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CONCERN OF THE CHURCH ABOUT EMIGRANTS FROM POLISH LANDS AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

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Abstract. Emigration from Polish lands at the end of the 19th century and in the early 20th century took place both before the First World War and after Poland regained independence in 1918. The Church cared for emigrants from all previous partitions. The subject of particular concern for Polish bishops was to provide assistance to temporary emigrants who took up temporary jobs in the countries of their emigration. The bishops strived to organize pastoral care in the countries of emigration by creating the structures of the Catholic Mission. They also issued regulations obliging diocesan clergy to deepen migrants' spirituality both before leaving the country and after coming back. Associations established in Poland and in the host countries were also involved in taking care of the emigrants.

Keywords: Catholic Church, permanent emigration, temporary emigration, pastoral care, organizations supporting migrants.

Streszczenie. *Troska Kościoła o emigrantów z ziem polskich pod koniec XIX i na początku XX wieku.* Emigracja z ziem polskich na przełomie XIX i początku XX wieku dokonywała się zarówno do pierwszej wojny światowej, jak i po odzyskaniu przez Polskę niepodległości w 1918 roku. Kościół troszczył się o emigrantów pochodzących ze wszystkich zaborów. Przedmiotem szczególnej zapobiegliwości biskupów polskich była troska o emigrantów czasowych podejmujących okresową pracę w krajach ich emigracji. Starali się zorganizować opiekę duszpasterską w krajach emigracji, tworząc struktury Mi-

sji Katolickiej. Wydawali też zarządzenia zobowiązujące duchowieństwo diecezjalne do pogłębienia duchowości emigrantów zarówno przed wyjazdem z kraju, jak i po powrocie. Do udziału w opiece nad emigrantami zostały włączone stowarzyszenia tworzone w kraju oraz w miejscu przebywania emigrantów.

Słowa kluczowe: Kościół katolicki, emigracja stała, emigracja czasowa, opieka duszpasterska, organizacje wspierające migrantów.

INTRODUCTION

The difficult living conditions in Poland in the late 19th century and the early 20th century forced multitudes of Polish people to emigrate. Poles emigrated to Western Europe, the United States, South America and the eastern areas of tsarist Russia. Most of them were unprepared for life abroad and usually did not know the language or culture of the host country, which made their existence in such conditions a great challenge. They usually looked for support to the Catholic Church, of which they were most often members. The subject of interest in this article is how pastoral care developed both before and during the First World War and how it was shaped later in the independent Poland.

1. PASTORAL CARE FOR THE EMIGRANTS UNTIL THE OUTBREAK OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

At the end of the 19th century, especially from the 1890s onwards, economic emigration to Germany intensified.¹ A large proportion of those who went to work in Germany came from the Greater Poland² region, but also from the Congress Kingdom of Poland and from Galicia.³

As the number of Poles in Germany increased, and their problems worsened, the successive Archbishops of Gniezno and Poznań re-

¹ See Stanisław Borowiak, "Jak zatrzymać robotnika na wsi? – ziemianie wielkopolscy wobec emigracji robotników rolnych do okręgów przemysłowych Rzeszy niemieckiej na przełomie XIX i XX w.," *Studia z Historii Społeczno-Gospodarczej* 8 (2010): 195.

² See Józef Łazinka, "Wychodźstwo polskie w Westfalii i Nadrenii 1890–1923," *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka* 4 (1949): 138–159.

³ See Borowiak, "Jak zatrzymać robotnika," 199–200.

ceived letters asking for Polish priests to work with the emigrants.⁴ After the death of the Bishop of Poznań, Archbishop Dinder, permission for priests to commence their work was granted by Bishop Likowski. Archbishop Stablewski from the same diocese also received letters not only from workers but also from Polish organizations and associations.

To better prepare the emigrants, Archbishop Stablewski recommended the establishment of the Brotherhood of St. Isidore, its goals being to provide religious and moral support for emigrants as well as to help them in job searching. In 1898, he called a meeting of priests from the parishes with the largest number of emigrants. As a result of the meeting, which took place in Poznań, a certain concept for providing support to emigrants was born. A pastoral instruction was also developed, and the magazine *Słowo Boże* (*The Word of God*)⁵ was offered to those who were emigrating. Stablewski's successor, Bishop Likowski, issued a proclamation to the clergy on the matter of emigrants in 1907; the proclamation was also sent to other dioceses. Parish priests were encouraged to provide each emigrant with a letter of recommendation to the parish priest in the host country regarding a place of work, as well as with letters encouraging them to maintain regular correspondence. Reading of Catholic press was also recommended.

There was also increased migration from the border areas of the Kingdom of Poland, which were closest to the Prussian border. Hence, the bishops from the Dioceses of Płock and of Kujawy and Kalisz expressed their thanks for sending the letter regarding migrants to Bishop Likowski. After 1907, when the Russian authorities allowed economic emigration, many diocesans left the dioceses located on the Prussian border. One of the reasons for the increasing wave of emigration was the overpopulation of villages in the Kingdom of Poland. As established by Janina Kuligowska, the population of the Kingdom of Poland in the 1869–1913 period, after the enfranchisement of peasants, almost doubled from 5.8 million to 11.4 million. Hence, the phenomenon of both temporary and permanent migration continued throughout this period. In 1913, a total of 622,000 emigrants from the Kingdom of Poland were recorded, of whom

⁴ See Bernard Kołodziej, "Troska Prymasów Polski o naszych emigrantów oraz ich uprawnienia," *Studia Prymasowskie UKSW* 5 (2011): 46.

⁵ Kołodziej, "Troska Prymasów Polski," 46.

approximately 400,000 emigrated to Germany and 200,000 to the United States of America.⁶ Migration to Germany and other European countries was most often seasonal. Based on a survey carried out in 1908 in the Diocese of Płock, it can be seen that the emigrants came from the deaneries of Lipno, Rypin, Mława, Przasnysz and Ostrołęka.⁷ As regards the Diocese of Włocławek, emigrants most often came from the deaneries of Włocławek, Nieszawa, Słupca, Konin, Kalisz, Wieluń and Częstochowa.⁸ These were the areas closest to the Prussian border at that time.

The growing number of emigrants caused a lively reaction from the church community in the Kingdom of Poland, especially in the Dioceses of Płock and of Kujawy and Kalisz. The Bishop of Płock encouraged the faithful who were going to emigrate to receive letters of recommendation to the parish priests in the areas where they were going to work in exile. The Bishop of Kujawy and Kalisz, S. Zdzitowiecki, was also keenly interested in the issue of emigration. At the meeting of the Dean's Social Committee in 1908, the decision was made to print letters of recommendation and distribute them to those faithful emigrating from the diocese.⁹

Emigration brought with itself numerous problems regarding both family life and pastoral care. Migrants were often exposed to unfair employment contracts and dishonest employment agencies offering poor working conditions. There was the Warsaw Society for the Protection of Emigrants, which cared about the fate of emigrants, but it was not always able to respond adequately to the emerging problems. Thus, in the Diocese of Kujawy and Kalisz, specific initiatives were put in motion to solve this problem. Father J. Żak, a member of the Committee for Social Affairs, developed a draft bill of the Society for the Protection of Emigrants based in Warsaw, which obliged it to provide employment services.¹⁰ In order to learn about the living conditions in emigration, Father W. Helbich, a priest from the Diocese of Włocławek, traveled to Saxony in 1908.¹¹

⁶ See Janina Kuligowska, "Emigracja i duszpasterstwo wychodźców z Królestwa Polskiego do roku 1914 (w świetle urzędowych publikacji kościelnych)," *Nasza Przeszłość* 65 (1986): 91–101.

⁷ Kuligowska, "Emigracja i duszpasterstwo wychodźców," 102–106.

⁸ *Kronika Diecezji Kujawsko-Kaliskiej* (hereafter *KDKK*), vol. 4, no. 9 (1910), 264.

⁹ *KDKK*, vol. 7, no. 7/8 (1913), 200 (pt. 3).

¹⁰ See Kuligowska, "Emigracja i duszpasterstwo wychodźców," 127.

¹¹ See Kuligowska, "Emigracja i duszpasterstwo wychodźców," 119.

However, the Warsaw Society for the Protection of Emigrants did not provide spiritual care. Therefore, at the initiative of the clergy of the Diocese of Płock and with the support of Bishop Antoni Julian Nowowiejski, the Płock Society for the Protection of Emigrants was established in the autumn of 1911. The Society published a list of priests working among emigrants, which made it easier for the priests to contact each other on matters related to migrants.

The issuance of the "Diocesan Regulation on Emigrants" by the Bishop of Kujawy and Kalisz, S. Zdzitowiecki, in 1907 was of great value for the pastoral care of migrants. In that document, the bishop obliged parish priests to provide pastoral care to their faithful before, during, and after emigration. This care included warning parishioners against signing employment contracts in towns located too far from a church and warning contract workers that they should have the right to participate in services at least once every two weeks and to leave work at least once a summer to make confession. The bishop's regulation assumed that priests would give emigrants letters of recommendation in Latin, addressed to the parish priests at their place of work, which the latter would use to give character references to the emigrants. In addition, it stated that priests should encourage emigrants to gather together on Sundays to read Polish magazines, such as *Przewodnik Katolicki*, *Słowo Boże*, *Robotnik*, *Pracownica*, etc.¹²

In the Diocese of Płock, all of the diocesan priests took effective measures, either mandated by the Diocesan Authority or taken from their own experience, to properly prepare parishioners for emigration.¹³

When priests were unable to provide proper care to emigrants in Germany and other European countries, moral and material care for Polish seasonal workers in Germany became the basic responsibility of the Poznań Society for the Protection of Seasonal Emigrants, inspired by Catholic activists from Galicia, the Kingdom of Poland and the Duchy of Poznań.¹⁴ The Society also investigated the working conditions of emigrants and intervened if necessary.¹⁵

¹² *KDKK*, vol. 1, no. 3 (1907), 103.

¹³ Adolf Szelażek, "Wychodźstwo i obieżyśastwo polskie z uwzględnieniem ankiety diecezjalnej Płockiej." *Miesięcznik Płocki Pastorski* 3, no. 11 (1908): 322.

¹⁴ Kuligowska, "Emigracja i duszpasterstwo wychodźców," 129.

¹⁵ Kuligowska, "Emigracja i duszpasterstwo wychodźców," 129.

Emigration also became a problem in other dioceses of the Kingdom of Poland, and the letters published by the bishops of Poznań became helpful to bishops of other dioceses and priests in helping those who emigrated.

There was also a strong emigration movement from Galicia, a significant part of it being temporary emigration. People of the region emigrated most often to Germany, the Hungarian territory, Switzerland, Denmark and France. Many did not know the language of the country of emigration, which is why there were requests to send Polish priests to perform pastoral service.¹⁶ Galician bishops also noticed the spiritual needs of their faithful. Hence, attempts to solve this difficulty began to appear. One of them was to make school prefects go to work with emigrants during the holidays. In addition to diocesan priests, monks (including Resurrectionists, Jesuits, Franciscans and Salesians) were also engaged in working with emigrants. However, it was difficult to provide pastoral care to seasonal or temporary migrants, also called travelers.¹⁷

From 1892 onwards, Denmark was also a destination for emigrants. It is estimated that around 100,000 Poles from Galicia and the Kingdom of Poland arrived there before World War I. Polish emigration gradually changed from temporary to permanent. Spiritual care for Polish emigrants in Denmark was provided by Polish-speaking Catholic clergy from the Franciscans, Jesuits, Montfortans and the Sacred Heart priests, many of whom did not understand the Polish spirit. Hence, they were reluctant to hold pastoral ministry in the Polish language and instead supported assimilation into the community of Danish Catholics, leading to a buildup of tension between the local clergy on the one part and the Polish Catholics and clergymen on the other.¹⁸

Migrations of the Polish population also took place deep into Russia. When the construction of another section of the Trans-Siberian route from Harbin to Vladivostok began in Russia, Poles saw an opportunity

¹⁶ Jan Badeni, *Emigracja ludu polskiego do Niemiec* (Kraków: wyd. "Przegląd Powszechny", 1889), 19–20.

¹⁷ See Józef Szymański, "Kościół katolicki w trosce o emigrację z ziem polskich na przełomie XIX i XX wieku," *Fides, Ratio et Patria. Studia Toruńskie* 4 (2016): 107–122.

¹⁸ See Józef Szymański, "Opieka duszpasterska nad Polakami w Danii (1892–1939)," *Studia Polonijne* 40 (2019): 165–193. <https://ojs.tnku.pl/index.php/sp/article/view/10964/10267>

for their development in this project. A significant group of them emigrated to Harbin, where they worked in the construction and operation of the railway. Initially, their spiritual needs were satisfied by French missionaries working in China at that time, but this approach to satisfying spiritual needs did not fit the growing Polish community. When the Polish community in Harbin began to increase in size, Poles started to try to build a Catholic church. Over time, two parishes were created. The construction of the first parish church was completed in 1909, and in 1925, the second parish was established there. Both parishes were served by Polish priests.¹⁹

During World War I, the Bishop of Gniezno and Poznań took care of emigrants in Germany. He also took care of war prisoners staying in the area.²⁰

2. CARE FOR EMIGRANTS IN INDEPENDENT POLAND

In Poland, after 1918, Cardinal Dalbor constantly received letters from the Polish government, emigration groups, Polish organizations and priests themselves with requests to organize an emigration ministry in Poland. The Polish government after 1918 was also concerned about emigrants. In 1920, Cardinal Dalbor decided that, as the Primate of Poland, he had the right and duty to oversee the pastoral care of Poles abroad. In the same year, at a conference of Polish bishops, he presented the issue of Polish emigrants. The synod of bishops commissioned him to organize support for emigrants and establish an emigrants' association.²¹ In 1921, at the meeting of the Polish Episcopate in Kraków on June 2, the decision was made to put the Primate in charge of emigrant support activities on a nationwide basis.²²

The Primate also saw the need to appoint separate priests who would visit emigrant communities, organize missions, and provide assistance – with the help of lay collaborators – in managing Polish associa-

¹⁹ See Szymański, "Opieka duszpasterska nad Polakami," 165–192.

²⁰ Szymański, "Opieka duszpasterska nad Polakami," 48.

²¹ Szymański, "Opieka duszpasterska nad Polakami," 49.

²² Szymański, "Opieka duszpasterska nad Polakami," 49.

tions, publishing magazines, books and brochures, making proclamations for them, and sustaining constant ties with the Homeland. He also came to the conclusion that there was a need to create a separate primatial office that would deal with the problems of caring for emigrants. He believed that in order to provide pastoral care, it would be best to bring one male and one female religious order to the Poznań area; the orders would send monks and nuns to emigrant communities and, after their return from the mission, would serve the missionaries' rest and spiritual renewal.²³

It should also be added that even during Cardinal Dalbor's pastoral ministry, the problem of pastoral care for migrants going to France was growing. After the First World War, Poles went to work in France under interstate agreements.²⁴ The difficult economic situation in Poland and the high unemployment rate caused many Poles to look for work outside their own country. As a result, approximately four hundred thousand Poles emigrated to France in the interwar period, most of whom did not speak French at the beginning. Since most of them were Catholics, requests for Polish pastors kept coming to the Primate.

At the same time, there was a need to regulate the relationship between the Church in Poland and the Church in France. This prompted Polish bishops to invite representatives of the French Episcopate to visit Poland. In 1924, representatives of the French Episcopal Conference from the dioceses where most Polish migrants settled came to Poland. During the visit, French bishops could not only meet with Polish bishops in the largest Polish centers but also see how Poles' religiousness manifested itself externally.

As a result of the meeting with Primate Dalbor, important elements of pastoral care for Poles in France were established. At a meeting with the Primate on June 23, 1924, the essential points of the Regulations for Polish priests working in France were settled, which, after further discussions, were announced in January 1925.²⁵ The French delegation also asked the Polish bishops for permanent pastors for larger groups of emigrants, be-

²³ Szymański, "Opieka duszpasterska nad Polakami," 48–49.

²⁴ See *Konwencja w przedmiocie emigracji i imigracji pomiędzy Rzeczpospolitą Polską a Rzeczpospolitą Francuską*, Journal of Laws (Dz.U.) 1920, no. 41, item 246.

²⁵ See Roman Dzwonkowski, "Współpraca polsko-francuska w organizowaniu opieki religijnej dla Polaków we Francji (1909–1939)," *Studia Polonijne* 8 (1984): 142.

cause, in its opinion, occasional religious care was completely insufficient.²⁶ This created the basis to regulate the status of Polish priests and gave special importance to the Polish Catholic Mission in Paris, which coordinated the activities of priests and liaised with the French Episcopate.²⁷

The friendly attitude of the French Episcopate to pastoral care in the Polish language in the 1920s is worth noting. Furthermore, the owners of various types of French mines also played a great role in organizing pastoral care and supporting Polish priests. Their motive was the desire to maintain peace in the workplace. They were convinced that meeting the religious needs of their employees would promote good performance in the workplace and protect their plants from disruptive activities.²⁸

Bishop August Hlond assumed responsibility for pastoral work among emigrants after the death of Cardinal Dalbor and became the next Archbishop of Gniezno and Poznań in 1926. In the reborn Poland, the Polish Episcopal Conference entrusted him with the care of Polish emigrants. Archbishop Hlond considered supporting emigrants as one of his most important tasks. Thus, in 1927, Primate Hlond notified the Polish government and all diplomatic missions in the world that, on behalf of the Episcopate, he had taken over the pastoral care of Catholic Poles living abroad.²⁹ The Holy See awarded Cardinal Hlond the title of Protector, that is, Spiritual Guardian of the Polish Emigration. This strengthened his position in carrying out this task in the Church and the world. At the same time, the Holy See approved another of Cardinal Hlond's initiatives, the Center for Pastoral Ministry Abroad, which operated at the office of the Primate of Poland in Poznań. Its task was to collect all information about the situation and needs of Polish emigration, handle the correspondence with the bishops of the countries of settlement, maintain contact with the rectors of Polish Catholic Missions, arrange formalities regarding departures, collect donations for emigrants, and promote the need to care for emigration.³⁰

²⁶ Dzwonkowski, "Współpraca polsko-francuska," 142.

²⁷ Dzwonkowski, "Współpraca polsko-francuska," 145.

²⁸ Dzwonkowski, "Współpraca polsko-francuska," 145–150.

²⁹ Dzwonkowski, "Współpraca polsko-francuska," 50–51.

³⁰ Dzwonkowski, "Współpraca polsko-francuska," 51.

At the request of Primate Hlond, at the meeting of the Polish Episcopal Conference in Częstochowa in 1928, the Commission for Foreign Pastoral Affairs was established under his chairmanship. Justifying the need for its establishment, the Primate stated that pastoral care of Poles abroad was becoming more and more widespread, requiring constant vigilance and oversight. The Commission was composed of Bishops A. Sapieha, Stanisław Łukomski and Teodor Kubina, who were already well aware of migration issues. The Commission undertook intensive work discussing problems arising in the pastoral care of Poles abroad. During the deliberations, it became increasingly clear that it would be necessary to create a religious congregation that would educate priests for pastoral care around the world or, alternatively, to reorganize one of the existing Polish congregations to care for emigrants. Primate Hlond was also constantly cognizant of this issue. The department at the Chancellery of the Primate of Poland in Poznań that dealt with matters of Polish emigration became the Center for Emigration Pastoral Ministry.³¹ Thinking about solving emigration problems, Primate Hlond established a second seminary at the site of the Primatial Seminary in Gniezno on October 1, 1929, known as the Foreign Seminary.³²

Soon afterwards, on May 10, 1931, Cardinal A. Hlond applied to the Holy See for approval of the Center for Pastoral Ministry Abroad. The Holy Father Pius XI approved the Center and granted Primate Hlond the protectorate over the pastoral care of Polish emigrants.³³ After receiving the approval of the Holy See, the Primate presented it to the bishops of the places of settlement of Polish emigrants as well as to the Polish Episcopal Conference in 1931 at the convention in Częstochowa. At the same meeting, he also announced that the Holy See had agreed to establish a new religious congregation for the education of priests who would work with emigrants. In August 1932, Primate Hlond established a new religious congregation, the Society of Christ, whose goal was to provide pastoral care to Polish emigrants. In November 1932, the Polish Episcopal commission notified the ordinaries about the establishment of a new religious congregation, which would henceforth be responsible for emigration pastoral

³¹ See Bernard Kołodziej, "Biskupi polscy w trosce o polskich emigrantów," *Studia Prymasowskie* 2 (2008): 211.

³² Kołodziej, "Biskupi polscy w trosce," 211.

³³ Kołodziej, "Biskupi polscy w trosce," 211–212.

work.³⁴ Shortly after the Pope's acceptance of his decision on August 5, 1931, Cardinal August Hlond appointed Father Ignacy Posadzy as the organizer of the Foreign Theological Seminary. Initially, it was located in Potulice thanks to a donation from Countess Aniela Potulicka.³⁵ Both students from existing seminaries and new candidates were admitted to the seminary. The monastic formation was aimed at preparing the priests not only to serve a pastoral role among the Polish community but also to undertake activities that would foster the integration of that environment. The first missionaries formed at the Seminary of the Society of Christ were sent for pastoral work in 1938.

Primate Hlond was constantly interested in the problems of emigrants and tried to respond to them. At his initiative, Father Ignacy Posadzy, before becoming the Rector of the Foreign Seminary, travelled to South America and then informed the Primate about his findings. Primate Hlond very often asked diocesan bishops to send priests to work in emigration. However, due to the insufficient number of priests, only a few could go to work abroad. The Primate himself used many opportunities to establish and maintain contacts with the Polish community. He often gave radio speeches to emigrants, especially during the pre-Christmas season. He also travelled many times to Polish communities in France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Austria, Belgium, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay.³⁶

Primate Hlond not only used his emigration office to keep contacts with the bishops of the areas where the emigrants stayed, but also tried to solve problems reported by the Catholic missions in France, Belgium or Germany as well as problems which came up in South America and North America.³⁷ Primate Hlond also contributed to the involvement of lay people in the care of emigrants. For this purpose, he used the existing organization, Care for Countrymen in Foreign Lands, the headquarters of which

³⁴ Kołodziej, "Biskupi polscy w trosce," 213–214.

³⁵ See Bernard Kołodziej, "Współzałożyciel ks. Ignacy Posadzy," in *Historia Towarzystwa Chrystusowego dla Wychodźców 1932–1939*, edited by Florian Berlik (Poznań: Towarzystwo Chrystusowe dla Polonii Zagranicznej, 1987), 8–84.

³⁶ Czesław Kamiński, "Ksiądz kardynał Hlond, protektor wychodźstwa polskiego, organizatorem polskiego duszpasterstwa emigracyjnego," in *Historia Towarzystwa Chrystusowego dla Wychodźców 1932–1939*, edited by Florian Berlik (Poznań: Towarzystwo Chrystusowe dla Polonii Zagranicznej, 1987), 44–53.

³⁷ Kamiński, "Ksiądz kardynał Hlond," 54–56.

he moved from Warsaw to Poznań.³⁸ It is particularly worth emphasizing the involvement of Catholic activists of this association in sending books and educational materials to emigrants abroad. The association published the popular magazine *Emigrant Polski* in the years 1928–1932. Since 1929, the “Polish Care Day” was organized, providing an opportunity to popularize emigration issues and organize public fundraisers, which led to the organization of the “Christmas Day Meeting” for Poles abroad. The association also tried to take care of those coming from and going into emigration, especially those returning to the country without financial resources and thus requiring support. This type of help was provided at the railway stations in Poznań and Zbąszyń as well as in Gdynia, where emigrants were leaving or returning by ship for or from the USA.³⁹

The creation of Polish parishes, which were important communities providing support and strength to persevere in the faith and Polishness, was of particular importance for keeping the faith and keeping the national identity.⁴⁰ These parishes were the result of the attitude of the Holy See, the efforts of the Polish Episcopate and, above all, the Primate, and the attitude of the bishops of the emigrants’ host dioceses.⁴¹ The importance of the parishes has been highlighted by many researchers,⁴² notably by Florian Znaniński, who researched the fortunes of emigration in the United States.⁴³ The parish was also a foundation for the life of emigrants in France, as emphasized by R. Dzwonkowski.⁴⁴

³⁸ Kamiński, “Ksiądz kardynał Hlond,” 55–56.

³⁹ See Barbara Michalik-Russek, “Stowarzyszenie ‘Opieka polska nad Rodakami na obczyźnie’ w latach 1926–1939,” *Studia Polonijne* 14 (1992): 163–171.

⁴⁰ See Roman Dzwonkowski, “Przemiany polskiej parafii w północnej Francji (1922–1972). Studium historyczno-socjologiczne parafii w Oignies,” *Studia Polonijne* 1 (1976): 27–83.

⁴¹ See Bronisław Panek, “Księża polscy pracujący na placówkach duszpasterskich we Francji od 1922 r.,” *Saeculum Christianum: Pismo Historyczno-Społeczne* 1, no. 1 (1994): 219–226.

⁴² See Artur Wysocki, “Znaczenie więzi z parafią polską dla Polonii francuskiej na podstawie wyników badania pilotażowego,” *Studia Polonijne* 43 (2022): 5–27.

⁴³ See William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniński, *Chłop polski w Europie i Ameryce. Organizacja grupy pierwotnej*, tom V (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1976), 221.

⁴⁴ Roman Dzwonkowski, “Ideowe oblicze współczesnej Polonii francuskiej,” in *Współczesne środowiska emigracji polskiej. Sytuacja duszpasterska*, edited by Józef Bakalarz (Lublin: Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski, 1985), 74.

Maintaining ties with the parish of origin was of great importance for preserving faith and values. Thus, Polish bishops encouraged parish priests to maintain these relationships, especially with seasonal or temporary migrants.⁴⁵

CONCLUSION

The analyses carried out in this article demonstrate that the Church in Poland cared for emigrants from Polish lands before and during the First World War as well as in the post-war years, after Poland had regained its independence. The Church's support extended to both permanent and temporary emigrants, with a particular commitment from the bishops of the Diocese of Gniezno and Poznań. The involvement of the Diocese of Gniezno and Poznań in Prussia facilitated both direct contacts with the German clergy and high-level contacts between the Poznań bishops and the bishops in the Kingdom of Poland. Thus, the diocese became the central place for dealing with many problems related to emigration, prompting Archbishop Dalbor and then Primate Hlond to create a special Commission in Poznań, tasked with ongoing oversight of various issues related to emigrants. This led, over time, to the decision to establish a center for priestly formation at the diocese, its role being to prepare priests to work among Poles abroad. This, in turn, influenced the establishment of the Society of Christ and a theological seminary preparing priests for work among the Polish emigrant community.

Apart from permanent emigration, another subject of particular interest to bishops from the Polish lands was temporary emigration to various European countries. Efforts were made to create conditions for providing spiritual care to Polish migrants in consultation with the Holy See and the bishops. One of the difficult problems faced in the process was to provide Polish priests who would extend pastoral care to the emigrants. The bishops strived to have as many Polish priests as possible, but their number was not sufficient. In the places where Polish parishes were established, maintaining Polish identity and faith was easier. However, at-

⁴⁵ Teodor Kubina, "W sprawie wychodźców," *Wiadomości Diecezjalne* 2 (1927): 45-46.

tempts were also made to provide pastoral care to seasonal emigrants in the place of emigration, that is, in the parishes of their residence. In the interwar period, lay people were also included in the efforts to support emigrants through the establishment of the association called Care for Countrymen in Foreign Lands. The association involved a significant part of the Catholic society in responsibility for emigrants and provided help to Poles in emigration and those returning from abroad by engaging in publishing, awareness and welfare activities.

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