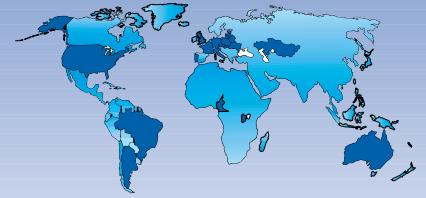




MIC INFORMATION



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WORD FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Confreres,

Before we all receive a set of materials from the symposium on "The Divine Mercy in the Marian Charism," which took place in Licheń in May of 2003, *MIC Information* will give you the conference by Fr. Prof. Celestyn Napiórkowski, OFMConv. entitled "Immaculately Conceived as a work of Divine Mercy." This conference's text has not been given in its written form to the conference participants. Many confreres who did not take part in this symposium expressed interest in this conference thanks to a lively discussion that arose because of this conference among the Marians both during the symposium and afterwards. And although the written text does not contain spontaneous additional remarks made by Fr. Professor (which were the most controversial), I trust, that it will encourage a discussion on the pages of this newsletter about the symposium and the way of understanding and experiencing the Marian charism of present day.

Today we are publishing with pleasure the first part of the interview that was given to *MIC Information* by Fr. Andrzej Szostek, M.I.C. The second part will appear in the next issue. The reading of both parts will give us the opportunity of getting to know better our confrere who enjoys general recognition and respect. It also makes it possible to take a look at a "piece" of the Polish Province's history as well as at some aspects of Marian life through the eyes of someone who is a true Marian and religious order priest, being at the same time an expert philosopher and theologian, Rector of the CUL, and member of the Pontifical Academy of Life. On this occasion, I would like to thank Fr. Paweł Naumowicz, M.I.C., who took the work of conducting interviews for *MIC Information* upon himself. I believe this form of presentation will make our Bulletin more appealing.

News from the Postulator General brings forth our gratitude to God and encourages our fervent prayers for Father Founder's beatification to come to pass as soon as possible. A great hope gives us the beginning of a long-awaited process for recognition of a miracle granted through his intercession. Graces received through the intercession of our Servants of God do not always comply with the requirements for a miracle in the medical sense of the word, however, they always represent a sign of God's grace that can be given to both the living and deceased. This is the case of little Irena Wołyniec who returned to health through the intercession of Blessed George. We want to believe that it is going to be different in the case of Maksym Hotejev's healing, of which we are glad to inform our Confreres.

We give this issue of *MIC Information* for copying on a day, which is very important for many of us because of the vows made on this day. Some of us are celebrating milestone jubilees on this day. It is a good occasion to give our jubilarians of this year our congratulations and best wishes of joy, the source of which is our Lord and Master – Jesus Christ.

Fr. Jan M. Rokosz, M.I.C.

**MUTATIONES
IN CONSTITUTIONIBUS ET DIRECTORIUM
A REGIMINE GENERALI VI DECRETI N. 9 A CAPITULO GENERALI
ANNO 1999 FACTI APPROBATAE**

Lp.	C/D	EST	DEBET ESSE
1	C 126	eiusque influxum semper	Eumque influxum semper
2	C 126	GE Proem. ; 3; 4	GE Prooem. ; 3; 4
3	C 226	eorum consiliariorium	Eorum membrorum consilii
4	C 227	Cf. CR 524; 525	Cf. CR 524; 525; c. 127
5	C 236	In electionibus id vim iuris habet, excepta electione Superioris generalis et provincialis , quod placuerit parti absolute magiori, nempe tantae, quae dimidium superat eorum qui suffragia ferunt; aut, post duo inefficacia scrutinia, parti comparate maiori in terzio scrutinio...	In electionibus id vim iuris habet, quod placuerit parti absolute magiori, nempe tantae, quae dimidium superat eorum qui suffragia ferunt; aut, excepta electione Superioris generalis et provincialis , post duo inefficacia scrutinia, parti comparate maiori in terzio scrutinio.
6	C254	Capitulum locale ex omnibus sodalibus professis cuiusvis domus constat. Convocatum est [...] ad delegatos pro capitulo provinciali eligendos.	Capitulum locale ex omnibus sodalibus professis cuiusvis domus constat. Convocatum est [...] ad delegatos pro capitulo provinciali eligendos; quae electio peragenda est a solis sodalibus votorum perpetuorum.
7	C 255	Tribus annis post capitulum generale elapsis, [...] convocetur [...] coventus generalis...	Tribus annis post capitulum generale ordinarium elapsis, [...] convocetur [...] coventus generalis...
8	C 263	Electio Superioris provincialis indiget confirmatione Superioris generalis.	Electio Superioris provincialis eiusquae Vicarii indiget confirmatione Superioris generalis.
9	D 48	Pro postulante et viro aggregato . Pro defuncto postulante aut viro aggregato ...	Pro postulante et cooperatore interno . Pro defuncto postulante aut cooperatore interno ...
10	D 85	Cooperatores associati et aggregati .	Cooperatores externi et interni .
11	D 85	a) Congregatio curet homines sibi deditos strictius cum se in Associatione Cooperatorum Marianorum coniungere, ut eorum auxilio in laboribus apostolicis utatur et cum eis sua bona spiritualia dividat. Associatio regitur propriis statutibus a superiore generale con consensu sui consilli approbatis. Accomodatio statutorum ad exigentias locales spectat ad superiores maiores .	a) Congregatio curet homines sibi deditos strictius cum se in Associatione Cooperatorum Marianorum coniungere, ut eorum auxilio in laboribus apostolicis utatur et cum eis sua bona spiritualia dividat. Associatio regitur propriis statutibus a Superiore generali con consensu sui consilli approbatis. Accomodatio statutorum ad exigentias locales spectat ad respectivos Superiores maiores .
12	D 85	b) Superiores maiores possunt aliquibus cooperatoribus viris, qui promissiones emittunt, permittere ut in domo religiosa habitant necnon ut in vita communi et in piis exercitiis aliquam participationem habeant, eorum iuribus et obligationibus primum definitis . (C 127)	b) Superiores maiores possunt aliquibus cooperatoribus viris, qui opportunas promissiones secundum iura et obligationes pro eis antea definitas emittunt, permittere ut in domo religiosa habitant necnon ut hi cooperatores interni in vita communi et in piis exercitiis huius domus aliquam participationem habeant.
13	D 93	habere nequat,	(C 134)
14	D 48	ut maior pars consiliarium intersit,	habere nequeat,
15	D 96		ut maior pars membrorum consilii intersit,

CHANGES IN THE TEXT
OF THE CONSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTORY APPROVED BY THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT
UPON THE POWER OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER'S DECREE NO. 9 OF 1999

Lp.	C/D	IS	SHOULD BE
1	C 126	an ever mounting influence	an ever mounting influence
2	C126	Proem 3, 4	Pref.; 3; 4
3	C 226	these Councilors	these Council members
4	C 227	CR 524, 525	CR 524; 525; CIC. 127
5	C 236	With the exception of an election for Superior General and Provincial Superior , in elections that have the force of law which receive the approval of an absolute majority, i.e., ...votes; or after two indecisive ballots, which receive the approval of a relative majority in the third ballot.	In elections that have the force of law which receive the approval of an absolute majority, i.e., ...votes; or, with the exception of an election for Superior General and Provincial Superior , after two indecisive ballots, which receive the approval of a relative majority in the third ballot.
6	C254	The local Chapter consists of all the professed members of each House. It must be convoked ... also to elect delegates to the Provincial Chapter.	The local Chapter consists of all the professed members of each House. It must be convoked ... also to elect delegates to the Provincial Chapter; in this election only members in perpetual vows have the right to vote.
7	C 255	Three years after the conclusion of a General Chapter, the Superior General ... should convoke a General Convention...	Three years after the conclusion of an Ordinary General Chapter, the Superior General ... should convoke a General Convention...
8	C 263	The election of the Provincial Superior requires the confirmation of the Superior General.	The election of the Provincial Superior and of his Vicar requires the confirmation of the Superior General.
9	D 48	For a Postulant and Vir Aggregatus Five Masses must be said for the soul of a deceased (...) vir aggregatus in the House ...	For a Postulant and Internal Co-worker Five Masses must be said for the soul of a deceased (...) internal co-worker in the House..
10	D 85	Associated and Aggregate Co-Workers	External and Internal Co-Workers.
11	D 85	a) The Congregation should take care that the people dedicated to it be joined more closely with it in an Association of Marian Helpers that it may take advantage of their help in apostolic works and share with them its spiritual goods. The Association is governed according to the proper statutes approved by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. It is the responsibility of the Major Superiors to apply these statutes to local needs.	a) The Congregation should take care that the people dedicated to it be joined more closely with it in the Association of Marian Helpers that it may take advantage of their help in apostolic works and share with them its spiritual goods. The Association is governed according to the proper statutes approved by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. It is the responsibility of the respective Major Superiors to apply these statutes to local needs.
12	D 85	b) Major Superiors may permit some male associates , who make certain promises, to live in a Religious House and to grant to these aggregated men some participation in common life and in pious exercises having defined first their rights and obligations.	b) Major Superiors may permit some male co-workers , who make opportune promises according to the rights and obligations beforehand defined for them , to live in a Religious House and to grant to these internal co-workers some participation in the common life and in the pious exercises of this House.
13	D 93	(C 127)	(C 134)
14	D 48	... cannot have institutes cannot have institutes ...
15	D 96	a majority of the Councilors be present, ...	a majority of the members of the Council be present, ...

CANONIZATION MATTERS**COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE POSTULATOR GENERAL****Graces received through intercession of our Father Renovator**

After prolonged consultations with doctors from Poland and the U.S., it has finally been decided that the case of Irena Wołyniec of Puńsk (Poland), who returned to health in 1996, after being infected with type B virus of jaundice, cannot be pronounced inexplicable from a medical point of view. In the Spring of 2003, I passed all the medical documents over to Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, M.I.C., of the U.S.A. This year, in the beginning of July, two doctors specializing in liver diseases pronounced in agreement that they did not find anything that cannot be scientifically explained. This is another case of a grace obtained through the intercession of Blessed George Matulewicz, which, however, does not fulfill the requirements of a miracle needed for Father Renovator's canonization.

The termination of our efforts in this matter coincided with hopeful news from Sr. Janina Samolewicz, Vice-Postulator of Fr. Matulewicz's process. During her stay in Riga, Latvia, she met with the Hotejev family. In 2000, their son, Maksym, completely recovered in a miraculous way. The boy was born on December 20, 1999. Shortly after he was submitted for medical examination because of dangerous attacks of suffocation and turning blue. Test results from January, February, April, and May of 2000, showed an opening 3 mm large in the partition dividing the right and left heart chambers. The opening was located across the aorta, in the spot where arterial blood pressure is at its highest. As a result of contractions pumping blood flowing from the lungs to the aorta, part of this blood was regularly pumped through the opening into the first chamber, thus causing changes both in the heart and in lungs. Doctors suggested a surgical procedure. When informed in May of 2000, Sr. Jadwiga Kukian of the Congregation of Sisters Handmaids of Jesus in the Eucharist, a relative of the Hotejevs, began to pray daily for the intention of Maksym's health through the intercession of Blessed George. Test results from November 27-29, 2000, obtained before the scheduled surgery, showed that boy's heart and lungs were normal. His parents stated that a control test completed upon doctors' orders one year later proved that their child did not have any cardiac defect: there was neither an opening in the partition, nor concretions at the aorta. The child's lungs were also clear. In the opinion of a cardiologist, with whom Sr. J. Samolewicz and Fr. Rinalds Stankēvičš, M.I.C., the Vice-Postulator, met, this case should be recognized as a medically inexplicable occurrence, if the ECG tests support previously obtained results. Further matters related to Maksym Hotejev's convalescence will be under Fr. R. Stankēvičš, the Vice-Postulator in Latvia, and Sr. J. Samolewicz's supervision.

Opening of the beatification process of victims of the Soviet regime

On May 31, 2003, in the Major Seminary of Mary, Queen of the Apostles, in St. Petersburg, Russia, H. E. Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz, the Metropolitan of Moscow, officially opened the beatification process of Martyrs slaughtered by the Communists authorities of the Soviet Union. Fr. Rinalds Stankēvičš, M.I.C., the Vice-Postulator, participated in this event. Among 16 candidates to the altars there are three of our confreres: Archimandrite Fabian Abrantowicz, Archimandrite Andrzej Cikoto, and Fr. Janis Mendriks. The prelate Bronisław Czaplicki serves as the Postulator of the beatification process for the Martyrs of the Soviet regime. Two Vice-Postulators from our Congregation: Fr. Viachaslau Pialinak, M.I.C. (for the process of Frs. Abrantowicz and Cikoto), and Fr. Rinalds Stankēvičš, M.I.C. (for Fr. Janis Mendriks's cause) work with him.

Marian Martyrs – candidates for the altars

Besides the above-mentioned three Fathers: Archimandrite Fabian Abrantowicz, Archimandrite Andrzej Cikoto, and Fr. Janis Mendriks, presented earlier for the beatification process of the victims of the Soviet system in former USSR, we petitioned for including in this process two more Marians: Fr. Eugeniusz Kulesza (†1941) and Fr. Benedikts Skrinda (†1947). Since the day of their demise, those confreres enjoy an interrupted glory of martyrdom, and not only among the Marians. On August 12, 2003, Father General Mark Garrow, M.I.C., sent an official petition in this matter to Fr. Bronisław Czaplicki, the beatification process Postulator. Now we must await his decision. We will publish detailed biographies of the new candidates for the altars in *MIC Information*, starting with the next issue.

Opening of the process of recognizing a miracle granted through the intercession of Fr. Stanislaus Papczyński

On September 8, 2003, Bishop Jerzy Mazur, SVD, the Ordinary of Ełk, in the cathedral of Ełk, initiated proceedings of the Tribunal called to examine the case of returning to life in Mrs. Urszula Markowska's womb of an eight-week old fetus (*see the story in MIC Information No. 36, p. 2 and No. 38, pp. 5-6.*) Members of the Tribunal are: Fr. Roman Szewczyk, Bishop's delegate; Fr. Gabriel Bartoszewski, OFMCap., Promoter of the Justice; Fr. Adam Łosiewski, and Fr. Dariusz Mażewski, M.I.C., notaries. According to the new Church law of 1983, initiation of each new process of canonization causes is a prerogative of the Ordinary of the local Church, on which territory a Servant of God either died or was slaughtered (in case of martyrs), or where an alleged miracle was obtained through the intercession of a Servant of God or a Blessed. After completing the process on the diocesan level (when it is presided by the Ordinary himself or his delegate), copies of acts are studied by the Congregation for the Saints. The final verdict belongs to the Holy Father who also signs a decree either of heroic virtues or martyrdom, as well as a decree confirming a miracle through the intercession of a Servant of God or a Blessed. The process in Ełk for recognizing a miracle through the intercession of Fr. Stanislaus Papczyński will probably last for about three months. We will inform you of its progress.

Fr. Wojciech Skóra, M.I.C.
Postulator General

MARIANS AROUND THE WORLD



ROME (GENERAL HOUSE AND GOVERNMENT)

New students of the International Marian College

Fr. Emil Gallo, M.I.C. from Slovakia, and Fr. Paweł Naumowicz, M.I.C. from Poland, are new students who will begin their special studies at the Pontifical Universities in Rome this academic year of 2003/2004. Fr. Paweł Naumowicz is our General Prefect of Formation. The new students wrote about themselves:

Fr. Emil Gallo, M.I.C.: I come from the Slovakian town of Pruské, from a traditionally faithful Catholic family. I just turned 34. After graduating from a trade school and passing my high school exams (1987), I worked for seven years as a laborer at a Heavy Machinery Plant in the town of Dubnica-on-Váh (Slovakia). Also, I completed my military service. My adventure with God began in the same time. I was fascinated by God's ingress into the modern world through Mary's intercession, particularly through her apparitions in Lourdes and the miraculous healing of a faithful doctor from Nagasaki. Since that time my acquaintance with Mary began. She brought me to the Marians whom I first met in 1993, when they were serving in Slovakia. I especially liked the Marian aspect of the Congregation's charism.

I began my novitiate in 1994, and in 1998, I professed my perpetual vows in the town of Kláštor-on-Zniev (Slovakia). In 2002, I defended my Master thesis at the Catholic University of Lublin (Poland); my

these topic was “The Theological Image of Mary in Traditional Slovakian Songs”. I was ordained a priest the same year in my native parish of Pruské. Shortly afterwards I started my ministry as a confessor at the Marian Shrine in Licheń Stary (Poland), where I was also learning about work at the Licheń Marian Center for Family and Addicts as well as the Marian Formation Center. In order to enlarge my education in the field of Mariology, Father Provincial sent me in June of 2003 to the Pontifical Theological Faculty *Marianum* in Rome for licentiate studies. My desire is for Marians to take root in Slovakia.

Father Paweł Naumowicz, M.I.C.: Since my childhood I had a recurring thought of a vocation for the priestly and religious way of life. I wanted to lead such a life, but I also was afraid of it. I did not think that I was either good enough or fit for it. Observing the Marians in Elbląg in their everyday tasks, I discovered that I wanted to live and work like they did. However, upon graduating from high school, I did not have a certainty in regards to things that the Lord expected from me. But after four years of studying electronics, I did not have doubts anymore. Hence, I entered the Congregation of Marians.

I did my novitiate in Skórzec and then six years of studies in Lublin – and the Lord guided me by the way of His love and grace. In August of 1994, I made my perpetual vows, and three years later I was ordained a priest. For two years I served in Licheń as a Vocations Director and then for four years – as a Prefect in our seminary in Lublin. My contact with young people did not allow me to “grow old”, and their zeal in faith mobilized me to seek God intensively.

By working with young generations of religious order members, as well as staying in touch with older ones, I was able to notice how much we all needed help and guidance on our religious road of life so that we would not go astray but persevere in our vocation with fresh and strong faith. In many cases (both concerning our Congregation and members of other communities), I felt powerless and without ample special training. I was missing the know-how for assisting and guiding people who turned to me for help or who were entrusted to my care by my superiors. Thus I conceived an idea of pursuing special studies: first, to get a “better hold on God” for myself and to entrust myself more fully to Him; and then, to better help others who are in need of this help and ask for it. I addressed the Provincial Superior with a request to allow me to undertake studies on theology of spirituality at the Gregorian University. The permission was granted, and I came to the Eternal City.

General Visitation in Belarus

The General Visitation in Belarus, which was conducted by Father General along with Fr. Sergiusz Gajek, M.I.C., began in Rosica, with the solemnity of the commemoration of our Blessed Martyrs George and Anthony, as well as the celebration of the 80th anniversary of installation of a Marian religious house in Druja (August 15th). It ended in Borisov on August 29th, where the Marians are preparing for construction of a church and a future Provincial House. The Visitors met with Bishop Władysław Blin, the Ordinary of the Vicebsk Diocese, with the 1st Secretary of the Apostolic Nuncio (the Nuncio was not present), and with the Minister for Religion.

Presently 12 Marians serve in Belarus. They reside in 3 religious houses. Two seminarians prepare for their perpetual vows in Lublin.

Fr. Franciszek Smagorowicz, M.I.C.’s Silver Jubilee of Priesthood

On August 15, 2003, the General House community celebrated the 25th anniversary of priesthood of Fr. Franciszek Smagorowicz, M.I.C. – a General Councilor, Secretary, Archivist, and Procurator General. During the festive dinner Fr. Jan M. Rokosz, speaking on behalf of the Superior General and the Roman community, congratulated the Jubilarian and gave him thanks and best wishes.

Franciszek Smagorowicz entered the Congregation in 1975. After two years of studying Philosophy at the Catholic University of Lublin, he made his novitiate at Skórzec. He professed his first vows on August 15, 1978. Then, he continued his studies of Philosophy, which were completed in 1982. He made his perpetual vows on August 1, 1981. After being ordained a priest (June 12, 1982), he worked as a catechist in Grudziądz (1981-84), and in Skórzec (1984-87). Since 1987, Fr. Franciszek began to work directly for the Congregation. First, he served as a Novice Master in Skórzec (1987-92), then, for one year, he was a Prefect of seminarians in Lublin; and in 1993-99 – a Provincial Secretary in Warsaw. Fr. Franciszek is known for his great

diligence, expertise, and fervor in working for the good of our religious community, worthily representing it at the Holy See as our Procurator General. Since his seminarian days, he has distinguished himself by his great knowledge, thanks to which he gained the title of a “master”, and later, because of his style and competence in fulfilling the office of secretary – a title of “Great Chancellor”.



BELARUS

Commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Rosica tragedy

On August 15-16, 2003, for the fourth time, the anniversary of elevating to the altars of Fr. Anthony Leszczewicz and George Kaszyra was celebrated in Rosica, Belarus. This year the event had a special significance because of the 60th anniversary of the Rosica tragedy. Its great meaning was particularly underscored by special guests: Father General Mark T. Garrow, M.I.C., Fr. Provincial Andrzej Pakuła, M.I.C., and Archimandrite Sergiusz Gajek, M.I.C., the Apostolic Visitator for Greek Catholics in Belarus. Diocesan authorities were represented by Fr. Franciszek Kisiel, Vicar General of the Vicebsk Diocese. As in previous years, almost 1,000 faithful attended, including two walking pilgrimage groups from Druja and Połock. Among the assembled there were a great number of young people.

On February 17, 1943, 1,528 people were burned alive in Rosica along with two Marians. This tragedy was just a part of the punitive action, which Hitler’s military units brought upon the local population. Since this tragedy belongs to the martyrology of the Belarussian people, recognizing that victims included both Catholics and Orthodox, the solemnity in Rosica is never celebrated without participation of the civil authorities. A specific significance to this solemnity was communicated by an acathyst performed by a Greek Catholic choir and a liturgy of the Eastern Rite.

The most moving moment of the event constituted, however, the night-time procession with candles that went to the site of martyrdom, where the Greek Catholic faithful sang an office for the souls of the slaughtered victims.

An important event of this year was also creation in Belarus of an “Association of Marian Martyrs.” This is a significant fact since the Belarussian Church is not rich in such forms of associations or communities. As underscored by Father Provincial, we deal here with a process of slowly forming a Marian family, which is under the protection of the Blessed Martyrs.

80th anniversary of installation of a Marian monastery in Druja

Immediately after participating in the Rosica solemnity, Fr. General, Fr. Provincial, and Archimandrite S. Gajek went to Druja, where, on August 17, 2003, they celebrated a solemn Mass on the 80th anniversary of the installation of a Marian monastery in Druja. In his homily, Fr. Garrow pointed out that Druja received a wonderful testimony in the persons of our Fathers, among whom more than one was granted the grace of martyrdom for the faith. It was not accidental either, that the General Visitation in Belarus began with this mother-monastery of Belarussian Marians.

Lublin accents added to the Belarussian martyrology

The jubilee celebrations in Rosica and Druja do not belong to Belarussian Marians’ internal matters only, but to the entire Congregation. On February 28, 2003, a day of prayer for the Church in Belarus was held in our International Seminary in Lublin. During the solemn vespers, Br. Alexandre Chamritski, M.I.C. presented the basic information regarding the life and martyrdom of the Archimandrites Andrzej Cikoto and Fabian Abrantowicz, as well as gave a short characterization of their times. Particular attention was directed to the significance for our vocation of martyrdom of the Marians from Druja and Rosica.

A few days later, a meeting of students from Belarus, also dedicated to the anniversary of the Rosica tragedy, took place in the seminary chapel. A Holy Mass, concelebrated by approx. 10 diocesan priests,

became the focal point of this event. The homily was delivered by a guest – Fr. Robert Krzywicki, M.I.C., Borisov House Superior, who was specifically invited for this occasion.

Liturgical celebrations related to the Blessed Martyrs of Rosica, as well as the spreading of their cult, are very important for the entire Congregation since they are part of the wonderful heritage of our religious community. This is why we shall all hope that other Marian communities will organize similar events in the future.

Br. Aliaksandr Zharnasek, M.I.C.



BRAZIL

Perpetual vows

On August 2, 2003, at the Shrine of Our Lady of La Salette in Barra Santa Salette, two seminarians professed their perpetual vows. Those seminarians are: Daniel Willeman and Silvio Rodrigues Roberto. Provincial Superior, Fr. Marek Szczepaniak, M.I.C., presided over the event. A large group of priests, seminarians, novices, postulants, family members, friends, Marian Helpers, and parishioners participated.

Brother Daniel Willeman, M.I.C. was born on September 11, 1972 in Rio do Salto, commune of Manoel Ribas, PR. He is the youngest of the family's nine children. He entered the Minor Seminary in Manoel Ribas in 1994. In three-years' time he completed high school and did one year of the novitiate in our Congregation, and then the novitiate in Turvo. On January 27, 1998, he made his first religious vows. For three years he studied philosophy at the Institute of Basilian Fathers in Curitiba. Then, for one year, he served at the Minor Seminary in Manoel Ribas. Since 2002, he has been studying theology in Curitiba. He is now in his second year.

Brother Silvio Rodrigues Roberto, M.I.C. was born on December 13, 1974 in Santos, state of São Paulo. He has a younger brother. In 1995, he began his post-graduate studies, majoring in biology. Feeling a vocation for religious life, he interrupted his studies in 1996 and entered our Congregation. He made his novitiate in Turvo. On January 27, 1998, he made his first religious vows. Then, he studied philosophy at the Basilian Institute in Curitiba. In 2000, the Provincial Superior sent him to the United States (St. Stanislaus Kostka Province) for a one-year course of English language. Presently he is in his third year at the Institute of Theology in Curitiba.

Golden jubilee of Fr. Jan Glica, M.I.C.'s religious life

On August 14, 2003, on the eve of the Assumption of Our Lady, at 8:00 p.m. we gave thanks to the Lord in the Divine Mercy Shrine in Curitiba for 50 years of religious life of Fr. Jan Glica, M.I.C. The Holy Mass, led by the Jubilarian, was concelebrated by many Marians under the leadership of Fr. Provincial, Marek Szczepaniak, who also delivered a homily. A large group of parishioners and Fr. Jan's friends, as well as seminarians and Sisters of the Merciful Jesus, participated in the Eucharist. After the homily, the Jubilarian made a solemn renewal of his religious vows. Upon receiving congratulations and wishes from parishioners, he thanked everyone for communal prayer and their participation in the solemnity. After the Holy Mass all present attended a modest party.

Fr. Jan Glica, M.I.C. was born on August 31, 1935, in Bączki near Garwolin. In 1952, upon finishing the 11th grade at high school, he entered the novitiate in Skórzec. On August 15, 1953, he professed his first religious vows. During 1953-55, he completed high school in Warsaw and obtained his diploma. Then, for one year, he held different jobs in our religious house at Wileńska Street in Warsaw. For the next two years he studied philosophy at the Metropolitan Seminary in Warsaw. He made his four years of theological studies at the Major Seminary in Włocławek (because Communist authorities forcefully expelled the Marian Seminary from Bielany).

As a deacon, in 1963, he was sent to conduct religious education in Góra Kalwaria, where, on June 28, 1964, he was ordained a priest. After four years of this service, on September 30, 1968, he left for missionary work in Brazil.

There he began to serve in St. George's parish in Curitiba. From the very start he proved to be a great organizer, a man of vision, and an artist. He planned and completed the parish church's interior design, built large subsidiary facilities and a religious house, where the Provincial Curia's headquarters are located presently. In 1978, Fr. Jan was sent to serve as a pastor in Adrianópolis, PR. In this parish he also created subsidiary facilities, renovated the church (both the interior and exterior), as well as the parish house. In addition, he erected eight chapels in the following towns: Varginha, Barra Grande, Rocha, Tatupeva, Epitácio, Primavera, and Pimentas; and renovated chapels in Descampado and Porto Velho. After five years of service, he was transferred back to Curitiba, to work this time at the Holy Family Parish. He ministered there for 10 years, in other words, until 1994. During this time he completed the interior decoration of the church and construction of the parish hall. He erected the religious education facilities and introduced the Divine Mercy devotion. In 1990, Fr. Jan traveled to the United States, where he stayed for one year learning the English language and working at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge.

In 1994, Fr. Glica was transferred to a newly created parish of The Divine Mercy in the Umbarà borough of Curitiba. There he had a chance to bring to life his projects, which were conceived a long time ago. He organized the parish from scratch with the hope that the place would become the future Divine Mercy shrine. He made plans for the church himself, which he was also able to build thanks to help from his friends-benefactors and his parishioners. He also takes care of the facilities for parishioners and pilgrims, and he is building a parish hall and rooms for religious education and conferences. Through his efforts, a Marian cemetery was also established. Thanks to his cooperation with Fr. Andrzej Krzymyczek, M.I.C., as well as other Marians, this station in Curitiba has become a center of promotion of the Divine Mercy devotion not only for the Diocese of Curitiba, but for all of Brazil.

Fr. Mieczysław Jastrzębski, M.I.C.

CAMEROON



The Divine Mercy in Atok

One of the goals of Marian presence in Cameroon, Diocese of Doumé Abong-Mbang, is spreading and development of the Divine Mercy cult. Having been installed in our new station in Atok, we began this apostolate by promoting the Divine Mercy Chaplet in our parish. We gathered the Christians from 25 villages in their chapels and we prayed along with them, teaching them how to pray. We agreed that they would meet in their chapels each Friday at 3 o'clock in the afternoon to pray to The Divine Mercy, especially for the intentions of the spiritual renewal of their parish and diocese. Our visits in the villages bore fruits in the form of the Divine Mercy groups, which meet for a communal prayer in a fairly regular fashion.

The next stage of the development of the Divine Mercy cult was a pilgrimage made by the Divine Mercy groups to our church in Atok, which will become, according to the Bishop's wish, the Diocesan Shrine of The Divine Mercy. The pilgrimage was planned as preparation for this year's Divine Mercy Sunday; it gathered over 200 people. Mainly young people participated, and they came from virtually every village of our parish, which extends for 60 km along the dirt road going as far as the Republic of Central Africa. We departed early in the morning on April 26th, 2003, (a Saturday), after celebrating a Holy Mass in the Nymbé village, which is a distance of 22 km from Atok – the pilgrimage's final destination. Many people joined us on our way. They also listened to religious education talks and conferences, as well as benefited from the sacrament of reconciliation.

During a prolonged stop on the road one of the Polish Sisters spoke about natural ways of planning a family, which is very important in the present general weakness of the family and lack of respect for life. The entire day was filled with prayers and singing, without which it is difficult to imagine the African Church. We arrived to our final destination in the evening and were greeted by the Pastor, Fr. Ryszard Kusy, M.I.C. Then the vigil before Divine Mercy Sunday began, which was also interspersed with prayers and songs. The Holy Mass celebrated the next day was a crowning and reward for this one-day pilgrimage. The

Mass was led by the Pastor. After Holy Communion, an important moment for our pilgrims of distributing images of the Merciful Jesus took place; we prepared these images beforehand. People responsible for the Divine Mercy Groups were to carry these images to their villages and then put them in their chapels.

The pilgrimage, and specifically the distribution of pictures of Merciful Jesus, contributed a great deal to enkindle in our parishioners the Divine Mercy cult. We see this devotion as an opportunity for moral renewal and young development of the Church as it is in our mission in Atok and the entire Diocese of Doumé. Those people, engrossed in moral and material poverty, decimated by diseases, the worst of which is AIDS, sense that our Merciful God does not condemn or judge them, but gives them strength, renews them and restores their dignity.

For us, Marians, this is a challenge for becoming ever more zealous witnesses and apostles of the Divine Mercy.

Fr. Bogusław Gil, M.I.C.



LITHUANIA

Ordinations to priesthood, jubilees, and perpetual vows

On the 31st of May, 2003, in the Marian Basilica of St. Michael the Archangel in Mariampole, Bishop Rimantas Norvila, Ordinary of the Diocese of Vilkasiškis, ordained Darius Tomas Davainis, M.I.C. and Tomas Miliauskas, M.I.C. to the priesthood. Fr. Darius was educated at the local Bl. George Matulewicz Seminary, while Fr. Tomas went to the Marian Major Seminary in Lublin. Along with our new priests, Deacon Dainius Gurevičius from the Diocese of Vilkasiškis also received his ordination.

Along with the Ordinary, the following concelebrated the Holy Mass: Bishop Juozas Žemaitis, M.I.C., Fr. Mark T. Garrow, Superior General of the Congregation, and 20 priests from Lithuania and Poland. Fr. Vytautas Brilius, Lithuanian Provincial Superior, delivered the homily. At the closing of the solemnity, Fr. General congratulated the newly ordained priests and reminded them of Bl. George's motto-invocation: "To seek God in everything!" In his speech delivered in Lithuanian, Fr. Rector Kazimierz Pek, M.I.C. of Lublin expressed joy from a well developing cooperation between Marians from Lithuania and Poland.

The next day the newly ordained priests celebrated their first Masses in parishes, to which they were sent as vicars: Fr. Davainis – in the Mariampole Basilica, and Fr. Miliauskas – in the Immaculate Conception of the Most B.V.M. Church in Vilnius. Local parishioners extended a warm welcome to the new priests. Fr. Tomas's colleagues and professors from Lublin attended the Holy Mass in Vilnius.

Along with the solemnity of Fr. Davainis's ordination on June 1, 2003, at Mariampole, Fr. Dr Vincentas Inkratas, M.I.C. celebrated his 60th anniversary, while Fr. Stanislovas Puidokas, M.I.C., the Basilica's Pastor celebrated his 25th anniversary of priesthood. The Local Superior, Fr. Remigijus Gaidys, M.I.C. presented the Jubilarians and the newly ordained priest with certificates from the Vatican, containing apostolic blessings.

On the Assumption of Our Lady (in the Lithuanian Province this day is traditionally reserved for the profession of religious vows), Br. Andrius Šidlauskas, M.I.C., and Br. Linas Šipavičius, M.I.C. professed their perpetual vows at the Mariampole Basilica before a large gathering of the faithful. In the fall both newly professed members will go to Lublin for further studies.

Celebrations in Mariampole to honor Bl. George Matulewicz

Although the liturgical remembrance of Bl. George Matulewicz comes on the day of his entrance into heaven, in other words, on January 27th, the annual solemnity at the Father Renovator's tomb is celebrated in Mariampole on July 12th (the entire event lasts throughout the week). On this day in 1987, two weeks after Archbishop Matulewicz's beatification, there was a solemnity of transferring his relics from the sarcophagus to the altar in the side chapel of St. Michael the Archangel's Basilica.

This year the solemnity took place on July 12-13. Each day a different deanery from the Diocese of Vilkasiškis held the worship. People prayed for many intentions: for farmers, laborers, and businessmen, for addicts, for social workers and Caritas employees, for the sick and handicapped, for doctors and nurses, for clergy and consecrated people, as well as for priestly and religious vocations, for youth and teachers, and on July 13th – for families. Also, every day after the main Mass, an *agape* took place in the Seminary Garden near the Basilica, in which Bishops participated.

On July 11th a large group of pilgrims from Poland, Metropolitan of Warmia, who were on their way to Ostra Brama (Spired Gate) in Vilnius, arrived at the basilica. On the same day, at the seminary hall, the author of these notes delivered a conference for members of the religious congregations on the way of life according to vows in the spirit of Bl. George. On July 12th a march of the young people to the chapel in Liguine – the place of the childhood and young years of Bl. George – took place. Besides the local youth, a large group of young pilgrims from Vilnius and other towns also participated. The procession covered about 150 km, going through small towns and bringing the revival of Catholic friendship and remembrance of the Blessed everywhere.

On the last day – July 13th – Bishop Jonas Boruta, SJ, Ordinary of Telšiai, assisted by other bishops and priests, led the Holy Mass. In his sermon he specifically underscored the significance of the Saints for our times and the meaningfulness of communion with them. He specifically mentioned also this particular faithfulness to Christ, which was Bl. Archbishop Matulewicz's special characteristic.

Fr. Vaclavas Aliulis, M.I.C.



GERMANY

Silent March in Vilgertshofen

This year's Silent March on August 17th at the Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrow in Vilgertshofen (Germany) was led by Prof. Anton Ziegenaus, a Dogmatic of the University in Augsburg. He is particularly well known to the younger generation of Marians because of his visits to the Marian Seminary in Lublin. This distinguished guest drew the attention of the gathered to the message, which Mary brings to modern men through showing Jesus' agony. Suffering, that for Christians has a salvific value, is "soothed" through the mentality of the modern world. Professor Ziegenaus remembered the personality of Anna Szafer, beatified by John Paul II in 1999. While attempting to repair a chimney, she fell into a caldron with boiling lye and was bedridden until the end of her life. After going through a stage of rebellion, she offered her sufferings for sinners in need of help. The suffering, which occupies central place in the Gospels, is viewed by the faithful as an experience of changes, hence a reality leading to resurrection from death. Professor Ziegenaus's speech was in harmony with the aura that reigned among people gathered in Vilgertshofen for the church fair. Every year several thousand people come there to celebrate a Mass and to follow in a silent procession Jesus carrying the cross.

Fr. Dariusz Mażewski, M.I.C. of Warsaw was representing the Polish Province Superior during this event, while Fr. Dariusz Hirsch, M.I.C., local house Superior and Rector of the Shrine in Vilgertshofen, was the host.

A tradition of the silent processions in Vilgertshofen goes back to the mid-18th century. At that time, town residents decided that each year they would pray in silence, pondering Our Lord's Passion, in thanksgiving for saving them from an epidemic. Thus, this tradition is now over 250 years old.

The Marian presence in Vilgertshofen has a great meaning for the Germans. Thanks to our ministry, the faithful are embraced with pastoral care. The Marians, actively working at that town, strive in every possible way to "enter" the culture and mentality of the local population to better respond to their expectations.

Fr. Dariusz Mażewski, M.I.C.



POLAND

Meeting of Bishops from Poland and Lithuania

Fr. Provincial Andrzej Pakuła, M.I.C., participated in the 16th Meeting of Teams of Bishops from Poland and Lithuania. The meeting took place on July 7-8, 2003, at Kalwaria Żmudzka. A direct occasion for this meeting was a church fair at the local shrine of Our Lady. The following matters were discussed: preparation of children and young people for the sacraments, Vocation Ministry, continuing formation for priests, and the position of the Church in Poland and Lithuania towards joining the European Union. Lithuanian Bishops renewed their request addressed to the Polish Bishops for giving help in staffing the ministry in Lithuania. They promised to help with teaching of the Lithuanian language to priests who would undertake work among Lithuanians in Poland.

By the decree of the President of the National Conference of Bishops in Poland, Card. Józef Glemp, the team representing the National Conference of Bishops in Poland will include the Superior of our Polish Province.

Celebrations in Stoczek Klasztorny

On the 50th anniversary of imprisonment of the Primate of the Thousand Years, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, as well as the 20th anniversary of the crowning the image of Our Lady – Queen of Peace, the Marian Shrine of Our Lady of Peace in Stoczek Klasztorny received the Primate of Poland, Cardinal Józef Glemp as a guest this year. The following also participated in celebrations: Ordinary of Warmia, Archbishop Edmund Piszcz; Auxiliary Bishop of Warmia, Julian Wojtkowski; Bishop of Ełk, Jerzy Mazur, S.V.D.; General Superior of the Congregation of Marians, Fr. Mark Garrow; and Superior of the Divine Providence Province, Fr. Andrzej Pakuła. In his homily the Primate recalled the Holy Father's appeal for the Shrine in Stoczek to become a place of promotion of the message of peace.

Opening of the process for recognition of a miracle granted through Fr. Stanislaus Papczyński's intercession

On September 5, 2003, Bishop of Ełk, Jerzy Mazur, S.V.D., appointed a Tribunal for examination of an alleged miraculous resuscitation of a dead fetus in mother's womb. Among members of this Tribunal will be Fr. Gabriel Bartoszewski, OFMCap., a person of great expertise in this field. Fr. Bartoszewski works both at the Nuncio and Primate of Poland Chancelleries. Presently he also participates in the beatification process of Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko.

The first session opening Fr. Papczyński's process will take place in the cathedral of Ełk on September 8, 2003, at 4:30 p.m. After that, at 6:00 p.m., Bishop Mazur, along with the Divine Providence Province Superior, Fr. Andrzej Pakuła and the Vice-Postulator for the beatification cause, will celebrate a Holy Mass, during which Fr. Pakuła will proclaim the Word of God.

New initiatives in research on the Marian heritage

Dr Elżbieta Matulewicz, who encountered the Marians during the Licheń Symposium on Divine Mercy, being encouraged by friendly acceptance of her work, undertook a collaboration with the St. Stanislaus Kostka Province in the U.S. on further research on the Divine Mercy Apostolate, particularly the one conducted in the U.S.A. by Fathers: J. Chróściechowski, J. Jarzębowski, and W. Pełczyński.

Ms. Matulewicz was born in 1948 in Olsztyn. She obtained her Master's degree in medicine at the F. Chopin Medical Academy in Warsaw. A Master's degree and a licentiate in Theology was granted her upon completion of the course at the Section of Spirituality at the Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. Also, she defended her Doctoral these entitled: "Holiness of a Christian according to Bl. George Matulewicz" there. She often gave conferences in Poland and Lithuania, among others: during the International Academic Conference "Holiness for everyone" (Vilnius – Kaunas – Mariampole' 2002), which was organized on the 75th anniversary of the death of Bl. George Matulewicz and 400th anniversary of St. Francis of Sales episcopacy.

Fr. Dariusz Mazewski, M.I.C.



PORTUGAL

Youth and Vocation Ministries

Meeting of the lay patrons of Marian Vocations. On March 15, 2003, for the second time this year, a formation meeting for the lay patrons of Marian Vocations took place in Balsamão. This meeting's topic was: "What is the religious way of life?" Ten lay patrons of Marian Vocations attended. Fr. Basileu Pires, M.I.C., led the meeting.

Easter meeting entitled "Seminary in the Family". On April 14-16, 2003, Balsamão welcomed participants of the annual meeting "Seminary in the Family," which was led by Brothers Eduardo Novo, M.I.C. and João Rodrigues, M.I.C. Five young men took part in this meeting entitled: "Life as a gift to others."

Retreat for young people: "Youth – Living Church", held on May 2-4, 2003, in Balsamão, assembled 12 participants. The retreat was organized and led by the Secretariat of the Youth and Vocations Ministries of the Marian Congregation. Meeting of the animators of the "Seminary in the Family" was held on May 25, 2003, in the Macedo de Cavaleiro parish, which is 17 km from Balsamão. The goal of this meeting was to inform the faithful about the vocation ministry proposed by the "Seminary in the Family," which is a model of the Marian vocation ministry. The "Seminary in the Family" is meant as an assistance program for families helping them to become a first seminary opened for every form of vocation within the Church.

Vocation summer camp of the Marian Seminary in Fatima was organized on July 15-20, 2003, near Balsamão, on the bank of Azibo River (Poço dos Paus). The topic was: "What kind of vocation is my vocation?". Thirteen boys in their teens came to this camp to participate in an orientation program led by Brother João Rodrigues, M.I.C. and a young man named Adelino.

Another camp was organized at the same location on July 20-25, 2003, for the Marian Youth, in which 15 young men participated under the direction of Brother Eduardo Novo, M.I.C. and Mr. Raquel Rodrigues, a Marian Helper.

Apostolate of Divine Mercy

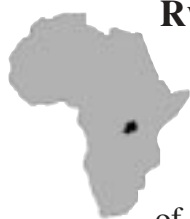
Divine Mercy Spirituality Week. Approximately 60 people from all over the country came to Balsamão to participate in the 6th Divine Mercy Spirituality Week (April 22-27, 2003). This was a time devoted to studies, prayers, fraternity, and celebration. Experts in the field of "Spreading the Divine Mercy" presented seven conferences. This event was organized by the Divine Mercy Apostolate of the Marian Fathers. The Week of Spirituality was crowned by celebrations of Divine Mercy Sunday, which gathered a great number of the faithful from different parts of Portugal.

Divine Mercy Weekend. On June 21-22, 2003, the parish in Cardanha (diocese of Bragança-Miranda) was hosting an event called "Divine Mercy Weekend." Its goal is to spread the Divine Mercy among people, to awake their trust in Divine Mercy, and to encourage them to become its apostles. This event was the last from a series of "Divine Mercy Weekends" organized throughout the year. The pastoral work was performed by a group composed of Fr. Basileu Pires, M.I.C., Fr. Stanisław Szymański, M.I.C., and four Marian Helpers.

Pilgrimage to Poland. Fr. Kazimierz Komor, M.I.C., Director of the Divine Mercy Apostolate, organized and led a pilgrimage (that took place on July 17-27, 2003) to locations related to St. Faustina's life, as well as historical sites important for the Polish culture. Twenty people from different parts of Portugal participated; everyone was greatly satisfied with the trip.

Community's retreat

The annual retreat of Marians in Portugal was organized on July 28 – August 2, 2003, in our monastery in Balsamão. It was decided that this year the retreat would be held as communal. Each participant presented one of the aspects of the retreat's main topic: "The Church draws its life from the Eucharist."



RWANDA

The Holy Father gave his blessing to Our Lady statue destined for the Marian Formation Center in Kibeho

The history of the statue of Our Lady of Kibeho goes back several years. It was a matter of carving a statue representing Our Lady who appeared here 20 years earlier, for the Kibeho shrine. In 2001, Bishop Augustin Misago, with a small group of artists, initiated work on such a statue. Unfortunately, this project quickly fell through. It is not an easy task to render in an artwork the image of Mary as she appeared in Kibeho. In August of 2002, I offered the bishop that, along with a group of artists from Rwanda, I would prepare a project for the statue. Three groups of artists were organized. Each group consulted with Natalie – one of the witnesses to the appearance. In the course of one year, nine statues were prepared. A special committee was appointed for their evaluation. None of the statues was accepted. Taking the committee's suggestions as guidance, I prepared a final version of the project and commissioned the carving of the statue by Italian sculptors. The figure was to be placed in the chapel of the Marian Formation Center in Kibeho. During my stay in Rome I personally supervised the sculpting process.

I wished very much for this statue to be blessed by the Holy Father. My wish came true on May 21, 2002, during a general audience in St. Peter's square. Kneeling before the Pope, I presented in a few sentences our project of creating a Marian Formation Center; the completion of the figure was the first step in that direction. Silently, but with a nice smile on his face, the Holy Father imparted his blessing to our plans and the figure of Our Lady.

The sign of Mary confirms our special charism and constantly adds a new zeal in working for the greatest glory of God. And although our Center is not yet created, the Marians are already involved in Marian pastoral work. We began preparations for our First Marian Congress in Rwanda on the 150th anniversary of proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. We published Rosary meditations on the topic of family. We are now preparing a publication entitled "Mary in the liturgy of the Church."

After seeing our statue of Our Lady, the Bishop commissioned me to complete its final model, which will be placed in the main altar of the Kibeho sanctuary church. The figure will be made by a professor of the Academy of Arts in Warsaw. The enthronisation of the statue will take place in Kibeho on November 28, 2003, – the solemnity of Our Lady appearance at this site.

Looking in retrospect on the entire Marian work in Kibeho, I would like to particularly underscore strong influence of God's grace that accompanies that work. I would like also to thank all those who support us with their prayers and offerings.

Inauguration of the Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrow in Kibeho

May 31st of 2003 was inscribed in the history of the Rwandan Church. On the feast of Visitation of Our Lady a solemnity of consecration of the Shrine of Our Lady of Kibeho took place. The celebration was presided over by the Prefect of the Congregation for Evangelization, Cardinal Crescenio Sepe, assisted by the Apostolic Nuncio in Rwanda, bishops from Rwanda, Burundi, Congo, and Tanzania. In the presence of 30,000 pilgrims 160 priests concelebrated the Holy Mass. Civil authorities were represented by the Vice-President, Prime Minister, and local officials. The United States Ambassador also participated.

In his homily, the Cardinal pointed out the importance of Kibeho – a Rwandan National Shrine – as a place of national reconciliation and prayer for peace; a place of forgiveness and love; a place of the human, spiritual, and religious renewal. He also underlined the fact that this is an international shrine with great prospects for development. Each pilgrim coming to Kibeho should become a living stone in this shrine. The Mother of the Word will support us in our journey, which always leads to God.

Both Cardinal Sepe and the Ordinary Bishop spoke about the Marian mission in creating the Marian Formation Center in Kibeho, to which they imparted their blessings.



UNITED STATES

St. Stanislaus Kostka Province

SSK Province faces sluggish economy with new initiatives

As the United States continues to slowly recover from the effects of a recession, nonprofit, religious organizations that depend on charitable contributions are increasingly feeling the ripple effects of a depressed economy. According to Independent Sector, a leading coalition of nonprofits and foundations, the lack of consumer confidence has translated into significant reductions in charitable giving, an estimated 42 percent decrease per household. How does a religious nonprofit like the Marians compete in a sluggish economy? The *Provincial Newsletter* (PN) spoke with the Provincial Econome of the SSK Province, Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, M.I.C., and Chief Financial Officer, Richard Cervera, to get their perspective on how the Province is managing despite facing one of the worst nonprofit/charitable giving seasons in recent history.

Provincial Newsletter: *In light of current economic challenges, what is the financial outlook for the SSK Province?*

Fr. Kaz: Cautiously optimistic. We did have two years that were financially difficult. In terms of finances, there are many reasons for this type of downturn. I cannot say that the economy was not a factor. When the economy in the U.S. is on a downswing, it does affect – directly or indirectly – the Province’s income level. However, it seems like the economy is slowly moving upward, although very, very cautiously.

Richard: Yes, and very sporadically. As everyone knows the last couple of years have been very, very financially tight for the Province – attributable to many things. You cannot discount the economy. Direct mail fund-raisers in general – referring to the Marian Helpers Center (MHC) – have suffered immensely during the same cycle. So our challenge is: How can we differentiate ourselves? What can we do differently? Still, things seem to be improving.

Fr. Kaz: Not only are there positive indications in the U.S. economy, but also in our Province. Things are moving forward, not just because of the economy, but also because of the new pastoral initiatives, programs, and special bequests.

Richard: We’ve gone through two years of wage freezes here. We have cut costs wherever possible and we’re always looking to identify other areas where we can cut additional costs without cutting into muscle or bone if at all possible. I suppose the best way to say that is efficiency. You cut in a way that you’re being efficient but not irresponsible for the organization.

We’re also taking a look at the assets that we currently hold from the perspective of which are performing, which are non-performing. Do we have assets that are not doing anything for us and will not do anything for us in the foreseeable future, and are they ripe for liquidation? Recently, we have been successful in selling two of our real estate properties for pretty close to market value. The income will be substantial.

Fr. Kaz: The importance of these additional sources of revenue is that it will help the Province – especially the MHC – develop new ways of fund raising. Because of the financial constraints and commitments to the Province, the MHC really had to cut down on initiatives. Our resources in the past two years have been truly constrained. And so, if the Province is doing better, it permits the MHC to be a little bit more creative, thus strengthening its position.

Richard: The MHC has been through a difficult period, as well as the rest of the Province. None of us have been immune.

Fr. Kaz: The reason that finances are so important is because we also assist others — especially Marian formation programs in Brazil and in the Ukraine — that rely on us. If the economy is bad here, it’s a lot worse there.

P.N. – People are discussing finances, cost-saving measures, and new initiatives. What do you believe is at the center of these discussions?

Richard: (...) One of the key things that emerges is the need to allow our new ministries and initiatives to develop and grow, so we are not dependent on just one source. To let the Shrine develop and enhance its output, to let the MHC continue to grow beyond its wildest dreams. The Spiritual Renewal Opportunities (SRO) program is another example. Build as many programs as make sense for us to take advantage of our ministry. The other thing is the Divine Mercy message is always a key topic. How can we leverage that message? How can we expand and make it more effective? How can we make it reach a larger part of the nation and the world? And then on the other side of the coin is cost control and containment. Let's not make any of the mistakes of the past. Let's understand that we are as vulnerable as any other organization. When you consider who our primary supporters are – donors who contribute about \$11 per donation – we have to be particularly prudent about how we spend dollars.

Fr. Kaz: I believe it's searching for ways of containing costs and new ways of fund raising. I feel more positive about where we are right now – more comfortable that I did a half a year ago or a year ago.

P.N. – Does some of this optimism have to do with your newly created Office of Development?

Fr. Kaz: Creating the Office of Development increases and enhances our relationship with major donors, which allows them to participate in our mission. That is a primary goal. It's not a new idea. Fr. Pelczynski was gifted at doing that. Two years ago, we decided to enhance it, but now it's time to move full steam ahead and make the Development Office what it truly should be: gathering people to participate in our mission to a greater degree than we ever have before. Of course, finances are integrally connected with our mission. People don't give you money because they have excess money. They want their money to do something. They want their money to be used properly and to know its making a difference in people's lives. We can never lose that vision.

(...)

Fr. Kaz: One thing about our Province is that we have never saved a lot of money. We always have given it away to support other Marians in their apostolic and missionary endeavors. People think we have deep coffers and we can do everything, but the fact is, that's not the case. For the most part, we have lived by faith, trusting that as long as we do our ministry faithfully, then the Lord will provide, and that is why we have been generous. And the second unique aspect of our Province is we've covered and cared for the people whom we have employed. We could have slashed employees; at many institutions, the first thing that goes is people. So what I'm trying to say is for us at the Province, finances are never an end in themselves. They are always interconnected with the mission, the people, the tasks we have to do, the places we have to support.

PN – Any other exciting new initiatives?

Fr. Kaz: Obviously donor development is one. Enhancing the ministries of the Shrine is number two. Number three is the Internet possibilities that have given us some positive indications – including enrollments online. Another would be the initiatives that are coming through the new leadership at the MHC. Those things will bear fruit. The phenomenal sales of the "Praying the Rosary Daily" leaflet (PR2) – that sold over 2.2 million copies in just five months – is a wonderful example, but it's not the only one. We're hoping that the Marian Prayer Crusade – which has just been launched – will also bear fruit. Another initiative involves the Shrine. We have about 30,000 pilgrims who come outside of Divine Mercy Sunday. The majority are not members of the Association. Which means somehow we are not capturing them but could develop a better way of reaching out to them.

Delivering the Message

On May 6-8, 2003, the JPII Institute presented a pilot seminar program for clergy at the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, MA. Entitled the "Ocean of Mercy" retreat seminar, it was somewhat different from the seminars that the Institute had done since 1999.

First a bit of background: After the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy was founded in 1996, one of its first apostolic works was to hold what we called "Fortnights of Divine Mercy" in Stockbridge for Divine Mercy leaders from all over the English-speaking world. By this good work, we trained most of the main Divine Mercy leaders in North America. From that point on, these participants and their groups looked to

Eden Hill, and especially to Fr. Seraphim and Fr. George Kosicki, CSB, as the reference point for the authentic Divine Mercy message and devotion. However, it gradually became clear that some Divine Mercy leaders and devotees were unable to travel to Stockbridge for these “Fortnights” due to the length of the program and the travel expenses involved. It was decided to “take the show on the road,” and we devised a condensed version of the program that could be brought around the country wherever there was need and interest in in-depth Divine Mercy teaching. These revised programs were called “Ocean of Mercy” seminars (see *Diary of St. Faustina*, 718). Since the autumn of 1999, we have held seminars throughout the U.S., the British Isles, and the Philippines. Future conferences are planned for Ottawa, Ontario; Lincoln, NE; and Bluffton, SC. Future seminars are scheduled in Stockbridge, and in Sierra Vista, AZ.

These seminars and conferences, we observed, were mostly attended by lay leaders and devotees. That is why we are now trying to develop this new seminar program – like the recent Stockbridge pilot – specifically for the needs of the clergy: seminars that address their unique questions and concerns – theological, pastoral, and liturgical. Future clergy programs include the Diocese of Peoria, IL, in June of 2004, and in St. Louis, MO, in February of 2005. While it will obviously take many years to meet the needs of the clergy for proper instruction in Divine Mercy theology and spirituality, it is our hope that this effort will gradually have a ripple effect on the Church in North America as a whole and that those whom we teach will, in turn, teach others.

Fr. Joseph Roesch, M.I.C., new columnist for *Catholic Standard & Times*

Fr. Joseph Roesch, MIC, became a new columnist for the *Catholic Standard & Times* – the newspaper for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia – beginning in June. Entitled “Ask Fr. Joe,” the monthly piece is similar to his column in Marian Helper magazine’s, “Ask a Marian.” Future plans for the column include an online presence and possible Q&A booklet opportunities.

Kathleen Ervin



UKRAINE

First Holy Mass celebrated at the new church in Khmelnicky

This year’s Corpus Christi solemnity (June 19th) will remain engraved in the memory of the Khmelnicky parish community. On this day the first Holy Mass was celebrated in the newly constructed church of the Most Holy Heart of the Blessed Mother. The Mass was concelebrated by the Vicariate Superior, Fr. Pavlo Ostrovskiy, M.I.C., General Superior, Fr. Mark T. Garrow, M.I.C., Vicar General, Fr. Jan M. Rokosz, M.I.C., and the parish Pastor, who also delivered a homily. To the priests’ great amazement, the faithful filled the church to the brim. The presence of the General Superior has become for the Pastor an opportunity to express to General Government and the entire Congregation the community’s gratitude for helping financially with the construction.

The construction of the church and Provincial House of the Marians in Ukraine began in 1998 upon the consent from the then General Superior, Fr. Adam Boniecki, M.I.C., who was able to partially raise necessary funds for this construction in Germany and Italy. Thanks to the great efforts and help of the present General Superior, Fr. Mark Garrow, as well as Vicar General, Fr. Jan M. Rokosz, and the General Government, the construction has been completed. In 1999, the lower part of the church was ready; Masses began to be celebrated and religious education classes held there. A year ago the Marian community was given the opportunity to move to a new religious house. Before our confreres lived in temporary barracks built in hardboard with no running water or sanitary facilities. The Mass was also celebrated in the same building.

The new religious house, aside from monastic quarters, also has facilities for parish pastoral work, a conference room, Vicariate Curia offices, and guestrooms. The completion of the construction project and consecration of the church and the religious house are planned for 2005.

Convention of the Ukrainian Vicariate

On June 25, 2003, the Convention of the Ukrainian Vicariate took place in the newly built religious house facilities in Khmelnytsky. Fr. General Mark Garrow and Vicar General, Fr. Jan M. Rokosz were presiding over the proceedings. The Convention has also become a conclusion of the general visitation.

Father General presented a report on the Vicariate's state of affairs, as well as observations, recommendations, and decrees. At the same time he announced staff changes to take place. Besides the Ukrainian Marians' strong points, the present visitation also revealed their shortcomings. It is an opportunity for the community to energize its spiritual and apostolic activity. Ukrainian confreres discussed opinions and some proposals made by the General Superior, particularly the project of creating in Mohyliv Podilsky a center to help addicts. This center would be modeled after the similar facility already functioning at the Licheń Shrine. Fr. General also informed that, as of September 1, 2003, the Marians would be definitively leaving the Assumption of Our Lady parish in Kharkiv (that has become a bishopric seat) and St. Barbara's parish in Berdychiv (as per agreement made with the Bishop in 1999). Final preparatory work for the construction of a Marian church and religious house in Kharkiv is under way. A well-functioning House of Mercy, founded by Fr. W. Wanags, M.I.C. in Gorodok, deserves a special notice. A new parish in Khmelnytsky experiences a dynamic development. Father General advised the Association of Marian Helpers to more closely cooperate with the Marian Publishing House in Kharkiv. Having in mind other congregations and Ukrainian dioceses' experience, our confreres pondered options for and against prolonging the formation period for the candidates to our Congregation coming from Ukraine.

The Vicariate Superior, Fr. Pavlo Ostrovskiy, M.I.C., thanked the Superior General, Vicar General, and the entire General Government for their particular care for the Ukrainian Vicariate.

Fr. Viktor Lutkovskiy, M.I.C.

OUR CHARISM

THE IMMACULATELY CONCEIVED AS THE WORK OF DIVINE MERCY STANISŁAW CELESTYN NAPIÓRKOWSKI, OFMCONV

The Marians inscribed the Immaculate Conception into their charism (special part, contemplation, proclamation). The Marians have zealously undertaken the apostolate of The Divine Mercy. I suppose that the Marians would like to see the coherence of both elements and therefore gave a little Franciscan some home work: Friend, do us a little favor... In an ecumenical way, try to combine the two great and beautiful elements of our life: The Immaculate Conception and Divine Mercy. Know, that both these elements are of tremendous consequence for us -- they define us in a fundamental way; they are Marianogenous, Marian-creative. It is important for us to demonstrate their interior connection (or perhaps the lack of it?), their mutual belonging to each other (or perhaps the lack of belonging?), their logical cohesion (or perhaps incoherence?). Both elements directly touch our hearts. Please, shed some light on the place where they grow into one (or perhaps do not blend?)...

If we remember that Divine Mercy expressed itself most fully in the work of Redemption, if it is known that everyone redeemed is a work of mercy, if it is believed that the Blessed Mother is redeemed in a more sublime manner – *sublimiore modo redempta*, then the matter is clear: Mary Immaculate, as redeemed in a more sublime manner, is in a more sublime manner a work, fruit and “object” (obviously, personal object) etc. of Divine Mercy. As a matter of fact, the lecture might be ended at this point, insofar as, essentially, all has been said; and, besides, it is exceptionally simple. Since, however, a lecture – in the name of honesty – should last for a long time, decidedly more ought to be said. Let us then stretch the word that is perhaps too concise. Shedding some light on them, let us amplify both subjects, which are essential in dogmatics: 1) The work of redemption as the work of Divine Mercy, and 2) The Immaculate Conception as a singular work of Divine Mercy.

1. The work of redemption as the work of Divine Mercy

Allow me to invite you Reverend Listeners to the Catholic University of Lublin. Among its lecturers there were my two professors of Dogmatics: Fr. Antoni Słomkowski and Fr. Wincenty Granat. These are men exceptionally worthy of trust: Both of them are distinguished Dogmatic theologians; both have become Servants of God, whom local Churches want raised to the honors of the altar (*nota bene* – without their consent, or even without asking for it).

Under the editorship of Fr. Granat, at the Pallotinum there appeared in 1970 the collective work: *The Gospel of Mercy*¹. In the introduction, among other things, the editor-in-chief wrote: “Divine Mercy revealed in Christ regards, first of all, people in need of spiritual help, although as a sign it manifests itself in granting temporal goods (curing of the sick, feeding the hungry, and, at times, raising of the dead). Christ the Lord is the central figure in the history of salvation and is the revelation of the love and mercy of God, and at the same time the model of human mercy; Divine Mercy and human mercy were united in the Person of the Son of God, and Christians should give testimony to this mercy by word and by the example of their life².”

Fr. Słomkowski, who undertook the theme: *Divine Mercy in the Incarnation and Redemption*, expressed himself simply and directly for our benefit, developing it in 63 pages³. He had no way of knowing that, at least in the second part of his exposition, he would be speaking to us in Licheń in A.D. 2003.

Mercy can manifest itself, first of all, as grief and compassion towards someone in adversity, and these feelings provoke action in order to bring relief to the one who is suffering⁴. It can manifest itself also, in the second place, in the removal of every defect, in so far as perfections given by God remove every defect: *In quantum vero perfectiones datae a Deo omnem defectum expellunt, pertinent ad misericordiam*⁵ [Indeed, insofar as perfections given by God remove every defect, they pertain to mercy].

The whole divine economy reveals God’s merciful love, but, in a particular way, we see it in the Incarnation, which is the expression of divine love and mercy: The motive of the Incarnation was the love of God towards fallen man, in other words, [the motive of the Incarnation] was His mercy towards mankind and the desire to remove defects and human degradation⁶.

Even more strongly than in the Incarnation, the merciful love of God manifested itself in the bloody sacrifice of Christ⁷. It is not necessary to prove it; it is enough – by means of recalling – to indicate it. In Christ God reconciled us with Himself (2 Cor 5:15-19; Col 1:20; Rom 8:31nn, 5, 8). God’s love was revealed in this way, that not we have loved God, but that he has loved us and has sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins (1 Jn 4:7-10). At the basis of the sacrifice of Jesus for the sins of the world is, therefore, the love of God towards mankind, and His mercy⁸.

This would be a good time to read respective places from the *Diary* of Sister Faustina, for example about the prayer of conversion: “O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of Mercy for us, I trust in You⁹.”

The Litany to the Mercy of God¹⁰ indicates Divine Mercy flowing out from the open wound of the Heart of Jesus, enclosed in the Heart of Jesus, in the institution of the Sacred Host, in the founding of the Church, in the Sacrament of Baptism, in the work of our justification through Jesus Christ...

The merciful love of God, most fully revealed in Christ, showed itself also as a love shockingly inventive: In the sacramental signs it secured its presence among us until the end of the world. Divine Mercy, revealed to us in Christ, touches us, who, on account of time and space, are a long way from Golgotha; it embraces us, penetrates, renews and adopts us. It makes us children of that Mercy.

For the salvation-generating sacramental signs of Divine Mercy, Merciful Love built a house. We call it the Church. The Church... – the sacred space of inexhaustible mercy¹¹. In the Church and through the Church the merciful Savior walks across the ages and all the continents, making present his sacrifice of merciful love, by his mercy liberating sinners, renewing the “old man,” strengthening us by the Spirit, whom he sends, calling pastors, leaning over the dying... With his mercy he fills the earth.

In order to increase the gratitude full of joy, and the joy full of gratitude, toward the Father and the merciful Savior, one could go on and on prolonging the contemplation of “God rich in mercy” (*Dives in misericordia Deus*) as well as of the Redeemer, who is full of the mercy revealed in the Redeemer and His redemptive work. Sister Faustina does not cease to sing the praises of this mercy in her *Diary*.

2. The Immaculate Conception as the unique work of Mercy

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God rejects the idea that Mary was not redeemed or that she did not need redemption. We have to believe that she needed redemption and was redeemed. Hence she was in need of divine mercy, and she received that mercy.

What’s more, according to the dogma, the Mother of the Lord was redeemed in a more perfect way, not an ordinary way, as the rest of the children of Eve. She obtained an antecedent, and not consequent, redemption; she

was preserved from original sin, and not liberated from it. The ordinarieness of the redemption is connected with the order of succession (first the sin, then the liberation); the extraordinariness of the redemption, proper to Mary alone, is connected with antecedence in relation to the contraction of sin:

“The Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her Conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by the omnipotent God, in view of the future merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin” (the Constitution *Ineffabilis Deus*).

Following the mind of bl. John Duns Scotus, we say that Mary was redeemed in a more sublime way – *sublimiore modo redempta*. We got used to this terminology. In all probability we did not become accustomed to become aware of Mary in relation to Divine Mercy. It has not been customary to connect the Immaculate Conception with the mercy of God. Yet, after all, in an unquestionable way, this connection exists: Redeemed man is man who obtained the mercy of God. The human being redeemed in a more perfect way is the one who obtained the mercy of God in a more perfect way. The human being redeemed in a more sublime way is the human being who obtained divine mercy in a more sublime way.

Today we consider such a theology as the one that is evidently right and evidently evident, but when John of Duns in Scotland came out with such an idea for the first time, he struck with his head the wall of Thomas from Aquino and of almost all the rest of the theological world.

The attention of Scotus was concentrated mainly upon Christ and the perfection of His mediation. The Subtle Doctor took up the problem of its perfection. He brought forward the thesis that the more perfect mediator is the mediator who shields his client from the evil, than the one who extricates his “client” from the evil. In both cases the “client” benefits from the service of the mediator, but in the two cases the type of mediation is distinctly different: obviously better is the mediator who successfully shields someone from a problem, than the one who solves an already existing problem. It is not difficult to translate the language of mediation into the language of mercy¹²

As regards the term redeemed in a more sublime way – *sublimiore modo redempta* – it can be justly observed, that it is correct only in a certain determined sense, namely in such that, as a matter of fact, the Most Holy Mother was redeemed in a more sublime way in comparison with the whole rest of redeemed people. The redemption of the Mother of the Lord fully merits a higher degree of the qualifying manner: more sublime – *sublimiore modo*. The thought suggests itself, however, that equally in principle one could use the highest degree: Mary was redeemed in a most sublime way – *sublimissimo modo redempta*. After all, no human being has been redeemed in a still more sublime way. This highest degree – *superlativus* – could however provoke a discussion regarding the question: “Could God redeem Mary in a manner still more sublime?”

3. Two most recent attached qualifiers

Recent years attached qualifiers to two important words on this subject, namely: The common declaration on justification, and a statement of John Paul II in *Redemptoris Mater*, No. 10.

On September 24-27, 2001, a world congress dedicated to Fr. Kolbe took place in Rome, with an imposing subject matter and attendance (professors from many universities). A beautiful Italian critical edition of the writings of the Saint became the charming occasion for the convocation of the congress. The organizers, requesting that the professors present a paper, sent them the writings and basic literature, which decisively determined the quality of the elaborations: first of all on the ground of the materials received. No one of the professors touched upon the new problem, namely the meaning of *The Common Declaration about Justification* for the interpretation of the doctrine regarding the Immaculate Conception. Finally Giovanni Jammalone, a Franciscan, professor at the St. Bonaventure Faculty, asked about it straight on. None of the speakers, to whom the question was posed, came running with a response. This is another sign that the great document of Augsburg lacked acceptance. Mariologists, too, have not seriously taken up the message of that event¹³. Therefore not only for ourselves, but also for them, we here, in Licheń, are taking up this important, unconventional, fresh and essentially absorbing subject.

First – the necessary factual information. Since the time of the reformation, and precisely since 1530, that is, since the Diet of Augsburg, where western Christianity definitively split, theologians (and, after all, not only they,) knew that, according to the Protestants, people obtain justification by grace alone, *sola gratia*, while according to the Catholics – not by grace alone, but also by cooperation with grace as well as through merits. By “justification” was understood the transition of a person from the state of sin, that is from unrighteousness before God, to the state

of grace, that is, to righteousness before God. If a Protestant read or heard a Catholic saying that it is necessary to merit heaven, he would crow: "Here is a Christian, who merits heaven, which, of course, cannot be merited by man! Heaven is not earned: heaven is received. Only God alone can grant such a great good..." A Catholic, on the other hand, on hearing that a Protestant is justified by grace alone, would crow: "Here is a Protestant, here is a Christian, a fellow who likes his ease, who dispenses himself from the effort to earn heaven, casting everything on God". Because Protestants added faith to grace, too, affirming that we attain justification gratuitously, by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ, the Catholic crowed in addition: "Here is a Protestant, an easy-going Christian, who proclaims: Believe, and do whatever you please!"

At least up to the II Vatican Council, and even after it, it seemed that on this point, between Catholic and Protestant theology there exists an impassable abyss, that the walls tower up to heaven. Luther, after all, firmly asserted that this is the "either – or" of the true Church of Christ, its "to be or not to be," *punctum stantis et cadentis Ecclesiae* [the point of standing and falling of the Church].

However, right after the Vatican Council II the Lutherans entered upon a doctrinal dialogue with us in the world forum, as well as in the United States and in Germany. It was impossible for the theme of justification not to come up in the dialogue. Until there came that which was not possible to come, the impossible happened: the Catholic Church and the World Lutheran Federation signed *A Common Declaration About Justification*¹⁴. Just as the final split on this point occurred in Augsburg (the Diet of 1530), so the agreement was signed in Augsburg (Oct. 31, 1999). The text of *The Common Declaration*, among other things, explains the very notion of justification¹⁵ (it repeats it according to *The Augsburg Confession*!) and records the text of the agreement that has an historical significance (it should dutifully find a home in the little reference library of every apostle of Mary, especially of The Immaculate):

"We share the common belief that justification is a work of the Triune God. God sent his only Son into the world for the salvation of sinners. The incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ are the basis and the condition of justification. Therefore justification means that Christ himself is our justice in which we participate by the will of the Father through the Holy Spirit. Together we profess: «Only by grace and in the belief in the salvific action of Christ, and not on the basis of our merits, we become accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts, enables us and summons us to good work»"¹⁶ (my emphasis – S.C.N.)

The Catholic side clearly accepted the complete gratuitousness of justification: Only by grace – *Sola gratia*! Both sides ascertained the attainment of an essential agreement (consensus).

"Common listening intently to the joyous message announced in Holy Scripture, as well as the theological conversations conducted in recent years between Lutheran Churches and the Roman-Catholic Church, resulted in the uniformity of views on the question of understanding justification. This uniformity comprises the consensus in basic matters, that makes it possible to reconcile the differences in detailed pronouncements"¹⁷ (my emphasis – S.C.N.)

What have these agreements to do with mariology and the theology of the Immaculate Conception? After all, in the whole *Common Declaration* there is no mention of the Mother of the Lord!

Well, they have exceedingly much to do with them. When we speak about the Most Blessed Mother, we reach for the language of merit: how often we say and hear that Mary obtained something for us, obtained for herself...: not only did she entreat and keeps on entreating, but that she also obtained and keeps on obtaining... In dogmatic theology there is even in use a special terminological trinity for differentiating the merits of Christ (the merit as something that is due or from justice – *de condigno*, when the recompense corresponds by magnitude and value to the meriting deed), our merits (the merit from a certain appropriateness, on principle it would be fitting that – *de congruo*, when the rewarded deed is disproportionately small with respect to the award) and the merit of Mary (a merit greater than ours, but lesser than that of Christ and qualitatively different from it; it remains clearly on our side, but surpasses our merits on the principle of super-appropriateness – *de super congruo*).

Many theologians and outrageously many pious apostles of Mary widely, and with enthusiasm, elaborate and laud the greatness of Mary's merits. They advance even to the proposition that by her merits Mary together with Christ co-redeemed, or even redeemed, the world. Presently there is flowing throughout the continents a great campaign for the declaration of the fifth dogma about Mary Co-redemptrix. – The "ears" of our Evangelical Brothers, who recall the principle of *Sola gratia*, "are wilting;" they have additional arguments for the blossoming of evident

faultiness on our side. Catholic theologians, in a considerable majority, observe this campaign with disgust, with uneasiness and with protest. Worldwide Mariology, represented by the Pontifical International Marian Academy, gathered in congress in Częstochowa at the special request of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, took up this problem and assumed an official negative stand. Americans continue to promote the campaign. This is a more than enough convincing example of how actual the question of Mary's merit remains. It is in this context that the Catholic Church signed the declaration about *sola gratia*. This does not mean that our Church renounced synergy, the theology of man's cooperation with grace; she continues to defend synergy, and she emphasized it in the Common declaration; but she added that also the possibility of this cooperation [synergy] she perceives as a grace. Our Church adheres to St. Augustine, according to whom God, in rewarding our good deeds (merits!) – crowns his grace: *remunerando nostra merita Deus coronat suam gratiam*.

If perhaps these words are not completely convincing, being as they are clearly entangled in the context of the dialogue with the world of Evangelical thought, let us hear the second word of the attached qualifiers (the first was the word from the *Common Declaration About Justification*). This time they are the words of John Paul II from the encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*.

John Paul II is astounded at the majesty of God's grace, which shined in the Immaculate Conception of the more perfectly redeemed Mary: St Paul in the Letter to the Ephesians, speaking about the «glory of grace» that «God and Father... has bestowed on us in his Beloved [Son]», adds: «In him we have redemption through his blood» (Eph 1:7). According to the belief formulated in the solemn teaching of the Church, this «glory of grace» was manifested in the Mother of God through the fact that she was redeemed “in a more sublime manner”¹⁸. By virtue of the richness of the grace of the Beloved [Son], by reason of the redemptive merits of Him who was to become her Son, Mary was preserved from the legacy of original sin”¹⁹.

In the classical textbooks of Mariology, developing the theme of meriting by the Mother of God, it is admitted that She was not able to earn the Incarnation itself, since the principle of merit does not fall under merit – *principium meriti non cadit sub merito*, but that She was able to earn and did earn the circumstances of the Incarnation... It was not asserted, however, that She merited for herself the grace of the Immaculate Conception. She did not merit it, because she did not exist before conception: not existing, she was not meriting, and was not able to merit. Her first grace – beyond any argument – was absolutely gratuitous. The Immaculate Conception was and remains a grace absolutely gratuitously given – *gratia absolutissime gratis data*, a pure grace – *gratia pura*, only grace, grace alone – *sola gratia*. In the Immaculate Conception the Mother of the Lord is a reflection of grace – *speculum gratiae*, a reflection of pure grace – *speculum gratiae purae*, *speculum solae gratiae*, a pure image of pure grace – *purum speculum gratiae purae*, *purum speculum solae gratiae*. In this understanding the Immaculate Conception is an unceasing song in praise of *sola gratia* [grace alone]. And since the graces of redemption are the graces of Divine Mercy, the Immaculate Conception unceasingly sings the song of glory in praise of Divine Mercy. Solely and exclusively only Divine Mercy shines in the Immaculate Conception of the Most Holy [Virgin]. The Immaculate Conception does not speak about merit, about cooperation with grace..., but sings the splendor of grace from the super-abundance of the merciful love of God-Love; it assumes and praises the radical antecedence of grace in relation to the possibility of any merit whatever. The merciful God alone stands at the beginning, in the center and at the end of this holy Misterium. Only and exclusively He – *solus Deus*, *solus misericors Deus*, Divine Mercy alone – *sola misericordia Dei*. You theologians, keep up your discussions about the merits of the Mother of God (at the Incarnation, on the Way of the Cross or beneath the Cross...), but stop talking about Her merit, when you begin to talk about the Immaculate Conception. Contemplate this holy Misterium and take delight at the extraordinariness of Divine Mercy. Become enraptured and give thanks. Give thanks and admire. Together with The Immaculate sing the hymn of praise, because He did great things for Her, who is mighty and merciful, and His mercy shone with an absolutely pure flame in the Immaculate Conception.

If the Congregation of Marians and the Order of Franciscans feel to be called in a special way to the veneration of the Immaculate Conception, let them be sure that they were also called to tell the world about Divine Mercy that in the most sublime manner shone in the One Redeemed in the most sublime manner.

Translated by Fr. Kazimierz Chwalek, M.I.C.

Footnotes:

¹ *Ewangelia Miłosierdzia* [The Gospel of Mercy], red. [ed.] W. Granat, Poznan-Warszawa 1970, 20 (hereafter: GM)

² Introduction, in: GM, 7.

³ Ibidem, 49-112.

⁴ Słomkowski refers to St. Augustine after St. Thomas: S. Thomae Aquinatis, *Summa theologica*, II-II, q. 30, a. 1: *Ut Augustinus dicit, misericordia est alienae miseriae in nostro corde compassio, qua utique, si possimus subvenire compellitur.* (Aug. *De civ. Dei* 9, 5), after: GM, 51.

⁵ *Summa theologica* I, q. 21, a. 3 (GM, 51).

⁶ GM, 83.

⁷ Ibid., 87-89.

⁸ Ibid., 88.

⁹ F. Kowalska, *Diary*, Warszawa..., Notebook I, No. 187. Jesus made Sr. Faustina the secretary of his mercy, his confidante, herald, apostle, emissary, victim... Something disturbing is taking place within Polish devotion: Sr. Faustina is being made into a "holy mediatrix of graces" (in a song often repeated by Radio Maryja). In this way the secretary and herald of the merciful Savior is being transformed into another mediatrix of graces, to whom one must turn with requests, and – as is obvious – also for intercession with Christ, as though He were not exhorting us to full confidence in Him and to have recourse directly to Him, the most merciful Savior. Sister Faustina has to be rescued. Let her remain what Jesus made her to be. As it is necessary to rescue Our Lady of Częstochowa from sacrilegious kidnaping (Her Child is being taken away from her, and just the head of the Mother of God without the Child is being publicized). So, too, it is necessary to rescue Sr. Faustina from her irresponsible devotees. Let St. Faustina remain such, as the merciful Jesus wanted to show her to us. Do not correct the Lord Jesus!

¹⁰ *Diary*, 12/II, 1937, No. 949.

¹¹ Cf. GM, 89-112.

¹² *The fully perfect mediator merits the removal of all punishment from the one for whom he brings about reconciliation. But original sin is even a greater punishment than the lack of the vision (beatific) [...], for sin is a punishment of the rational nature, the greatest of all punishments. If, therefore, Christ reconciled us with God in a most perfect manner (perfectissime), he merited the removal of that greatest punishment from somebody, but only from [his] mother, hence etc. – This is confirmed by an example: if the greatest punishment for a descendant of Adam is to anger a king against himself, no one will accomplish the reconciliation in an absolutely perfect manner, if he does not remove from him both the disinheritance, and the situation of being King's enemy [...].*

¹³ I took up this theme in a concise manner during the panel discussion, developing it more extensively in the publication: *Massimiliano Kolbe nel suo tempo e oggi. Approccio interdisciplinare alla personalità e agli scritti. Atti del Congresso Internazionale* (Roma-Seraphicum, 24-27 Settembre 2001), ed. E. Galignano, Centro Internazionale "Milizia dell'Immacolata," Roma 2003, 630-631. *Importanza del 31 ottobre 1999 per la teologia dell'Immacolata Concezione.* [...]

¹⁴ Bibliography: S.C. Napiórkowski, OFMConv, *Sola fide – sola gratia. From the discussion about justification*, Biuletyn Ekumeniczny [Ecumenical Bulletin] 6 (1976) No. 17, 32-41; the same, *Solus Christus. Zbawcze pośrednictwo według „Księgi Zgody”* same, *Bogactwo łaski a nędza grzesznika. Zróznicowany konsensus teologii katolickiej i luteranckiej o usprawiedliwieniu osiągnięty w dialogu ekumenicznym* [The differentiated consensus of Catholic and Lutheran theology on justification reached in an ecumenical dialogue], Kraków 2000; R. Karwacki, *Communicatio Spiritus Sancti. Pneumatologiczna interpretacja Kościoła jako communio według dokumentów dialogu katolicko-luteranckiego na forum światowym* [Communication of The Holy Spirit. The pneumatological interpretation of the Church as a Communion according to the documents of the Catholic-Lutheran dialogue in a worldwide forum], Siedlce 1999; *Deklaracja o usprawiedliwieniu. Historia powstania. Tekst deklaracji. Opinie. Komentarze* [The Declaration on Justification. History of its origin. Text of the Declaration. Opinions. Commentaries], ed. Karol Karski, Augustana, Bielsko-Biała 2000; *Zbawienie w Roku Jubileuszowym. Nauka na temat usprawiedliwienia w dialogu katolicko-luteranckim. Dokumenty i opracowania* [Salvation in the Jubilee Year. Teaching on the theme of justification in the Catholic-Lutheran dialogue. Documents and Studies], ed. Z.J. Kijas OFMConv, PAT-Michalineum, Kraków 2000; S.C. Napiórkowski OFMConv, *Bóg łaskawy. Nad „Wspólną deklaracją o usprawiedliwieniu”* [The Gracious God. On "The Joint Declaration on Justification"], Biblioteka „WIEZI”, Warszawa 2001; moreover the text and materials: „Studia i Dokumenty Ekumeniczne” [Ecumenical Studies and Documents] 9 (1995) No. 2; 14 (1998) No. 2; 15 (1999) No.2 – Annex to *The Common Declaration*, 16 (2000), No. 2.

¹⁵ Justification is the remission of sins (Acts 3: 23-25; Acts 13: 39; Lk 18: 14), a liberation from the dominating power of sin and death (Rom 5: 12-21), and from the curse of the law (Gal 3: 10-14). It is acceptance into community with God, already now, but in a perfect way only in the future Kingdom of God (Rom 5: 1n). It unites [one] with Christ, with his death and resurrection (Rom 6: 5). It is achieved by the reception of the Holy Spirit in baptism as the insertion into one body (Rom 8: 1n; 1 Cor 12: 12n). All this comes exclusively from God in consideration of Christ by grace through faith in the Gospel about the Son of God (Rom 1: 1-3). *The Common Declaration*, No. 11.

¹⁶ Ibid., 15.

¹⁷ Ibid., 14.

¹⁸ Cf. Pius IX, *Bulla Ineffabilis Deus* (Dec. 8, 1854): Pii IX P.M. Acta, part I, 616; LG 53.

¹⁹ RM 10.

I ALWAYS HAD GOOD FORTUNE WITH THE MARIANS

*Conversation with Fr. Prof. Andrzej Szostek, M.I.C., the Rector of the Catholic University of Lublin
conducted by Fr. Paweł Naumowicz, M.I.C.*

Paweł Naumowicz – *How did you come to be a priest and a Marian?*

Andrzej Szostek – My family (parents, three sisters and myself) were regular churchgoers. Although my Father probably did not bother with the Lord a lot, yet he carefully fulfilled all duties; and no one can say that he was particularly breaking away. I was a devout boy and always wanted to become a priest, since an early age. Sometimes I tell this joke, obviously slightly parodying a little child's thinking, that I wanted to be a priest so that I could sing in church the way I wanted. Because when I sang a little too loud, my Mother always hushed me up, but when the priest sang loudly – and he really screamed – he had the right. Also sometimes, being back from the church, I would climb on a chair, put two towels around me as a chasuble, and deliver a sermon. I remember well my intentness, with which I preached against frog-abuse. We lived then in Grudziądz, on a bank of Trynka River, where the frogs made themselves heard every evening. Probably I was repeating an example from the sermon of Fr. Pauline Kalinowski, the Pastor of St. Nicholas' in Grudziądz, who was a little deaf, but made beautiful sermons for kids.

One way or another, I wanted to become a priest, period. I knew that I could be anything else, that I was fit for other occupations; thus, I was not guided by some sort of complexes, I just wanted to become a priest.

P.N. – *Did you have any idea what it meant to be a priest? What Fr. Andrzej Szostek would look like in the future? Aside from “celebrating” a Mass standing up on a chair and delivering sermons on frogs' life, did you prepare yourself in any special way for your future service?*

A.Sz. – I was convinced that they would not accept me to the seminary, if I wasn't an altar boy and did not know any Latin. Thus, I became an acolyte at the parish church and at the orphanage run by the Sisters. I remember a certain occurrence that hap-

pened at the Sisters'. The priest gave me a little prayer book with acolyte's responses – I still have it somewhere. The text was in two columns – on the left it was in Latin, and on the right it was in Latin, too, only written phonetically. The priest told me to learn the text by heart, I did not need to understand it. Thus: *Quia Tu es Deus, fortitudo mea...* One day he told me that I had to come to May celebrations. At that time I could not tell very well the May celebrations from the Holy Mass (I was in second grade of grammar school). I did not thoroughly learn the acolyte's responses either. I came before the altar, kneeled and waited for the time of those responses to finally come, when I should be able to recite my *Quia Tu es Deus, fortitudo mea...* because then the singing would follow, the litany; and nothing happened. I remember that I felt so intense that I... passed out. They carried me away from before the altar, and I thought to myself that I ruined the entire Mass: because I went woolgathering and did something wrong. I was terribly stressed out.

Hence, I was an acolyte since childhood. As far as the Latin goes it was like this. When I passed from seventh grade to secondary school, I had to choose between two languages: English and Latin. Usually students chose English, because no one felt the need for Latin; while I, without giving anyone any explanation, chose Latin. I was the class president and rather popular with other kids, thus many of them followed my example. Suddenly it turned out that among 80 first-year secondary school students 60 chose Latin. The Director was beside himself. He took the class list and moved everyone with worse grades to the English class. I am aware that because of my determination, the reason for which I left unexplained, so many kids took up Latin. When I came to the seminary, which was already at the Marians', I was greatly surprised to find out that the majority did not have a slightest idea about Latin.

P.N. – *You belonged to a parish where diocesan priests served. Why didn't you enter a diocesan seminary? And if entering a congregation, why did you choose the Marians?*

A.Sz. – When I found out that there was an option to either become a diocesan priest or a religious order priest, I told myself, I remember, that I would go the length. There was no Marian parish in my hometown of Grudziądz, but the Marians had St. Francis Xavier’s Church received from the Jesuits. One of my acquaintances – close friends – was an acolyte there. He encouraged me to come.

At home no one opposed my plans. My parents only told me to think it through. I knew something about the Little Friars of Carol de Foucauld, and the Little Sisters also used to visit us. Before the war my parents, my Mother particularly, kept in close touch with the Dominicans. But I figured that if the Lord wanted to place me among Dominicans or Little Friars, He probably would have brought me in closer contact with them. I already knew the Marians and really liked them. There was no reason for looking somewhere else. Before even passing my finals at school, I asked for the Constitution and other materials related to the Congregation. Someone delivered them to me, but frankly I did not study them too well.

P.N. – *Therefore, Marians themselves attracted you to the Congregation. Were some special people who contributed the most to your making the discernment and choice among them?*

A.Sz. – I always had good fortune with the Marians, even then, in my youth, and later, in the Congregation. As I recall, Grudziądz did not have a Marian parish, but did have wonderful Marian priests. For example, Fr. Hermanowicz, a Belarussian, enjoyed great respect, although in a small town, such as Grudziądz, priests from the East were regarded with reserve, if not an open dislike.

Then there was Fr. Perz, M.I.C., Doctor of Theology, who gave religious education classes at my school. I remember once my Father came back from parents-teachers meeting at an agricultural secondary school, where he taught math. It turned out that their Polish language teacher, a zealous Marxist, complained that he had only 5 to 6 hours weekly of Polish language classes and that it was definitely too little, because “it was not only the matter of literature, but of creating a philosophy of life, certain vision, proper scientific attitude towards the world.” Which Fr. Perz instantaneously responded by saying that he perfectly understood Mr. Professor since he had to straighten out in just

one hour everything that the latter put into students’ heads during his six hours. Such was Fr. Perz, later the Provincial Superior, a man of great culture, tactfulness, and sense of humor.

I also remember Fr. Leon Szelağ who liked the young people very much. With him I went to Tatry Mountains as member of the first group of boys. I did not belong to the rich ones either. Sometimes for lunch at school we took pieces of fried up bread because there was no money for the fresh bread. We weren’t starving, such a situation never occurred. I remember scenes that happened each time when we lost something. But I am not complaining – I had a wonderful childhood. My family had four children, a floor below – 10, and the nearest neighbors had 14 kids. Therefore I had companions to play with. My Father was a surveyor, and Mother – a librarian. Their salaries were so small that I could not afford a vacation trip to the other end of Poland. Fr. Szelağ gathered such boys from all over Grudziądz (I was then in elementary school) and together with Fr. Opieczonek, M.I.C. we went on the first camping trip. I fell in love with Tatry Mountains then. Even today it so happens that I cannot feel really rested, if I don’t go to mountains.

P.M. – *I remember that you used to go to our house in Cyrhla at least one a year- – either in winter or summer. So, where does this hobby stand today?*

A.Sz. – Now I don’t have time for it. And this is not a hobby, but a relaxation. When one works at the desk all day, then the best relaxation would a physical effort. The weather may be bad, I may not be able to see sites, it is enough for me to just walk.

P.M. – *For the whole day, if I recall correctly...*

A.Sz. – I was unreasonable at times. If I was coming for six days only, I wouldn’t be waiting for good weather. Once I went on a exceedingly long walk and strained my tendon. But the next day I was on the road again going to the Goat’s Pass. Do not ask for details, I have nothing to be proud of. And then I go back to Lublin, and please believe me, strength stays with my legs, the entire organism is cleared, and my mind preserves the memory of those days filled with short trips, pacing. This wandering has some extremely renewing quality.

The first person that ever took me to Tatry

Mountains was Fr. Szelağ, already mentioned. Later, for many years, practically from the time I entered the Congregation, I took trips with Fr. Olgierd Nassalski, M.I.C. It's difficult for me to say that I became a priest because of one specific Marian. But among those people that contributed to strengthening of my vocation no one helped me more than Fr. Nassalski. He ministered in Grudziądz for just one year, during which time he visited us. But this contact was not the most important, only camping trips – in winter or summertime – most often to Tatry or Bieszczady Mountains, sometimes near Warsaw. And particularly conversations held on those trips and returning to those conversations during his visits to us. He never tried to talk me into entering the seminary – he did not have to since I already told him that I wanted to become a priest. But he served me with his good councils and somehow strengthened me. I must say that this good, close, fraternal contact remained even when I became a Marian.

Another Marian who helped me a lot spiritually was Fr. Jerzy Wieprzkowski. As I learned later, he belonged to a group of Marian “renovators” allied with Fr. Nieciecki, but mainly with Fr. Łopatecki. Fr. Wieprzkowski was the spiritual director of the seminary in Włocławek, later he worked in Grudziądz and was my family's and my confessor. When I was in ninth grade, I used to take regular walks with him on Sunday afternoons. Those walks had a clearly spiritual atmosphere. This priest knew that I wanted to be a Marian; I benefited a lot from him as my confessor and spiritual director. Later, as I was entering the Marian Congregation, he was leaving it. In 1964 he transferred to work in a diocese, and next he definitively resigned from priesthood. Paradoxically, not only did this fact not shake my vocation, but strengthened it in some way.

I remember religious education classes, from which I gained a lot thanks to Fr. Henryk Kulesza, M.I.C., Senior's involvement. He also left the Congregation later. He was not a great or brilliant priest, but he was an honest, devoted Marian.

With good sentiment, I recall Fr. Józef Pietuszko, M.I.C., and the year when Fr. Adam Boniecki, M.I.C. ministered in Grudziądz. As an acolyte, I was also under Fr. Franciszek Bieniasz, M.I.C.'s care (he was a seminarian at the time), and later – under Fr. Eugeniusz Delikat, M.I.C., whom I also recall with warm feeling. He used to regularly

organize acolytes' meetings that had a deeper meaning than the ones held before him. We not only played ball and sang, but also were formed. Fr. Delikat polished up the liturgy and was a sought-out preacher for the youth. He had his own style that was unique and prompted a lively response.

P.N. – I also remember Fr. Delikat from my secondary school times. He was giving classes for the school seniors from the entire town of Elbląg. Young people discussed those classes later in their schools. Besides, he has preserved this style until today...

A.Sz. – I could continue for a long time naming Marians that passed through the two churches in Grudziądz, i.e. Fr. Stolarczyk and Fr. Opieczonek. But I do not recall anyone from that period who would negatively remain in my memory. One person was liked more than the other, but that's normal. This way I was growing up as an acolyte with the Marians, closely associated with them.

P.N. – You always stayed near the Church, so your joining the Congregation was not probably a surprise to anyone?

A.Sz. – Rather no one at my school suspected that I wanted to become a priest. I only recall two incidents when such a suggestion was made. I remember that I invented myself a pseudonym “Boniface” for signing the diaries, and a girl asked me then, if I wanted to become a priest. It seems that I denied it then.

I confided my desire to become a priest only in my friend Marian, the very one who introduced me to Marian acolytes. Once, the lady who taught us Latin mentioned that somehow no one from our school wanted to enter the seminary – it happened already in my tenth grade – Marian blurted that Szostek here wanted to go. The entire class burst out laughing, and I was furious at him fearing that a surname “pastor” would be glued on to me. Nothing of the kind happened. Everyone just forgot the whole incident at once. Everyone knew that I was going to church and served as an acolyte, etc., but somehow nobody associated me with men of cloth, for which I was very happy.

P.N. – However, you did not enter the seminary right after school?!

A.Sz. – First, I went to college, mainly to dodge the military service. That was the first reason. The second reason was related with my home – I did not want to do any harm to my sisters who were already in college: one majored in Polish studies, the other – in chemistry. They both had scholarships. The third reason, given by my parents, was as follows: “You must consider: if you want to become a priest, be a priest. But first go to college, see a part of another world. Your vocation is not going to vanish, should you have one.” Incidentally, this was not the healthiest argument, but that’s how it went.

I passed the admission exams for historical studies in Toruń. Still to the present day I love history and in my spare time I always reach for history books. I remember going on a camping trip with Fr. Nasalski. During this trip I clearly realized that I was going to throw away five years of my life in college to become at the end an archivist, for example. And yet I wanted to become a priest, preach sermons, hear confessions, celebrate Masses. At the end of the trip I got an assignment of cleaning a cooking pot. After a whole month of using pots without cleaning them with proper chemicals, there was a lot to clean using stones and sand. When at the end of my task Fr. Olgierd came to see me, I told him: “That’s it! I am not going to college!”

A storm broke up at home. They told me: “First – consider; second – remember the military service; third – mind that your sisters are in college.” Fr. Olgierd came to see our family and had a “man to man” conversation with my parents. Finally it was decided that I would go to college for one year. This did not look too bad to me. I went for historical studies, wishing to go to seminary right after my first year. And this is how it all happened. Before leaving college, I obtained an academic scholarship – something that rarely happened to the first year students. With this money I bought myself two pairs of sneakers: a good one for hiking, and another, more elegant than good. And then I went to Lublin.

P.N. – *It means that you went to the university at once?! Without doing your postulancy or novitiate...*

A.Sz. – At that time Marians were studying in Włocławek. I met with Fr. Szwajkowski, M.I.C. and Fr. Papużyński, M.I.C. there. We transferred to Lublin on account of CUL. I was in the first year, along with Fr. Śliwiński, M.I.C., Fr. Skwierczyński,

M.I.C. and a few others, who left the Marians in later times. Fr. Czesław Wojtkiewicz, M.I.C., the House Councilor, who was also on the CUL’s staff, noticed that I liked philosophy and was getting good grades in it. He proposed that I do thorough studies in philosophy going all the way up to Master’s degree, and then study theology just shortly. I was very glad to accept this proposal. That was a time of some experiments within the Church.

The year 1964 was also a time of yet another experiment: an attempt was made to combine the novitiate with the first year of studies. Upon admission to the Congregation and passing the eight-day Skórzec retreat – an excellent one – run by Fr. Nieciecki, we were transferred to Lublin. Fr. Andrzej Krzymyżek, M.I.C. came with us as the moderator. Later, it was decided that this way of action was not in accordance with Canon Law, and also – senseless. We left the seminary everyday for several hours, and then we studied. There was no time or place for formation. Fr. Krzymyżek went back to Skórzec, and Fr. Stanisław Szymański, M.I.C. came instead – another charming Marian, who had a lot of influence on the further development of my vocation, just like Fr. Waław Makoś, M.I.C. did. I truly had good fortune with the Marians. For example, after my first year, I petitioned before the Provincial, Fr. Witold Nieciecki, for a transfer to the Department of Christian Philosophy, and my request was granted.

It was a very brave decision on the Congregation’s part, and twice as brave at that. First, I know Lublin Seminary professors, who used to say: “Rather a cactus would grow on the palm of my hand than Szostek would return to the seminary.” It means that the Congregation really trusted my decision of becoming a Marian. Fr. Waław Makoś has definitely played his role in it – he helped me out. Secondly, my education would be much more costly. It was decided that I would make my studies for three years longer than usual. Only later it turned out that I was the least expensive seminarian. Already during my philosophy studies I obtained a stipend: first, the institutional one, and then – an academic one, which was quite substantial. Later, when I was studying theology, I was already employed as an assistant.

After five years of studying philosophy, I was accepted anew into the novitiate. Thus, I was twice accepted into the Congregation, but I never was thrown out, nor did I resign myself along the way.

That's the trick. When I completed my philosophy studies, Fr. Styczeń proposed me to remain with the Faculty of Ethics. I obtained Cardinal Karol Wojtyła's support, and hence, since 1970, I had been studying theology for four years, being already on CUL's staff.

During my seminary time I also met Fr. Waldemar Oskiera, a Marian, who helped me for a long time and still is helping and guiding me. At that time Fr. Oskiera was, with some intervals, our spiritual director. I still keep in touch with him.

P.N. – Thus, your serious affiliation with CUL and Faculty of Ethics began at that time...

A.Sz. – This was a time of experiments, and somehow, I entered this path. Further development of my experiment was already related to academic work. I remember that when I was beginning my philosophy course, Fr. Czesław Wojtkiewicz, still a Marian at that time, wholeheartedly advised me to get in close association with the University. I was repeatedly saying then that I did not want to be a scholar. I truly did not want to. I just wanted to complete my education. However, later I asked myself a question: "Do I have to be faithful to what I've said or faithful to the discernment of my true vocation?"

P.N. – You mentioned a group of Marians who were first strongly going for reforming the Congregation, and then later left it, as, for example, Wieprzkowski or Łopatecki...

A.Sz. – That was a sort of "exodus", which affected the entire Church, also in Poland. Maybe, it hit the Marians with doubled force. Łopatecki wanted to renew the Marians radically, and then he left. Many have been affected by this. Wieprzkowski also left, he was the one who posed for one of the renovators. Somehow it all coincided with the general crisis in priesthood after Vatican II. It has been said at the time that Vatican II reevaluated bishops and laity, but in a sense the priests were left unnoticed. Many others also left, for example, Fr. Kazimierz Leśniewski and Fr. Kulesza – they were my Prefects. Also, Fr. Stanisław Jagodziński – he was in my year and I was friends with him; Fr. Kusaj, who guided me when he was a seminarian and I – an acolyte. In the seminary we shared a dormitory room. I asked some of them later what could be done to avoid this happening to me. One replied frankly: "I do not know."

P.N. – Isn't it strange that some of those who left the Marians, distinguished themselves in the beginning of their religious and priestly path by a strong desire of changing themselves and the Congregation? After all, they wanted to reform it. Did they feel such a strong grace and force within themselves?

A.Sz. – I will respond a little naively, but I cannot do otherwise. For me, one of the criteria of vocation is that the young member of Congregation feels thankful for being accepted, for a chance to find his way of life within the Congregation. Does his stay in the Congregation seem to be for him a relief, joy, breath of air, even if problems arise? Or, by coming to a community, he has at once a feeling of doing a favor and wants to make reforms that he feels able to complete. I do not foretell a long stay in a congregation for such individuals. It is also important to have an inner feeling of being set free: "Finally, I am able to pray and live the way I wanted; I do not need to hide my desires and finally read books that truly interest me. Finally."

Naturally, a vocation can also be wasted at a later time.

P.N. – Our Prefect, Fr. Michał Kozak, M.I.C., used to teach us, following St. Benedict, that a usual way of joining a congregation is such when one comes and asks: "I want to live like you; teach me how." But not one comes and says: "I know when you strayed and what you should do. I will reveal the truth to you." In what way did your confreres leaving the Congregation influenced your vocation as a priest and religious order member?

A.Sz. – At times I felt afraid because often times such people, with whom I was very friendly left the seminary. On the other hand, all departures strengthened my vocation in a sense that they influenced my decisions by making them more responsible and definitive.

Besides, there was a discussion going at the time about *identitas mariana*, particularly at the time when we were attending the diocesan seminary. I was not aware then to what extent the path of our education is reflecting on my sensing and understanding my identity. From the time when we opened our own seminary, which was against my conviction, all discussions stopped or at least dimin-

ished a lot. In our times we saw the Marian House in Lublin as it was some sort of a boarding house, from which one went to a real seminary. It is amazing, but it's only with time that I understood how much a stay in your own seminary means, a direct contact with the Marians, the environment. The matter of one identity cannot be explained only on theoretical level, only verbally.

P.N. – *You spoke about gratitude towards the Congregation for being accepted into it. What else can be done in order to persevere to the end? What helping tools did you work out for yourself?*

A.Sz. – After the departure of my close friends and getting my own experience and crises, I can say only one thing: no one is error-proof. I specifically recall a passage from Gospels: “If the house is not built on the rock...” Tempests and strong winds will come into everyone's life, also rain; and they will attack. Those words relate to the entire Sermon on the Mount, but I have a feeling that they mainly relate to the basics of spiritual life, to prayer. There is no other way: if one does not start from deep contact with God, from a sincere and open acceptance of the Constitutions into one's heart, from gratitude and readiness, from accepting everything that the Congregation offers in a spirit of faith, then this man will somewhere “erupt”.

I do not believe that I laid the foundation in the best way... We enter here on very delicate grounds. I would say that it's not so simple. The time of reforms and different experiments was not propitious for laying of such a foundation. We were in our novitiate years, and at the same time I was teaching the young to sing before the Holy Mass. We were going to religious education stations and teaching how to sing. Today I would not repeat this and wouldn't recommend it. Our age groups (classes) were not free from different experiments and living exceedingly *ad extra*. This reflected later on my confreres and my vocation; I think this influence wasn't either very small or always beneficial.

When I came to the Congregation, one of the confreres said in the very beginning (1964): “This is how it is with life in a religious community. It starts out with a top C, and then slowly descends, which is good; one wishes for not dropping too low before one's death.” I thought that he was exaggerating. The official ideology was quite the contrary – one enters and then steadily rises. I think that one state-

ment does not contradict the other. One is strangely related to the other. On one hand, a man gets experience and begins to better understand how to deepen his faith in Jesus Christ and his devotion to Him. On the other hand, there is some damage that comes from the world, from tiredness, from habit. It applies to me just as well.

DECEASED BROTHERN

OUR ASSOCIATE BROTHER

**Bishop Roman Andrzejewski***(02.19.1938 – 07.7.2003)*

Noon, on July 7, 2003, Bishop Roman Andrzejewski, *Vir Aggregatus* of the Congregation of Marian Fathers unexpectedly passed away.

He was born on February 19, 1938, in Morzyczyn, Poland. In 1961, he graduated from the Major Seminary in Włocławek, and on May 21st of the same year was ordained a priest. Next, he studied classical philosophy at the Catholic University of Lublin. In 1973, he defended his Doctoral thesis at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. In 1974-75, he studied at the Pontifical Institute Altioris Latinitatis at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome.

During the years of his service for the Church he held, among others, the office of an assistant at CUL (1966-74), Prefect of Education at the Seminary in Włocławek (1968-70), Professor of Latin and Patrology at the Major Seminary in Włocławek (1972-83), Speaker at the Polish Section of Radio Vatican (1974-75), confessor for religious sisters (1978-81), Professor of Church Latin and Latin Literature at CUL (1974-82).

He was consecrated a bishop by Bishop Jan Zareba and received from him a domination to Vicare General of the Włocławek Diocese on December 20, 1981. In 1988-96, Bishop Roman Andrzejewski presided over a Committee of the National Conference of Bishops in Poland for the Ministry among Farmers. As a national minister for farmers, he showed great care for the future of Polish agriculture and the destiny of the village residents.

As a bishop, he decided to associate more closely with the Congregation of Marian Fathers. With a letter of November 16, 1992, written by hand on the commemoration of Our Lady of Mercy, Bishop Roman addressed the Provincial Superior, Fr. Stanisław Kurlandzki, M.I.C., with a request to be admitted into the Congregation as an "Associate Member". In this letter he gave the following reasons for his request: 1. Devotion to Mary; 2. Care for priests serving all over the world, particularly, in the East; 3. Devotion to Poor Souls; 4. A desire to be buried at the Licheń Shrine, should he not make other provisions or impassable circumstances arise. Formulated in such a way, his motivation showed a deep concurrence of his spirituality with the main characteristics of our Congregation's charism.

At that time the Bishop was 54 years of age, of which 31 years of priesthood and 11 years of bishopric service. On November 19, 1992, the Government of the Polish Province of our Congregation agreed to grant the Bishop the status of an "Associate Member". In his letter of December 3, 1992, to the Provincial Superior, Bishop Andrzejewski warmly thanked for the grace of being aggregated in the Congregation and obtaining of appropriate privileges. He also expressed his willingness to fulfill all duties related to membership in the Marian community and his desire to serve the Congregation in his capacity of a bishop. On December 8, 1992, he was formally aggregated in the Congregation.

In 1992-2003, Bishop Roman consecrated to the priesthood several Marian Deacons, led the Holy Mass and delivered a homily on several occasions during Marian Chapters or Provincial Conventions; celebrated a Mass at church fairs and gave ardent sermons before pilgrims in the Licheń Shrine. He visited with pleasure different Marian communities in Poland and abroad, particularly the Licheń Shrine and the Provincial House in Warsaw. He stayed in close touch with the Provincial Superior in order to give reports on his "Marian way of life". It can be said that he remained faithful to undertaking the responsibilities of an Associated Member.

On May 31, 2003, he consecrated to priesthood in the Licheń two Marian Deacons. A month later, sudden death took him away. Funeral solemnities were performed on July 10, 2003, at the Włocławek cathedral and on July 11, 2003, at the Licheń Shrine, where the Bishop was buried next to other persons of merit. The funeral Mass was led by the Apostolic Nuncio to Poland, Archbishop Józef Kowalczyk.

Fr. Stanisław Kurlandzki, M.I.C.



Fr. Antoni Papużyński, M.I.C.

(08.8.1940 – 07.13.2003)



Fr. Antoni Papużyński was born on August 8, 1940, in Kazakhstan, where his parents were in exile. In 1946, his mother brought him and his three brothers back from exile. His father and the oldest brother returned to the homeland as soldiers of the Polish Army. The family took up residence in the Głogów administrative district: first, in Kotla, and since 1950 – in Brzostów. On December 27, 1947, in Kotla Antoni was baptized and later went to the First Communion. In 1947-54, he attended elementary school, and in 1954-57, completed three years of secondary school in Głogów. In 1957 he was accepted to the Skórczew novitiate as a candidate for priesthood in our Congregation. Antoni made his first religious vows on August 15, 1958, at the novitiate house.

In 1959 he completed the 4th grade of secondary school in Głuchołazy. In 1959-60 he served at our religious house in Licheń, and in 1960-62 studied philosophy at the Marian Institute of Theology and Philosophy in Warsaw. He took his four-year course of theology (1962-66) at the Major Seminary in Włocławek. His perpetual profession of vows came on August 15, 1964. After graduating from the seminary he asked for prolonging the time of his service as a deacon. In 1966-69 he worked as a catechist in Licheń. He was ordained a priest in Włocławek, on February 2, 1967. In 1969-72 he made his post-graduate studies at the Department of Christian Philosophy (Section of Philosophy and Psychology) at the CUL. Upon completing his Master's thesis entitled: "Psychological and pedagogical basis of the Founder of the Marians, Fr. Stanislaus Papczyński's system of education", he obtained his Master's degree in psychology. In 1973-79 he served as the Provincial Vocations Director, and in the school year of 1979/80 – he ministered at Marymont borough in Warsaw. In 1980 he went to do pastoral work in England.

In 1980-82 Fr. Papużyński served in Fawley Court as a chaplain of the Divine Mercy College, and then he ministered in Slough (1982-85), and in the last year he served as the Vocations Minister. In 1985 he was transferred again to Fawley Court, where he was the chaplain of the College and Vocations Minister for a year, becoming later (since 1986) a House Superior, Treasurer, and Vocations Minister, and since 1987 also the Vice Provincial. In 1993-97, residing in Hereford, he was the 3rd Provincial Councilor.

From mid-1997, on account of special treatment that he was undergoing in Warsaw, Fr. Antoni resided at his nephew Sławomir's house in Malbork, Poland. In response to his persistent requests, granted him in 1998 the indult of ex-claustration for three years. After the indult's expiration, Fr. Papużyński remained outside the community life without his superiors' permission. In March of 2003, he petitioned again for permission to reside outside the religious house on account of his health problems. He received such permission on May 23, 2003. At that time he resided in Warsaw.

Fr. Antoni died unexpectedly Sunday, July 13, 2003, in Gdańsk. The news of his demise just reached the Provincial Superior on July 17, 2003.

Fr. Antoni Skwierczyński, M.I.C.

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