

MACIEJ SADOWSKI, C.SS.R.

«FAITHFUL TO THE LEGACY OF ST. CLEMENT –
WHILE OPEN TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES»
THE ORIGIN AND BEGINNINGS OF THE POLISH
REDEMPTORIST PROVINCE (1883-1909)¹

Introduction; 1. – Difficult beginnings – «Coraggio ... Riuscirà!»; 2. – In the cradle of the Polish Redemptorists; 3. – The ministry of reconciliation in the divided country; 4. – «Crescat et mutiplicet Provincia Polonica!»; Conclusion

Introduction

«The past is now – though somewhat far». Using these words the Polish national bard, Cyprian Kamil Norwid (1821-1883), formulated one of the simplest and most accurate definitions of the past. Thus the past is a constant ingredient of identity. It is a legacy which helps nations, communities and individuals maintain a sense of who they are.

The need to preserve their traditions and the sources of their charism is a special obligation for religious communities. In this context one should see a happy coincidence that this year the Polish Redemptorists celebrate a double jubilee: the 100th anniversary of the canonisation of St. Clement Maria Hofbauer (1751-1820) and the 100th anniversary of the existence of the Redemptorist Province of Warsaw as an independent structure.

¹ Currently our organisational unit of Polish Redemptorists is known as the Warsaw Province of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. This name has been used since 1965. At that time our General Government in Rome issued a decree dealing with the official names of Redemptorist units and their headquarters. However, one should remember that from our foundation in Poland until 1965 our unit's legal and formal name was: the Polish Province of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

These anniversaries have also become a source of inspiration and encouragement for the contemporary generation of the Redemptorists to carry out a thorough study of their past and the source of their identity. This presentation is only a humble attempt to show the beginnings of the historical heritage of the Polish Province of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

1. – *Difficult beginnings* – «Coraggio ... Riuscirà!»

The history of the Redemptorists' presence in the Polish lands goes back to the year 1787 when St. Clement Hofbauer and Thaddeus Hübl (1760-1807) founded the first monastery of the Congregation beyond the Alps at the Church of St. Benno in Warsaw². In Warsaw the Redemptorists, called «Bennonites», conducted their intensive pastoral activities for twenty years, and their specific and pioneering pastoral model was called a «Perpetual Mission»³. In June 1808, after twenty years of their fruitful social-religious work, Napoleon ordered them to leave their monastery and expelled them from the capital. But that expulsion of the Redemptorists from Warsaw did not put an end to their activities in Polish lands. Some Polish pupils of St. Clement returned to the lands under the Russian partition and with time they began their work as diocesan priests, for example in Pruszyń, near Siedlce. The plan to create a Redemptorist community in Janów Podolski did not succeed. However, in the years 1824-1834 Father Jan Podgórski (1755-1847), together with five brothers,

² J. WOJNOWSKI, *Ciernista droga kapłaństwa św. Klemens Dworzaka. Na 150-lecie zgonu 15 III. 1820-1950* [The Thorny Way of the Priesthood of St. Clement Dworzak. On the Occasion of the 150th Anniversary of his Death. 15 March 1820-1950], in *Homo Dei* (= HD) 39 (1970) 210-211, 300-303; cfr A. OW CZARSKI, *Le relazioni tra il vicariato transalpino (di Varsavia) e il governo generale dei Redentoristi durante il soggiorno di S. Clemente M. Hofbauer a Varsavia (1778-1808)*, in *SHCSR* 46 (1998) 311-323; cfr ID., *Redemptoryści Benonicy w Warszawie 1787-1808*, [The Redemptorists Bennonites in Warsaw 1787-1808], 2nd ed., Kraków 2003, 9 passim; cfr W. SZOŁDRSKI, *Redemptoryści w Polsce* [The Redemptorists in Poland], vol. 3, [Wrocław 1953], 4-6, (manuscript copies in the Library of the Novitiate of the Redemptorist Province of Warsaw in Lubaszowa).

³ J. HEINZMANN, *Der «Homo apostolicus» Klemens Maria Hofbauer*, in *SHCSR* 34 (1986) 357-378; OW CZARSKI, *Redemptoryści Benonicy*, 157-183.

made another attempt to found a community following the Rule of St. Alphonsus in the secret monastery in Piotrkowice near Kielce⁴. But this episode of the Redemptorist history also turned out to be short-lived. The failure of those efforts did not discourage the next generations to make other attempts, which were successful only in the year 1883.

It was thanks to the efforts of the Polish aristocrat, the Servant of God Father Bernard Łubieński (1846-1933), that the Redemptorists could officially return to Poland⁵. In the year 1864 Łubieński had entered the Redemptorist novitiate in the Province of London and after having professed his vows and received Holy Orders, he made efforts aimed at renewing the Redemptorist tradition of St. Clement Hofbauer in homeland, by then torn apart by partitioners. At the consent of the General Government, and thanks to the enormous support of his family and influential friends, Łubieński managed to bring back the Redemptorists to the Polish lands. «Poland's Apostle», as his contemporaries called him, Łubieński became as if the second founder of the Congregation on the Vistula. The location of this new foundation was imposed first by political reasons. One such reason was the anti-Catholic and anti-Polish sting of the Kulturkampf in Great Poland (Wielkopolska)⁶. But there was

⁴ B. ŁUBIEŃSKI, *O. Jan Podgóski, redemptorysta towarzysz św. Klemensa* [Father Jan Podgóski, Redemptorist and Companion of St. Clement], Kraków 1913, 93-97; cfr K. SZRANT, *Redemptoristi in Polonia dispersi post suppressionem conventus S. Bennonis an. 1808*, in *SHCSR* 7 (1959) 134-144; cfr M. BRUDZISZ, *W diasporze i w tajnym klasztorze w Piotrkowicach 1808-1834 (1841). Karta z dziejów redemptorystów-benonitów w Polsce* [In the Diaspora and the Secret Monastery in Piotrkowice 1808-1834 (1841). A Chapter from the History of the Redemptorists-Bennonites in Poland], Kraków 1994, 21-25, 45-47.

⁵ Bernard Łubieński, born on 9.12.1846 in Guzów, near Warsaw. In 1864 he entered the Redemptorists in the Province of London. He took his religious vows on 7.05.1866, and received Holy Orders on 29.12.1870 in Aachen (Germany). He died with the reputation of sanctity on 10.09.1933 in Warsaw. M. PIROŻYŃSKI, *O. Bernard Łubieński (1846-1933)*, Wrocław 1946, 31-97; cfr A. BAZIELICH, *Na drogach charyzmatu. Udział o. Bernarda Łubieńskiego w ponownym przybyciu Redemptorystów do Polski w 1883 roku* [On the Ways of Charism. The Contribution of Father Bernard Łubieński to the Return of the Redemptorists to Poland in 1883], Kraków 1995, 16-19.

⁶ In general, «Great Poland» is a term designating that part of Poland

also the standing decree against the Congregation in the territory of the so-called Congress Poland⁷. Consequently, missionary activities late in the nineteenth century could be undertaken with relative autonomy only under the Austrian partition, i.e. in Galicia⁸.

The initiative to bring the Redemptorists to the Polish lands was supported to a great extent by Father Bernard's brother, Roger Łubieński (1849-1930), who made his first attempt to do so in 1872⁹. But in those times the superiors of the Congregation did not favour the idea.

It was only seven years later that another opportunity presented itself. The Provincial of the Redemptorists in England, Father Robert Aston Coffin (1819-1885)¹⁰, agreed to allow Bernard Łubieński to make a trip to his homeland for a family reunion. Then in a letter to the Superior General of the Redemptorists, Nicholas Mauron (1818-1893), Father Coffin explained that this would also be a fine occasion for Łubieński to do some reconnaissance, that is, to explore the possibility of an Alphonsian foundation in the Polish lands¹¹.

which after 1793, during the second partition of the country, belonged to Prussia.

⁷ «Congress Poland» (1815-1918) designates the autonomous Polish state created in 1815 from part of the territory of the Duchy of Warsaw. It was thereby joined in a personal union with Russia so that the Czar of Russia was simultaneously king of Congress Poland.

⁸ P. KRASNY, *Kościół p.w. Matki Boskiej Nieustającej Pomocy i św. Katarzyny Aleksandryjskiej oraz klasztor oo. Dominikanów, później oo. Redemptorystów w Mościskach*, [The Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and the Church of St. Catherine of Alexandria as well as the Dominican Monastery, then the Redemptorists in Mościska], in: *Materiały do dziejów sztuki sakralnej na ziemiach wschodnich dawnej Rzeczypospolitej* [The Materials to the History of Sacral Art in the Eastern Lands of the Former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth], ed. Jan Ostrowski, part 1. *Kościóły i klasztory rzymskokatolickie dawnego województwa ruskiego* [The Roman Catholic Churches and Monasteries in the Former Voivodship of Ruthenia], vol. 7, Kraków 1999, 200-204.

⁹ PIROŻYŃSKI, O. *Bernard Łubieński*, 63-73.

¹⁰ BOLAND, 83-84.

¹¹ Nicholas Mauron, Superior General of the Redemptorists in the years 1855-1893, was born in Sankt Silvester in the Canton of Fribourg (Switzerland). He managed to unite the Italian and Transalpine Redemptorists. Blessed Pius IX committed to him and to all Redemptorists the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in 1865. BOLAND, 230-231, 285-286.

En route, Lubienski stopped over at the Redemptorist house in Vienna. The very fact of Łubieński's visit with his Austrian fellow Redemptorists in Vienna was in itself very symbolic. For there he visited the grave of the Servant of God Clement Hofbauer in the Church of *Maria am Gestade*. In prayer at Clement's grave, Lubienski begged the intercession of this first Redemptorist ever to work in the Polish lands. He prayed that the Redemptorists might once again be in Poland¹².

The base from which this aristocrat-in-a-religious-habit worked for a return of Redemptorists to Poland was the estate of his brother Roger, in Babica near Rzeszów. It was here that the Łubieński family reunion took place on the occasion of the birthday of the most senior family member, Henryk Łubieński. Father Bernard proceeded to have meetings with various distinguished people about the prospective foundation. These included: Bishop Albin Dunajewski of Kraków (1817-1894); the well-known missionary and theologian Father, Marian Ignacy Morawski S.J.; the Vicar General of the Diocese of Przemyśl, Father Ignacy Łobos (1827-1900); the future Metropolitan of Lvov, Monsignor Seweryn Morawski (1819-1900), and Father Aleksander Maryański (1845-1912). He also met with representatives of the Galician aristocracy: the proprietor of Łańcut and former governor of Galicia, Alfred Józef Potocki (1822-1889), and Princess Sapieha (1806-1890). All of these promised their help in this endeavour. However, no concrete decisions were reached at the time.

Roger Łubieński also looked for a venue for the future monastery, and at the same time he sent many letters to the Redemptorist General Government in Rome, encouraging the superiors to give their consent to the Polish foundation¹³. Meanwhile Father Bernard sent to Rome a detailed report of his reconnaissance in Poland, presenting his own thoughts on the prospects

¹² The Archives of the Warsaw Redemptorist Province in Tuchów (AWPR), without call number, B. ŁUBIEŃSKI, *O powrocie Kongregacji Najświętszego Odkupiciela do Polski* [About the Return of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer to Poland] without the place and date of publication, p. 3, (manuscript copies).

¹³ BAZIELICH, *Na drogach charyzmatu*, 16-19.

of Redemptorists having a residence in the territory of Galicia.

Father General Mauron looked kindly upon Bernard Łubieński's report, and then asked the Provincial of Vienna, Andreas Hamerle (1837-1930), to examine the project. In turn, the latter appointed Father Joseph Kassewalder (1819-1898) and Engelbert Janeček (1848-1908) to talk to Bishop Dunajewski, Father Ignacy Łobos and Roger Łubieński. The sites discussed for the new Polish foundation included Żywiec, Jarosław, Mużyłowice in the deanery of Jaworów, Oświęcim, Sambor and Mościska near Przemyśl. Finally, it was decided that the best location would be at the former Dominican monastery in Mościska, a town with a population of several thousand, twenty-eight kilometers east of Przemyśl, and seventy kilometers west of Lvov. Mościska in the district of Czerwieńsk dated back to the fifteenth century when the Dominicans founded their monastery and built St. Catherine's Church. The Austrian authorities had liquidated the foundation in 1788, at the peak of Josephinism, and the church was changed into a warehouse¹⁴. In those territories the missionary work was conducted by the Jesuits, the Lazarist Fathers, the Reformed Franciscans and the Bernardines. The Redemptorists were to come there as a new, alien and unknown group. At first, they had to overcome the language barrier since the first priests were mostly Czechs; in addition, they were commonly regarded as Germans. Even Łubieński himself, after having spent twenty-four years in England, had to learn his mother tongue anew, especially for sacred liturgy and preaching¹⁵.

In the spring of 1881 Father Hamerle and Father Antoni Jedek (1834-1903) arrived in Babica where they talked about the details of the Galician foundation with Roger Łubieński. Towards the end of March they met the local parish priest, Father Roman Staojałowski, along with other local people, including the civil authorities of Mościska. Finally, Father Kassewalder and Father Jedek signed the purchase contract concerning the former Do-

¹⁴ KRASNY, *Kościół p.w. Matki Boskiej Nieustającej Pomocy*, 199-200.

¹⁵ M. SOJKA, *Dzieje redemptorystów polskich w latach 1883-1939* [*The History of the Polish Redemptorists in the Years 1883-1939*], Kraków 2004, 32-35, (manuscript copies in the Archives of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Kraków, call number H-308)

minican monastery on 13 December, 1881. The document stated that the Redemptorists could take over the centre in July 1883. The Redemptorists became the owners of the monastery, whereas the adjacent St. Catherine's Church was given over to their care for as long as they ministered in Mościska. The authorities in Lvov consented to the Redemptorists' residing and ministering only in the territory of the so-called Galician Autonomy. At the same time they required that the Redemptorists give their financial guarantee and assurance that they would not apply for any governmental grants¹⁶.

The Redemptorist Father General Mauron considered Father Bernard Łubieński as the natural candidate to begin the new foundation in the Polish lands. Consequently, Father Bernard was reassigned from the Province of London to the Austrian Province since it was the Viennese Redemptorists who had the duty and privilege to form the community in Mościska. In 1882 Łubieński left the friendly island of his youth, and from London via Rome he returned to his homeland. In late May and early June he was twice in private audiences with Pope Leo XIII, asking him for his apostolic blessing for the new Redemptorist foundation. In his *Memoirs* Łubieński, described his first audience of 29 May, 1882, as he was accompanied by his brothers Zygmunt and Tomasz: «Monsignore Macchi, standing next to the Pope, introduced the guests. When it was our turn he made a mistake and said, "*Principi Łubieński*"¹⁷. And the Holy Father repeated "*Oh, principi Polacchi, mi piace...*"¹⁸ and he gently touched Tomasz on the cheek asking him where he came from. He answered, "*Di Varsavia*"¹⁹. [...] Then he addressed me asking what I was doing there. I answered as best as I could in Italian, "*Sono Liguorino, devo andare far una fondazione nella Polonia*"²⁰. Hearing that, the Pope put his hand under my chin, and looking kindly into my

¹⁶ E. JABŁOŃSKA-DEPTUŁA, *Zakony diecezji przemyskiej od pierwszego rozbioru do 1938 roku* [The Orders of the Diocese of Przemyśl from the First Partition till 1938], in *Nasza Przeszłość* 46 (1976) 207-268.

¹⁷ *Princes Łubieńskis...*

¹⁸ *Oh, Polish princes, I am glad to meet you.*

¹⁹ *From Warsaw.*

²⁰ *I am a Redemptorist. I am to go to Poland to establish a foundation.*

eyes he said, "Coraggio ... Riuscirà!"²¹. Father Bernard also went to Castellamare to visit Father General Mauron who was ill at the time. Father Mauron again blessed «the Polish centre»²².

The journey of the Servant of God then led him through Firenze, Bologna, Bussolengo, and Innsbruck to Vienna, from where he was sent to the monastery in Eggenburg to master his Polish and prepare himself for his new duties.

Having learned about Łubieński's visit to Austria on 18 November, 1882, Bishop Dunajewski invited him to Kraków, offering him accommodation in his own palace. The Polish Redemptorist accepted that hospitality eagerly in January 1883²³. During his five-month stay in the town at the foot of the Wawel Hill, Father Bernard did pastoral ministry as a chaplain in the cloisters of the Visitations Nuns, the Augustinian Nuns and the Felician Sisters, which was an excellent occasion for him to improve his Polish and to get to know the nature of Polish spirituality and religious expression. The aristocrat wearing the Redemptorist habit also met Blessed Zygmunt Szczęśny Feliński, Archbishop of Warsaw (1822-1895) and the well-known Capuchin preacher Father Jan Prokop Leszczyński (1812-1895) who were at that time in exile in Kraków²⁴.

2. – In the cradle of the Polish Redemptorists

Father Antoni Jedek was the first Redemptorist to arrive in Mościska at the end of May 1883. He received a warm welcome from the parish priest Father Roman Stojałowski and the parishioners. He paid a visit to Bishop Łukasz Solecki of Przemyśl (1827-1900) and, after having received the jurisdictional documents from the diocesan curia, he celebrated the first Mass in St. Catherine's Church on 31 May. At the beginning of June, the

²¹ *Courage! You will succeed!* (APWR, without any call number, *Wspomnienia [Memoirs]*, p. 204, (manuscript copy).

²² T. KACZEWSKI, *O. Bernard Łubieński mąż boży i asceta. W 25 lecie zgonu [Father Bernard Łubieński, a Man of God and Ascetic. On the 25th Anniversary of his Death]*, in *HD* 27 (1958) 642-648.

²³ AWPR, call number, BŁ, E 97, *O. Bernard Łubieński do bp. Albina Dunajewskiego [Father Bernard Łubieński to Bishop Albin Dunajewski]*, Eggenburg, 18 November 1882, 43-44.

²⁴ ŁUBIEŃSKI, *O powrocie Kongregacji Najświętszego Odkupiciela*, 49-60.

professed brother Jan Nepomucen Grala (1852-1913) arrived in Mościska as the second member of the community.

Father Bernard Łubieński joined them on 22 June 1883²⁵. On his way to Mościska he wrote to his sisters the following meaningful words, «Thank God, my five months of wandering are about to finish and it seems to me that I will reach the aim of my life, i.e., I will see the house of the Congregation in Poland. But I should expect a lot of work and suffering»²⁶.

At first, the Redemptorists did not deliver sermons to the local people because of their insufficient knowledge of Polish. The inaugural sermon was delivered on 15 July, 1883 by Łubieński himself. It was on the Sunday of the Most Holy Redeemer – the patronal feast of the Congregation. That day, in the presence of the local authorities and numerous faithful, the Redemptorists officially took over the church and monastery in Mościska. This event was regarded as the official return of the Redemptorists to the Polish lands. During the next months the priests preached at least twice on Sundays and feasts; they also celebrated services and heard confessions of those who came there from neighbouring places²⁷. Initially, the Redemptorists in Mościska lived in extreme poverty. «A barrel with a plank on the top served as their table and their beds were bundles of straw on the floor on which mice and various worms travelled»²⁸. The Austrian Provincial was aware of these extreme conditions and gave concrete help to the community in Mościska, sending them craftsmen from Vienna who repaired the church and monastery. Those investments were generously supported by the faithful and several aristocratic families also con-

²⁵ B. ŁUBIEŃSKI, *Życiorys Ojca Antoniego Jedka, Cong. Ss. Red* [*The Life of Father Antoni Jedek, Cong. Ss. Red*], p. 9-13, (manuscript copy AWPR); cfr A. BAZIELICH, *Sługa Boży O. Bernard Łubieński. Apostoł Chrystusowego Odkupienia* [*The Servant of God Father Bernard Łubieński. An Apostle of Christ's Redemption*], in *HD* 40 (1991) 36-39.

²⁶ AWPR, call number BŁ E 98, O. Bernard Łubieński do s. M. Amaty i s. M. Ireney Łubieńskich [Father Bernard Łubieński to Sr M. Amata Łubieńska and Sr M. Irena Łubieńska], Babica, 15 June 1883.

²⁷ ŁUBIEŃSKI, *O powrocie Kongregacji Najświętszego Odkupiciela*, 56-77.

²⁸ AWPR, call number BŁ E 98, O. Bernard Łubieński do s. M. Amaty i s. M. Ireney Łubieńskich [Father Bernard Łubieński to Sr M. Amata Łubieńska and Sr M. Irena Łubieńska], Mościska, 11 August 1883.

tributed money for this purpose²⁹. Łubieński wrote in one of his letters:

«Although it is severely cold outside, the church is warm and the harvest is great. The celebrations of St. Catherine and the Immaculate Conception with their octaves and then the feasts were for us constant holidays, so that we counted 10,000 Communions distributed from our tabernacle after our arrival»³⁰.

It was a visible sign of the devout pastoral ministry of the whole Redemptorist community, whose members in 1883 were: Fathers Antoni Jedek, Bernard Łubieński, Paweł Meissner (1852-1922), and Brothers Nepomucen Bilek and Waclaw Bilek³¹. Hardened by their difficult conditions, they lived their lives faithful to their religious rule, a fact which was noted in the pastoral visitation of the Provincial Father Hamerle in July 1884. As a result of the visitation it was decided to organise more material help and to enlarge the community³². This last promise became especially necessary when Father Bernard Łubieński «... fell seriously ill on 12 January 1885. After two months he was no longer in danger of death, but he was partially paralysed»³³. His condition became worse every year. In spite of several attempts at rehabilitation, with visits to Austrian and German spas, the «lame missionary», as he was called, carried out his service in a heroic way in the spirit and charism of the Congregation³⁴.

²⁹ *Litterae Annales de Rebus Gestis Provinciae Austriacae Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris*, 1884, 48.

³⁰ AWPR, call number BŁ E 98, O. Bernard Łubieński do s. M. Amaty i s. M. Ireny Łubieńskich [Father Bernard Łubieński to Sr M. Amata Łubieńska and Sr M. Irena Łubieńska], Mościska, 11 January 1884.

³¹ C. MADER, *Die Kongregation des Allerheiligsten Erlösers in Österreich*, Wien 1887, p. 14 passim.

³² The lack of resources to develop the foundation and «the oppressive poverty also played a positive and constructive role although it retarded the development of the centre. For it corrected the false understanding of the local people who were convinced that the new monks received rich supplies from Vienna». K. ZABAWA, *Początek i organizacja redemptorystów polskich (1787-1945)* [*The Origin and Organisation of the Polish Redemptorists, 1787-1945*], Lublin 1971, 105, (manuscript copy in AWPR).

³³ PIROŻYŃSKI, *O. Bernard Łubieński*, 31

³⁴ ŁUBIEŃSKI, *Wspomnienia*, 208-212.

3. – *The ministry of reconciliation in the divided country*

In spite of the serious financial problems and still too few Polish candidates to the Congregation, the young Redemptorist community developed in a dynamic way. Thanks to the efforts of Father Stanisław Stojalowski (1845-1911) the Redemptorists from Mościska conducted their first parish mission in Kulików in 1886³⁵. Their monastery also became a popular place for the diocesan clergy to come for closed retreats³⁶. But there were also difficulties and tensions within the community of five priests and three brothers. These led to openly-expressed suggestions perhaps to close the foundation in Mościska around the year 1888. The Austrian superiors were sceptical about the «Galician experiment», and the Poles were convinced that one could not expect anything good from the Czechs or the Austrians³⁷. It seems that the turning point was the year 1890 when Łubieński was ordered to go to Western Europe for medical treatment and convalescence. On that occasion he visited numerous convents of the Redemptoristine Nuns, and other residences of his fellow Redemptorists, promoting the Polish foundation everywhere³⁸.

In spite of uncertainty and initial problems of the young community the ministry of the Redemptorists eventually won great favour. Evidence of this was the proposal of Bishop Ignacy Łobos of Tarnów made at the beginning of 1890. He wanted them to take over the sanctuary of the Mother of God in Tuchów. On 18 April, 1890, the Provincial Father Andreas Hamerle

³⁵ E. NOCUN, *Misje parafialne redemptorystów polskich w latach 1886-1918* [*Parish Missions of the Polish Redemptorists in the Years 1886-1918*], Kraków 1998, 28-29.

³⁶ *Catalogus Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris*, 1887, 58, 121-165; 1895, 63-64; *Litterae Annales de Rebus Gestis Provinciae Austriacae Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris*, 1886, 34-35.

³⁷ SOJKA, *Dzieje redemptorystów polskich w latach 1883-1939*, 37.

³⁸ After having visited various Redemptorist communities he wrote to Father E. Janeček, «Perhaps I am wrong but it seems to me that my trip is not only pleasant and useful for me, but also a good thing for the others, i.e., fellow Redemptorists. Since if we in Mościska know very little about what is going on in other houses, they also know little about us». (AWPR, call number BŁ, E 91, O. Bernard Łubieński do o. Engelbert Janečka [Father Bernard Łubieński to Father Engelbera Janeček], Pucheim, 11 August 1890, p. 60).

answered Bishop Łobos that he was interested in the foundation, but he did not have enough Polish Redemptorists since all of them had been directed to Mościska. (In further confirmation of this statement of the Provincial, Teofil Pasur [1857-1931] was sent to Mościska in October 1891³⁹.)

The invitation to Tuchów was repeated two years later during the retreats for priests in Tarnów, preached by Father Bernard Łubieński. There he met Bishop Łobos, who made the proposal again. On 16 September, 1892, the shepherd of the diocese sent a request to the Provincial of Vienna asking him to present the matter of the proposed Tuchów foundation to the Superior General of the Redemptorists. The latter wrote on 19 December, 1892, to Bishop Łobos informing him about the acceptance of the proposal, and ordered Father Hamerle to fulfil his wish. While trying to acquire proper documents from the state authorities, the community inaugurated its activities on 30 April, 1893, and there was a solemn installation ceremony of the new superior of the centre, Father Antoni Jedek in the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Tuchów⁴⁰.

This foundation

«... was on the one hand valuable, but on the other hand, it was risky and involved much responsibility because of the uncertain status of the property rights. Giving more attention to the responsibility of this pilgrimage centre that was entrusted to them, the Redemptorists treated the place as their own and began the restoration and enlarging of the buildings at once»⁴¹.

The construction work was finished at the beginning of 1894. The next year they bought the necessary equipment and liturgical adornments. The church organs were restored, too. The

³⁹ Teofil Pasur (actually Pazur), born in 1857 in Roźniatów in Upper Silesia. He was ordained in 1886. He was a rector of the monastery in Tuchów, and in the years 1901-1909 he was a vice-provincial, and then provincial of the Polish Redemptorists from 1909 to 1918. He died in 1931 in Tuchów. *Litterae Annales de Rebus Gestis Provinciae Vindobonensis Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris*, 1900, 32-33; cfr BOLAND, 281.

⁴⁰ AWPR, call number. BŁ, E 103, O. Bernard Łubieński do bp. Ignacego Łobosa [Father Bernard Łubieński to Bishop Ignacy Łobos], Mościska, 30 March 1893.

⁴¹ AWPR, SZOŁDRSKI, *Redemptoryści w Polsce*, vol. 2, p. 3-5.

second stage of construction began in 1896. The monastery was connected with the church; a new sacristy and galleries were added and the square adjacent to the church was enlarged⁴². The culmination of the zealous work of the Redemptorists as custodians of the shrine, and the increasing devotion of the people, was the coronation of the miraculous picture of the Mother of God by Bishop Leon Wałęga of Tarnów (1859-1933) on 2 October, 1904⁴³.

Subsequent to the strengthening of the structures of the Polish Redemptorist community was a desire to create an autonomous Polish Vice-Province⁴⁴. The new Superior General of the Congregation, Father Mathias Raus (1829-1917), making an effort to meet this wish, established the Polish Redemptorist Vice-Province on 16 October, 1894. Then in 1901 he linked it with the Province of Prague. The new Vice-Province had two houses and only nine members. Its first superior, given the title of «Visitor», was Father Engelbert Janeček (1848-1908), and the headquarters was at the monastery in Mościska⁴⁵. A novitiate for those wishing to be professed Redemptorist brothers was created there in 1896 and three years later a novitiate for clerical seminarians was opened⁴⁶. In 1901 Father Teofil Pasur, showing organisational and administrative skills, was appointed the new Vice-Provincial. Among other things, he managed to bring outstanding seminary formators and lecturers from the Province of London: Fathers Léon Bégin (1878-1961) and Victor Waroux (1882-1955)⁴⁷. At the turn of the

⁴² L. GOLNIK, *Historia Kościoła i cudownego obrazu Najświętszej Maryi Panny w Tuchowie* [*The History of the Church and the Miraculous Picture of Our Lady in Tuchów*], Tuchów 1945, 11-13, (manuscript copies); cfr W. SZOŁDRSKI, *Historia kościoła i cudownego obrazu Najświętszej Panny w Tuchowie* [*The History of the Church and the Miraculous Picture of Our Lady in Tuchów*], Cieszyn 1920, 125; cfr A. BAZIELICH, *Pod opieką redemptorystów* [*Under the Redemptorists' Care*], in *Pani ziemi tarnowskiej. Sanktuarium Matki Bożej w Tuchowie 1597-1997* [*Our Lady of Tarnów. The Sanctuary of Our Lady in Tuchów 1597-1997*], ed. S. Piech, Kraków 1998, 108-110.

⁴³ SZOŁDRSKI, *Historia kościoła i cudownego obrazu*, 129.

⁴⁴ ZABAWA, *Początek i organizacja redemptorystów polskich*, 298.

⁴⁵ *Catalogus Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris*, 1895, 63-64.

⁴⁶ AWPR, without call number, *Dziennik Urzędowy Zarządu Prowincji Polskiej Redemptorystów 1895-1945* [*The Register of the Government of the Polish Redemptorist Province, 1895-1945*], p. 11-17.

⁴⁷ SZOŁDRSKI, *Redemptoryści w Polsce*, vol. 3, p. 116-123.

century many diocesan priests joined the Vice-Province, desiring to live according to the charism of St. Alphonsus. In most cases they had been influenced by the retreats and the example of the Servant of God Bernard Łubieński. These priests included: Władysław Bohosiewicz (1868-1942), the Vicar General of the Armenian cathedral in Lvov and confessor of the papal nuncio, Achille Ratti (later Pope Pius XI); Józef Erdman (1885-1939) from the Archdiocese of Gniezno; Władysław Szoldrski (1884-1971) and Karol Szrant (1886-1975) from the Diocese of Poznań; Edmund Górski (1875-1944) and Rafał Raczko (1868-1944) from the Diocese of Kielce; Jan Biłko (1877-1972) from the Diocese of Kraków; and Józef Palewski (1867-1944) and Aleksander Piotrowski (1881-1940) from the Diocese of Tarnów⁴⁸.

Despite the rapid increase in the number of the new Polish Redemptorists, more priests were still needed. Many a time Łubieński had to refuse invitations for parish missions throughout the diocese⁴⁹. Other bishops continuously encouraged the Redemptorists to take over new places, e.g., in Lvov, Żywiec, Wadowice, Maków Podhalański, Odporyszów, Wejherów, Wronki and Bronowice Wielkie near Kraków. However, the lack of priests and finances of the young Vice-Province meant a reluctant refusal of these requests⁵⁰.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 48-64, 155-168, 214-216, 407.

⁴⁹ Rogens of the chancellery of Lublin Consistory – Father Leon Kwiek wrote in the summer of 1906, «The thought to invite members of the religious congregations from Austrian Galicia to give missions in the churches of the Diocese of Lublin originated at the beginning of spring of 1906. His Excellency, through third parties, asked Fatherr Bernard Łubieński, a Redemptorist, who, accompanied by his fellow Redemptorists, preached missions in various places of the Kingdom of Poland, whether he could come with the same purpose to the Diocese of Lublin. Father Łubieński answered that at that time he could not undertake this task since he had received so many proposals from various places and he had accepted so many requests together with his companions that his schedule was already full for the year». (The Archdiocesan Archives in Lublin, call number Rep. 60.XVIII.12, c. 1: Note of the Rogens of the chancellery of Lublin Consistory – Father Leon Kwiek, Lublin 14.07.1906; cfr M. SADOWSKI, *Redemptoryści polscy w latach 1939-1945 [Polish Redemptorists in the Years 1939-1945]*, Kraków 2005, 29.

⁵⁰ SOJKA, *Dzieje redemptorystów polskich w latach 1883-1939*, 40-41.

After having received several invitations from Cardinal Jan Puzyna to create a Redemptorist foundation in the Diocese of Kraków, the Redemptorist superiors decided to build a church and monastery in Podgórze, which was then a separate town, divided from the royal city of Kraków by the Vistula River⁵¹. The choice of this place was basically the work of the Servant of God Bernard Łubieński, who was supported by both Bishop J. Puzyna and Anatol Nowak (1862-1933), the cathedral canon. Nowak later became an auxiliary bishop of Kraków.

Łubieński described the challenges he himself faced, and which later his fellow Redemptorists also faced, when founding the centre in Podgórze:

«Being joined to Kraków by two bridges causes a big influx of workers, craftsmen and apprentices of all kinds because the cost of living here is not as expensive. Therefore, the moral level of the town suffers. Socialism has spread. The Kraków pickpockets have their hovels here ... It is true that over the river we have Kraków with its magnificent churches and monasteries, but in Podgórze itself, except for a little house of the Felician Sisters, which has no chapel to celebrate Mass, there is no monastery»⁵².

After the monastery was built in Podgórze, Father General Raus moved the new headquarters of the Vice-Provincial there on 17 July, 1903. During the celebrations, the picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was placed in the chapel adjacent to the monastery and soon the picture began drawing a large number of the faithful. In the same year the construction of a new church began in the so-called Vistula neo-Gothic style. It was designed by Jan Marcelli Sas Zubrzycki, Professor of the Lvov Technical University. The well-known artist, Redemptorist Brother Maximilian Schmalzl (1850-1930), was the one who designed and

⁵¹ SZOŁDRSKI, *Redemptoryści w Polsce*, vol. 2, p. 121.

⁵² Archives of the Monastery of the Redemptorists in Kraków (AKRK), K-I, *Kronika domu Zgromadzenia Najśw[iętszego] Odkupiciela pod wezwaniem Matki B[oskiej] Nieust[ającej] Pomocy w Krakowie na Podgórzu* [*The Chronicle of the House of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, belonging to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in Kraków-Podgórze*], vol. 1, 1900-1913, p. 6-7.

executed most of the interior artwork of the church⁵³. Thanks to its rapid completion, the new church was consecrated on 8 September, 1906, by Bishop Anatol Nowak⁵⁴.

At the same time, through the generosity of Archbishop Józef Bilczewski (1860-1923), the Polish Redemptorists bought a plot in Maksymówka in Trans-Carpathia. It was there that they chose to put up a new building for their seminary that had been founded only three years earlier⁵⁵. In 1905, thanks to the decree of tolerance, the Redemptorists could make a successful attempt to settle in the territory under the Russian partition. Archbishop Wincenty Teofil Popiel (1825-1912) extended an official invitation to come to Warsaw. The reliable and dedicated friend Count Roger Łubieński acquired from the partitioner authorities suitable permissions for Fathers Bernard Łubieński and Józef Stach (1864-1949). The missions and retreats which they gave in the autumn of 1905 in Warsaw, drew large crowds and, consequently, in February 1906 Monsignor Jan Siemiec (1846-1919) began efforts that resulted in bringing five Redemptorists to the capital. At first, the community was hosted by the Grey Sisters

⁵³ Representatives of many environments financed the construction. These included Father Adolf Żółtowski, who became a Redemptorist and who offered 35,000 crowns from his family estate. The sale of 25,000 pictures of the Mother of Perpetual Help, printed in Prague and distributed in all sections of the country, contributed considerably to the fund. Donations also came from Cardinal J. Puzyna, Archbishop F. Stablewski, Archbishop W. Popiel, Bishop A. Nowak, and likewise from priests and congregations of women religious (Felicians, Ursulines, and Norbertines). Other donors represented aristocratic families, including Countess A. Branicka, Countess Potulicka, Countess Szwejkowska, Countess Potocka, Princess Ogińska, Princess Sanguszko, Count T. Żółtowski, Count R. Łubieński, Count S. Łubieński, and Count T. Dzieduszycki. But there were also Kraków residents, and many humble anonymous donors. One Mass a week was celebrated for their intentions. AKRK, *Liber benefactorum ecclesiae et domus Podgorzensis* [1903-1961], p. 3-22.

⁵⁴ AKRK, *Kronika ... klasztoru w Krakowie*, vol. 1, p. 10-27, 54, 63; cfr L. PIECHNIK, *Zakony w Archidiecezji Krakowskiej za rządów Adama Stefana Sapiehy* [The Orders in the Archdiocese of Kraków during the Time of Adam Stefan Sapieha], in *Księga Sapieżyńska* [The Sapieżyńska Book], ed. J. Wolny, vol. 1, Kraków 1982, 356.

⁵⁵ J. WOJNOWSKI, *Redemptoryści na ziemiach polskich*, in HD 28 (1959) 822; cfr M. JURUŚ, *Klasztor redemptorystów w Maksymówce* [The Redemptorist Monastery in Maksymówka], Kraków 2000, 13 passim.

but on 25 September 1906, they moved to a temporary monastery, the so-called hospice, established in the presbytery of the Church of the Most Holy Redeemer, which was under construction. Almost 100 years after the expulsion of St. Clement the Redemptorists could now again minister to the people of Warsaw⁵⁶. Efforts to obtain permission from the General-Governor of Warsaw Gieorgij A. Skałon (1847-1914) were successful: on 25 May, 1907, the local authorities issued their consent for a three-year stay of the Redemptorists within the territory of the Russian Empire⁵⁷.

Moreover, using the three-year permission to stay in Russia issued by the tsarist authorities, in the years 1908-1909 several teams, each of which had three missionaries, gave a series of evangelisation retreats to Poles living under the Russian partition and to Polish immigrants living in the vast territories of distant Siberia, from Omsk to Vladivostok, and in the Caucasus, from Grozny to Baku⁵⁸. Father Łubieński wrote, «[Władysław] Bohosiewicz, together with two other fathers, travelled throughout Siberia, giving missions in ten main places, as far as Vladivostok»⁵⁹. The fruit of this unprecedented missionary «Trans-Siberian tour» was that numerous Catholics returned to the practice of the faith, including Poles, Lithuanians and Germans. Some of them received the sacraments for the first time in their lives. Others began identifying themselves with Catholicism again while hearing the missions, whereas those who participated in the missions in Tschelabinsk bade farewell to the missionaries, saying that it would be easier for them to bear the hardships of life because they had experienced that God existed and cared for them even if they were so far from their homeland⁶⁰.

⁵⁶ *Catalogus Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris*, 1905, 151-153; 1908, 163.

⁵⁷ SZOŁDRSKI, *Redemptoryści w Polsce*, vol. 2, p. 4-5.

⁵⁸ E. NOCUŃ, *Volksmissionen der polnischen Redemptoristen in Sibirien im Jahr 1908*, in *SHCSR* 56 (2008) 161-178.

⁵⁹ AWPR, call number BŁ, E 104, O. Bernard Łubieński do s. Marii Weroniki od Przenajświętszego Oblicza [Father Bernard Łubieński to Sister Maria Weronika of the Most Blessed Face], Warsaw, 5 February 1909, p. 52.

⁶⁰ NOCUŃ, *Volksmissionen der polnischen Redemptoristen*, 175-178.

4. – *Crescat et mutiplicet Provincia Polonica!*

At the same time there was a real possibility to make the Polish Redemptorists entirely independent, creating their own unit as a province. In the spring of 1909, Father Teofil Pasur took part in the Roman General Chapter that elected a new superior general of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, the Irish Father Patrick Murray⁶¹. The end of the chapter fell on the celebration of the canonisation of Clement Hofbauer by Pope Pius X, 20 May, 1909. It was an excellent opportunity for the Vice-Provincial Pasur to take the initiative toward having a Polish province⁶². The Roman superiors were greatly impressed by the news about the proposal for Father Bernard Łubieński to accept the Archbishopric of Mohylew. However, he did not want to assume this dignity because of his disability⁶³. On 12 October, 1909, Teofil Pasur was again appointed to be the Vice-Provincial. Four days later he welcomed the representatives of the General Government in the persons of the new Superior General Murray and his consultor, the future Cardinal Willem M. Van Rossum (1854-1932). From Vienna they had come to Kraków to visit their Polish colleagues after the thanksgiving celebrations for St. Clement's canonisation. But they also wanted to look into the possibility of creating an independent Polish province⁶⁴.

After seeing first hand the dynamic and versatile development of the young community, the General Government approved the establishment of the Polish Province of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

At the beginning of December 1909, the Provincial of Prague, Father Jan Hudeček (1870-1957), hurried to convey the news that «soon the Polish Province will be established, and that by telegraph the Most Reverend Father Visitor [Father Teofil Pasur]

⁶¹ *Litterae Annales de Rebus Gestis Provinciae Pragensis Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris*, 1908, 75-77; *Catalogus Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris*, 1908, 163-260.

⁶² R. CULLANE, *Most Rev. Father Patrick Murray (1865-1959), Superior General CSsR (1909-1947). Biographical outline over the years 1865-1909*, in *SHCSR* 9 (1961) 21-79.

⁶³ SOJKA, *Dzieje redemptorystów polskich w latach 1883-1939*, 45.

⁶⁴ AKRK, *Kronika ... klasztoru w Krakowie*, vol. 1, p. 198.

will be informed of the decree»⁶⁵. Father Bernard Łubieński, the contemporary chronicler of the Kraków community, depicted those moments, full of tension, expectations and joy, noting on 7 December:

«We were confessing until nine; now we are going to have supper. The news has arrived. ... There is a telegram. Is it from Rome? We cannot believe it. The Most Reverend Father Visitor holds it up, puts it in the hand of [Father Łubieński]. Here it is! Vivat! Long live, crescat et mutiplicet Provincia Polonica!».

The message, sent from the Eternal City at 7:15 P.M. and signed by Superior General Murray and Father Jan Hudeček, contained only one line, which was so much expected, «*Provincia Polonica erecta. Gratulamur. Mox sequetur decretum. Vivat! Floreat!!*»⁶⁶ The decree was dated 8 December, 1909.

The official name of the new unit of the Congregation was very meaningful since it referred to the Polish nation, which had not had its own State for over a century. The Superior General could have connected the name of the province with the headquarters of the provincial, or to the commonly used term for the lands under the Austrian partition, i.e., Galicia. It seems that the Irish background of Father General Murray, who did not hide his solidarity with the Polish people, afflicted by the tragedy of the partitions and foreign dependence, influenced his decision⁶⁷. On the occasion of the creation of the Polish Province the Provincials from Prague and Vienna congratulated the new Provincial. The superior of the Austrian Redemptorists, Father Francis Weimann, stressed the brotherly relationships between the neighbouring units, defining the Polish Province as «daughter» of the Province of Vienna. He called the Province of Prague «wetnurse» of the Polish fellow Redemptorists, expressing his wish that the good relationships would be maintained in the future⁶⁸.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 232.

⁶⁶ Latin: *Polish Province was created. Congratulations. The decree will follow soon.* *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 232.

⁶⁷ P. MURRAY, *Litterae circulares*, vol. 1, Romae 1947, n° 9; cfr M. BRUDZISZ, *Redemptoryści polscy w służbie Kościoła w ostatnim stuleciu 1883-1983* [*The Polish Redemptorists in the Service to the Church in the Last Century 1883-1983*], in *HD* 52 (1983) 168.

⁶⁸ AKRK, *Kronika ... klasztoru w Krakowie*, vol. 1, p. 235.

As promised, the Superior General sent the decree of foundation and the official appointment of Father Teofil Pasur as the first provincial. Father Łubieński noted the spontaneous reactions of all the Polish Redemptorists to the decision, «The choice was good, the choice was excellent because there is no one else who is a better father, a better host, a better superior than he»⁶⁹. The rules and constitutions of the Congregation defined precisely the structure of the Polish Redemptorist Province at the moment of its creation. Each provincial was appointed for a three-year term by the Superior General. Additionally, the General Government appointed a council, consisting of two Consultors, one for the office of Secretary to the provincial and the other as his Admonitor, i.e., official guard of faithfulness in preserving the rules and constitutions by the provincial⁷⁰. The first Consultor Secretary was Father Józef Palewski, whereas the Consultor Admonitor was Father Józef Stach⁷¹.

When the Polish Province was created it had seventy-seven members⁷². The priests and brothers lived and ministered in five communities (Mościska, Tuchów, Podgórze near Kraków, Maksymówka and the hospice in Warsaw). The Redemptorists made themselves known as great advocates of devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Their charismatic ministry in the Polish Church made them increasingly recognisable and appreciated in various social and ecclesiastical circles. A visible sign of this recognition was the fact that this relatively small group of missionaries carried out an imposing number of 1,504 retreats and missions over the years 1885-1909⁷³.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 234.

⁷⁰ «*Electio Superioris Provincialis ejusque Consultorum spectat ad Rectorem Majorem ejusque Consultores generales. Quilibet Superior Provincialis [...] duos Consultores habeat, quorum primus sit ejus Admonitor, alter Secretarius. Munus Provincialis ejusque Consultorum ad treimum perduret*». *Constitutiones et Regulae Congregationis Sacerdotum sub titulo Sanctissimi Redemptoris, Romae 1895*, n° 832-833.

⁷¹ AKRK, *Kronika ... klasztoru w Krakowie*, vol. 1, p. 238-239.

⁷² Twenty-seven priests, thirty professed brothers and ten professed seminarians. Moreover, in a preparatory seminary there were twenty junior seminarians (hopefully good candidates for religious life).

⁷³ This imposing number included 578 parish missions, 186 renewed

Conclusion

In the past century the contribution which the Polish Redemptorists have made to the Polish Church and the Polish nation looms large on the pages of history. Their charism has been the proclamation of Jesus Christ and His message of abundant Redemption. They have persevered in this calling even amid the tragic conditions of war, and during the Communist slavery as well. They have been with the people in the success of regained independence. They have remained faithful to the motto of St. Clement Hofbauer to proclaim the constant truths of the Christian Gospel anew in a dynamically changing world.

In this context the words of Father Karol Sobek (1873-1922), written in the chronicle of the Redemptorist community in Podgórze near Kraków at the beginning of 1910 still ring valid, «The Polish Province stands on its own legs; it must grow, develop, become powerful in every way for the glory of God and salvation of souls and the common good. May Almighty God, the Most Holy Mother and St. Clement keep it under their care!»⁷⁴

SUMMARY

This year the Polish Redemptorists celebrate a double jubilee: the 100th anniversary of the canonization of St. Clement Hofbauer, and the 100th anniversary of the foundation of their province of Warsaw. The Redemptorist presence in Poland goes back to 1787 when Clement founded the first residence of the Congregation beyond the Alps, namely, in Warsaw. In 1883 the Redemptorists were able to return to Poland thanks to the efforts of the Servant of God, Father Bernard Lubiński. The location of the new foundation was dictated by political reasons (under the Austrian partition of Polish lands in so-called Galicia);

missions, 334 closed retreats and 339 parish retreats and triduums. *Litterae annales de rebus gestis Provinciae Polonicae Congregationis SS. Redemptoris. Anno salutis, 1910, Cracoviae 1912, 48.*

⁷⁴ AKRK, *Kronika ... klasztoru w Krakowie*, vol. 1, p. 238.

this foundation was in the town of Mościska, and in a former Dominican monastery. Later, in October 1894, the Superior General Father Matthias Raus established the Polish Vice-Province with only two houses and a total of nine men. Dynamic growth brought about an independent province on 8 December, 1909, the first provincial being Father Teofil Pasur. The province began with seventy-seven members in five communities (Mościska, Tuchów, Podgórze, Maksymówka, and the hospice in Warsaw). The recognition of their charismatic ministry brought calls for many parish missions and retreats; and, of course, they were known for promoting devotion to Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

RESUMEN

Este año los redentoristas polacos celebran un jubileo doble: cien años de la canonización de San Clemente Hofbauer y cien años de la fundación de la provincia de Varsovia. La presencia de los redentoristas en Polonia se remonta a 1787, cuando Clemente fundó la primera residencia de la Congregación más allá de los Alpes, precisamente en Varsovia. En 1833 los redentoristas lograron volver a Polonia gracias al empeño del Siervo di Dios p. Bernardo Łubieński. El lugar de la nueva fundación fue debido a razones políticas (en la parte de Polonia bajo dominio austriaco llamada Galicia). Esta fundación se hizo en Mościska en un antiguo convento dominico. Más tarde, en octubre de 1894, el superior general p. Matías Raus erigió la Viceprovincia polaca, que tenía entonces sólo dos casas y nueve miembros. Su rápido desarrollo permitió la erección de una provincia independiente el 8 de diciembre de 1909, siendo su primer provincial el p. Teófilo Pasar. La provincia polaca comenzaba con 77 miembros en cinco comunidades (Mościska, Tuchów, Podgórze, Maksymówka y el hospicio de Varsovia). Por la estima de su apostolado carismático, los redentoristas polacos recibieron numerosísimas peticiones de misiones parroquiales y retiros, siendo por supuesto conocidos por promover la devoción a Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro.