

REV. GRZEGORZ WEJMAN

REV. DR. EDMUND NOWICKI – APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR IN GORZÓW WIELKOPOLSKI

INTRODUCTION

Protonotary Apostolic Rev. dr. Edmund Nowicki of the archdiocese of Gniezno and Poznań was deeply attached to the city of Gorzów Wielkopolski through his priestly ministry, and to the city of Gdańsk through his episcopal ministry. Work in the Apostolic Administration in Gorzów Wielkopolski was particularly difficult for him. A huge area – 1/7 of the territory of Poland, lack of basic pastoral tools and obstructions created by the then state authorities caused extremely big problems with building the foundations of pastoral life in the church newly-created in this land. Still, his fortitude, solid theological and legal background, as well as personal sensitivity bore the expected fruit of the well-functioning apostolic administration.

Three major publications were published on the life and activity of Edmund Nowicki. In 1998 Rev. Stanisław Bogdanowicz published a book entitled “Edmund Nowicki, the bishop of Gdańsk”. Collective work edited by Rev. Henryk Jankowski entitled “Bishop Edmund Nowicki 1956-1971” was published in 1996 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of death of the bishop of Gdańsk. The main item is the doctoral thesis of Rev. Edward Napierała entitled “Historia Administracji Apostolskiej w Gorzowie Wlkp. za rządów ks. dr.

Edmunda Nowickiego (1945-1951)”, gives an account of the birth and development of the administration in Gorzów¹.

This paper presents the most important pastoral achievements of Rev. Edmund Nowicki in the perspective of his appointment as the apostolic administrator and his organizational, pastoral and personal ministry in Gorzów Wielkopolski summed up with the most important events in his life of a priest and a bishop.

1. PRIEST

Edmund Nowicki was born on September 13, 1900 in Trzemeszno, district of Mogielnica as the fourth son of Zygmunt and Maria nee Huebner. His father owned a brewery. He attended a secondary school in Nakło. After graduation he entered a Higher Seminary. He studied in Gniezno and Poznań because of the personal union of the archdiocese of Gniezno and Poznań. He was ordained a priest on March 15, 1924 in Gniezno by cardinal Edmund Dalbor. After his ordination he spent 3 years working as a curate in the Sacred Heart parish in Poznań. He was then sent to Rome to study canonical law. He was granted a PhD degree in 1929 from the Pontifical Gregorian University. Following his return to Poland, he worked in the Curia and the Ecclesiastical Court in Poznań. He also used to write².

¹ S. Bogdanowicz, *Edmund Nowicki Biskup Gdański*, Gdański 1998; H. Jankowski (ed.), *Biskup Edmund Nowicki 1956 – 1971*, Gdańsk 1996; the Author's private archives, E. Napierała, *Historia Administracji Apostolskiej w Gorzowie Wlkp. za rządów ks. dra Edmunda Nowickiego /1945-1951/*, Warszawa 1975 (typescript); E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia z pierwszych lat urzędowania w diecezji gorzowskiej*, in: P. Socha (ed.) in co-operation with Z. Lec, *Księga pamiątkowa, 50-lecie organizacji Kościoła katolickiego na Ziemi Lubuskiej, Pomorzu Zachodnim i Północnym (1945-1995)*, Zielona Góra – Gorzów Wlkp. 1998, 511-546; E. Napierała, *Ks. dr E. Nowicki administrator apostolski w Gorzowie Wlkp.*, in: P. Socha (ed.) in cooperation with Z. Lec, *Księga pamiątkowa...*, op. cit., 55-62.

² G. Wejman, *Organizacja Kościoła katolickiego na Pomorzu Zachodnim i ziemi lubuskiej w latach 1945-1972*, Szczecin 2007, 635-636.

He was in Poznań when WWII started³. He was arrested only on October 3, 1939 and put in prison at Młyńska Street⁴. Conditions in the prison were horrible. Each priest was locked in a different cell with common criminals who were ready to do anything. Priests could only meet once a month during a common walk. They used this opportunity for prayer and confession.

In November that year, Rev. Nowicki was transferred to the Monastery of Friars Minor of the Observance in Kazimierz Biskupi. The regime there was a little lighter⁵. Few months later he was taken to Fort VII in Poznań and then to Dachau concentration camp where he arrived on May 4, 1940 and was given camp number 22032⁶ and found himself in hell. Nazis showed no consideration for anyone or

³ Nazi occupiers did what they wanted with the clergy. They stretched international law for their own benefit and convenience. Following the invasion of Poland, the existing concordat of 1925 was deemed non-existent and it was not possible to apply the concordat with the Third Reich of 1933 on the territories incorporated into the Reich. In consequence, the Church in Poland was deprived of any legal protection. S. Bogdanowicz, op. cit., 70.

⁴ Rev. S. Bogdanowicz wrote that E. Nowicki, who later became a bishop “was no stranger to all kinds of persecution of the Church and harassment of the clergy by the former Prussian authorities, he was also familiar with the insane Nazi ideology, however everyone was surprised by the method and scale of repression following the September defeat”. S. Bogdanowicz, op. cit., 68. However, the deepest humiliation for the soul of a priest was when he was asked to betray the Primate. This is how bishop E. Nowicki recalls the event years later: “We were given a piece of paper and were asked to write the life history and everything we knew that could be used against the Primate and the Bishop. This vulgar temptation to betray was a big humiliation for us, and the disappointment of the authorities only increased their anger”. E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, „Miesięcznik Diecezjalny Gdański” (1969), no 11, 271.

⁵ First, priests were not isolated from each other. Second, they got passes and could go outside the internment area. However, the occupying forces prevented the clergy from performing their basic activities. Bishop Nowicki recalls that you could be put to death for contacting the members of the congregation. at the same time he emphasized that priests ignored this order as this would be in conflict with their vocation. E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 271.

⁶ S. Bogdanowicz, op. cit., 76.

anything. At first priests of all nationalities stayed together but as time went by Polish priests were isolated from the rest and were kept together with the worst criminals who were indoctrinated to believe that the priests were dangerous thugs. One of them used to beat Rev. Nowicki and shout “you are here because you gouged out eyes of German children. Do you understand?”⁷.

The imprisonment in Dachau was not the worst. On August 2, 1940 Rev. E. Nowicki was moved to the concentration camp in Mauthausen-Gusen⁸. Conditions in this camp were unusually hard. It used to happen that a trusty returned to the camp alone as he had earlier murdered the entire unit. Gestapo officers and imprisoned criminals were ruthless towards everyone, particularly towards the clergy. Conditions in the camp can be summed up with the following words of bishop E. Nowicki: “it was real hell starting from the welcome. When compared to Gusen, Dachau was called a «sanatorium»”⁹.

Rev. E. Nowicki returned to Dachau camp on December 8, 1940¹⁰. The second stay in Dachau was much worse than the first one. Germans brought there priests from all other camps and performed inhumane experiments on them. Rev. dr. Nowicki was ready to die. Fortunately, God had other plans for him and on February 6, 1941 through a great effort of his family he was released from the camp¹¹. This is how he interpreted his release: “God’s will was different than me and my friends thought. I survived. Why? For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways – says the Holy Spirit

⁷ E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 273.

⁸ S. Bogdanowicz, op. cit., 78.

⁹ The camp was very destructive for people as evidenced by the fact that Rev. Nowicki did not recognize his friend Rev. Edward Kozłowski. E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 275.

¹⁰ S. Bogdanowicz, op. cit., 82.

¹¹ Quoting archbishop Marian Przykucki, Rev. Bogdanowicz wrote that the release of Rev. E. Nowicki from Dachau camp was possible because of the influence of a high-ranking Wehrmacht officer. S. Bogdanowicz, op. cit., 83.

(Isaiah 55,8)¹². He was one of the authors of the report on the situation of the Church in occupied Poland¹³.

After the end of WWII he returned to his work in the Curia in Poznań where he held the position of a chancellor.

2. APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR

2.1. Decision of cardinal August Hlond, the Primate of Poland

Rev. E. Nowicki was appointed Apostolic Administrator in Gozów Wielkopolski on August 15, 1945. Back then he was still a young priest – 45 years old and 19 years a priest, yet a man with a huge life-experience¹⁴. The nomination ceremony was led by cardinal August Hlond on August 14, 1945 at the house of archbishop Walenty Dymek in Poznań. Years later Rev. E. Nowicki recalled that day saying “it was a very solemn moment because we understood that we were attempting extraordinary things but we were entering the unknown without any resources whatsoever”¹⁵.

He took the office of the Administrator on September 1, 1945. On September 12 as was customary before the war¹⁶, he went to the Public Administration Ministry and the Belweder Palace to present his nominations. Unfortunately, president Bolesław Bierut refused to see him. Rev. Nowicki informed cardinal August Hlond about negative results of his meeting in the Public Administration Ministry and

¹² E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 278.

¹³ S. Bogdanowicz, op. cit., 84.

¹⁴ G. Wejman, op. cit., 635-636.

¹⁵ E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 516.

¹⁶ It happened at the request of the Primate and following two letters he issued to the state authorities. In the first letter of August 16, 1945 he informed the public administration that five apostolic administrators were appointed for the territories in the West and North. In the second letter of August 25 he informed minister Władysław Kiernik about the complex situation. Cf. K. Kowalczyk, *W walce o rząd dusz. Polityka władz państwowych wobec Kościoła katolickiego na Pomorzu Zachodnim w latach 1945-1956*, Szczecin 2003, 76.

the Belweder and the Cardinal made a decision to cancel appointments of other administrators with state authorities¹⁷.

He held the office of the Administrator till January 26, 1951 i.e. until the government of the People's Republic of Poland issued a regulation on the liquidation of the temporary status of church administration in the western and northern regions which as announced in the press would make it possible to "elect vicars capitular and acknowledge current parish priests as permanent administrators of their parishes and permanent holders of those functions"¹⁸.

Where was Rev. Edmund Nowicki coming? He became the administrator of a church unit called apostolic administration for Kamień, Lubusz and prelatre of Piła which covered 48 836 km² and included former provinces of Szczecin, Koszalin, central part of the province of Zielona Góra, Trzcianka district belonging to the province of Poznań, district Lębork and part of Wejherowo and Puck districts belonging to the province of Gdańsk¹⁹.

Apart from several dozen parishes there were no other church institutions in that area. There was no Curia, no ecclesiastical court, seminary or a cathedral there. Nor were there buildings to house those institutions²⁰.

Szczecin was the biggest city of the Apostolic Administration. However, August Hlond, the Primate of Poland did not encourage Rev. Nowicki to live in the city for two reasons. First, Szczecin was located at the end of the administration, second, it was located on the other side of the Oder River. Moreover, the issue of Polish borders was not fully regulated and the Primate was afraid that the Polish Apostolic Administrator may be driven away from there.

¹⁷ E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 520. The Primate as Rev. E. Nowicki recalls— was very surprised and moved as he was truly convinced that the relation between the state and the Church had not changed from before WWII.

¹⁸ "Trybuna Ludu" of 27.01.1951.

¹⁹ M. Chorzępa, *Rozwój organizacji kościelnej na Ziemi Lubuskiej i Pomorzu Zachodnim w latach 1945-1965*, „Nasza Przeszłość” (1965), no. 22, 113.

²⁰ Cf. P. Socha, *Sylwetki Administratorów Apostolskich i Biskupów*, "Studia Paradyskie" (1997), no. 6/7, 175.

He only suggested to plan space for a cathedral, curia, seminary and an episcopal residence in Szczecin. As. Rev. E. Nowicki, the later bishop of Gdańsk, recalls, Gorzów Wielkopolski was chosen as the place to live due to its location. When one looks at the entire administration, it is clear that Gorzów Wielkopolski was located in its central part and that was the major reason. Back then, transport and communication were not as developed as they are now²¹.

He went to the administration at the beginning of September and visited Słubice, Boczów and Gorzów Wielkopolski²². This is what he said after his first visit: “Thanks to a Soviet officer it was possible to make the first visit in mid September. Very slowly I started putting the work plan together in my head and I became more and more used to the idea that Gorzów could be a favorable solution at least for some period”²³.

After his return to Poznań, Protonotary Apostolic edited two appeals. One was addressed to Polish people in the western territories

²¹ E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 518.

²² Private archives of the author (“APA”), J. Anczarski, *Początki diecezji gorzowskiej*, part 1, *Rządcy diecezji gorzowskiej*, Świnoujście 1994, 4-13 (typescript). The first visit in the administration took place at the beginning of September. Rev. Nowicki came to Gorzów Wlkp. in very unusual circumstances. As he recalls, a Soviet officer played a big role. He came to Poznań and took Rev. Nowicki to Frankfurt (at present Słubice). He came with a specific mission. He wanted Rev. Nowicki to send priests to work in the area that he managed. He was aware how much Poles were attached to God and the Church. Polish settlers felt alien and isolated without catholic faith and priests. They could not work well. Therefore he came to Poznań. From Frankfurt they went to Boczów and then to Gorzów. In Gorzów he was enthusiastically welcomed by the congregation and representatives of state authorities (president and district head). He was shown a church that could be the cathedral. A response to every suggestion was “we will provide it”, “we will handle that”. The administrator was taken for a car tour of Gorzów. The city and district authorities were very interested to have the administrator live in their city. Rev. Nowicki was surprised with great kindness and concern for the bishop and the functioning of the curia and the seminary. He was assured that adequate buildings and equipment will be provided. Were their intentions sincere and true? As the Administrator recalls, they could not be questioned. Cf. E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 522-525.

²³ E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 526.

and the second to priests who had already started settling there. Both encouraged their addressees to stand strong in the new conditions and were filled with great kindness.

On September 8, 1945²⁴ he went back to Pomerania. Then from Poznań he went to Koszalin and next to Białogard and then through Koszalin on September 15 he came to Szczecin²⁵. The next day his first

²⁴ Rev. E. Nowicki stayed for quite a long time in Poznań for two reasons: his financial situation made it difficult for him to leave (rail transport was not reliable and he did not have a car) but most of all he needed priests for cooperation and priests from the East were coming to the Curia in Poznań offering their help, he managed to convince some of them to work with him. Cf. E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 518.

²⁵ It was the first inspection in the administration. He made this pastoral visit with Rev. K. Świetliński from the Society of Christ Fathers. While visiting parishes, Rev. E. Nowicki issued decrees of appointment for some of the permanently settled parish priests. The said decree was issued among others in Nowogard to Rev. B. Szczepanowski. Cf. B. Kołodziej, *Dzieje Towarzystwa Chrystusowego dla Wychodźców w latach 1939-1948*, Poznań 1983, 211.

This is how Rev. K. Świetliński describes this visit: “Stante pede” His Excellence Apostolic Administrator Rev. Edmund Nowicki embraces with his heart and mind his area of work, the biggest in Poland and probably most challenging as well.

Rev. Świetliński drives His Excellence Apostolic Administrator from Ponań to Koszalin on September 8 in a car borrowed from director Mroziński so that he could introduce himself to col. Borkowicz, government representative for the western district. He then visits 42 already existing pastoral institutions in Western Pomerania. People enthusiastically welcome their bishop. Priests in those institutions wish to see their bishop and share their impressions of the completed works and hear words of encouragement. Mr. Borkowicz, Province Governor meets His Excellence outside working hours in his office at 9 p.m. During a 30-minute conversation both governors of Western Pomerania – spiritual and administrative, discuss in detail overlapping aspects of their joint activity. During his stay in Koszalin, Rev. Nowicki was hosted by Franciscan Fathers.

Province Harvest Festival and a Garrison Day are held in Koszalin the next day on September 9. Two officers acting upon an order of general Kędziński invite His Excellence to take part. However, he could not stay because he was not invited by the province governor. In the morning he went to visit the pastoral institution in Białogard. However, he promised to meet gen. Kędziński the next day afternoon. During the meeting, gen. Kędziński

inauguration took place in the Church of our Lady Queen of the Polish Crown²⁶. The church was prepared by citizens of Szczecin to become a cathedral. However, the administrator said that he would reside in Gorzów Wielkopolski. The inauguration in Gorzów Wielkopolski took place in the St. Mary's Church on October 28, 1945, the Feast of Christ the King²⁷.

Following the reconnaissance, he enthusiastically started to organize central and territorial administration.

requested that discipline be followed by military chaplains who liked wearing military suits. He expressed his wish that chaplains wear cassocks because "a soldier is fed up with uniforms and wants to see a priest in a cassock and the Word of God on their lips" – the general said.

His Excellence visited a few other pastoral intuitions on his way – among others he went to Nowogard where he was received by Rev. Bogdan Szczepanowski.

While there, he issued decrees of appointment for individual pastoral institutions and some parish priests who were already settled there". Archives of the Metropolitan Curia in Szczecin ("AKMS"), Rev. K. Świetliński, *Od Szczecina do Szczecina. Kronika odnowy życia polskiego i Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego w Szczecinie* (photocopy of the document).

In Szczecin Rev. Nowicki was hosted at the boarding house at Potulickiej street by Rev. K. Świetliński and brother Wacław Chromiński. Cf. AKMS, Rev. K. Świetliński, op. cit.

²⁶ After holy mass, there was a celebration in honor of the arch prelate with representatives of state authorities and crowds of people present. It was followed by a reception at the parish. Cf. AKMS, Rev. K. Świetliński, op. cit., and Archives of the Holy Family Parish in Szczecin, *Kronika parafii*.

²⁷ *Ingres i rezydencja Ks. Administratora Apostolskiego*, "Zarządzenia Administracji Apostolskiej Kamieńskiej, Lubuskiej i Prałatury Piłskiej" ("ZAA") (1945), no. 2, 6. By virtue of a letter of the government plenipotentiary for Gorzów District, the church was handed back to the Catholic Church on September 8, 1945. On December 19, 1945 Rev. E. Nowicki established the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Cathedral parish (the decree came into force on January 1, 1946). Cf. J. Czapan, *Historia Pierwszego Dziesięciolecia Parafii Katedralnej w Gorzowie Wlkp. pw. Wniebowzięcia N.M.Panny*, "Gorzowskie Wiadomości Kościelne" ("GWK") (1957), no. 1, 57.

2.2. Organization of diocesan structures

Zealousness and prudence of PA Rev. E. Nowicki led to the creation of all central diocesan institutions. First of all the Curia with its offices was organized. It started its work as early as September 1, 1945 as requested by A. Hlond, the Primate of Poland who wished this date that was so very tragic for our country to be replaced with a new reality. Rev. Jan Zaręba, a priest from the Archdiocese of Gniezno, became the first Chancellor²⁸. He was followed by Rev. dr. Józef Michalski (1948-1950) and Rev. Marian Kumala (1950-1952)²⁹.

On February 1, 1946, PA Rev. Nowicki created an Education Department. It was run by Rev. Maciej Szałagan who also held the function of a diocesan inspector for religious education and the director of Diocesan Eucharistic Crusade. In August 1946 a Property Department was created with Rev. Paweł Mikulski as its head. On March 15, 1947 Rev. Nowicki created the Pastoral Office, managed by Rev. Stefan Ceptowski³⁰; in 1949 the office was transformed into a Pastoral

²⁸ His appointment to serve in the administration was very interesting. Rev. Nowicki was not yet in the area that was entrusted to him but he was already looking for priests. After the war priests were coming to Poznań and Rev. Nowicki was urging them to work in the apostolic administration that was entrusted to him. Some refused. Rev. Zaręba asked: "In what capacity?". The answer was: "Notary, chaplain or chancellor". "No compensation, Father. Will you accept such conditions?" He did. E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 529.

The Curia was officially opened on October 27, 1945. It was first located at 1a 30 stycznia street, and from May 1, 1946 at 17 Łokietka Street, and then from October 1, 1946 in a block of flats at 16 Łokietka Street. Finally on October 15, 1947 it was moved to a newly-renovated tenement building at Drzymały 36. *Siedziba Kurii Administracji Apostolskiej*, ZAA (1945), no.2, 6. and *Zmiana siedziby Kurii Administracji Apostolskiej*, ZAA (1945), no. 6, 15 and *Zmiana siedziby Kurii Administracji Apostolskiej*, ZAA (1946) 5, 40. *Personalia*, ZAA (1947), no. 5, 333.

²⁹ Archives of the Diocese of Zielona Góra and Gorzów ("ADZG"), Administrative Office, ref. no. C2, no. 136, Pastoral Department, years 1950-1952, Copy of the decree, l.dz. 8824/50, Gorzów Wlkp., December 27, 1950; E. Welzandt, *Rys historyczny diecezji gorzowskiej*, GWK (1970), no. 7, 211.

³⁰ *Personalia*, ZAA (1947), no. 5, 333.

Department – credit should be given to Rev. Józef Anczarski who worked as its director for 13 years³¹. In the following year (1948), on December 1 Rev. Nowicki appointed an Administrative Council and on October 1, 1950 to ensure the right appearance of churches, roadside crosses and shrines, he created a Sacred Art Office³² with Rev. Kazimierz Kowalski as its head.³³

He was supported in his ministry by vicars general. This function was introduced to the administration in 1948. On April 14, 1948 Rev. dr. Antoni Rojko became the first vicar general³⁴. At the beginning of 1950 he was replaced by Rev. dr. Józef Michalski (who held the function till October 29, 1950), and then on January 11, 1951 he was replaced by Rev. Prelate Władysław Sygnatowicz³⁵.

There is no doubt that in his ministry in the diocese, the Protonotary Apostolic was supported by the Council of Diocesan Consultants which was a substitute for the cathedral chapter. The first council was appointed on November 22, 1945 and was composed of 4 priests: Rev. Kazimierz Michalski, Rev. Henryk Hilchen, Rev. Zygmunt Siekierko

³¹ Rev. Kazimierz Żarnowiecki became the first director of the Pastoral Department (1949 – 1950) ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. C2, no. 135, Pastoral Department, year (1949) 1950, Nomination letter and dz. 8824/50 and *Personalia*, ZAA (1949), no. 9-10, 318.

³² A. Baciński, *Dziesięć lat diecezji gorzowskiej*, “Wrocławski Tygodnik Katolicki” (1947), no. 47, 4.

³³ Statistical year book of Gorzów Diocese, Gorzów Wlkp. 1959, p.12, Rev. Kowalski came to Gorzów Wielkopolski every week to serve the Curia and provide guideline and advice to priests who were coming there. He also gave lectures on sacred art in the Higher Seminary in Gorzów. He was released from the curial function at the end of 1959. Cf. *Personalia*, GWK (1959), no. 12, 629.

³⁴ ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. B1, no. 42, Vicar General, years 1948-1952, Copy of the nomination decree, l.dz. 2826/48, Gorzów Wlkp. March 30, 1948. E. Nowicki, *Nominacja wikariusza generalnego*, Znak 2826/48, ZAA (1948), no. 3-4, 95. Cf. *Śp. ks. dr Antoni Rojko*, GWK (1958), no. 7, 405-408.

³⁵ ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. B1, no. 42, Vicar General, years 1948-1952, Nomination decree, L. 200/51, Gorzów Wlkp., January 11, 1951; APA, J. Anczarski, *Księża lwowscy w diecezji gorzowskiej*, 1988, no. 87, ks. *Władysław Sygnatowicz*, (typescript); E. Welzandt, op. cit., 211; APA, J. Anczarski, *Początki diecezji gorzowskiej*, part I, *Rządcy diecezji gorzowskiej*, 119, (typescript).

and Rev. Karol Chmielewski³⁶. The next council was appointed by Rev. Protonotary Apostolic E. Nowicki on November 30, 1948³⁷. It was composed of nine priests, on September 1, 1950 they were joined by Rev. Józef Michalski – vicar general.

The prime concern of Rev. E. Nowicki was to create an Ecclesiastical Court. The Court was established on October 29, 1950. The Ecclesiastical Court of Law in Poznań became the Appellate Court of the second instance³⁸, whereas the Ecclesiastical Court of Law in Gniezno became the court of the third instance³⁹. From January 14, 1955 the Ecclesiastical Court was located on the second floor of the Curia building at 36 Drzymały Street⁴⁰. Rev. dr. Józef Michalski became the first officer.

It is hard to imagine work in a diocese without an adequate number of priests and Rev. Nowicki was well aware of that. There were requests for priests everywhere. Protonotary Apostolic recalled: “There were delegations coming from everywhere with requests for priests, official letters were coming from district and province authorities. It was not possible to answer that urgent need as there was a shortage of priests. People tried to solve the problem themselves. They were searching trains transporting returning expatriates and asking priests to stay. When requests did not work, people took away their luggage thus forcing them to discontinue their journey. It often happened that people left the designated areas and walked to places that were

³⁶ ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. D3, no. 119, Consultants, years 1945-1952.

³⁷ Statistical year book for the Apostolic Administration of Kamień, Lubusz and Prelature of Piła (“SAAKLPP”), (1949), 8-9; *Personalia*, ZAA (1949), no. 1-2, 55 and *Personalia*, ZAA (1949), no. 3-4, 141.

³⁸ Archives of the Court of the Diocese of Gorzów in Zielona Góra (“ASDG”), File without a ref. no. or a title, Primate of Poland – N. 2315/50/R. Decree, Warszawa, October 11, 1950.

³⁹ ASDG, File without a ref. no. or a title, Primate of Poland – N.2551.50/R. Decree, Warszawa, November 10, 1950, and J. Konieczny, *Kalendarium sądownictwa w Kościele gorzowskim (1945-1992)*, Gorzów Wlkp. S 1992 – 39.

⁴⁰ ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. B2, no. 57, Circulars, year 1955, Circular no. 1/55, 9.

several dozen kilometers away where a Polish priest worked, or at least close to his residence⁴¹.

Bishop's urgent concern for people's salvation⁴² resulted in the creation of seminaries. Higher Seminary in Gorzów Wlkp.⁴³ (consecrated by A. Hlond, the Primate of Poland on October 26, 1946 and three minor seminaries in Gorzów Wlkp.⁴⁴ (established on June 4, 1946), in Wschów⁴⁵ (established in 1947 as a boarding school and since 1953 as a seminary⁴⁶ (July 1, 1947).

To broaden the religious knowledge of lay people in the ordinariate, in 1949 Rev. E. Nowicki created the Religious School in Szczecin which functioned from 1949 to 1952. Around 200 to 250 people were broadening their knowledge there. Approx. 45% of attendees were academic youth.

⁴¹ E. Nowicki, *Zagadnienia organizacyjne Kościoła Katolickiego na Ziemiach Odzyskanych*, GWK (1970), no. 7, 202.

⁴² In his appeal to the congregation Rev. Nowicki said: "We are witnesses of the grave danger to the salvation of immortal souls and the cause of the Holy Church in the recovered territories due to the lack of priests. Thus we will only be able to ensure the stability and continuity of God's cause in our borderland if we get young clergy from among our people settled here and we bring them up". Cf. ZAA (1946), no. 7, 1-4.

⁴³ A. Baciński, *Otwarcie Wyższego Seminarium Duchownego w Gorzowie Wielkopolskim 26 X 1947 r.*, Gorzów Wlkp. 1948, mps in the collection of the Archives of the Seminary in Paradyż ("AWSDP").

⁴⁴ E. Nowicki, *Zarządzenie w sprawie ogłoszenia z ambon komunikatu o otwarciu męskiego seminarium w Gorzowie*, ZAA (1946), no. 5, 32-33. Its seat was located at 18 Łokietka Street. Rev. Michał Polulak became the director. Responsibility for the teaching and scientific area was entrusted to Bolesław Kudelka, MA, whereas duties of a catechist were assumed by Rev. Jan Wujda, MA. 82 persons enrolled for the first year. Teaching was based on the curricula of junior high school and high school. Cf. ZAA (1946), no. 6, 25, and "Tygodnik Katolicki" (1946), no. 28, 4.

⁴⁵ *Internat biskupi we Wschowie*, ZAA (1946), no. 6, 59-60; "Tygodnik Katolicki" (1948), no. 59/50, 418 and "Tygodnik Katolicki" (1949), no. 17, 102-103.

⁴⁶ E. Nowicki, *Zarządzenie w sprawie ogłoszenia z ambon komunikatu o otwarciu Męskiego Seminarium w Słupsku*, ZAA (1947), no. 4, 253.

With the approval of the Protonotary Apostolic⁴⁷, at the beginning of 1946 Rev. Kazimierz Żarnowiecki organized a Liturgical Institute in Szczecin⁴⁸ based on Common Workshops. Its seat was located at 17 Niepodległości Street⁴⁹. The Liturgical Institute in Szczecin had a shop on the ground floor and a fitter workshop on the first floor, embroidery shop⁵⁰, graphic shop and a carpenter's on the second floor (moved in 1974 to facilities at 1/3 Potulicka Street). It also had a shop selling products of the Institute in Gniezno at 16 Tumaska Street⁵¹. The Liturgical Institute produced liturgical vestments designed by its own workshop (after the war the demand for liturgical vestments was to a large extent satisfied by products from Szczecin where orders from all over Poland were sent), products made of wood e.g.

⁴⁷ On December 18, 1945 Rev. Kazimierz Żarnowiecki wrote to the apostolic administrator: "It is very hard to be on my own, the institution is growing but unfortunately only in organizational terms whereas the most important thing is the spirit and educational thought. I am not able to handle it all. Still, at present it is recommended to get some institutions under control if only in the organizational terms and this is what I am doing in the hope that God will surely send me some help. The work done over the last months added a bit to my experience, and the organization of matters in our parish makes me think that the ideology of caring for the homeless and granting them property rights should be clearly linked to serving the Church, and thus I have been thinking more and more about creating a Liturgical Institute (like Parsch or Maria Laach), with our workshops and boarding houses involved. I wrote to the Primate to tell him about this. I have defined objectives and tasks years ago and now I am particularly concerned about the legal form of this institution. (...) The plan also involves publishing a liturgical magazine. I am hoping to publish the first issue in April". Cf. Archives of the Archdiocese of Szczecin and Kamień ("AKMS"), LSZ 30, Holy Family Parish, 1945-1951. Income from the activity of the Liturgical Institute was to be distributed in the following way: 40% for the boarding house for homeless youth or big families, 40% for granting property rights to employees of the institute, and 20% for the development of the institution.

⁴⁸ AKMS, ref. no. LSZ 26, John the Baptist parish in Szczecin, years 1949-1960.

⁴⁹ P. Fenrych (ed.), *Rok 1945 – „Szczecin jest Polski i Boży”*, "Prezbiterium" (1985), no. 1-5, 85.

⁵⁰ Helena Helerowa from Warsaw was the manager. Cf. R. Kostynowicz, *Trzy życiowe decyzje i dwa powołania*, "Prezbiterium" (1985), no. 1-5, 90.

⁵¹ Ibidem, 90-92.

rosary beads, ebony wall crosses, altar candle holders, prayer desks confessionals, liturgical vestments cabinets, painting frames, vestry equipment and other, as well as liturgical vessels⁵².

2.3. Field church structures

New people came to settle in the territories awarded to Poland by the Potsdam Conference (July 17 – August 2, 1945). This land became their homeland. They started organizing business, political and religious life there. After the war a very small number of local inhabitants was still there, namely 82 348 people (10 348 people lived in the Lubusz land, approx. 44 800 in 7 districts belonging to the prelature of Piła and approx. 27 200 local inhabitants in Szczecin Province). Following the “Vistula operation”, approx. 54 thousand Ukrainians settled in western Pomerania in the years 1947-1950. Jews were a significant nationality group (approx. 30 thousand). In 1956 approx. 1600 thousand Catholics and 57 925 non-Catholics lived in the administration⁵³.

Priests and nuns offered them pastoral support. In the territory of the Apostolic Administration in Gorzów Wielkopolski there were only 18 local priests⁵⁴ and 10 monastic priests⁵⁵. Priests that settled in

⁵² Ibidem.

⁵³ Cf. *Kronika. Stan Kościoła katolickiego w ordynariacie gorzowskim na przestrzeni od 1945-1956*, GWK (1957), no.6, 370. T. Dzwonkowski (*Administracja apostolska kamięńska, lubuska i pralatura pilska. Zarys dziejów 1945–1966*, in: P. Socha (ed.) in co-operation with Z. Lec, *Księga pamiątkowa...*, op. cit., 27) presents incorrect information that in 1950 the congregation of Gorzów Wielkopolski had ca. 1.5 million members.

⁵⁴ J. Michalski, *Kuria biskupia Ziemi Lubuskiej i Pomorza Zachodniego w Gorzowie Wielkopolskim w latach 1945-1965*, GWK (1965), no. 3, 69. B. Frankiewicz (*Początki polskiej administracji kościelnej na Pomorzu Zachodnim w latach 1945-1947*, “Przegląd Zachodniopomorski” (1986), no. 1, 71-72) informs that in the years 1945-1946 in the Western Pomerania there were 23 German and local priests. T. Dzwonkowski (op. cit., 28) writes about 25 native priests.

⁵⁵ *Kronika. Stan Kościoła katolickiego w ordynariacie gorzowskim na przestrzeni od 1945-1956*, GWK (1957), no. 6, 370. L. Bończa-Bystrzycki, *Kościół katolicki na Pomorzu Zachodnim (1871-1945)*, Koszalin 1995, 67.

its territory included mostly priests from lands, which after the war became a part of the Soviet Union i.e. the Archdiocese of Lviv – 100 priests⁵⁶, Archdiocese of Wilno – 58, diocese of Łuck – 60, diocese of Pińsko – 21 and other⁵⁷.

To coordinate and standardize pastoral work in Gorzów administration, Rev. E. Nowicki organized the first convention of priests in Gorzów on September 19-22, 1945. The convention was attended by 120 priests working in Lubusz land and Western Pomerania⁵⁸.

134 diocesan priests and 68 monastic priests worked in the Apostolic Administration of Gorzów at the end of 1945⁵⁹. Statistical year book for the Apostolic Administration of July 1946 includes names of 268 priests⁶⁰. Third convention of priests of the Apostolic Administration in Gorzów Wielkopolski took place on July 3-5, 1950 in the Higher Seminary in Gorzów Wielkopolski. It was an anniversary convention attended by archbishop Stefan Wyszyński, primate of Poland, bishop Michał Klepacz, ordinary of Łódź, bishop Jan Lorek, Apostolic Administrator in Sandomierz, bishop Zdzisław Goliński, bishop suffragan of Lublin Rev. dr. Bolesław Kominek, Apostolic Administrator in Opole and Rev. dr. Karol Milik, Apostolic Administrator in Wrocław. 300 priests came to the convention. In his speech Rev. E. Nowicki, the Administrator in Gorzów said among other things that there were 398 priests working in his administration, including 238 diocese priests and 160 monastic priests, with some

⁵⁶ APA, J. Anczarski, *Księża lwowscy w diecezji gorzowskiej*, 1988, (typescript).

⁵⁷ C. Osękowski, *Spółczesność Polski zachodniej i północnej w latach 1945–1956. Procesy integracji i dezintegracji*, Zielona Góra 1994, 215.

⁵⁸ *Trzydniowy kurs duszpasterski w Gorzowie*, ZAA (1948), no. 9-10, 310, footnote 1.

⁵⁹ Cf. ADZG, Chronicle of the 10th anniversary of parishes of Gorzów ordinariate, t. 5, no. 144, Rev. J. Anczarski, *Praca ks. Józefa Anczarskiego w Kurii Biskupiej i w diecezji gorzowskiej w latach: 29 XII 1950-30 VI 1963*, Gorzów Wlkp. 1963, 11. Although A. Baciński, *Dziesięć...*, art. cit., 4 mentions 60 secular priests and 68 monastic priests.

⁶⁰ Statistical year book of the Apostolic Administration of Kamień, Lubusz and the prelatry of Piła, Gorzów Wlkp. 1946.

priests ministering in 2 or 3 parishes. On average each priest had 4 thousand members and several churches to take care of. Parishes with a congregation of 20 thousand members had only a parish priest and one curate⁶¹.

The first priest for the ordinariate in Gorzów Wielkopolski was ordained in 1950. Next year 6 more priests, who were educated outside the administration, were ordained.

In 1945 there were only ten monastic priests living in 5 monastic houses. When thinking about the shortage of priests, Rev. Nowicki used to talk about the “bleeding wound” of the new administration. Indeed, the response from Polish bishops and superiors in monasteries to the appeals of cardinal A. Hlond and Protonotary Apostolic Rev. E. Nowicki was not satisfactory. What must be highlighted here, is the role played by the Society of Christ Fathers. Their contribution to rebuilding the Church in Western Pomerania was truly significant as for instance in 1947 every fourth priest working there belonged to the Society of Christ Fathers. Rev. Ignacy Posadzy often visited individual institutions and strengthened priests in their conduct and work, and appreciated its results. The vast majority of them performed pastoral work. Based on available materials, it may be concluded that in the years 1945-1950 priests from 15 different orders and congregations worked in the administration⁶². Priests belonging to the Society of Christ Fathers, Salesian Society, Franciscans, Missionary Oblates

⁶¹ Cf. APA, E. Napierała, *Ks. dr E. Nowicki...*, op. cit., 58.

⁶² In 1955 there were 167 monastic priests in the entire ordinariate representing fourteen congregations. The biggest groups were Silesians (40), Fathers of Christ (33) and Missionaries of St. Vincent de Paul (27), Conventual Franciscans (15), Capuchins (14) and Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (10). There were eight Resurrectionists, seven Missionaries of the Holy Family, six Missionaries of La Salette, five Oratorians and two from the Order of Friars Minor, two Canons Regular of the Lateran and two from the Society of the Divine Word, there was also one Basilian monk. Cf. ADZG, Chronicle of the 10th anniversary of the ordinariate Gorzów, vol. 5, no. 144, Rev. J. Anczarski, *Praca ks. Józefa Anczarskiego w Kurii Biskupiej i w diecezji gorzowskiej w latach: 29 XII 1950-30 VI 1963*, Gorzów Wlkp. 1963, 11. Z. Lec, *Zakony i zgromadzenia zakonne męskie w 50-leciu administracji kościelnej na ziemi lubuskiej, Pomorzu Zachodnim i północnym*, in: P. Socha (ed.) in

of Mary Immaculate and Missionaries of St. Vincent de Paul. They were represented by at least 10 monastic priests⁶³. Monastic priests worked mainly in parochial ministry. Priests belonging to the Missionaries of St. Vincent de Paul were an exception as they ran the seminary and some Curia offices.

Rev. E Nowicki very quickly established co-operation with nuns who proved to be very helpful. After the war there were only 54 nuns here from 5 congregations ministering in 16 towns. Initially, the nuns followed their own charisma in their work or responded to the needs of the environment in which they lived. In 1950s nuns were removed from state hospitals and institutions. It seemed that they might even be entirely eliminated as was the case in Czechoslovakia where in 1950 all male and female congregations were shut down. After nuns were removed from hospitals and kindergartens, they started working in parishes as religion teachers, organists, clerks, sacristans, organizers of pastoral groups, cooks or accountants⁶⁴. Most nuns belonged to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, Sisters of Saint Elizabeth, Sisters of Saint Benedict and Ursulines⁶⁵. Nuns were involved both in central and territorial structures. They toiled to prepare the Curia building, helped to run seminaries (minor and higher)⁶⁶. It must be underlined that nuns were very versatile in their work. In 1950s there were over 500 nuns representing 34 congregations working in the apostolic administration in 73 institutions where they did immense work.

They ministered in an ever growing territorial organization. When the Apostolic Administration was created in Gorzów Wielkopolski i.e. on August 15, 1945, its territory covered 16 deaneries: eight

cooperation with Z. Lec, *Księga pamiątkowa...*, op. cit., 482, mentions 172 monastic priests.

⁶³ Cf. Z. Lec, *Zakony...*, art. cit., 481.

⁶⁴ B. Mastyk, *Żeńskie zgromadzenia zakonne w diecezji gorzowskiej w okresie 50 lat jej istnienia*, in: P. Socha (ed.) in cooperation with Z. Lec, *Księga pamiątkowa...*, op. cit., 464.

⁶⁵ Cf. T. Dzwonkowski, op. cit., 29.

⁶⁶ Cf. B. Mastyk, op. cit., 463-464.

within the prelatore of Piła (Babimost, Lębork, Piła, Pszczew, Wałcz, Wschowa, Złotów and Człuchów), four in the part originally belonging to the Archdiocese of Wrocław (Świebodzin, Zielona Góra, Rzepin and Strzelce Krajeńskie) and four in the Eastern part of Berlin diocese (Szczecin, Koszalin, Stargard Szczeciński and Słupsk)⁶⁷. On June 8, 1946 Apostolic administrator Rev. E. Nowicki created and reorganized 23 new deaneries in the administration⁶⁸. Seven new deaneries were added to the sixteen already in place i.e. Choszczno, Gorzów Wlkp., Gryfino, Kamień Pomorski, Myślibórz, Nowogard and Szczecinek. On November 17, 1948⁶⁹, Rev. E. Nowicki created three more deaneries i.e. Sławno⁷⁰, Krosno n. Odrą⁷¹ and Drawsko⁷², and one more in Bytów on March 23, 1949⁷³. Deaneries were headed by deans supported by vice deans. There were up to 5 deanery meetings per year and 1 to 3 times a year they took part in deanery conventions.

When the Apostolic Administration was created it covered 142 parishes: 84 in the prelatore of Piła (75 parishes, 8 local vicariates, one independent pastoral institution)⁷⁴, 31 in the Archdiocese of Wrocław

⁶⁷ J. Michalski, art. cit., 69.

⁶⁸ SAAKLPP (1946), 3-29, and: E. Nowicki, *Dekret w sprawie tymczasowej zmiany delimitacji niektórych dekanatów, Gorzów, 8 VI 1946.*, ZAA (1946), no. 5, 21-24 and 41-42.

⁶⁹ Decrees came into force on 1 XII 1948.

⁷⁰ E. Nowicki, *Dekret w sprawie utworzenia dekanatu Sławno i reorganizacji dekanatu Słupsk*, l.dz. 9698/48, ZAA (1948), no. 11-12, 350.

⁷¹ E. Nowicki, *Dekret w sprawie utworzenia dekanatu Krosno n./O i reorganizacji dekanatu Zielona Góra*, l.dz. 8040/48, ZAA (1948), no. 11-12, 350.

⁷² E. Nowicki, *Dekret w sprawie utworzenia dekanatu Drawsko i reorganizacji dekanatu Choszczno*, l.dz. 10034/48, ZAA (1949), no. 1-2, 21.

⁷³ *Dekret w sprawie reorganizacji dekanatu lęborskiego i utworzenia dekanatu bytowskiego*, l.dz. 2229/49, ZAA (1949), no. 3-4, 124. Rev. Stanisław Klatka, parish priest of Niezabyszewo parish became the dean of Bytów deanery; cf. *Personalia*, ZAA (1949), no. 3-4, 141.

⁷⁴ H. Krose, *Kirchliches Handbuch XXIII*, Köln 1941.

(9 parishes, 22 curacies)⁷⁵ and 27 in the diocese of Berlin (19 parishes, 5 curacies, 3 local vicariates)⁷⁶.

Having assumed the function of the administrator, Rev. E. Nowicki established seven new parishes⁷⁷: two in Gorzów Wielkopolski – Assumption of the Holy Virgin Mary parish⁷⁸ and Christ the King parish⁷⁹; two in Słupsk – Our Lady of the Rosary parish⁸⁰ and the Holy Family parish⁸¹, one in Szczecin – St. Andrew Bobola parish⁸², one in Czerwińsk – St. Adalbert parish⁸³ and one in Słubice of the Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Poland⁸⁴. Statistical year book of the administration of 1949 lists 501 parishes, out of which only 138 were established canonically. Thus we can talk about 138 parishes

⁷⁵ *Handbuch des Erzbistums Breslau für das Jahr 1939*, Breslau 1939; *Schematismus des Bistums Berlin für das Jahr 1942*, Berlin 1942.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁷ On June 8, 1946 new deanships were created and old ones were reorganized, they covered 228 parishes. Not all parishes were established canonically.

⁷⁸ *Dekret erekcji parafii Wniebowzięcia Najświętszej Maryi Panny w Gorzowie*, N. 1057/45, ZAA (1946), no. 1, 16-17. The parish was established on December 19, 1945 – the decree came into force on January 1, 1946.

⁷⁹ *Dekret erekcji parafii Chrystusa Króla w Gorzowie*, L.D. 696/46, ZAA (1946), no. 3, 5-6. The parish was established on February 5, 1946 – decree came into force on March 1, 1946.

⁸⁰ *Dekret erekcji parafii Najświętszej Maryi Panny Królowej Różańca św. w Słupsku* no. 4465/48, ZAA (1948), no. 7-8, 220-222. The parish was established on June 1, 1948 – the decree came into force on July 1, 1948.

⁸¹ *Dekret erekcji parafii Świętej Rodziny w Słupsku* Nr 4465/48, ZAA (1948), no. 7-8, 222-223. The parish was established on June 1, 1948 – the decree came into force on July 1, 1948.

⁸² *Dekret erekcji parafii św. Andrzeja Boboli w Szczecinie*, ZAA (1946), no. 3, 7-8. The parish was established on February 13, 1948 – the decree came into force on March 1, 1948.

⁸³ *Dekret erekcji parafii św. Wojciecha w Czerwińsku*, znak: L. Dz. 1312/46, ZAA (1946), no. 4, 8-9. The parish was established on March 5, 1946 – the decree came into force on March 19, 1946.

⁸⁴ *Dekret erekcji parafii Najświętszej Maryi Panny Królowej Polski w Słubicach*, znak: L. Dz. 1659/48, ZAA (1948), no.3-4, 96-97. The parish was established on February 16, 1948 – the decree came into force on March 1, 1948.

and 363 pastoral institutions (including 12 local vicariates)⁸⁵. Pastoral institutions were not parishes. They were created to facilitate ministry to people. They were staffed with vicars who resided there permanently or priests who commuted there from their home parishes⁸⁶.

From 1948 further growth of church administration was more and more difficult due to hostile policy of the state towards the Church. Authorities did not agree to the creation of new parishes and did not give churches back to the Church. In mid 1950s authorities even started taking church property away. This is how the authorities of the People's Republic of Poland planned to gain control over the Church⁸⁷.

2.4. Pastoral activity

2.4.1. Teaching

Pastoral teaching has always been the most important task of any priest. Protonotary Apostolic knew it very well and therefore he used every opportunity to preach the word of God. It is not possible to discuss all of his writings and statements.

At the beginning of his ministry in the administration, he addressed his first appeal to the clergy⁸⁸. He wrote to priests that the Recovered Territories are Polish and catholic land and that ministry here should be seen as a calling within the calling. The Protonotary

⁸⁵ Incorrect data presented by Ryszard Marek (R. Marek, *Kościół rzymskokatolicki wobec ziem zachodnich i północnych*, Warszawa 1976, 227, who mentions 110 parishes and 494 pastoral institutions. Out of twelve local vicariates three (Kostkowo, Sapolno Człuchowskie and Wierzchowo) became parishes on 1 VI 1951, and one (Stara Wiśniewka) – according to the Statistical year book of Gorzów Diocese (“SDG”), Gorzów Wlkp. 1969 – was recognized as an established parish already in 1909. Cf. SDG (1959), 94, 160–161, 196, 295, 326 and SDG (1969), 373.

⁸⁶ There were 23 pastoral institutions in the deanship of Bytów. There were only five parishes recognized as canonically established (Miastko, Bytów, Niezabyszewo, Tuchomie and Ugoszcz).

⁸⁷ Cf. T. Dzwonkowski, op. cit., 27.

⁸⁸ ZAA (1945), no. 1, 2nn.

Apostolic put a great emphasis on the responsibility of priests and personal sanctification through maintaining personal relation with Jesus based on contemplation, preparation for the Holy Mass, rosary, breviary, examination of conscience and frequent confession. Rev. Nowicki also issued an order in which he recommended that each priest went on a three-day retreat every two years⁸⁹. What is significant here, is that the pastoral convention in 1949 ended with an act of personal entrustment to the Sacred Heart⁹⁰.

In his concern about the holiness of priests, he created the Apostolic Union of Clergy on November 7, 1946⁹¹. Rev. prof. Karol Czubyj from Szczecin became its district director (residing at 84 Aleja Wojska Polskiego)⁹², later the function was held till April 30, 1948 by Rev. Izydor Ździebło – the spiritual father of the Higher Seminary in Gorzów Wielkopolski⁹³ and Rev. Canon Wiktor Panecki. The Statute

⁸⁹ Cf. A. Baciński, *Administrator...*, art. cit., 15.

⁹⁰ Cf. E. Napierała, *Historia...*, op. cit., 164.

⁹¹ *Wznowienie działalności Unii Apostolskiej*, ZAA (1946), no. 7, 1-2. The Apostolic Union of Clergy was founded by Rev. Bartłomiej Holzhauser as an Institute in Tittmoning, the diocese of Salzburg. Pope Innocent X in 1647 blessed this association, while Innocent XI in 1684 with canonical bull approved their constitution. In 1880 Pope Leo XIII approved the new rule of the union which was at some point called the Union of Priests of the Sacred Heart. In 1937 it had 22,000 thousand priests in 250 dioceses around the world, whereas in Poland it had approx. 700 members. Its rules were included in the Code of Canonical Law of 1917, canons 124-144.

After WWII clerical students were also invited to participate in the structures of the Union, particularly students in their last year. 8-day closed retreat was organized for members of the Union. Cf. J. Kowalski, *List do dyrektora Diecezjalnego Unii Apostolskiej Kapłanów diecezjalnych w Gorzowie, Pelplin dn. 7 listopada 1946 r.*, ZAA (1946), no. 7, 2-4.

⁹² *Wznowienie działalności Unii Apostolskiej*, p. 2; also *Personalalia*, ZAA (1946), no. 7, 18. J. Kowalski, *List do dyrektora Diecezjalnego Unii Apostolskiej Kapłanów diecezjalnych w Gorzowie*, 2-4.

⁹³ E. Nowicki, *Zezwolenie, Gorzów, dn. 13 marca 1948 r.*, ZAA (1948), no. 5-6, 157. See. L.S. [L. Siewko], *Śp. Ksiądz Izydor Ździebło*, GWK (1958), no. 1, 48-51. The Apostolic Union of the Clergy is an association of Diocesan Unions united in each country to form a national association and worldwide in an international union. At the diocese level it is headed by a director and a council. The director

of the Union stipulated that its objective is among others to “unite priests determined to face all apostolic difficulties”⁹⁴.

During the II Conference of Deans held on May 6-7, 1947 in Gorzów Wielkopolski, the Protonotary Apostolic proposed that a committee be appointed to develop a project supporting the poorest priests and thus Brotherly Help was created. Rev. Kazimierz Terlecki became its director. He also created the Diocesan Missionary Association of the Clergy of Apostolic Administration. Chancellor Rev. Jan Zięba became its president⁹⁵, he was followed by Rev. Kazimierz Terlecki (December 1, 1948)⁹⁶.

Rev. Nowicki was a true father for priests. At the II Conference of Deans (May 6-7, 1947) he raised the problem of furnishing flats for priests at railway junction points⁹⁷. Such guest rooms for priests were prepared in Szczecinek at the presbytery of the Holy Spirit Church (23 Klasztorna Street), and at the presbytery of St. Mary’s Church (10 E. Plater Street), in Krzyż at the presbytery of the Sacred Heart Church (12 Poznańska street) and in Piła at the presbytery of St. Anthony Church (6 Ludowa Street)⁹⁸. In 1950 Sisters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul organized accommodation and meals for priests coming to Gorzów Wielkopolski, at 10 Obotrycka Street⁹⁹.

is elected for 6 years by members of the Union. The election result is approved by a bishop. The council is elected for 6 years by members of the union. The council is composed of a secretary (appointed by the director), assistant, treasurer and counsels representing various categories of priests). Director’s duties include maintaining communication with priests, ordinary and the national director. Cf. ADZG, Office, ref. no. C2, no. 143, Pastoral Department, 1972, Apostolic Union of the Clergy, Statutes (ad experimentum), 4-5. Retreats were organized every year for directors. See ADZG, Office, ref. no. C2, no. 142, Pastoral Department, year 1970, Notification, l.dz. 141/71/Ord., Pelplin, March 26, 1971.

⁹⁴ ZAA (1946), no. 7, 1-4.

⁹⁵ *Personalia*, ZAA (1947), no. 5, 333.

⁹⁶ *Personalia*, ZAA (1949), no. 1-2, 56.

⁹⁷ *Pokoje gościnne w Szczecinku, Pile i Krzyżu dla księży przejezdnych*, ZAA (1947), no. 3, 234.

⁹⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁹ S. Ceptowski, *V Konferencja XX. Dziekanów*, 121.

He was also friendly towards local priests. In some cases the authorities wanted Rev. Administrator to remove German parish priests from office but he would simply say “no”. This is what was to happen with Rev. Binder from Dąbrówka Wielka by Babimost¹⁰⁰. He also had a fatherly attitude towards nationalist priests who wanted to come back to the Catholic Church¹⁰¹.

Rev. Nowicki warned priests against various temptations and gave them fatherly advice. He cared for unity among the clergy, and wrote to priests: many of you came with mean-spirited local prejudice or monastic prejudice towards secular clergy and the other way round. Skills, background or position are of no importance, it doesn't matter whether a priest is a monastic priest or belongs to secular clergy if a priest is alter Christ! He is far from the Spirit of Christ, who, according to other considerations, arranges his relationship with his co-priests¹⁰².

An issue which was of particular importance for him was love among priests. In the spirit of this love he taught priests to help one another even in the smallest matters, because life is a chain made of small matters and events. In the spirit of this love he also asked them to provide fraternal correction and to pray for one another¹⁰³.

He had equally great concern for the people. Already in his first pastoral address¹⁰⁴ he included the main topics of his teaching. He wrote that they – Catholic Poles – returned to the former Piast lands and they should do all they can to make those lands more and more Polish and more and more Catholic because this is great grace of God and a great assignment. This teaching plan was very aptly summarized by Rev. Napierała in his dissertation: “a wise shepherd formulated the direction of his pastoral work. The priority was clearly presented: God in spiritual and public life, in the family and in upbringing

¹⁰⁰ E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 546.

¹⁰¹ *Ibidem*, 530.

¹⁰² Cf. E. Nowicki, *O współżyciu i współpracy kapłanów*, ZAA (1947), no. 1, 2.

¹⁰³ Cf. E. Nowicki, *O współżyciu i współpracy kapłanów*, 3-4.

¹⁰⁴ ZAA (1945), no. 1, 2 et seq.

of children, and Our Lady, Mary, as the fastest way to God”¹⁰⁵. He was faithful to these priorities throughout his whole stay in Gorzów Wielkopolski.

Very early, already on 10 September 1945 he published the Pastoral Guidelines¹⁰⁶, which was commented by Rev. Napierała in the following way: “it was a kind of a «Magna Charta» of pastoral activity for the coming years”¹⁰⁷. The most important guidelines included:

1. On Sundays and feasts, sermons should be proclaimed during every Holy Mass;
2. Sermons should be proclaimed based on the catechism and in a structured way;
3. The structured proclaiming of sermons should be started from catechism sermons;
4. In moral guidance it is most necessary to refer to the 3rd, 5th, 6th and 7th Commandment;
5. One should eschew any political allusions;
6. Retreats and missions should be conducted in parishes.

The shepherd of this land appreciated the role of words, not only spoken, but also written ones. Already in Poznań, he started authoring the diocese monthly newspaper entitled “Zarządzenia Administracji Apostolskiej Kamińskiej, Lubuskiej i Prałatury Piłskiej”¹⁰⁸, which became the official journal of the administration. Two statistical year books have been published during his governance. The first one was issued with the use of a duplicating machine in 1946, the second one

¹⁰⁵ Cf. E. Napierała, *Ks. dr E. Nowicki...*, op. cit., 59.

¹⁰⁶ ZAA (1945), no. 1, 2 et seq.

¹⁰⁷ E. Napierała, *Historia...*, op. cit., 116.

¹⁰⁸ The first issue was published on September 15, 1945 and consisted of 24 pages. In addition to the mentioned proclamations, it included the nomination decree of reverend administrator Nowicki and several ordinances. For several months (until April 1946) the ordinances appeared as a monthly and later as a bimonthly. The state permit stipulated that the ordinances could be issued in a circulation of 500 copies and could not exceed 32 pages. It was later allowed to increase the number of pages, but unfortunately, it was not allowed to increase the circulation. Cf. ZAA (1945), no. 1; E. Napierała, *Historia...*, op. cit., 125.

was printed in 1949. Both of them were very useful for priests who were becoming familiar with the structure of the Catholic Church in those lands¹⁰⁹

In the years 1947-1949 three editions of the “Regained Territories’ Calendar” were published. Other published materials included Pastoral Aids and Chronicles. What is also valuable is that the Caritas Association, the Seminary in Gorzów Wielkopolski and Minor Seminaries in Gorzów Wielkopolski and in Słupsk also had their newspapers. Editorial work related to publishing seminary newspapers was particularly important for future generations of priests who could develop their editorial skills this way.

October 26, 1947 was the date of issuing of the brochure entitled “The Opening of the Seminary in Gorzów Wielkopolski”. The text for print, divided into 7 chapters, the volume of which was 32 pages, had been prepared by Rev. Antoni Baciński, PhD, who was then a prosecutor and a lecturer of the history of the Church. This brochure – the so-called “one-day brochure” – was printed in a circulation of 30 thousand copies in the State Printing House in Gorzów Wielkopolski¹¹⁰ The next brochure, of the volume of 32 pages and the size of 15x21 cm, entitled “Reverend Patron Domański” was also published in 1947 in relation to the 10th anniversary of the Congress of Poles in Germany.

In the years 1946-1953 the periodical entitled “Tygodnik Katolicki” was issued. The newspaper’s circulation was from 6 to 19 thousand and the volume of particular issues ranged from 8 to 16 pages¹¹¹. “Tygodnik Katolicki” included a special insert for children – “Mały Tygodnik”. The editor-in-chief of the “Mały Tygodnik” was Rev.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. A. Baciński, *Administrator...*, art. cit., 18.

¹¹⁰ AWSDP, A. Baciński, *Otwarcie...*, op. cit.

¹¹¹ Cf. ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. C7, no. 370, Church property, 1946-1957, Permit to issue periodicals, no. 480, no. 1037.46, Warsaw, 25 March 1946; ADZG, Editorial Office of Tygodnik Katolicki, Tygodnik Katolicki, L.dz. 1034/46.

Maciej Szałagan. This small journal was composed of 4 B5 pages. Children read it very eagerly and often wrote to the editorial office¹¹².

The last issue of the “Catholic Weekly” was published in October 1953. The issuing of the newspaper finally ended on 3 November 1954¹¹³. In the period of the Thaw after October 1956, the editor-in-chief, priest Kazimierz Łabiński, tried to reactivate the newspaper, but the state authorities did not give permission for that¹¹⁴.

In order to facilitate access of priests and people to necessary catholic publications, on 24 January 1947 the administration Curia established the diocesan Bookshop of St. Anthony in Gorzów Wielkopolski, at 26 Łokietka Street. It still functions today. It was established thanks to the capital of the diocese and partner contributions. It was the property of the Gorzów Wielkopolski diocese and the indicated partners were, according to the statute, only fiduciaries

¹¹² B. Kiernicki, “*Tygodnik Katolicki*”, incl: P. Socha (eds.) coop. *Z. Lec, Księga pamiątkowa...*, op. cit., 300-301.

¹¹³ The Curia received permission from the Central Press Control Office on 25 March 1946, and the decree of rev. administrator E. Nowicki was issued on 3 May 1946. Cf., ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. C7, no. 370, Church property, years 1946-1957, Letter to the Tax Office in Gorzów Wielkopolski, l.dz. 7331/47 of 30 October 1946. The decree liquidating the Editorial Office, Administration and Publishing House of “*Tygodnik Katolicki*” was issued by rev. prelate Szelążek on 3 November 1954. Cf. ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. C7, no. 370, Church property, years 1946-1957, Decree, sign: JUU 2S-6/54, Gorzów Wielkopolski 3 November 1954. It should be added that as early as in September 1953, rev. K. Łabiński, while writing to rev. prelate Z. Szelążek, mentioned that “*Tygodnik Katolicki*” ceased to be published actually from March 1953. At that time, he asked to be released from the position of editor. Cf. ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. C7, no. 370, Church property, years 1946-1957, Letter of rev. K. Łabiński to the Ordinary, Gorzów Wielkopolski, 20 September 1953, the Delivery and Acceptance Protocol was signed on 11 November 1954. Cf. ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. C7, no. 370, Church property, years 1946-1957, Delivery and Acceptance Protocol of “*Tygodnik-Katolicki*” in Gorzów.

¹¹⁴ Here is how Jerzy Zawieyski wrote back to the priest: “Dear Brother, your newspaper was given up for lost just like «Niedziela» and «Ład Boży»”. Cf. “*Tygodnik Katolicki*”, special edition, p. 8. ADZG contains yearbooks of “*Tygodnik Katolicki*” from 1947-1952. You may also find cash books from 1948, 1950, 1951, 1952. Cf. ADZG, Editorial Office of *Tygodnik Katolicki*, no. 2948, 2952-2954.

of the diocese¹¹⁵. The person appointed the manager of the bookshop was Helena Kuźmicka. The bookshop established collaboration with the most important publishing houses and book suppliers in Poland. In 1952 there were 21 of them¹¹⁶. The bookshop operated well, even in the period of Stalinism. The bookshop premises includes two shop rooms, a back-room with a toilet and the manager's room.

2.4.2. Liturgical and pastoral service

Every diocese governor starts his mission solemnly during an ingress. Rev. Nowicki had two ingresses in his life. The first one took place in Szczecin on September 16 – it was an ingress to the Queen of the Polish Crown church¹¹⁷, and the second one – on the Feast of Christ the King, on October 28, it was an ingress to the cathedral of Gorzów Wielkopolski¹¹⁸.

It is not feasible to describe all the liturgical celebrations officiated by Rev. Nowicki. However, it is worth to pay attention to those celebrations which had a strong influence on the people or which had a broad impact. Naturally, they were related to the liturgical year which defined the working year.

The first major liturgical events for the administration were Christmas of the year 1945 and Easter of 1946. They were religious and very patriotic in nature. Christmas Midnight Masses and Easter Sunrise Services were officiated in all the parishes and became an opportunity to manifest faith and Polish identity¹¹⁹.

A very important event in the life of the Administrator, Rev. Nowicki, was the Corpus Christi procession which took place in

¹¹⁵ ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. C7, no. 370, Church property (Priest Retirement Residence, Diocesan House, Bookshop, Tygodnik Katolicki), years 1946-1957, Certificate, sign J II 2 F – 1/57, of 17 October 1957.

¹¹⁶ ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. C7, no. 370, Church property (Priest Retirement Residence, Diocesan House, Bookshop, Tygodnik Katolicki), years 1946-1957, List of suppliers of 31 December 1952.

¹¹⁷ Cf. E. Napierała, *Geneza Administracji Apostolskiej w Gorzowie Wlkp.*, 196.

¹¹⁸ E. Nowicki, *Wspomnienia*, 529.

¹¹⁹ Cf. T. Dzwonkowski, op. cit., 37.

Gorzów Wielkopolski on June 20, 1946 and was led by archbishop Walenty Dymek from Poznań. That was a time when great tensions between the Church and local authorities were not present yet. The procession was attended not only by a large number of people but also by organized groups of soldiers, the “milicja” (police of the communist era in Poland), firemen and railway-men¹²⁰.

A day which was very important was August 15, 1946. On that day, in the presence of the painting of Mary, Our Lady who Patiently Listens¹²¹ (which was transported from Rokitno to Gorzów Wielkopolski) and of 50 000 people, Rev. E. Nowicki entrusted the administration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This event was part of cardinal August Hlond’s great initiative to entrust Poland, Polish dioceses and parishes to Our Lady, Mary.

A very important experience for Rev. Nowicki and for the people was the visit of the Primate of Poland, August Hlond in the Gorzów Wielkopolski ordinariate, which took place on October 25-30, 1947. The route of the Primate’s journey was that of St. Otto of Bamberg, who was famous for his mission in Western Pomerania. In every city Primate Hlond and the Administrator, Rev. Nowicki, were greeted by large numbers of people. The Primate visited Rokitno, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Szczecin, Goleniów, Kołobrzeg, Koszalin, Miastko, Szczecinek, Jastrowie, Złotów and Zakrzewo¹²². This visit contributed to strengthening faith and the Polish identity because the Primate talked about the Poles’ moral right to inhabit these lands¹²³.

The Administrator, Rev. Nowicki, performed visitations of parishes and officiated the liturgy. In parishes the holy sacraments were officiated by priests, but the sacrament of confirmation was

¹²⁰ Cf. “Tygodnik Katolicki” (1946), issue 9.

¹²¹ The painting is probably the work of a Russian painter, Andrei Rublov. It came to Rokitno in 1669, and on 4 March 1670 it was considered miraculous.

¹²² G. Wejman, *Prymas August Hlond budowniczy polskiej administracji kościelnej na Pomorzu Zachodnim i ziemi lubuskiej*, incl.: Zbigniew Rakiej TChr (eds.), *Doniosłe dziedzictwo. Sługa Boży, prymas August Hlond – duszpasterz i mąż stanu. Z dziejów parafii św. Ottona w Pyrzycach*, Pyrzyce-Szczecin 2015, 29-54.

¹²³ Cf. T. Dzwonkowski, op. cit., 38.

administered by Rev. Nowicki. According to Rev. A. Baciński, he administered this sacrament to 168 000 people¹²⁴.

The great concern Rev. Nowicki had for liturgical life in the area of the administration is visible already in his first pastoral guideline. Here are a few fragments:

1. The people should be given the possibility to attend confession every day in the morning at 6:00 AM and in the afternoon on Saturdays, days preceding feasts and on Thursdays preceding First Fridays. These confession times should be indicated on church doors and announced from the Church pulpit as part of the Sunday after-Mass announcements;
2. People should be given the possibility to receive Holy Communion before they start work and administering Communion should start from 6:00 AM;
3. Corpses of people who died in sanctifying grace should be, without exception, buried in the presence of a priest at the grave;
4. It is necessary to establish a propitiation service of the Holy Hour to be held in the afternoon on Thursdays before First Fridays of the month, with the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and a service on the First Friday of the month to worship the Sacred Heart of Jesus¹²⁵.

Rev. Nowicki kept returning to those ordinances in subsequent years. He reminded about hanging out announcements with hours of confession and services¹²⁶, he explained how First Thursday and First Friday services should be held¹²⁷. He had a lot of concern for children and the youth. He requested parish priests and prefects to organize triduum before exams and before the ending of the school year¹²⁸.

¹²⁴ Cf. A. Baciński, *Administrator...*, art. cit., 19.

¹²⁵ ZAA (1945), no. 1, 2 et seq.

¹²⁶ Cf. ZAA (1947), no. 3, 156.

¹²⁷ Cf. ZAA (1947), no. 1, 13-14.

¹²⁸ ZAA (1947), no. 1, 14; ZAA (1947), no. 3, 155.

For many years, the Pastoral Department of the Bishop Curia in Gorzów Wielkopolski was devoting much attention and concern to the issue of church chants. This problem was very serious in the area of the apostolic administration. People in parishes, who came from various parts of Poland, sang in their own way or they did not sing at all. Therefore, the formation of organists was a priority. The first mentions of the formation of organists come from the years 1951-1952¹²⁹. Aside music, chant was also becoming an element which unified people in the area of Gorzów Wielkopolski administration. Since the very beginning of the existence of the administration, church choirs were set up. On September 16, 1946 the Administrator, Rev. E. Nowicki, approved the "Church Choir Statute"¹³⁰. By 1949, 27 church choirs were formed.

In Western Pomerania the number of members of Catholic associations was estimated by the authorities of the Polish People's Republic at about 1800 people¹³¹; this number was significantly underestimated, because – for instance – in every parish there were groups of the Living Rosary Association. There were also The Prayer Apostolate, organized groups of Altar Servers, the Eucharistic Crusade and the Sodality of Our Lady¹³². Catholic Youth Associations were formed for the youth. On August 5, 1949 the state authorities announced a decree which amended the Associations Act. This amendment implied the actual liquidation of Catholic associations. On November 4, 1949, as a result of the ordinance of the Episcopate of Poland, all church associations and organizations, including also

¹²⁹ The archives of the Bishop's Curia contain documents only starting from 1960 onwards that have been collected in binders with titles: Miscellaneous correspondence, Musicians, Parishes without a permanent organist, Reports, etc.

¹³⁰ E. Nowicki, *Statut chórów kościelnych*, ZAA (1946), no. 6, 7-10.

¹³¹ K. Kowalczyk, op. cit., 178.

¹³² In April 1948 WUBP (The Province Office for Public Safety) informed MBP (the Ministry of Public Safety) that in Szczecin the Sodality of Our Lady staged a theatrical performance without the consent of the authorities. Therefore, rev. Tadeusz Załuczkowski was summoned to WUBP and it was decided to bring him to criminal and administrative responsibility. Ibidem, 178.

church choirs, were dissolved¹³³. Since that moment they functioned in a limited scope¹³⁴.

Rev. Nowicki had a lot of concern for the Church property. As a result of World War II many temples were devastated and destroyed¹³⁵. When, after the war, the areas of Western Pomerania and the Lubusz Land were inhabited by new people, for whom these lands became their new homeland, religious life had to be organized there from scratch. Priests consecrated temples existing there for Catholic religious worship¹³⁶. The temples which were taken over may be divided into Catholic ones, constructed by Catholics and used by them, post-Catholic ones, i.e. constructed by Catholics and

¹³³ “Tygodnik Katolicki” (1949), issue 33, 306.

¹³⁴ According to the report of the Office for Religious Affairs in Szczecin, until June 1952, there were 4 choirs: in Szczecin (at the parish of the Holy Family), Stargard Szczeciński, Gryfice and Goleniów, whereas until December 1952 there were only 2 choirs with 43 members. Cf. the State Archives in Szczecin (hereinafter: APS), PWRN (The Province Board of the People’s Council), UdSW (Office for Religious Affairs), no. 3807, k. 14, the Report of UdSW PWRN in Szczecin for the second quarter of 1952 and APS, PWRN, UdSW, no. 3807, k. 14, the Report of UdSW PWRN in Szczecin for the fourth quarter of 1952.

¹³⁵ Based on the inventory of the church property of each parish, surveys (questionnaires) sent out on the destruction of church property, the files of the provincial conservator in Szczecin and the inventories and calendars of the Szczecin Province (issued before World War II), rev. Lech Bończa-Bystrzycki stated that during World War II on the territory of Szczecin Province 480 buildings of religious worship, including 60 historic buildings, were destroyed. In percentage terms, the scale of the destruction was as follows: 41 objects were destroyed in 100%, 60 in 80%, 98 in 60%, 114 in 40% and 167 in 20%. Cf. L. Bończa-Bystrzycki, *Studia i materiały do dziejów Kościoła katolickiego na Pomorzu Zachodnim w granicach archidiecezji szczecińsko-kamieńskiej*, Koszalin 1999, 173-178.

¹³⁶ On 3 February 1946, rev. administrator E. Nowicki issued an ordinance on the management of church property. Chapter I of that ordinance refers to church buildings. Repairs should be done in advance, so that there is no major damage. The construction of new buildings, or major changes, reconstruction should be done with the consent of the curia. Cf. E. Nowicki, *Rozporządzenie o zarządzie majątkiem kościelnym*, ZAA, (1946), no. 2, 3-4.

then, during the Reformation, taken over by Protestants, and post-Protestant ones – i.e. constructed by Protestants and used by them.

The temples which were most numerous were those in the second group, i.e. ones that were constructed in the Middle Ages and taken over by protestants. In total, in the area of the apostolic administration there were 243 Catholic churches (160 in the area of the Piła Prelature, 52 in the area of the Wrocław archdiocese and 31 in the area of the Berlin bishopric)¹³⁷; 88 of them required immediate renovation, e.g. the Church of Our Lady in Słupsk¹³⁸, the St. Antony of Padua Church in Sławno¹³⁹, the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Świdwin¹⁴⁰. There were 1500 post-Catholic and post-Protestant temples¹⁴¹. On 2 January 1949, after taking over the non-Catholic religious facilities, the apostolic administration in Gorzów Wielkopolski had 1274 churches at its disposal¹⁴², in the year 1956 – 1403 churches and chapels.

¹³⁷ Freie Prälatur Scheidemühl, Scheidemühl 1940, 1942; Schematismus des Bistums Berlin für das Jahr 1940, Berlin Bischöfliches Ordinariat 1940; Handbuch des Erzbistums Breslau für das Jahr 1942, Breslau Erzbischöfliches Ordinariat; M. Chorzępa, op. cit., 115. *Kronika. Stan Kościoła katolickiego*, 370, gives the number of 151 churches.

¹³⁸ K. Chmielewski, *Par. Najśw. Maryi Panny w Słupsku odbudowała świątynię ku czci Matki Bożej*, (1957), issue 5, 302-306. The church was reconciled on 2 February 1946.

¹³⁹ Cf. M. Chorzępa, op. cit., 116.

¹⁴⁰ M. Polulak, *Świdwin – parafia, która dźwignęła z ruin wielką świątynię*, GWK (1957), issue 3, 182-190. It was rebuilt in 1948.

¹⁴¹ Cf. *Kronika. Stan Kościoła katolickiego*, 370. Rev. M. Chorzępa mentions 1300 Protestant temples. Cf. M. Chorzępa, op. cit., 115.

¹⁴² S. Ceptowski (*IV Konferencja Księży Dziekanów*, ZAA (1959), no. 5-6, 198 and 207) states that at the beginning of 1949 there were 467 parish churches and 759 auxiliary churches in operation. This gives a total of 1226 temples. Of course, it should be remembered that in 1949 there were only 138 canonically erected parishes. M. Chorzępa (*Rozwój organizacji kościelnej*, 131) for the 5th anniversary of the apostolic administration, talks about 1202 churches and 72 chapels opened. J. Kochanowska (*Losy zabytków sakralnych Pomorza Zachodniego podczas wojny i w pierwszych latach powojennych*, incl: Z. Mazur (eds.), *Wspólne dziedzictwo? Ze studiów nad stosunkiem do spuścizny kulturowej na Ziemiach Zachodnich*

It is thanks to the concern of Rev. E. Nowicki that sanctuaries were erected. On August 15, 1946 the Sanctuary of Our Lady in Rokitno became the main sanctuary of the Gorzów Wielkopolski administration. The baroque style church was constructed in the years 1707-1748 and equipped by the Bledzew abbot Józef Loka (1756-1762)¹⁴³. Another sanctuary devoted to Our Lady was erected in Skrzatusz. Religious life began here again after World War II. The indulgence celebrations took place on August 15 and September 15. The central object of worship is the linden-wood statue of the Pieta which comes from the XV century. On November 13, 1697 the Poznań bishop Jan Stanisław Witwicki published a decree which announced that the Pieta was miraculous. The church comes from the XVII century¹⁴⁴. The third sanctuary devoted to Our Lady was that in Otyń. In August 1946 the 15th-century statue of Our Lady Mary was installed in the parish church under the invocation of the Elevation of the Holy Cross¹⁴⁵. The statue was placed in the Chapel, in the side altar, next to the presbytery. The statue of Our Lady of Klenica holding Baby Jesus has got a crown, however it is not known who and when crowned her. After the war also the cult of the Five Holy Martyrs of Międzyrzecz developed in the Gorzów Wielkopolski administration. After Międzyrzecz was restored to Poland in 1945, on August 15, 1945, the Administrator, Rev. E. Nowicki, announced the Five Holy Martyrs of Międzyrzecz¹⁴⁶ the secondary patrons of the administration. The cult developed in St. John the Baptist Parish Church.

i Północnych, Poznań 2000, 222) states that in 1948 the state authorities made a census of church property in the Szczecin Province (published in 1950) in which they revealed the existence of 700 churches and chapels (the census also included ruins), of which only 375 temples were given to the people: in 1945 – 116 churches and chapels; in 1946 – 182; in 1947 – 59 and in 1948 only 18 churches and chapels.

¹⁴³ G. Wejman, *Organizacja...*, op. cit., 217-222.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, 222-224.

¹⁴⁵ B. Dratwa, *Sanktuaria diecezji gorzowskiej*, GWK (1976), issue 3, 105; AWSDP (Archive of the Seminary in Paradyż), B. Dratwa, *Kult Matki Bożej Klenickiej XV-XVIII w.*, Lublin KUL 1972, (typescript).

¹⁴⁶ P. Socha, *Świadkowie wiary*, "Ecclesiastica" (1997), issue 1, 277.

2.4.3. Charity institutions

Out of concern for the poor and those in need, by the decree of January 15, 1946 Rev. E. Nowicki set up the charity organization Caritas. In 1947 the organization had 138 parish branches which employed 586 people. There were 12 481 members supporting the organization and 430 local caregivers. The Caritas organization employed 85 nuns belonging to various congregations. In the years 1946-1949 the "Caritas" periodical was published. It was distributed to every parish. Its circulation was 462 copies. Constant aid of Caritas was provided to 17 043 people and one-time aid to 72 213 people. Caritas had Sewing Workshops and a Social Carpentry Workshop in Gorzów Wielkopolski; it also had 2 orphanages for small children, 5 orphanages, 4 boarding houses – dormitories, 3 Nursing Homes for the elderly, 1 special care facility and 41 kindergartens, including 30 urban and 11 rural ones. An entity which was very active was "Caritas Academica". It comprised ca. 2 000 students of the Academy of Trade and the Higher School of Engineering. Unfortunately, as a result of a very unfavorable attitude of the communist authorities towards the Church, on January 23, 1950 the Caritas organization was dissolved in the whole country. The Church in Poland took care of the poor and the suffering within the scope of the church Christian Mercy Action¹⁴⁷.

With the consent of the Administrator, Rev. Nowicki, Rev. Kazimierz Żarnowiecki¹⁴⁸ established the Common Labor Workshops in Szczecin. In the beginning of August, the Accommodation Department of the Urban Authorities allocated to him a facility in which the Common Labor Establishment was opened. In a short time, the Establishment which initially comprised a group of over a dozen

¹⁴⁷ G. Wejman, *Organizacja...*, op. cit., 367-380.

¹⁴⁸ A. Żarnowiecka, *Żadna siła mi tej młodzieży nie rozpedzi*, *Szczeciński epizod ks. Kazimierza Żarnowieckiego*, "Szczecińskie Studia Kościelne" (2000), issue 7-10, 285-292. P. Socha, *Sylwetki administratorów apostołskich i biskupów diecezji zielonogórsko-gorzowskich*, "Życie i Myśl" (1995), issue 4, 31-52, and A. Rasmus, *Ks. Kazimierz Świetliński TChr i jego „Kronika odnowy życia polskiego i Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego w Szczecinie”*, Szczecin 2006, 42.

young people and a few instructors transformed into a numerous group of 130 young people¹⁴⁹ and 30 members of staff. On September 5, 1945 the Establishment was dedicated. Initially it was located between the Unisława Street, the Felczak Street and 30 Kiliński Square. However, shortly, it was transferred to the building located at 1/3 Potulicka Street¹⁵⁰. Unfortunately, on December 31, 1951 the Common Labor Establishment LLC in Szczecin was liquidated and the capital was handed over to charity¹⁵¹.

3. BISHOP

January 26, 1951 was the starting day of Rev. Nowicki's exile. He never got to return to the role of the governor to Gorzów Wielkopolski, however, with his thoughts and memory he was close to that city, as well as to Szczecin and Koszalin. It is evidenced by his memories, sermons and personal conversations with priests. Unfortunately, this great Pole and priest did not have a chance to liturgically bid farewell to the people of the apostolic administration.

Rev. E. Nowicki was a hard-working man¹⁵². Therefore, he quickly undertook work in Poznań. In that time he was the canon of the archcathedral chapter, he worked as the vice-officialis of the Metropolitan Ecclesiastical Court and was appointed to the Primate Tribunal in Warsaw. He was also a lecturer of canon law at the Society of Christ Fathers seminary in Poznań and he regularly administered the Sacrament of Reconciliation in several monastic houses. Then he became the bishop of Gdańsk.

¹⁴⁹ APRK (Private Archive of rev. Roman Kostynowicz), File, Common Labor Workshops. Young people came to the Common Labor Workshops from: Gniezno, Poznań, Bydgoszcz, Grudziądz, Gdynia, Cracow, Warsaw, Kielce, Lublin, Lviv and Vilnius.

¹⁵⁰ P. Fenrych (ed.), art. cit., 85.

¹⁵¹ A. Żarnowiecka, art. cit., 291-292.

¹⁵² Cf. H. Jankowski, *Ś.P. Biskup Edmund Nowicki*, incl: H. Jankowski (eds.), op. cit., 7-8.

During the stay of the Primate of Poland, archbishop Stefan Wyszyński, in Rome, on April 29, 1951, Rev. Nowicki received the nomination to become the “sedi datus” coadjutor bishop in Gdańsk. Due to the objection of state authorities, he could not be consecrated bishop in the prescribed time. On clear instruction of the pope Pius XII he was secretly consecrated bishop on September 21, 1954 in the bishop chapel in Poznań by archbishop Walenty Dymek, with the participation of co-consecrators: bishop Franciszek Jedwabski, a suffragan bishop from Poznań and bishop Lucjan Bernacki, a suffragan bishop from Gniezno.

The political events of October 1956 and some remission in the persecutions of the Church, allowed bishop E. Nowicki to take over the governance on December 8, 1956 in Gdańsk. When the bishop of the Gdańsk diocese Karol Maria Splett died in Düsseldorf on March 5, 1964, pope Paul VI, with the bull of March 7, 1964, appointed bishop Nowicki to be the third in history residential (i.e. diocesan) bishop of Gdańsk. He died on March 10, 1971 in Warsaw. He was buried in St. Mary's Church in Gdańsk.

The occupation, the exile from Gorzów Wielkopolski and constant fight against evil and against the communist system had their impact on him. His health deteriorated and he had to have a pacemaker implanted. When the physicians made the decision that it is necessary to replace the device, bishop E. Nowicki was not willing to go to hospital because he felt that he would not come back, but he went there because he did not want to oppose God's will¹⁵³. From his deathbed he addressed his last message to the people of his diocese. In the message he thanked for greathearted collaboration. After many considerations he had in hospital, he declared that he was

¹⁵³ J. Majder, *Nie moja, ale Twoja wola niech się stanie. Wspomnienia z ostatnich dni życia śp. Biskupa E. Nowickiego*, „Miesięcznik Diecezjalny Gdański” (1971), issue 13, 151-153.

leaving to meet the Lord with joy and without fear. He also promised to intercede for everyone before God's Heart¹⁵⁴.

Bishop E. Nowicki died on March 10, 1971 at 02:15 PM at a cardiology clinic in Warsaw and his funeral took place on March 14. Funeral celebrations which were attended by 28 bishops, they were officiated by bishop Andrzej Wronka and the sermon was proclaimed by the Primate of Poland, cardinal Stefan Wyszyński. The funeral was attended by representatives of various Church and state institutions. The number of people who bid farewell to the late bishop was over 100 000¹⁵⁵.

Who did those people bid farewell on that day to? A great Pole and a great bishop whose coat of arms included St Paul the Apostle's words: "Finis legis Christus" – "Christ is the end of the law" (Romans 10:4). As a human, a priest, an administrator and a bishop, he always tried to fulfill the will of Jesus Christ. The words of the Primate of Poland, cardinal August Hlond and cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, referring to Rev. Nowicki, are a meaningful testimony of his life. In a letter addressed to the Holy See, Primate A. Hlond wrote the following: "The local Apostolic Administrator is the most active Ordinary in Poland, who sacrifices himself very strongly. He is organizing the Church in a huge area and in extremely difficult conditions. He is surrounded with admiration and compassion"¹⁵⁶. In the letter addressed by the Primate S. Wyszyński to Rev. Nowicki, we read i.a.: "God will allow, Excellence, that your contributions, which are today evaluated by us, will, with time, be evaluated by the whole nation"¹⁵⁷.

¹⁵⁴ E. Nowicki, *Ostatnie słowo arcybiskupie* śp. Ks. biskupa Edmunda Nowickiego do diecezjan, "Miesięcznik Diecezjalny Gdański" (1971), issue 13, 153-155.

¹⁵⁵ S. Bogdanowicz, op. cit., 437.

¹⁵⁶ Ibidem, 158.

¹⁵⁷ ADZG, Administrative Office, ref. no. A5, no. 5. The Primate of Poland, 1946-1952, N2476/50/G.

CONCLUSION

Rev. PA Edmund Nowicki, PhD, was a great Pole, priest and bishop, and yet, by many he is not known or has been forgotten. Why is that? The answer to this question is difficult. It has to be stated that for Rev. E. Nowicki popularity and splendor were not important. He was always like that; as he said to the inhabitants of Gdańsk, he did not come to receive honors and titles, but to fulfill the will of the Lord. He was one of the people who accept God's will and do not oppose it. That is how he perceived his stay in the concentration camp, and that is the way he treated his service in the apostolic administration in Gorzów Wielkopolski. More than five years of his work in Western Pomerania and in the Lubusz Land resulted in great achievements in the form of very well-functioning church organization, the only thing that was missing were fixed church structures, but, unfortunately political factors were an obstacle to their development.

Summary

Rev. PA Edmund Nowicki PhD, a priest of the Archdiocese of Gniezno i Poznań, was strongly associated with Gorzów Wielkopolski through his priestly ministry and with Gdańsk through his episcopal ministry. The work in the apostolic administration in Gorzów Wielkopolski was particularly difficult for him. The enormous area – 1/7 of Poland's area, the lack of basic religious ministry tools and the difficulties arising from the then authorities posed extremely big problems in creating the pastoral life in the newly created church unit in these lands.

More than five years of his work in Western Pomerania and the Lubusz region brought great achievements in the form of a very well-functioning church organization, only permanent church structures were lacking, but unfortunately political factors did not lead to their implementation. This success is the fruit of his fortitude, solid theological and legal background and personal sensitivity. Rev. PA Dr Edmund Nowicki is a great Pole, priest and bishop.

Key words: Rev. Edmund Nowicki, Apostolic administrator, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Western Pomerania, Lubusz region

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