than to the ordination. Everything happened in such a way that only the merciful eyes of the Blessed Mother looked at this strange rite that was taking place at that time. I was so weak that it was most comfortable for me to lie prostrate on the ground than to stand ”.

Humanly speaking, Father Wyszynski's health did not give promise to high hopes. Yet God's plans were different. “It was my wish to be able to celebrate at least a few Masses in my life. Yet God added many more, unforeseen years to those years, and He decided a time. (...) From that moment on, I feel that I am pulling not with my own forces, but with God's powers, so I cannot attribute anything to myself, I cannot talk too much about my priesthood, about what happened in my life, because I was only submissive to God ”.

He went to Jasna Góra Monastery with the celebration of his first Holy Mass. Why? On 5th August 1924, at Jasna Góra, he celebrated the first Holy Mass. Why? "I went to Jasna Góra to have a Mother, so that she

would stand at every Holy Mass, as she stood with Christ on Calvary".

The beginning of priestly ministry

Immediately after his ordination, Father Wyszynski became a vicar at the Cathedral in Włocławek. At the same time, he was the diocesan editor of "The Kujawski Word ". He also worked as a prefect in the nursery of the "Cellulose" factory. There he encountered the great poverty of the working class.

“For several months I was the prefect in Włocławek in the nursery of the" Cellulose "factory, about which the books are writing today. Next to the nursery there were huge buildings of a large factory with bundles of precise machines, where workers worked in white coats so as not to dirty the machines. There was a nursery under the monstrosities - an ordinary shack. In order to get to it and not to end up in the mud to your knees, you had to lift your cassock and jump from stone to stone. Everyone did so - me, the teachers and the children. Nevertheless, we brought inside so much mud that we sat and studied in the mud. The children were pale, emaciated, wrapped in all the rags that could be found in the house. I certainly learned more there alone than I managed to teach the children. I tried new teaching methods - I was not a prefect by profession. I was laying out everything with chalk in my hand and amusing the children with drawings on the blackboard. The whole lecture was in drawings. Apparently it is fashionable

today, but it was not like that in the year of our Lord 1924".

Perhaps it was these experiences that prompted Father Wszyński to become interested in a new discipline of knowledge that was just emerging - Catholic social science.

This fascination was expressed in additional socio-economic studies at the Faculty of Law and Economic Sciences at KUL, which he undertook simultaneously with the studies of canon law. From the very beginning, Father Wszyński attended lectures by Fr. Prof. Antoni Szymański on capitalism and collectivism, labour legislation, social security, the theory of social policy and sociology, and from the fourth year of studies he participated in a scientific seminar in the field of social policy.

During his studies, Father Wszyński actively participated in the activities of the "Rebirth" association. It was established after Poland regained independence. The aim of "Rebirth" was to penetrate the worldly reality with the spirit of the Gospel.

He remained faithful to the assumptions of Catholic social teaching until the end of his life. It is based on understanding man as a person who is endowed with great dignity by God, has his rights and obligations, and is a social being. Such thinking about man precludes the degeneration of both the individualism which is the basis

of the capitalist system and the collectivism which governs communism.

An opportunity to deepen his knowledge of the issues of social science and the activity of the Church was for Father Wyszyński a year-long scientific trip to Western Europe, which he made after obtaining his doctorate in 1929. The main area of his interests during this trip was scientific and social issues.

The route of his one-year journey led through Austria, Italy, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. In addition to studies, aimed at collecting the richest possible comparative material from methodology of Catholic social science, Father Wyszyński was interested in the Christian-social activity of the Church, the work of the Catholic Action, and the apostolate of lay people.

The experiences gathered during the one-year research trip around Europe had a great impact on the social and Christian activity that Father Wyszyński undertook in Włocławek. They were also a path to a deeper understanding of social problems which he later encountered as the Primate of Poland.

Among the workers in Włocławek

In the interwar period, The Primate was one of the most active and competent representatives of the Church in Poland, dealing with the current social issues. This fact had a significant influence on the shape of his entire ministry in the Church.

The main area of his social activity in this period was his work for the Christian Trade Unions in Włocławek, which secured the rights of working people and played a significant role in the process of defending these rights on a basis other than that proposed by socialism. The workers issues were then becoming a pressing problem: humiliating working conditions, low wages, impoverishment of workers and their families, the uncertainty of tomorrow and exploitation leading to the greatest drama of unemployment. This situation required joint, organized countermeasures of an economic, political and, above all, ethical nature. It was a time of the great world economic crisis. In such circumstances, Father Wyszzyński undertook a formation activity among the workers, showing them the perspective of rebirth, which was supported by the social teaching of the Church.

The aim of the Christian Trade Unions was to care for the economic affairs of workers and contact with employers, as well as to care for the intellectual and spiritual formation of working people. He devoted much

attention to the education of young workers. As part of the activities of the Christian Workers' University, he created a youth section. This is how he remembers this work already as the Primate of Poland: "After working for a whole week, I spent every Saturday at this university, among the employees and representatives of the Christian Trade Unions. I worked there, as best I could, humbly and selflessly, because I did not take a penny for it from anyone. For many years I have served people who joined the Church, convinced that I would certainly help them solve many difficulties for peace and that I would pass on to them the spirit of social justice, as taught by Christ. "

Father Wyszyński, considered by some circles in Włocławek as a "red priest", defended the dissatisfied social classes against the illusion that only the Bolshevik ideology was a rescue for them. He warned against this threat as another slavery, deeply believing that only the Gospel and the Catholic social doctrine of the Church are capable of guaranteeing dignified and just human relations in the spirit of the doctrine of Christ. He saw a particular threat in the attitude of the Polish intelligentsia, succumbing to communist ideology. In 1934, he published a brochure "The Culture of Bolshevism and the Polish Intelligentsia". The danger of communist influence was described by Fr. Wyszyński with a surprising knowledge of the ideology of Bolshevism. He saw the injustice of the capitalist system, but also, with a thorough knowledge of the problem, showed the

misfortunes that Bolshevism was to bring to Polish social, economic and cultural life. Unfortunately, it soon turned out how correct this intuition was.

Father Wyszyński proved to be an outstanding expert on social problems, not only in Włocławek. He participated in nationwide conventions of social activists. In February 1936, he was elected to the commission to prepare the work of uniting the professional movement. He was involved in these activities in order to see the problems of the working class "to restore these masses to the Church, to liberate (them) from the most dangerous apostasy - proletarian atheism." In 1937 he was incorporated by Cdl. August Hlond to the Social Council.

In this way, God in His Providence prepared Father Wyszyński for the fight against communism during his service as Primate. He well knew and understood the needs of working people, stood up for their rights, stood up for them, accompanied them with advice and support.

Wartime exile

Shortly after the outbreak of World War II, Karol Radoński, bishop of Włocławek, sent Rev. Professor Wszyński with several priests and students of the 6th year of the Włocławek seminary to the east in the hope that the war would not get there so soon and they would be able to finish their seminary studies and prepare for priestly ordination. When they arrived in Lublin, it turned out that the city had been bombed a few days earlier. There was no question of staying there. They drove further east. They reached Lutsk in Volhynia. There they were surprised by the news that Poland was occupied by the Red Army from the east.

After returning to Włocławek, it turned out that he was on the list of people wanted by the Gestapo by name. Blessed Bishop Michał Kozal gave the order that he was to leave Włocławek immediately. Just after The departure of Fr. Wszyński, the Germans arrested Bishop Kozal and many clergymen, took them to the camp in Dachau, and seized the seminary buildings and turned them into a war hospital.

Fr Wszyński first went to his family home, to Wrociszew. The exile of the war began. After some time, Father Korśmieowicz brought him to Kozłówka, where he was a chaplain in the Zamoyski estate. Then he went to Żułów, to the house of the Franciscan Sisters, Servants of the Cross. He also served the local population, catechized



3. WITH CHILDREN AT THEIR FIRST COMMUNION, LASKI 1942

children, and supported partisans. The next place of Father Wyszynski's stay was Laski near Warsaw. Here he was the chaplain of the Franciscan Sisters Servants of the Cross and the Institute for the Blind Children. He was active in the underground resistance under the pseudonym Radwan III. He was also the chaplain of the war hospital. Here he encountered the cruelty of war up close. Young soldiers looked for support in it. Brave at the front, they were like children in suffering. They asked him to be present during surgery. He fulfilled their requests and strengthened their spirits. He walked in the woods, collected the wounded, and heard confessions of the soldiers in the trenches. Once he found a girl injured in the leg. The wound was very deep. She had to wear a tourniquet. He carried the girl on his back and transported her to a war hospital. Years later, she came to thank him for saving his life.

In Laski, he met a group of girls from the so-called Eight. There were eight students, headed by Maria Okońska, who wanted to create the "City of Girls" educational centre with Fr. Wyszynski. This was the beginning of one of the first secular institutes in Poland. During the communist period it was not possible to implement the idea of the "City of Girls". The members of the Eight devoted their lives to help Father Wyszynski when God made him responsible for the Church in Poland.

After the end of the war, he returned to Włocławek. He was entrusted with the task of organizing a seminary. The seminary building in Włocławek, had been turned into a hospital, and required renovation. The beginnings of the seminary were in the parish in Lubraniec.

On 25th March 1946, Cardinal August Hlond called Father Wyszynski to Poznań and informed him of the will of the Holy See that he was to be the ordinary of the Lublin diocese.

At the episcopal see in Lublin

Father Wyszynski - as he mentioned many times later - was surprised by the nomination and asked for time to think. He prayed all night. He did not feel prepared for such a task. Until the end of his life, he reproached himself for not believing immediately: "A man is never well prepared for a task that is suddenly entrusted to him. And I had a lot of doubts. Therefore, I was reluctant to follow the Mother of Christ, who immediately said: "Here I am, the handmaid of the Lord." I didn't do it that quickly. I thought too humanly, I remembered my own ineptitude, and I forgot what God can do with whatever tools He chooses to do. "

Bishop Wyszynski began his ministry in the name of the Mother of God. He entrusted her by choosing Jasna Góra as the place of episcopal consecration on the 12th May 1946. In his episcopal coat of arms he placed the image of Our Lady of Jasna Góra. In a pastoral letter for the day of ingress to the Lublin cathedral, he wrote: "I come here straight from Jasna Góra, from the Mediatrix of all graces (...). On my episcopal shield I carry the cheerful, though scarred face of Mary. With all my childhood faith, I asked her for favours for you and for myself, Beloved Brothers, Priests and Faithful, for a blessing for our joint work; I trust that the Bride of the Holy Spirit, the Queen of the Apostles and the Help of the Faithful, the Mother of Jasna Góra will be both for me and



**4. ENTRY OF BISHOP WYSZYŃSKI TO THE CATHEDRAL OF LUBLIN,
MAY 1946**

for you, Beloved Ones, a shield in battle, a victory and a gate to heaven ”.

In Lublin, he tried to warmly care for people depressed by warfare. He travelled throughout the diocese, reaching its farthest and most dangerous corners, visited parishes, and at times confirmed thousands of people. There was a lot of neglect over the years of the war. Roads were often impassable. He travelled to many places in a horse-drawn carriage. He also visited the poorest districts of Lublin, visited the faithful in the ruins of their houses. He was able to visit a pub in Lublin on Good Friday to ask the men what they were doing there on such a day. He received a disarming answer: "Our women clean, cook, bake cakes, and we don't want to disturb them." The sight of the bishop in such a place brought them to sobriety. The Bishop of Lublin was a support for politically persecuted people, he pleaded for prisoners, and did everything to save them from death sentences for participating in the actions of the Home Army or in partisan units. God himself multiplied his strength and assigned more and more difficult tasks.

On the 22nd October 1948, the Primate Cdl. August Hlond died. Bishop Wyszynski wrote in his notes: "So often, I thought that in the extremely difficult situation of the Church in Poland, his blessing was the Steersman, leading through his torments with a steady hand. You felt strangely calm around Primate Hlond. As

he wrote these words, he did not know that he would be the providential helmsman from then on.

Shepherd of the Church in Poland

How did it happen that the youngest bishop, who had been in his ministry for only two years, became the Archbishop of Gniezno and Warsaw, the Primate of Poland. Years later, he learned that Cardinal August Hlond, before his death, dictated to his secretary, Bishop Antoni Baraniak, two letters to the Holy Father, asking that his successor would be Bishop Stefan Wyszyński.

Until the ingress in Gniezno (2nd February 1949), Bishop Wyszyński remained in Lublin. On the threshold of 1949, he wrote: "I'm starting a new year of work. I did not think that I should say goodbye to Lublin this year (...). But I am only God's errand boy. "

Archbishop Stefan Wyszyński began his service in the Primate's See in a very difficult situation of enslavement of the Fatherland by the communist regime. Already in his letter on the day of ingress, he wrote with what message he comes with:

"Do I still have a duty to introduce myself to you," asked the Primate in the aforementioned letter. - I am neither a politician nor a diplomat, I am not an activist or a reformer. But on the other hand I am your spiritual father, shepherd and bishop of your souls, I am an apostle of Jesus Christ. My mission is priestly, pastoral, apostolic, arising from God's eternal thoughts, from the saving will

of the Father, who joyfully shares his happiness with man”.

Taking up the service of the Primate of Poland, Archbishop Stefan Wyszyński adopted as his program the testamentary words of the dying Cardinal August Hlond. “Undoubtedly, light was needed for such work. I am not saying that this is some kind of extraordinary gift of mine. This is a gift of grace announced through the mouth of my Predecessor, Cardinal August Hlond, who, dying in Warsaw, said: “Work and fight under the protection of the Mother of God. Victory, when it comes, will be the victory of the Blessed Virgin Mary. ” These were almost the last words of Cardinal August Hlond.

I have never lost them from my consciousness. God allowed me to light in my soul the image of the Woman Clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet. She also fought, because she was fighting to defend her child, who was just about to be born, and whom Satan was already waiting for, so that when he was born he might devour him. God stood up for the Woman, taking the new-born child to Himself, and He gave the Mother shelter on earth. And this is what I thought: God will defend His Son and will not let Him destroy Him, although the dragon - as Saint John saw in the Apocalypse - sweeps a third of the stars from the horizon of the sky to throw them to the ground. Christ will be saved because He does not die anymore. The cross was the site of His victory

through death, but He has conquered! So "fight or victory will come."

In times of the struggle of God's powers and the power of darkness, Primate Wyszyński prioritized a concern for people, not for political success. He looked for solutions according to faith and prudence, he did everything so that no man would perish because of his fault, lest the nation succumb to hatred.

Analysing the situation of the Church at this difficult moment in history, when there was no binding legal agreement in the country - the concordat was broken by the communist authorities on 12th September 1945 - Primate Wyszyński on the 14th April 1950 concluded an Agreement with the government. It was about any legal basis in the Church-State relationship.

In November 1952, Primate Wyszyński was appointed a Cardinal. It was an expression of the special trust of the Holy Father Pius XII in the Primate of Poland. As the state authorities did not issue him with a passport, in January 1953 he could not go to the consistory. At that time, citizens did not have passports at home. Before each departure, you had to apply for a document, which, after returning, had to be returned to the office. The authorities could refuse to grant a passport without giving any reason.

The government was constantly breaking the Agreement. On 9th February 1953, the authorities issued

a decree filling church positions. Bishops were to be appointed by the prime minister and parish priests by the Voivode. In view of such lawlessness and attempts to interfere with the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the Polish Episcopate headed by Primate Wyszyński issued a memorial to the government on 8th May 1953: "Non possumus". Primate Wyszyński said to the faithful during the Corpus Christi procession in Warsaw: "You must not reach the altar, you must not stand between Christ and the priest, you must not violate the conscience of the priest, you must not stand between the bishop and the priest. We teach that what is Caesar must be returned to Caesar and what is God's to God. However when Caesar sits on the altar, we say briefly: you must not ". This protest eventually contributed to the arrest of the Primate.

Three years of imprisonment

On the night of 25th September 1953, Cardinal Wyszyński was arrested and deported from Warsaw. He was imprisoned for three years - in Rywałd, in Stoczek Warmiński, in Prudnik and finally in Komańcza. His Prison Notes testify to the fact that even in captivity he was an internally free man. It is enough to read the plan of the day he made and which he faithfully followed.

“Our lifestyle in Stoczek is established as follows:

5.00 am Get up.

5.45 Morning prayers and meditation.

6.15 Holy Mass of Father Stanisław.

7.00 My Holy Mass.

8.15 Breakfast and a walk.

9.00 Horae minores and a piece of the rosary.

9.30 Personal works.

13.00 Lunch and a walk (the second part of the rosary).

15.00 Vespers and completorium.

15.30 Personal works.

18.00 Matutinum cum Laudibus.

19.00 Supper.

20.00 Rosary service and evening prayers.

20.45 Private reading.

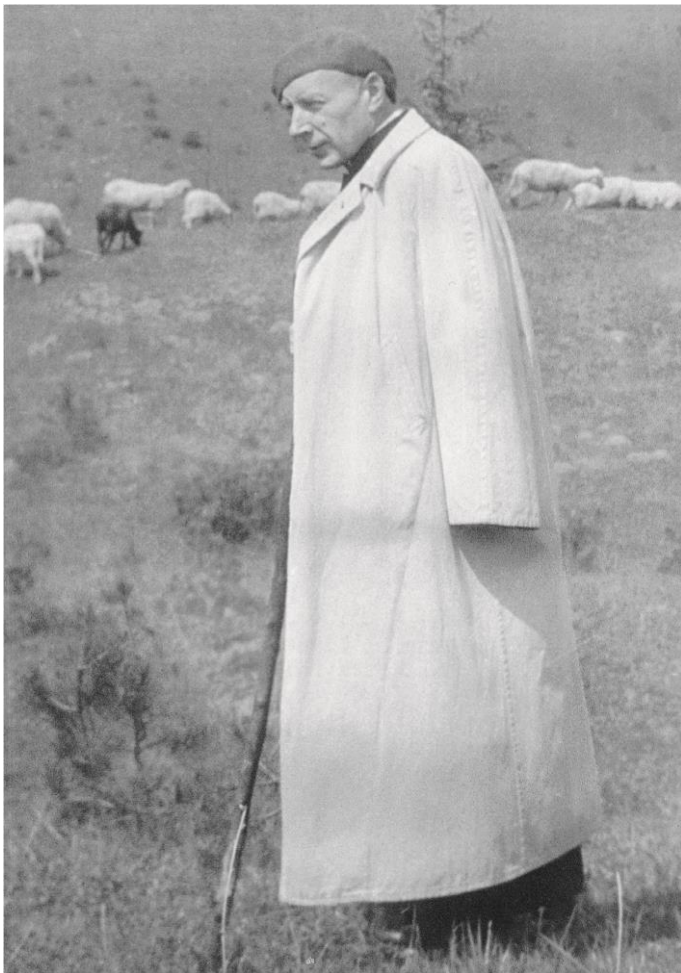
22.00 Rest ".

The Primate was aware of the harm done to him. However, he tried to watch over every instinct of thoughts, will and heart, so as not to succumb not only to hatred, but even dislike. In Prison Notes, he noted: "They won't make me hate them."

This did not mean passively submitting to unfair decisions by the government. From the beginning, he demanded that his situation be explained. On 28th September 1953 he wrote: "A man in oilcloth," a tall, handsome man, still young, with an expressionless face, volunteered. I am explaining to him once again my position on the rape committed on me. "

The prison was for the Primate, above all, a great spiritual torment. In Prison Notes, dated 3rd May 1954, we read:

"I am growing stones so heavy in my soul that I cannot hold this fruit of my life. So I am throwing them at Your feet, Mother, maybe on the way from these boulders you will be able to lead me to your Dear Son. Your Son did not want to turn stones into bread, because



1. KOMAŃCZA, 1956

it is easier to reach the Son on a rocky road than on a road lined with logs. Perhaps the fruit of my womb, Mother, will also be blessed. Smile at my stones. That's all I can do. The rest is up to you. And neither do I want them all to become bread. But let just one of these stones nourish my hungry soul.

Cardinal Wyszyński considered the painful and dramatic time of imprisonment a great grace. It was his desert where he met God in the depths of his being. In prison in Stoczek, on 8th December 1953, that he surrendered himself to the Mother of God. But not so that she would defend him. He wanted to obtain freedom for the Church at the cost of his own life. In the notes from 12th May 1956, we read: "I am asking you for one thing, that, having taken all mine, you would like to defend the Church of Christ. (...) Protect him with your maternal mantle, hide it in Your Heart. If you need it, kill me so that the Church of Your Son may live in Poland. "

In isolation, in Komańcza, on 16th May 1956, he wrote the Jasna Góra Vows of the Nation as a renewal of the Vows of King Jan Kazimierz. They were secretly transported to Jasna Góra Monastery and were solemnly deposited there on 26th August 1956.

"The Polish nation has taken its oaths many times; although it kept faith in the Church, it did not get rid of many addictions and national vices that cannot be reconciled with the attitude of the believer. We are so often scandalous when unbelievers look at the lives of

believers. Our moral weakness and instability, despite our strong faith, our moral relativism, our tendency to succumb to bad examples and current trends, obeying various errors, sometimes simply absurd, the fall of marital morality, infidelity, promiscuity, intoxication - all this makes the moral and social division of the Nation it is shaky. We know how to stay in temples for hours, stand in the Jasna Góra square like an old oak tree, but we succumb easily to even the weakest excitement to all sins and vices. We are spiritually doubled, mentally broken, and therefore deprived of a lifestyle and national character. We know how to combine all of this with our attachment to the Church, which we do not listen to in everyday life; with our ardent prayer, from which we do not reap the proper fruit; with our devotion to the Most Pure Mother to whom everyday life is so opposed.

To overcome this duality, gain a moral plumb line, learn to overcome oneself, gain the bravery of faith and Christian life - this is a blessed pursuit of an almost conservative national instinct and Catholic sense.

" The program of the Jasna Góra Vows of the Nation became the content of the Great Novena before the Millennium of the Baptism of Poland. It was a comprehensive, consistent program embracing personal, family and social life, so that everything would be new in Christ with the help of His Mother. These are the themes for the nine years of the Great Novena: 1. Fidelity to God, the Cross, the Gospel, the Church and its shepherds; 2.

Life in sanctifying grace; 3. Defence of life, soul and body; 4. Marital fidelity; 5. Family strong is God; 6. Youth faithful to Christ; 7. Social love and justice; 8. Fighting against national defects and acquiring virtues; 9. Honour the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The entire Great Novena was imbued with the spirit of mature Marian devotion. It was not nine years of talking about the Mother of God, but striving to live in accordance with God's will, following her example and with her help.

The Jasna Góra Vows of the Nation is still an up-to-date program of renewal, an important religious commitment and social. The Holy Father John Paul II said: "These words of the Jasna Góra Vow from 1956 have not become obsolete. They are certainly not out of date. (...) They are valid under new conditions - and in a new way. They are even more than then a condition of our social maturity. The condition of our place in Europe, which, after breaking the post-Yalta divisions, is looking for ways to international unity".

Soon after the Jasna Góra Vows, the time of political thawing had come. After he was released, the Primate wanted to go straight to Jasna Góra Monastery. Released on 28th October 1956 at the request of the authorities, he came directly to the capital to calm the Polish society so that the Hungarian situation in Poland would not be repeated. He went to Jasna Góra on 2nd November. Then he said to Our Lady: "Silence would be

most appropriate now. It is a very great and very important moment: meeting my Best Lady, Mother of Jasna Góra, who was all of me during the difficult but honourable days of my prison, when the Primate of Poland was given the joy of suffering insult to the name of God. The one in front of whom I am standing now has been my Strength and Perseverance, Light and Support, Consolation, Hope and continual help all this time - the true Virgin Help of Christians, Virgo Auxiliatrix! She helped me survive everything that happened to me by the hand of the Best Father. Thanks to her, I am here among you now! I come to her as a humble pilgrim to bring to her the toil and suffering of my three years of experience and to place my filial gratitude in her maternal hands, both for the years of torment and for my presence among you again”.

Primate Wyszyński's release from prison did not end the persecution of the Church. Various harassments continued: confiscation of church property and religious houses, taxes, taking clerics to the army, expelling religion from schools, removing crosses. Primate Wyszyński protested, argued for the rights of the Church, but never aimed at an armed confrontation. He counted on the help of the Holy Mother. He lived thanks to the thousand-year experience of the Church in Poland and the words of the Marian testament of Cardinal Hlond.

Mary, given to protect the nation, visits Poland.

In the most difficult moment in our history, Mary has always been our hope and salvation. For centuries, Poland has been connected with the Mother of God in a special way. "From the beginning of our days, we needed a Mother from the Baptism of the Bellows! Therefore, from the very beginning, the Mother of Christ watches over us, as she watched over the cradle of Jesus and the cradle of the Holy Church.

The first Polish cathedrals and churches are dedicated to her. It is like the Marian cradle of Christian Poland. As the first word that a child utters is "mother", so we had our first, national, children's cry when our people began to sing in huts and on battlefields the song: "The Virgin Mary, praised by God" ".

Jasna Góra became for the Primate, especially during his imprisonment, a light from a lighthouse showing a safe harbour. In a letter to the general of the Pauline Order, he wrote from Komańcza: "I believe so strongly that Providence has given Poland additional help, binding the Nation in difficult times. Jasna Góra is the last resort for the nation. It is especially visible when it is difficult and when it seems that there is no help from nowhere. "

In order to bind Poles as closely as possible with Our Lady of Jasna Góra, the Primate together with the Polish Episcopate took the initiative of the Visitation. It was a journey of the copy of the Image of Our Lady of Częstochowa from parish to parish.

Above all, however, the Visitation was accompanied by the moral transformation of people. It was not just an external, spectacular experience. The visit to each parish was preceded by a retreat. There were great conversions, confessions after many years, reconciliation of broken families, and the ordering of non-sacramental marriages. People said: "You cannot stand before Our Lady with disorder in your soul. I have to put everything in order, because I would not be able to look her in the eye."

Nobody foresaw great obstacles and adventures by the Visitation of Our Lady. However She did not manage to go all over Poland during the 9 years of the Great Novena. During the Millennium, the diocesan Visitation was stopped so that the wandering Image of the Mother of God could be placed successively at all stations of the Millennium Trail.

Unfortunately, Our Lady could not finish this jubilee journey calmly. On 20th June 1966, on its way from Frombork to Warsaw in Liksajny, the Visitation Image was arrested. Officers of the security office department and civic militia took the Image from the Primate and brought it to Warsaw, directly to Cathedral, in order to prevent the

ceremonial welcome of the Visitation Image in Nowy Dwór and in the Church of St. Stanisław Kostka in Warsaw. For several weeks, the Visiting Mother of God stayed in Warsaw to prevent another desecration of the Image.

However, when the date of the Diocesan Visitation in Katowice was approaching, Primate Wyszyński believed that he could not stop the Image of the Mother of God on his way through Poland. On 2nd September 1966, the Visitation Image set off from Jasna Góra towards Katowice. Between Częstochowa and Katowice, the police stopped the car, ordered the Pauline Fathers and the Bishop to get out of the vehicle. The image of the Visiting Mother of God was arrested for the second time and brought to Jasna Góra Monastery.

Militia posts have been set up at the gates of Jasna Góra. The MO officers watched the Visitation Image day and night, checking all the cars leaving Jasna Góra. The imprisonment of the Picture lasted 6 years, until 1972. A priest from the Diocese of Sandomierz, Fr. Józef Wójcik then “kidnapped” the Image of the Mother of God and the Sister Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary Immaculate from Mariówka, miraculously transported him to the Visitation in Radom. Since then, the Mother of God has been traveling around Poland without any obstacles.

In many ways, she travelled during imprisonment. The persecutors of the Church did not know that the Mother of God could not be arrested,

because the Image is only a sign of her presence. When the Image was imprisoned, empty frames and a candle became a sign of her presence. The miracles of grace did not cease. People welcomed Our Lady with enthusiastic faith and fervour, until the Visitation Image returned to its journey. The first Visitation lasted 23 years. But the decision of the Polish Episcopate continues. The Mother of God, in the sign of the Visitation Image, travels from parish to parish, she is welcomed by new generations of Poles.

Cardinal Wyszyński, the father of the Second Vatican Council

With the reliable pastoral program of Poland's preparation for the Millennium, coinciding with a great event in the universal Church, the Second Vatican Council, which was held from 1962–1965. It was the 21st ecumenical council in history. 2,540 bishops from all over the world participated.

Cardinal Wyszyński participated in the work of the Council at the central level from the very beginning. He was a member of the Central Preparatory Commission established in 1960, whose task was to work out the norms defining the course of Vatican II. Then, from 1962, he was a member of the Secretariat extra ordine. From 1963, by the decision of the Holy Father Paul VI, he became a member of the Presidium of the Council.

The testimony of Cardinal Wyszyński's work and his contribution to the concept of the Council's deliberations are his notes from that period. We learn from them, amongst other things, that in 1962 he brought the question of the participation of lay people in the Council's deliberations. The proposal was accepted.

A special subject of the Council, connected with the person of Cardinal Wyszyński and Polish bishops, is the teaching about the Blessed Virgin Mary and the

proclamation of the Church's Mother. During his stay in Rome, in May 1964, Primate Wyszyński learned from the Holy Father Paul VI that theologians had a problem with the title "Mother of the Church", so that he would not be mistaken with the term Mother - Church, and also for ecumenical reasons.

After returning to Poland, he asked Bishop Antoni Pawłowski - a Mariologist, to write a letter to the Holy Father on this matter. The letter was accepted by bishops as the Memorial of the Polish Episcopate.

The request was supported by the experiences of our nation, which owes so much to the Mother of God. In a speech at the Council Hall on 16th September 1964, the Primate said:

"The Blessed Virgin Mary through so many centuries through which the fate of our nation has unfolded, shows through specific events how great is the power of her mediation in strengthening the virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit, for the defence of our land under her overwhelming protection. "

God listened to the filial desire of the Primate and the Church in Poland - Mary was proclaimed the Mother of the Church.

The Holy Father Paul VI made the proclamation in the conciliar hall at the end of the third session of the Council on 21st November 1964. On this day, the Primate wrote: "(...) The Holy Father gives his speech, in which he

describes the results of the works of the third session, especially he devotes more time to the constitution De Ecclesia and collegiality. - The great, final fragment of his speech is devoted to cp. VIII De Ecclesia - about the Holy Mother in the Church of Christ. It ends by declaring the Holy Mother the Mother of the Church. - Fantastic enthusiasm fills the auditorium, long-lasting applause continues. All bishops rise from their seats. The rapture - perhaps equal to that of Ephesus, lasts a long while. It is a testimony to the unity of the Council Fathers, there are neither conservatives nor progressives - there are simply believing bishops who want a Mother. - It is difficult to describe my own feelings - I am at Jasna Góra, among my children, who prayed on their bare knees on the cold floor for this triumph of the Blessed Mother. You can see how sensitive the Mother is to humble prayers. He now looks at [this] enthusiasm from the two large tapestries that hang from the balconies under the dome - one - the Nativity of Jesus, the other - the Assumption of Mary. Slowly everything goes silent and the Pope goes on. (...) The conciliar auditorium is filled with an eminently sublime atmosphere of great joy and relief. "

For the Primate, the announcement of Mary as the Mother of the Church was a confirmation that the Marian way of defending the faith it is right and victorious in every way.

"The Church is Christ and Marian. He was like this from the beginning, but we only now understand it more

deeply when the Council introduced Mariology into the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, reminding us of the important truth that Mary always stands by her Son in the Church. It would be a great mistake if we wanted to "divorce" - only Christ remains in the Church, and Mary goes down in history. No, she is timeless; that means also today. If we say: Mary is the Mother of the Church, then we must also remember another statement of the Council that she leads us to the Church. Already at Cana, she advised her disciples: "Whatever (my Son) commands you, do."

In line with this truth, Primate Wyszyński established the Movement of Helpers of the Mother of the Church. Mary, present in the life of the Church, should not only be adored and imitated, but also collaborate with her for the salvation of people, bring her help through prayer, suffering and the witness of life.

The Millennium Year 1966 – for Poles the great jubilee of the Millennium of the Baptism of our Nation was an examination of faith and Christian maturity. Jubilee celebrations were celebrated throughout the country, in all dioceses. Thousands of people in churches, streets and squares. In the Millennium Year, Poles felt free and the barrier of fear broke. It was then that the collapse of communism began.

The government of the Polish People's Republic, dependent on Moscow, persisted in persecuting the Church. For the main celebration on 3rd May 1966, the

Holy Father, Paul VI, wished to come to Jasna Gora. The communist authorities closed the Polish borders to him. No foreign delegation was allowed to attend the Millennium Celebrations. In this situation, Mary's entrustment gains special strength.

On a dangerous historical pass, the Primate gave everything to the Mother of God. He entrusted all the matters of Christ's Church in his homeland to her, convinced that this is God's will for our nation. "The power of Catholic Poland," he said, "is now in her, because God wills it".

In a situation of a threat to faith, Cardinal Wyszyński, together with the entire Episcopate, decided to once again give Poland over to the Blessed Mother in a complete, irreversible way, into the slavery of love. Speaking to priests in 1961, he said: "Whenever it is particularly difficult, when the darkness covers the earth and the sun is already dying out and the stars do not give light, we must give everything to Mary."

He did the on 3rd May 1966, surrendering Poland to Mary. In the Millennium Deed of Dedication to Poland, we read: "From now on, the Best Mother and our Queen of Poland, consider us Poles as a Nation for your total property, as a tool in your hands for the Holy Church, to whom we owe the light of Faith, the strength of the Cross, spiritual unity and the peace of God. . Do what you want with us! We want to do everything you ask, if only Poland would keep the untouched treasure of the Holy Faith for

all ages, and the Church in our Homeland would enjoy the freedom it deserves, if we could become a true help of the Universal Church with you and through You, Mother of the Church and Virgin Help of Christians - to build up the Body of Christ on earth! For this purpose, we wish to live from now on, as a Catholic nation, by working for God's glory and for the good of our earthly homeland. Put into your slavery, we want to make in our personal, family, social and national life, not my own will, but Your and Your Son's will, which is Love itself. "

This Millennial surrender of Poland to Mary is like an insurance policy for the faith of young generations. There will be difficulties, there will be crises, and Our Lady will not fail. This heroic act was an expression of the Primate's love for Poland, about which he said: "I love my homeland more than my own heart. Whatever I do for the Church, I do for her. "

The most profound meaning of surrender to Mary was explained by the Holy Father John Paul II at Jasna Góra during his first pilgrimage to his homeland: "The meaning of the word" slavery "so acute for Poles, hides a similar paradox to the words of the Gospel about one's own life, which must be lost, in order to gain them [cf. Mt. 10.39]. Freedom is a great gift from God. You have to use it well. Love is the fulfilment of freedom, and at the same time one must belong to its essence - that is, not be free, or rather be free in a mature way! However, this "non-being-free" in love never feels like a bondage. The

mother does not feel that she is tied to a sick child as a bondage, but as an affirmation of her freedom, as its fulfilment. Then she is most free! Slavery, therefore, indicates a "special dependence", a holy dependence and an "absolute trust". Without this holy dependence, without this heroic trust, human life is bland! ”.

The Millennium Age was a struggle between Christian love and hatred. The Millennium Celebrations in Warsaw on 24th June 1966 became a special spectacle of hatred. On that day, the entire Old Town, all streets were blocked by groups of drunken party fighters brought from various parts of Poland, who, preventing access to the cathedral, chanted: "We don't forgive, we don't forgive." It was a protest against the message of the Polish bishops to the German bishops, which was a step towards the reconciliation of our nations.

Cardinal Wyszyński, in his millennium sermon in the capital, asked us not to give in to hatred. He said:

"Here is the nation baptized throughout its history, today looking to tomorrow (...) as an equipment for the future, it teaches about the high dignity of every human being: great or battered, powerful or inept, along with the instruction: You will love your neighbour (Mt 22.39). And that's everyone! The one who has heartfelt eyes and the one who has glass eyes. What has a heat in his chest and what has a stone in his heart. The one who has a brotherly hand out towards you and the one who stabs you with his eyes. Every! (...) I keep telling you that

the one who wins - even if he is struck down and trampled on - who loves, and not the one who tramples in hatred. The latter has lost. Who hates - has already lost! Whoever mobilizes hatred - has lost! Who fights with God - has lost! And he has already triumphed today - even if he is trampled on the ground - who loves and forgives, who, like Christ, gives his heart and even his life for his enemies.
"

After the end of the millennium celebrations, in Warsaw in front of the Primate's residence, at Miodowa Street 17/19, a group of communist militants stood up shouting: "Wyszyński to Rome!" "Away!" "Traitor!". Burning torches were thrown through the closed gate into the courtyard of the primate's residence. The offended Primate stood in the window in the left wing of the residence, in the so-called deans' room and bless those screaming.

In this way, he taught the spirit of forgiveness and social dialogue, and educated the nation to solidarity. When the Holy Father John Paul II exclaimed in Victory Square in Warsaw in 1979: "Let your Spirit descend and renew the face of the earth, this earth" - the Motherland was already prepared to accept these words.

Primate Wyszyński, persecuted by the authorities, was loved and admired by the society. He was called the Father of the Nation. These were not empty words. He really cared for the nation like a father. After the events of March in 1968, he said in the Warsaw

cathedral: "I, the bishop of the capital, how painfully I experience this" spectacle "- because I cannot name it otherwise. What is left for me? I must remind you, dear children, to protect your own hearts, thoughts and feelings against the monstrous hatred and lies that are happening before our eyes. That you may have the courage to defend your right to truth, love, mutual respect and justice, to the unity of Christ and the peace of God! Only this will save us! Nothing else will save us in our homeland (...).

If I could do it, as I desire it with my heart, then I would fall on my knees in front of all those who are insulted in our homeland and I would ask: Brother, forgive them! ... forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing! ... because they do not understand yet! the laws of love. And we want to be governed by the law of love! I have announced to you the Social Crusade of Love. From this pulpit I said: I would like the Capital to become a City of beautiful love for all Poland, because only this guarantees peace, truth and freedom.

However, when I kneel in spirit before all those who are insulted and ask them to save their love, which is to save their own humanity, I kneel before those who have insulted and insulted in word and deed. All the more I say to them: Friend! ... Friend! ... - as Christ spoke to the disciple who kissed Him ... Friend, what are you doing? I also apologize to you that you have insulted your

humanity with a lie and with hatred that was allowed into your heart. And I'm sorry ... ".

He cared not only for believers and those who came to the Church, but also for those who considered themselves enemies or who lost their way in life. He taught forgiveness and unconditional love. "Our whole life," he said, "is worth as much as there is love in it." This is how Cardinal Wyszyński understood the mission of the Church towards man and the nation.

He taught that the Church is like the soul of the Nation. Throughout history, it has always strengthened and united the Nation, especially when Poland was not on the world map. Never in the history of our homeland has the Church used her power against the nation. He took up the task of supporting man and society with the powers of the Gospel over and over again.

The Primate in defence of human rights

He had never been indifferent to social problems, despite accusations that the Church meddles with politics. He never remained silent, seeing the workers being hurt and the abuses of power. However, when it came to the safety of the entire homeland, he asked for prudence and patience. He took the responsibility on himself.

He spoke many times with representatives of the highest state authorities, who were party secretaries - with Bolesław Bierut, Władysław Gomułka (once for 11 hours), Edward Gierek, Stanisław Kania, and Wojciech Jaruzelski, calling for the rights of workers. He mentions it in a letter to Bishop Herbert Bednorz of Katowice. This letter is a response to the doubts conveyed by the Bishop of the workers whether the Church is not too submissive to the authorities at their expense. The Primate has never dealt with any matters at the expense of the people. He said: "I will not earn money on the blood of the workers." He writes about it directly:

"Let me recall the episode after the" December revolution "[1970]. Some Catholic groups then asked me if it would be possible to take advantage of the difficult situation of the government and put forward the demands of the Church. I replied: The Polish Episcopate is

not in the habit of "taking advantage of the situation". Let the government go ahead to satisfy the demands of the dock workers. "

In talks with representatives of the highest state authorities, he persistently argued for the rights of workers, demanded amnesty, for example for the participants of the demonstration in June 1976, during the riots in Ursus and Radom. In talks and memorials, he demanded an amendment to the Labour Code, he called for decent working hours for workers so that, tempted by wages, they would not prematurely exhaust their forces. At that time, it was planned to introduce a four-shift work system.

The most intense time of direct cooperation with workers is the time of Solidarity. As a man associated with trade union activities, before World War II, he perfectly understood the demands of workers.

He supported their demand for approval of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity". He talked to the authorities and pleaded for respect for the natural rights of working people.

Responding with respect even those who considered themselves enemies of the Church, Primate Wyszyński demanded fair treatment of believers in the Homeland:

"Both a Catholic bishop and a Catholic priest, and every Catholic in Poland is also a Pole and this constitutes

a nation. We, baptized people, entered the life of our nation with all the strength of our Christian spirit, and we did not bring any harm or dishonour to this nation. That is why we will not allow ourselves to block our mouths with a corrupt hand”.

Aware of the great value in human life, in all its dimensions, faith in God, the Primate did not allow the Church to be eliminated from social life and closed in the sacristy. Speaking to lawyers, he explained: “Whenever social topics come to the pulpit, you don't have to think that it is dragging politics to the pulpit. It is the duty of the Church to remind us of the moral principles of life and coexistence, work and cooperation. Only then would the Church have compromised her duties if she had not been doing so, or had allowed herself to be intimidated and had not said anything about social matters. The Church must not be intimidated. ”

Firmly defending the freedom and rights of the Church, Primate Wyszyński always referred to justice married with love.

“The great disease of the modern world is that it has trusted in hatred. At the moment, two great forces are struggling for priority and primacy in the world. The power of hatred, armed with steel shells, hateful doctrines, entire programs of hate and the pedagogy of hatred - and the power of love that does not pay with evil for the evil suffered, but forgives, loves despite everything, even enemies, ordering those who hate us to

do good , and humbly asks us to pray for those who persecute and slander us. This is the victory that conquers the world! This is the yearning of the world and its need, a social order that emerges with a great voice from the hearts of the human family, born of the Father's love! ”.

In the pastoral letter announcing the Social Crusade of Love in 1967, he included a message that shows that the only way to a true renewal of life, the way to overcome crises and develop social life in the spirit of Christian culture.

"By violating the law of social love, by exacerbating individualism in many areas of life, people have reached the absurdity of self-destruction, the destruction of the family, social, national and human ties".

In order for social love not to be general, but to penetrate the everyday life of people in the homeland, this program was presented by the Primate in the so-called ABC of the Social Crusade of Love:

1. Respect every human being, because Christ lives in him. Be sensitive to the other person, your brother.

2. Think good of everyone - don't think badly of anyone. Try to find something good even in the worst.

3. Always speak kindly of others - do not speak ill of others. Really the harm done to the word. Don't make a disconnect between people.

4. Speak with every language of love. Don't raise your voice. Do not swear. Don't be upset. Don't squeeze any tears. Calm down and be kind.

5. Forgive everything, everyone. Don't hold a grudge in your heart. Always reach out first for reconciliation.

6. Always act for the benefit of your neighbour. Do good to everyone as if you would like it to be done to you. Don't think about who owes you, but what you owe to others.

7. Actively sympathize with suffering. We are happy to rush with consolation, advice, help, heart.

8. Work honestly, because others benefit from the fruits of your work, just as you use the work of others.

9. Get involved in social assistance to others. Open yourself to the poor and the sick. Use yours. Try to see those in need around you.

10. Pray for everyone, even for your enemies.

Cardinal Wyszyński considered the life of love and harmony to be the greatest good for man and the Fatherland. He put his love for Poland above all else.

“For us, after God, Poland is the greatest love! We must be faithful to God, first of all, to our homeland and Polish national culture. We will love all the people in the world but a just love. After God, after Jesus Christ and the Holy Mother, after all God's order, our love belongs, first and foremost, to our homeland, history and culture from which we grow on Polish soil. And even if the various invitations to love all peoples and nations were announced on banners, we would not be against it, but we would demand that we could live, above all, with the spirit, history, culture and language of our beautiful Polish land, worked out for centuries with the life of our forefathers. ”

Primate Wyszyński considered the defence of the nation's spiritual identity the most important thing: “The enemies know what is good for the nation and what is harmful to it. If they want to harm him, they would destroy what helps him. Therefore, the invaders have always destroyed the Church and wanted to erase the traces of Christian morality in the life of the nation. That is why they tried to humiliate the nation and drink up its spirit of faith. These are lessons from the recent past. May we not forget them quickly, because they can be useful to us!

We recognize the enemies of our nation by the way they relate to God and to Christian morality. They are able to assess the sense of this morality for us, they know that it is the strength and power of the nation, that it best

serves its existence, its wholeness and its unity. Therefore, by wanting to destroy a nation, they destroy its faith and Christian morality. "

Man is most important on earth

Defending the dignity of the human person is the fundamental direction in the thinking of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński; the heart of his teaching about God, which he always discovered in relation to man - as a loving Father, a saving Son and the sanctifying Holy Spirit. He aroused hope and argued that not everything is lost in the most difficult situations. "The most battered man, the most blamed, burdened by all penal codes, still remains a man, because sins can be erased from him, and humanity will remain."

The Primate insistently stressed the need for "rehabilitation" of human beings. He believed that the future depended on it. "A deep search for truth must begin in us, above all in human nature. To get to know it deeply and completely, to understand who a person actually is - it is a great salvation for the modern world".

Even for criminals, the Primate saw an opportunity in God's mercy. "Even if we lose our life in the eyes of the world and the world renounces us, condemning us to death, like thieves to the crucifixion - this is the assessment of the world. There is still an evaluation of God, God cancels out the judgment of the world - "he is guilty of death" - and announces his divine judgment: "Today you will still be with me in Paradise" ".

Among human rights, the right to life was placed in the first place by Primate. He tried to conduct the affairs of the Church and the Fatherland in such a way that no one would perish. I would not forgive myself, he repeated, if at least one man died because of me. The Primate did not fight against any system, but in every system he fought for the people.

He tirelessly reminded us that God is the only Lord of life, the father of man. Thus, man has no right to decide about human life, even the smallest, helpless one. Human life is a gift of God, his blissful love, eternal and invincible love. A man who has come into being is immortal, will live forever, even if the history of his life on earth is interrupted.

Interrupting a child's life is always illegal. "The modern mother is falsely told that the life that is taking shape in her is an 'invader' and some 'unjust aggressor'. She is told that she has the right to defend herself against this attacker. And finally - horror of horrors - she is given a 'right' that no one, even the most unjust prosecutor, has - to compromise her life! According to the codes of criminal law, it is only in a long and arduous procedure that it is possible to pronounce: 'he is guilty of death'. And here without a sentence, one will of a man, perhaps temporarily tormented, poor or sick, condemns him to death! We ask: By what right? Why should the universal and fundamental right to life "Don't kill" be suspended here? "

The matter of a new person's life is not a private matter of two parents - mother and father - the Primate taught. Everyone should be interested in this matter, and above all a new being who has the right to exist and no one can sentence them to death.

The condition of a just system - a new man

Social activity in the life and teaching of Cardinal Wyszyński was based on a solid foundation of the Gospel and the teaching of the Church. From this position he took up and tried to solve all social, economic and political problems. He lived the deepest conviction that all areas of human life should be permeated and animated by God's presence and His grace.

The Primate at the centre of systemic, political and economic issues and problems put man and his dignity as a child of God.

"You have to realize that it is about man's salvation. If the best systems, the greatest human efforts, nowhere, on the whole planet, are able to give full happiness, we have to return - this is not some kind of "retro socio-economic" - to the human person, to the human being. You have to see, understand and save man! This is what the Church does.

A modern man - this fallen giant, chained in the metal sheets of technology, technicism and technocracy that restrain him, which helps him to live and at the same time disturbs him - must regain the freedom of God's children so that he can stand up, walk freely and fulfil the

tasks assigned to him by the Creator. This is the task of the entire human family, to which we also belong.

Therefore, the social issue is much broader. It is no longer just saving the economy, it is not just a matter of some sort of conflict between one social strata or another. It is a cry for rescue for the human person, so that they, while taking advantage of the social and economic order, from modern forms of life and work, do not lose their personality and does not lose their basic moral values, without which nothing can be achieved in the field of temporal life and economic order. "

The Primate consistently emphasized the dependence of earthly life on the respect for God's laws.

"We have to break with the conviction that there is no relationship between the national economy and Christian morality. Indeed, there are the imperatives of the moment and the condition for the true renewal of our mortal life. It is here that the responsibility of the children of the Church is born for the renewal and sanctification of mortality, to set an example of how to serve others socially and how to use the fruits of human work and the gifts of the earth. Therefore, even to the earthly world, today we need the revelation of the sons of God (Rom 8:19), who would bring the values of Christian morality into our daily, temporal and material life, whom Jesus Christ, the Son of the heavenly ploughman and the sower of the Gospel of truth and life, holiness will be blessed by. and grace, justice, love and peace. "

In his courageous social program, the Primate taught that renewal depends not on the change of political and economic systems, but on the rebirth of man.

In 1945 he wrote in the magazine "God's Order":

"After the war, governments changed, political systems changed in almost all of Europe. One wave is ebbing, the other is coming. Before each new wave, human longings are to come: that the new ones may be different, better, may they finally be what the world needs. They have other names, proclaim new slogans, condemn the old regimes, pass death sentences on old people, but by condemning they imitate their deeds.

People and slogans change - evil does not cease. The names are meaningless. Whether it will be a monarchy, or a republic, or a democracy, capitalist or Christian system - if they are ruled by old people without conscience, without moral principles - it will be the abuse of signs, names that will protect oneself from poverty. People recognize each other easily on dyed foxes.

We are not even convinced of the country by Catholic name, if its citizens do not think, feel or do Catholic (...) The name does not exempt from honesty and morality. Nor is it a patent for a virtue. In every system there is no shortage of rogues who make ideals, slogans and names a subject of trade and easy profit. "

This was repeated by the Primate in the early 1980s, when it was widely believed that the fall of communism and the change of the system would automatically bring a new, just order in which people would be respected. The Primate warned too against superficial enthusiasm. He consistently proclaimed that it was not about a new system, but about a new man. This learning was not easy. Systemic and political changes seemed to be a much more effective way of social renewal. On 2nd February 1981, the Primate in the Gniezno Basilica said:

“You don't have to look at others, at these or those, maybe at politicians, and demand that they change themselves. Everyone has to start with themselves so that we can truly change. And then when we are all reborn and politicians will have to change, whether they will or not. At the moment, it is not just about changing the social institution in our Homeland, it is not only about the exchange of people, but it is primarily about the renewal of man. The point is for a man to be new, for a "new tribe" to emerge ... Because if a man does not change, the most prosperous system, the richest state will not stand, it will be stolen and will perish, because what about - I may say trivially - that the circulating bottle of spirit would pass from the hands of some drunkards to the hands of other drunkards! Let me say even more drastically that the key to the state treasury will pass from the hands of some thieves to the hands of other thieves? It is probably not the case that all thieves should have access to the cash

registers and all drinkers to vodka, only that the conscience of everyone should wake up so that we understand our responsibility for the nation that God resurrects”.

Today we are seeing just how true these prophetic words were. The system has changed, the people in power have changed, and the struggle for social justice and respect for man is still going on. Father Wyszyński saw the education of man as the most important task on his way to social justice:

“There are times ahead when man will have to live to the fullest. Until now, man has led a half-life. Or he lived a mortal life subject to the bondage of money and profit, a selfish life. Maybe he was stripped of his own aspirations and subjected to another slavery - to the service of the state. Both were a mistake. Perhaps only great saints managed to skilfully combine the fullness of human life.

In order to avoid old mistakes, modern man should be brought up comprehensively for himself, for God, for the state, and for the nation and society. Education should concern the entire human person, that is, it should cover his personal and social character. ”

Primate Wyszyński tried to educate man and the nation to such a fullness. It is worth recalling this primate’s school of social thinking. There is a timeless message in it that shows the way to a just future.

“Do not believe that the problem of the crisis of the modern world is a crisis of culture, economy and political system, one way or the other. Not true, these are all the garbage and fall leaves that fall from the trees; winds will spread them over the fields and dumps. These are the little problems! The contemporary problem and the culminating point of the world crisis lies where the mouth of a man who wants to serve his brother meets his feet. Who can and wants to do it, wins and draws development plans for the future. (...)

The wind will bear everything else like rubbish, because people don't need it! They do not need a new culture, new morality, economy, politics and new systems. They need a new love, a new respect and a new freedom. "

The victory came

The greatest victory of the faith of Cardinal Wyszyński was undoubtedly the election of the Holy Father John Paul II, who said: "Venerable and Beloved, my Reverend Primate! Let me just say what I think. There would not be this Polish Pope in the See of Peter, who today, full of fear of God, but also full of trust, would begin a new pontificate, if it were not for your faith, which would not retreat from imprisonment and suffering, your heroic hope, and your entrustment entirely to the Mother of the Church, if Jasna Góra was not there - and that whole period of the history of the Church in our homeland, which is related to your episcopal and primate ministry".

In many speeches that the Primate gave after returning home from the conclave, we find a reference to the mystery of the choice of the Holy Father John Paul II. On 23rd November 1978, he said at Jasna Góra:

"Believe that it was the work of God, the work of Christ in the Holy Spirit and the Bride of the Holy Spirit - the Mother of Christ! That's how everyone understood it. Nobody was surprised by the choice of a foreigner, not even a Pole. He made everyone happy. It was such a joy that it was impossible to protect yourself from its signs. How many cardinals, old people, wept for joy! And tears are probably the best interpreter of feelings ...



When I approached John Paul II with the first homage, our mouths opened almost simultaneously with the name of Our Lady of Jasna Góra: this is her work! We believed it strongly and we still believe in it.

From the moment the Holy Father John Paul II was elected, Cardinal Wyszyński prayed for him in every Holy Mass, in every Jasna Góra Appeal, in every Rosary. "For him to grow, to diminish me" - he repeated after St. John the Baptist. He rejoiced in every accomplishment of the Holy Father. He supported him with prayer and sacrifice of his life.

When on 13th May 1981, the Primate himself, seriously ill, learned about the attempted assassination of the Holy Father, he creased under the influence of this news, saying: "I was always afraid of it." From then on, he offered everything for John Paul II. On 14th May 1981, in the last speech to the faithful of the capital, which was played from an audio tape during the Holy Mass in front of the Church of St. Anna, said: "And that is why I am asking you, that these heroic prayers that you offer for my intention at Jasna Góra and in Warsaw and diocesan churches, anywhere, that you would direct all of this with me to the Mother of Christ, begging for health and strength for the Holy Father. Let us make these small sacrifices so that our "widow's penny" would obtain God's mercy, that Christ would discern the great love we have for His representative on earth. "

In the farewell speech to the Main Council on 22nd May, we find words that testify that Cardinal Wyszyński consciously offered his life and suffering for the intention of John Paul II.

"Holy Father! We don't need to talk about our feelings for him and about these strange synchronicities of our lives, especially in recent years, up to this point. This synchronization obliges me personally to the Holy Father, and I accept this obligation consciously, with full understanding and docility".

The Shepherd's passing

On 28th May 1981, Cardinal Wyszyński passed on to God. Before his death, during the sacrament of the sick, on 16th May he said: "New times will come, they require new lights, new powers, God will give them in His own time. Let us remember that, like Cardinal Hlond, I entrusted everything to the Blessed Mother and I know that she will not be weaker in Poland, even if people change! "

The Holy Father could not come to his funeral. He sent his representative. It was the Secretary of State, Card. Agostino Casaroli, who presided over the funeral ceremony. The Holy Father has sent a beautiful letter.

The Primate of the Millennium went to God surrounded by great love and reverence for the Church and the nation. From the beginning of May, the cancerous disease was growing rapidly. In the chapel of the Primate's house, prayers lasted day and night, on 28th May in the morning at 4.40 a shocking moment – The Primate died. The body was placed in a double coffin and transferred to the church of St. Joseph in Krakowskie Przedmieście.

Since the transfer, thousands of believers had come to pay their last respects to the Primate of the Millennium, called the Father of the Nation. You had to wait in a long line of several hours to pass the coffin in an

endless procession. They walked in silence, praying, day and night, from 28th to 31st May - that is, until the funeral ceremony at Victory Square (now Piłsudski Square).

The news of the death of Cardinal Wyszyński spread like wildfire all over the world. 1,600 messages and letters of condolence were sent to the Secretariat of the Primate of Poland.

On 31st May, on the day of the funeral, a funeral procession from the Church of St. Joseph to the Victory Square was led by the delegate of the Holy Father John Paul II, the Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Cassaroli. Thousands of nuns, about five thousand priests, delegations of universities, chapters, bishops, archbishops, 14 cardinals, including Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (future Pope Benedict XVI) joined the funeral procession.

At the funeral of the Primate of the Millennium, in addition to the delegation of the Holy See, delegations from 17 episcopates from various parts of the world, representatives of other churches, representatives of diplomatic missions and Polish diaspora came. Primate Wyszyński's body was laid, according to his will, in the crypt of St. John's in Warsaw. In 1987, the coffin with the mortal remains of Cardinal Wyszyński were moved from the crypt to a specially built chapel next to the entrance to the Cathedral.

Thousands of believers still pray at his tomb

Saint John Paul II, in his letter for the funeral, asked: "Make the figure of the unforgettable Primate, the late Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, his person, his teaching, his role in such a difficult period of our history. Make all of this the subject of meditation and undertake this great and difficult work, the legacy of over a thousand years of history, on which he, Cardinal Stefan, the Primate of Poland, a good shepherd, left a permanent, indelible mark. Let the pastors of the Church undertake this work with the greatest responsibility, let it be undertaken by the clergy, priests, religious families, and the faithful of every age and profession. Let the young take them. May it be taken up by the whole Church and the whole nation. Each one in his own way, just as God and his own conscience show him. Take it and lead it to the future. "

The beatification process of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński began at the diocesan stage on 20th May 1989, and ended on 6th February 2001. It lasted almost 12 years, with 289 sessions. 59 witnesses were heard. The files in 37 volumes were submitted on 27th April 2001 to the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

The Vatican part of the beatification process began on 7th June 2001 with the official opening of the

beatification acts. The decree on the heroic virtues of Cardinal Wyszyński was signed by Pope Francis on 18th December 2017. On 24th September 2018, the medical council considered it a miracle that a 19-year-old girl who fell ill with thyroid cancer was healed.

The date of the beatification was set for 7th June 2020.

Due to the pandemic, it was moved to 12th September 2021.



Table of content

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Life's Path..... | 2 |
| Childhood..... | 3 |
| Seminary and priestly ordination..... | 9 |
| The beginning of priestly ministry | 14 |
| Among the workers in Włocławek..... | 17 |
| Wartime exile..... | 20 |
| At the episcopal see in Lublin | 24 |
| Shepherd of the Church in Poland | 28 |
| Three years of imprisonment | 32 |
| Mary, given to protect the nation, visits Poland. | 39 |
| Cardinal Wyszyński, the father of the Second Vatican Council | 43 |
| The Primate in defence of human rights | 53 |
| Man is most important on earth..... | 60 |
| The condition of a just system - a new man | 63 |
| The victory came..... | 69 |
| The Shepherd's passing | 73 |
| Thousands of believers still pray at his tomb | 75 |