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FATHER KASPER DRUŻBICKI SJ (1590-1662) AND HIS TEACHINGS ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

Over the last six centuries the Society of Jesus, founded by St Ignatius Loyola, has played an enormous role in the life of the Catholic Church. There have been periods when, without the Jesuits, little has happened in the Catholic Church. There are numerous saints, scholars, missionaries, pastors, artists, architects, poets stemming from the Jesuit circle, and in recent years the Society has given Pope Francis to the world. The zealous monks reached Poland in the mid-16th century and their activities put up a dam that blocked the great wave of Protestantism. One of the most outstanding representatives of the Society of Jesus was Fr. Druźbicki Druźbicki, educator, superior, preacher, theological writer, mystic, founder of the Polish school of religious spirituality. There is a considerable amount of writing about him in Polish as well as in Latin, German and French¹. This study aims to present the figure of the Polish Jesuit theologian with particular emphasis on his teachings on Christian perfection.

1. An outline of biography and works of Fr. Druźbicki Druźbicki

As evidenced by Daniel Pawłowski, his first biographer, the Polish Jesuit was born on January 6, 1590², on Epiphany³. His parents, Piotr and Elżbieta from the Obieziński family, “Nałęcz związany” coat of arms, lived in the village of Druźbice, in the Sieradz province. Kasper’s ancestors have built a church there and in this parish, they had a priest (sometimes two) from their family. There is some doubt as to whether at Kasper’s birth this estate belonged to his family. Fr. Pawłowski, when writing about his birth, stated that his parents were *praenobiles in the Posnaniensi palatinate*. In his *Herbarz* (Book of Heraldry), Kasper Niesiecki noted that the Druźbice estate had passed into the hands of the Trzebieńscy family⁴. Only Fabian Jaroszewicz clearly stated that Kasper Druźbicki was born in the Sieradz province⁵. It is possible, as Jarosław Rejowicz pointed out, Kasper’s parents, after selling the family estate,

¹ See J. Majkowski, J. Misiurek, *Druźbicki Kasper SJ*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 4, Lublin 1983, szp. 240-241.

² Karol Estreicher incorrectly gave the date of birth: 6 Jan. 1587. Cf. K. Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska*, vol. 15, Kraków 1897, p. 332.

³ D. Pawłowski, *Vita Patris Gasparis Druźbicki, Poloniae Societatis Jesu*, Kraków 1670. Polish translation: *Wierna życia Wielbnego X. Kaspra Druźbickiego relacja*, Zamość 1700, p. 1.

⁴ K. Niesiecki, *Herbarz Polski*, vol. 3, Lipsk 1832, p. 411.

⁵ F. Jaroszewicz, *Matka świętych Polska*, pt. 2, Piekary 1850, p. 4.

moved to the Poznań Region, where they managed to achieve a certain social standing⁶. Drużbicki's biographers reported an unusual event from his childhood. Namely, he was said to have fallen into the water and drowned. He was pulled out after a few hours and miraculously came back to life. Many years after, in his *Libellus illustrationum*, Drużbicki thanked the Lord with the following words: *You've brought me close to death, or even brought me, already dead, back to life*⁷. In the family home, he received Catholic education as his parents were not infected with the religious novelties of their era. He used to say himself that his temperament was calm. It was not ill-disposed to performing good deeds, nor was it inclined towards evil⁸.

Drużbicki's parents enrolled their son in the Jesuit College in Poznań, where he studied the humanities. He was both diligent and talented, standing out from among his colleagues from different parts of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Having observed the lifestyle of St. Ignatius Loyola's sons, he decided to join the Jesuits. On August 1, 1609, he started his novitiate in Krakow and, under the supervision of his Master Andrzej Gutthaeter Dobrodziejski, for two years he climbed the stair of monastic perfection. In his spiritual diary, he wrote that the Lord God gave him both repentance and contempt for himself, as well as veneration of to the Passion of Christ, the Holy Sacrament and to Our Lady, who healed him from a lung disease, which he contracted just before entering the novitiate. The pages of his diary also feature a prayer being an expression of gratitude for the grace of vocation: *You have asked me, O Lord, to make a complete sacrifice of myself, in a continuous burnt offering through the vows of perfection on the altar of voluntariness, burning with the fire of love, so that You could take me at my first entrance to the Order as your servant from the hands of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother and my dearest Lady, and then accept my burnt offering on the altar of your cross. My Soul was and still is so precious to You, as the last and closest part of your creation. Thus, I thank you for the gift of the Order, which I consider as the greatest and the most accurate of your benefits. For this, I shall bless You for all Eternity, from the bottom of my entrails, for this peculiar grace*⁹.

Having completed his novitiate, Kasper made his first religious vows on the Assumption of Mary, on August 15, 1611. Then, he moved to Lublin, where for a year he has been a student in rhetoric, taught by Fr. Seweryn Branscensis, murdered by the infidels during the Deluge¹⁰. Between 1612 and 1615 he studied philosophy in Kalisz and attended lectures of Fr. Jan Rogulski and Fr. Scypion Kaczorowski. The lectures of the former are preserved in the manuscript¹¹. Around that time, Kasper started reading ascetic works, intensively studying *O żywocie zakonnym (De vita spirituali ejusque perfectione)*¹² by Álvarez de Paz, an outstanding Spanish ascetic writer. After graduating in philosophy, he took up the duties of a poetry and rhetoric teacher in Jesuit convent schools in Lublin and Lviv. In

⁶ J. Rejowicz, *Kaznodziejstwo Drużbickiego*, "Przegląd Powszechny", 61/1899, p. 209.

⁷ *Libellus illustrationum* itself was lost. It was partially reprinted by Daniel Pawłowski in *Vita*, p. 4.

⁸ D. Pawłowski, *Wierna życia...relacja*, p. 4.

⁹ D. Pawłowski, *Wierna życia...relacja*, p. 4.

¹⁰ A. Bober, *Sytuacja jezuitów na południowo-wschodnich obszarach Rzeczypospolitej w dobie buntu kozackiego (1648-1665)*, Kraków 1686, pp. 31-32.

¹¹ BJ, ref. 2170, 2902

¹² The book entitled *De vita spiritualis ejusque perfectione* was misleadingly translated into Polish as *O Żywocie zakonnym* and published in Kraków in 1613.

1616 he started 5-year theological studies in Poznań, where he met excellent professors: Mikołaj Żorowski (moralist), Balthazar Wolborius (biblicist), Jan Borszyński (moralist), Jakub Golewski (dogmatist). He also came into contact with Father Mikołaj Łęczycycki, professor of biblical exegesis and polemic theology, author of many ascetic and polemic works, who exerted a significant influence on Drużbicki's later work¹³. At the end of his theological studies, in 1621, he was ordained priest in Poznań. The 31-year-old priest became known as a master preacher. He himself mentioned the conversion of *one Gentleman, a great enemy of the Order*¹⁴.

In 1622 Fr. Drużbicki moved to Jarosław, where under the leadership of Fr. Krzysztof Angelus, he celebrated the so-called Third Probation, which was intended to prepare the young monk priest for direct evangelization work, similarly to today's *tirocinium pastorale*. The plague raging in Ruthenia provided him with an opportunity for a heroic act of love for his neighbor. He made a vow to serve the unfortunate. He contemplated dying for Christ, writing down the following words: *Sweetest Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered and died for me, out of the gift of Your grace, I desire, and beg You, and offer to suffer and die for You. Oh, may You let me shed my blood and lay down my life for You, who gave Yours for me*¹⁵. The desire for martyrdom was quite common among the Jesuits of the epoch. They often went on missions, and there they often died for preaching the Gospel. Fr. Wojciech Męciński, Drużbicki's peer, who was tortured for his faith in Nagasaki in 1643, can serve as a case in point¹⁶.

In 1623, Fr. Drużbicki lived in Lublin, where he lectured logic at a local college. In addition to teaching youth, he presided over a sodality of lawyers, as at the time Lublin was known for its tribunals. He achieved fame as a preacher and wrote that *he offered his fame to God as a sacrifice*¹⁷. He also turned out to be a skilled polemicist engaging in a religious dispute about the deity of Christ with Krzysztof Lubieniecki Junior, minister of the Lublin church of Polish Brethren. Drużbicki's adversary recalled the dispute as follows: *The brightest tribunal, the palestra, the visiting gentlemen and noblemen, the Governor of Lublin, Mikołaj Oleśnicki, the Castellan of Lublin, Tarło, all of them listened with great attention to this religious sparring at the Jesuit church in Lublin*.¹⁸

Two years later Fr. Drużbicki moved to Kalisz, where he was appointed prefect. There, he made his perpetual vows on May 3, 1626. On the 5th of August of the same year, he was nominated to the novitiate master of St. Matthew's in Krakow, while at the same time being the Vice-Chancellor of the local St. Stephen's College. In 1629, he became the Vice-Chancellor of the Great College of St. Peter and Paul in Kraków, founded by King Sigismund III Vasa. The same year, on October 6, he was elected Provincial of the Kraków Province succeeding Fr. Henryk Pichert. The office was handed down to him by Pompilius Lambertengo, a prominent Italian organizer, who had a significant influence on adapting the laws and customs of the Polish provinces to those of the Western provinces.

¹³ L. Grzebień, *Łęczycycki Mikołaj (1574-1653)*, in: *Słownik polskich teologów katolickich*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1982, pp. 560-566.

¹⁴ D. Pawłowski, *Wierna życia...relacja*, p. 10.

¹⁵ J. Rejowicz, *Kaznodziejstwo Drużbickiego*, p. 211.

¹⁶ W. Padacz, *Z polskiej gleby*, Kraków 1973, pp. 446-461.

¹⁷ D. Pawłowski, *Wierna życia...relacja*, p. 11.

¹⁸ K. Lubieniecki, *Disputatio Lublini cum Gaspare Drużbicki Jesuita habita*, Raków 1627.

As the Provincial Superior, Fr. Drużbicki strove towards a harmonious combination of firmness with goodness. After accepting the office, he asked God the following: 1^o) *let me always please you*; 2^o) *give me your wisdom in governing*; 3^o) *give me a pure heart*; 4^o) *guide my hand in writing, my tongue in speech, my thoughts in reasoning, give me health, force, and resilience to work*; 5^o) *give me the right feeling to pray, let me, O Lord, do whatever you command me to do, and command whatever you please*¹⁹. As the Provincial Superior, he was very cautious when accepting candidates for the Order, opposing the foundation of an excessive number of institutions, and taking care of the proper material basis for the new foundations. He attached great importance to the development of missions and spared no efforts preparing young missionaries in the spirit of zeal and dedication. He canvassed for the conversion of Orthodox Christians to Roman Catholicism in line with the spirit and principles of the Union of Brest. Encouraged by Jan Andrzej Próchnicki, the Bishop of Lviv, he sent two confreres to the Uniate Synode in Lviv on October 28, 1629. These were Fr. Bambus and Fr. Szczytnicki, who were intended to *prepare their minds for the unison and fusion of both confessions in gentle manners and private discussions*²⁰. The first of them gave a thrilling sermon at the Synod. As the Provincial, he penned and issued 28 rules for prosecutors and administrators of Jesuit manor houses in 1630, which remained in force until their abolition in 1773. Much as these provisions clearly showed Drużbicki's approval for the serf-grange economy, at the same time they exhibited a very humane approach to the subjects. It was even more evident in Drużbicki's memorial to the superiors of monastic houses from 1631: *Let them all know, all the superiors and subordinates, that under the pain of severe punishment none of us can hit in the face or beat up their servants and subjects*²¹.

During the time of Fr. Drużbicki's government, the dispute between the Society of Jesus and the Krakow Academy reached its climax. It concerned the foundation of a Jesuit academy, in Krakow, similar to the one in Vilnius. Father Mikołaj Łęczycki was the soul of these efforts. The Kraków Academy defended its rights by all means and the case found its way to Rome. The Roman Rota issued an "executorales" verdict allowing the Jesuits to open their own school, which was announced in Krakow on May 22, 1630 at the College of St. Peter in the presence of the nuncio Anthony Santacroce, provincial Drużbicki, priests, and monks. It seemed that the Jesuits had won, but it was only a half-victory. After the death of King Sigismund III Vasa (known as the protector of the Jesuit Order) in 1632, the Kraków Academy intensified their battle against the monks. The struggle was waged with pens, and gave rise to prolific anti-Jesuitian literature. Professor Neyman published as many as six brochures, the most important of which was the *Memoriale eksorbitancji i procesu Akademii Krakowskiej z Jezuitami o szkoły krakowskie* (The Memorial of Exorbitance and the Trial of the Krakow Academy with Jesuits Concerning the Krakow Schools). In response, the Jesuits issued five brochures and two larger treatises. The reply to Neyman's *Memoriale* was authored by Provincial Drużbicki himself, who published a polemical piece entitled: *Deklaracja memoriału eksorbitancji i procesu Akademii Krakowskiej między stany koronne poddanego* (The declaration of the memorial of exhortation and the trial of the Krakow Academy between the crown states of the subject). At the Convocation Sejm, summoned by

¹⁹ D. Pawłowski, *Wierna życia...relacja*, p. 32.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 41.

²¹ S. Załęski, *Jezuici w Polsce*, vol. 2, Lwów 1901, pp. 718-719.

Primate for electoral purposes on October 10, 1632, the matter of the dispute was transferred for resolution to Prince Władysław. At the end of that month, a conciliatory tribunal was held, which involved several Jesuits (Drużbicki, Rudnicki, Szembek, and Brzechwa). The dispute was not resolved and King Władysław IV Vasa referred it to the Holy See. At the end of 1633, Fr Kasper wrote a dissertation entitled: *Powody dla których Ojciec św* (Reasons for which the Holy Father...) in which he expounded on the issue calmly and objectively. Pope Urban VIII ordered the Polish to close public schools in Kraków. The Jesuits complied with the papal decree, and from 1634 on, they ran four-year theological studies for their clerics in Kraków²².

At the end of 1632, Fr. Drużbicki transferred the provincial title to his successor Fr. Marcin Hińcza, a known author of ascetic books²³. Drużbicki became the superior of the college in Kalisz founded by Primate Stanisław Karnkowski. He catered for the earthly needs of the monks, education, library, and printing house. In 1634, he moved to Jarosław, where he took the duties of an instructor of the Third Probe. He encouraged young monastic priests to spend a year studying Jesuit spirituality and monastic law, and to conduct 30-day retreats upon due preparation. Drużbicki maintained a friendship with Duchess Anna Ostrogska (née Kostka), the founder of the Jesuit residence in Jarosław. It was thanks to Ostrogska's funds that the church, which had served as a sanctuary of the Virgin Mary since 1381, was renovated.

In 1636 Fr. Drużbicki devoted himself to preaching, taking over the Tribunal's pulpit in Lublin. He preached with great commitment to the members of the Crown Tribunal and a mixed auditorium of the nobility, burghers, and the folk. He left behind 24 handwritten volumes of sermons and oratories (8 volumes to religious people, 6 volumes of Sunday sermons, 4 volumes of holiday sermons, 2 volumes of casual sermons, 3 volumes of homiletic materials, 1 volume of home oratories). In the history of Polish preaching, he sits among the transitional preachers active between the period of classicism and the subsequent period of panegyricism. On the one hand, he used a refined language, a well-wrought preaching form, and gave a clear and thorough interpretation of the tenets of faith; on the other hand, some signs of literary corruption could be observed as well, such as an excessively flowery language, an accumulation of synonyms relating to the same subject, or the presence of etymological arguments. In 1650, he rejected King John Casimir's proposal to become the royal preacher. *I must concentrate on death and the final judgment we face*, he wrote to the ruler, *and not the applause sought by preachers. I practice preaching principles inconsistent with those that are welcome at the court, where evidence and feeling are in contempt, while concepts, subtlety and novelty cause great enjoyment*²⁴. Fr. Drużbicki translated some of his sermons into Latin to introduce foreign preachers could to his thought. In addition, he published instructions for monastic disseminators of the Word of God, which concerned the preparation and preaching of sermons from pulpits. There, he made his readers aware that the purpose of the sermon was to encourage and induce the listener towards a more profound love and following of Christ. Therefore, he postulated emphasizing its moral aspects, practical applications, and emotional moments, thus influencing the will and the feeling with an appropriate presentation

²² Memoriale exorbitancji i procesu Akademii Krakowskiej. BOssol, sign 719.

²³ See L. Grzebień, *Hańcza Marcin* (1592-1668), in: *Słownik polskich teologów katolickich*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1982, pp. 50-51.

²⁴ J. Rejowicz, *Kaznodziejstwo Drużbickiego*, "Przegląd Powszechny", 62/1899, p. 81.

of the truths of faith. For this reason, he recommended that preachers frequently pray for the grace of recognition of the Scripture, and for *prophetic*²⁵ gifts, proper knowledge of their environment, well-written sermons, mastery of the examined subject, and the ability to memorize the content of their sermons and tailor them to the needs of the listeners²⁶.

The years 1638-1641 witnessed Fr. Drużbicki's rule the Ostrogski College, founded by the saintly Anna Alojza Chodkiewiczowa, wife of Grand Marshal of the Crown Jan Karol Chodkiewicz. At that time, Ostróg offered a course in philosophy for Jesuit clerics. In 1640 Chodkiewiczowa founded a dormitory for the sons of the impoverished nobles of Volhynia, with a separate house for 20 students. In 1641, the generous founder donated a house with a garden in the suburbs as a dorm for musicians. As the Vice-Chancellor of the college, Fr. Drużbicki catered for the library, expanding its collection, and in 1641 he expanded the pharmacy, which flourished without further impediments.

On July 3, 1640, a wonderful monastic jubilee took place in Ostróg, prepared by the regent, described by a Jesuit historian in the following words: *What was not there! Triumphant arches, 3 orchestras: hetman, estate and student orchestras, fireworks, salvos; a three-day folk mission and wonderful funeral rites for the soul of the founders and benefactors of the Order, preparations for the ceremonies, high masses, vespers and sermons during the ceremony itself, actio scholastica Polish drama entitled "The triumph of the Order in its first century", all of which pleased the hetman's wife and the noble guests from Volhynia and Polesia. For 8 days, 100 poor people were sitting at each table, served alternately by Jesuit priests and clerics. The Grand Marshal's wife spent several thousand Polish zlotys on upholstery, expensive carpets, mattresses, church decorations. She ordered two oxen, calves, poultry, and vegetables as needed. The saintly Vice-Chancellor Kasper Drużbicki was the soul of the jubilee celebration*²⁷.

In 1640, at the Congregation of the Polish Province in Jarosław, Fr. Drużbicki granted the incorporation of the following residences into the Ostrogski College: Ksawerów²⁸, Perejasław²⁹, Nowogródek³⁰, and Winnica³¹.

²⁵ Some of the biographers mentioned that Fr. Drużbicki had a gift of prophecy and was considered by the inhabitants of Poznań as *their prophet*. They also provided certain facts that testify to this gift. Speaking to Mrs. Tomicka, he predicted that there would be no Jesuits at her death bed, although they had been her spiritual guides throughout her lifetime; he determined with precision the day of death of Duke Ostrogski, the governor of Vilnius; to Tomasz Zamoyski, the Crown Chancellor, he foretold that his wife would give him two daughters, and then a son. D. Pawłowski, *Wierna życia...relacja*, p. 75; K. Niesiecki, *Herbarz Polski*, vol. 3, p. 417; F. Jaroszewicz, *Matka Świętych Polska*, pt. 2, p. 8.

²⁶ W. Urban, *Praktyczne rady kaznodziejskie ks. Kaspra Drużbickiego*, "Wiadomości Duszpasterskie", 4/1948, no. 1, pp. 10-13.

²⁷ S. Załęski, *Jezuici w Polsce*, vol. 4, p. 1269.

²⁸ The constant invasions of the Cossacks prevented Ksawerowo from developing. After 1664, the residence stopped its operation and the foundation moved from Ksawerowo to the residence in Owruć. Compare: *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564-1995*, ed. L. Grzebień, Kraków 1996, pp. 339-340.

²⁹ The residence in Perejasław, from the foundation of Łukasz Żółkiewski, the starost of Perejasław, was seized by the Cossacks in 1648 and turned into an Orthodox Basilian monastery. Cf. *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i innych krajów słowiańskich*, vol 7, pp. 955-956.

³⁰ The Jesuit residence in Nowogródek existed between 1631 and 1714, and then became a college, which survived until the dissolution of the Jesuit order. Compare: *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach...*, p. 464.

³¹ The residence in Winnica, from the foundation of Walenty Aleksander Kalinowski, was seized by the Cossacks in 1648 and only started developing in 1732. Between 1630 and 1648 there were schools and a dorm for poor

In 1641, Fr. Drużbicki was in Krakow, where he performed the duties of Vice-Chancellor and novitiate master at the St. Stephen's Church. In June 1586 the novitiate was moved from Braniewo to a former presbytery, with the exclusive right to use St. Matthew's Chapel situated in a Gothic church erected ca. 1300. Fr. Drużbicki established a number of principles to be applied in spiritual direction. In his opinion, a spiritual director should be authorized by his superiors to guide the souls and be properly prepared for taking on responsible duties. The essence of spiritual direction is to help discover a vocation so that it is accepted and realized. According to Drużbicki, continuous contact between the student and his spiritual guide, who should always have time for spiritual conversations, was essential. The directed person should respect and trust his superior, from whom he should humbly accept appropriate guidance. Fr. Drużbicki also recommended having good friends who would be kind enough to provide guidelines and help to strive for perfection³². As a novice master, he realized the importance of his role and therefore *he was always available and willing to assist any novice in in moments of difficulty and doubt*³³.

In 1644, Fr. Drużbicki moved to his beloved Poznań and took up the duties of Vice-Chancellor at the local college. Active between 1571 and 1773, the college became famous for its schools run by the Jesuits, including the Academy³⁴. Drużbicki's rule coincided with a period of great national defeats in the struggle against the Cossacks. He witnessed the Republic of Poland in great misery and described the causes of wars and national defeats in a sermon delivered on St. Mark the Evangelist's Day in 1649: *Let us not discuss the foolishness of our adversaries, but let us consider our own instead. So far God has spoken to us with the words of private and public goodness. Has not the word of Isaiah been fulfilled with us: "Sedebit populus meus in pulchritudine pacis, in tabernaculis fiducia, in requie opulenta". Let us understand the God's address, and that God has taken care of us, has been feeding us? [...] Another language in which God speaks to us is the language of oppression and defeat [...], was He not speaking to us with this language often and clearly at that time? He took our leader and our king away [Władysław IV, died on 20 V 1648], he cut the hand away from our army and leaders [Żółte Wody 11-16 V 1648; Korsuń 20 V 1648]. Then, we fled when no one was pursuing us [Piławce 23/24 IX 1648] and over 30 000 of our people were taken captive. How many have been killed? How many areas ravaged? Has not a third of the kingdom been torn apart? It seems that we lack the strength or the spirit [...]. What shall become of us us, when there are peoples within the Republic itself who are reading to tear us apart?*³⁵. Drużbicki's sermon is suffused with patriotic feelings, question marks, and a profound concern for the future of his Homeland.

In 1651 Fr. Drużbicki started the restoration of the Poznań college, seeking to reconstruct old buildings from scratch. The cornerstone of the new church was consecrated by Bishop Kazimierz Prince Czartoryski. Meanwhile, a war with Sweden broke out, followed by a raging plague that stalled the construction and pushed the college into ruin. Hostile to the

scholars. There was a school theatre and a small library transported to Ostróg in 1648. Compare: S. Zaleski, *Jeziuci w Polsce*, vol. 4, pp. 1081-1092.

³² S. Piotrowski, *Zasady duszpasterzowania*, "Ateneum Kapłańskie", 66/1963, pp. 145-149.

³³ D. Pawłowski, *Wierna życia...relacja*, p. 42.

³⁴ See L. Piechnik, *Działalność jezuitów na polu szkolnictwa w Poznaniu*, "Nasza Przeszłość", 30/1969, pp. 171-210.

³⁵ J. Rejowicz, *Kaznodziejstwo Drużbickiego*, "Przegląd Powszechny", 61/1899, p. 417.

Jesuits, the Swedes completely ravaged the most beautiful ground floor rooms, transforming them into stables, and plundered the rooms upstairs in a terrible way, too.

During his stay in Poznań, Fr. Drużbicki acted as an envoy to Rome, visiting the Eternal City four times: in 1636 and 1643 as the procurator of the Polish Province, and in 1646 and 1652 as a delegate to the 8th and 10th General Conventions.

In 1652 Fr. Drużbicki became a provincial again. He was given the rule over the Polish province by General Geswin Nickel. There are not many sources of information about our hero's life at that time. As we know, on August 7, 1657 he was seen in Lviv, where he welcomed Grand Marshal of the Crown Stefan Czarnecki in front of the Jesuit church, after his victory over George II Rákóczi.

Poznań was the last place of residence and work of Fr. Drużbicki, who on September 29, 1657 took up the post of Vice-Chancellor at the local college. As already mentioned above, the college had been ruined by the Swedish Deluge and the nationwide epidemic. Drużbicki assumed his duties enthusiastically and not only returned the college to its former state but also advanced the construction of the church. He revived the neglected services, raised manor farms from ruins, and opened schools. Until the end of his life, he worked tirelessly in the confessional and at the pulpit. At the age of 71, he still preached Passion sermons in Poznań.

In the spring of 1662, Fr Kasper fell ill with fever and, provided with all the sacraments, died on April 2 that year. Poznań residents flocked at the coffin with his body, exhibited in the collegiate chapel, to pay their respects. They kissed his robes, rubbed their medals, rosaries, and books against them, and even started tearing the robes to pieces, taking them home as relics. The Jesuits were forced to move Drużbicki's body to the enclosed monastery. There, for 17 days, the body of the saintly monk rested on a catafalque because the friars were busy with Lent missions and confessions. The Jesuits and the representatives of other religious communities gathered on the day of his funeral. Many thousands of people turned out to bid farewell to their prophet. He was buried in the crypt under Our Lady's Chapel in the basement of the newly erected church. In 1666 the already rotten coffin was opened to reveal that Drużbicki's body completely preserved, except for the head. The event was witnessed by Suffragan Bishop of Poznań Maciej Marian Kurski and his two commissioners, Stanisław Grundowicz and Jan Regulus. After the monastic tomb was destroyed by the flooding of the Warta in 1698, Fr. Drużbicki's bones were collected and placed in a copper coffin. At this time a painting depicting a life-size figure of Fr. Drużbicki, considered as a saint while he still lived, was displayed in Our Lady Chapel³⁶.

2. Christian perfection according to Fr. Drużbicki Drużbicki

Fr. Drużbicki Drużbicki wrote several works on Christian perfection, including: *Droga doskonałości chrześcijańskiej* (The road to Christian perfection) (Kalisz 1665, 1741, 1791, Lwów 1667), *Szkoła doskonałości chrześcijańskiej* (School of Christian perfection) (Poznań 1871), *Przemysły zysku duchowego albo nauki do prędkiego w drodze Bożej postępu* (Insights on spiritual benefits or teachings for quick advances on God's way) (Kraków 1671, 1672, Gdańsk 1672, Kalisz 1685, Wilno 1708, Lwów 1746, Poznań 1750, 1866), *Sublimitas perfectionis religiosae* (Praga 1713, Ingolstadt 1732) and *Tractatus de brevissima ad*

³⁶ J. Mandziuk, *Życie i twórczość ojca Kaspra Drużbickiego*, Lublin 1966, mps, p. 41.

perfectionem via hoc est de perenni divinae voluntatis intentione, executione, apprehensione (Kalisz 1682)³⁷. It was his last work that served as a basis for this study.

What is Christian perfection according to our spiritual master? The answer is simple: *Christian perfection and true sainthood exist in a union with God*, which means that perfection is the same as sainthood. The author used these terms interchangeably. Man is perfect inasmuch as he participates in God's perfection and unites with God³⁸.

According to Fr. Druzbicki everyone was summoned to achieve perfection in the union with God. To this end, he must get to know the paths that guide him towards the said union. Here, the author distinguishes three types of people: the first type includes those who think they have a worthy goal, which they set in front of their eyes, but have chosen the wrong path and will never achieve it; the second type includes those who have chosen a proper but a long way, filled with various twists and turns, obstacles, and those who die before achieving perfection; the third type includes who choose a short and safe path, achieving their union with God within the shortest possible time. Unfortunately, there are few such people. Thus, one must be very careful not to take the wrong and long path in one's pursuit of sainthood³⁹.

The author poses yet another question: why, despite their calling for sainthood, do some people never achieve it? Druzbicki saw that group as comprised primarily the members of religious communities. Having posed the question, he answers it himself. According to Druzbicki, *simultaneously with God*, [these people] *search for Him not just for His own sake, or even worse, having abandoned God, they search for something else*⁴⁰. Those who fail at achieving sainthood often tend to be focused on their personal problems. For such people it is impossible to unite with God. *If people knew, could, and wanted to look for God himself and were satisfied with him, and put Him at the center of their longings and desires, and did not love themselves or things other than God, then they would find Him without any difficulty in all things and would unite with him*⁴¹.

En route to perfection, man must clearly set his goal, i.e. God alone – *solus Deus et nihil praeter ipsum*⁴². The search for things other than God is unbecoming to Christians. However, the Church is full of people who, despite their striving for perfection, look for different things that distance them from God. These people die before reaching perfection. They have simply taken the long road that does not lead them to their goal quickly enough.

To cast a clearer light on his argument, the Jesuit ascetic quotes from the *Song of Songs* (6, 8-9): *Sixty queens there may be, and eighty concubines, and virgins beyond number; [but] my dove, my perfect one, is unique, the only daughter of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her*. According to Fr. Druzbicki, royal wives and concubines stand for those

³⁷ Fr. Druzbicki authored about 40 theological treatises, sermons, reflections and clerical manuals, which were published in print primarily after his death. They were reprinted many times in various places and were also included in edited collections (Kalisz, vol. 1, 1686, Poznań, vol. 2, 1691, Ingolstadt, vol. 1-2, 1732). Many of the works survived as manuscripts, and some were translated into French, English, Spanish and German. See: L. Grzebień, *Druzbicki Kasper h. Nałęcz (1590-1662)*, in: *Słownik polskich teologów katolickich*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1981, pp. 425-428.

³⁸ K. Druzbicki, *Tractatus de brevissima ad perfectionem via...*, p. 1.

³⁹ Compare W. Urban, *Droga do doskonałości chrześcijańskiej wedle księdza Kaspra Druzbickiego*, "Wiadomości Duszpasterskie", 4/1948, no 7/8, p. 267-269.

⁴⁰ K. Druzbicki, *Tractatus de brevissima ad perfectionem via...*, p. 5.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 13.

members of the Church who, despite their sincerity, seek God only indirectly and imperfectly. There are many such Church members. Those who seek God most perfectly and righteously are rare, and therefore are called the most gentle among doves.

The author of the quoted treaty concludes: human life on earth is short, hence man must pursue the shortest path to perfection. No excuses or delays are acceptable in pursuing this goal. If one chooses the wrong path, i.e. the long path, one will simply fail to reach perfection⁴³.

Does such a direct and short path to perfection exist? Fr. Drużbicki tries to answer that question in Chapter IV of his piece. The answer is affirmative: such a path does exist – it is the one that *ad Deum per ipsum Deum ducit*⁴⁴. This path involves fulfilling God's will: *Dico: ad Deum perveniendi commodissimam rationem, Voluntatem Dei esse*⁴⁵. To unite with God as soon as possible, the person striving for perfection must therefore follow the path of God's will. The most dependable guide along this route is Jesus Christ, who set himself as an example of how to best fulfill the will of the Heavenly Father. He did it most perfectly and it made it the staple of his life: *Sola Voluntatis Divinae via Christum ad Deum et perducere potuit et perduxit*⁴⁶. It is therefore necessary to follow Jesus Christ closely and pursue the goal without deviating from the chosen path; to avoid the wrongdoings that lead one towards vile goals; to abstain from contradicting God's will; and to do good deeds in accordance with His will. Drużbicki distinguishes between two types of human deeds: good, i.e. performed in pursuit of a worthy goal in accordance with God's will, and evil, i.e. done in pursuit of a vile goal that runs contrary to God's will. Hence, all human deeds that approximate one to God, are those that do not deviate from God's will⁴⁷.

According to Fr. Drużbicki, in one's quest for perfection, one should not reject human measures, such as practicing the virtues and practices that strengthen one's piety; however, the human measures cannot replace the proper attitude towards God's will. They should be treated with reserve, because they are laden with covert deviations from the chosen path. The author strongly emphasizes that only *Voluntas Divinae Intentio [...] est Intentio Intentionum, regula regularum, principaliter regula, aliae autem tantum ratione istius*⁴⁸.

What does the fulfilment of God's will involve, therefore? Fr. Drużbicki contends that the Lord God ordered the man to do some deeds, while forbidding others. Drużbicki's interpretation of the "ordered deeds" extends the Ten Commandments, that *necessaria est [...] observantio*⁴⁹, while also including obedience towards the decisions of one's authorized superiors. Man will faithfully fulfill the will of God by performing the deeds commanded directly by God, and indirectly by people.

Father Drużbicki prayed for uniting himself with God's will in the following words: *At the end, let me, O God, to do all that you command, and command of me what you like, make me what You want me to be, do what You want through me, always have mercy on me, as*

⁴³ J. Mandziuk, *Życie i twórczość ks. Kaspra Drużbickiego i jego nauka o doskonałości chrześcijańskiej*, Wrocław 1965, p. 55.

⁴⁴ K. Drużbicki, *Tractatus de brevissima ad perfectionem via...*, p. 20.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 21.

⁴⁶ K. Drużbicki, *Tractatus de brevissima ad perfectionem via...*, p. 25.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 22.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 53.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 55.

*You know and will. Be pleased with my humiliation, and mind my great veneration. Do not let me do the things You do not wish me to do; do not allow me to wish for anything outside of Your will. Let me be completely faithful to You, a completely steady servant of Yours; You are my Lord, and may You be exalted in me and through me, venerable God*⁵⁰.

In his reflections on the fulfillment of God's will, the Jesuit theologian stressed the importance of intention. It should be good, prudent, willing, and, above all, pure. Two extremes should be avoided when awakening one's intention: not to awaken it too often or too generally. There are times, continues Drużbicki, at which intention may be awakened more often, specifically when performing orders given by one's superiors.

Drużbicki contends that one may come closer to a union with God when performing acts that are in accord with God's will, and doing so with the feelings of ardent love, filial reverence, frequent fear, trust in humility, obedience, and admiration⁵¹.

Contemplating Fr. Drużbicki's influence on the understanding of the notion of Christian perfection, one must emphasize the debt he took out with the medieval mystic, Blessed Henryk Suzo. The affinity between Fr. Drużbicki and St. Ignatius Loyola is even more striking. For both of them, perfection involves, above all, striving to seek and find God in all creation, hence the cult and practice of God's presence, God's will, God's liking, and a proper intention as the underpinning of one's every action⁵². In the spirit of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* and *Constitution*, the Polish Jesuit sought God in all creatures, and he also sought all creatures in God. He recognized the need to separate oneself from the said creatures to direct all of one's love towards their Creator, while at the same time acknowledging the practical impossibility of eliminating them completely. Thus, he claimed that it was necessary to treat earthly creatures as gifts of God, and avoid loving them for themselves or for one's own satisfaction, instead loving them for God. Drużbicki's is the most Ignatian approach to the world. It is a realistic approach, one that recognizes the value of active apostolic life for the salvation of the world⁵³.

* * *

Throughout his life, Fr. Drużbicki lived the motto of St. Benedict of Nursia: *Ora et labora*. He held religious offices for the most part of his clerical life, becoming a prolific writer, pastor, preacher, and administrator in the process. At the same time, he was able to deal with all kinds of earthly matters, converse with and provide guidelines to others, all of which never distracted him from writing ascetic literature. What we find in him is *a harmony of very rare qualities and advantages: a contemplative life and active life, a limitlessly austere lifestyle and an equally unbound sharpness, a great deal of kindness and consideration towards others, complemented by honesty, matter-of-factness, and practicality*⁵⁴. In fulfilling God's will, Drużbicki exemplified the shortest path to Christian perfection, and was a great implementer of the Ignatian principle: *Ad maiorem Dei gloriam*.

⁵⁰ D. Pawłowski, *Wierna życia...relacja*, p. 34.

⁵¹ J. Mandziuk, *Życie i twórczość ks. Kaspra Drużbickiego i jego nauka...*, p. 58.

⁵² M. Bednarz, *Charakterystyczne cechy mistyki o. Kaspra Drużbickiego*. *Ateneum Kapłańskie* 66(1963), p. 122.

⁵³ J. Mandziuk, *Ks. Kasper Drużbicki teolog i mistyk*, Warszawa 1969, mps, pp. 84-85.

⁵⁴ S. Bednarski, *Drużbicki Kasper*, w: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 5, Kraków 1939-1946, p. 404.

Father Kasper Drużbicki SJ (1590 – 1662) and his teaching on Christian perfection Summary

Since the foundation of their order, the Jesuits exerted a huge impact on the Catholic Church in Poland. They introduced the reform adopted at the Council of Trent to stop the spread of Protestantism. The Society gave the world many mystics, great theologians, missionaries, saints, and priests. One of them was Father Kasper Drużbicki, theologian, ascetic writer, preacher, and administrator. His numerous theological works include a treatise on the shortest path to Christian perfection, which is the fulfillment of God's will. Drużbicki's treatise was intended not only for those in consecrated life but also for those in secular life who strive toward sainthood.

Keywords: Mysticism, holiness, Society of Jesus, school system, asceticism, monastic life, Trent's reform

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