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## History of the Congresses of Teaching Priests in the Kingdom of Poland (1906–1917)

### Introduction

The Kingdom of Poland was established in 1815 by the Congress of Vienna in 1815 as a monarchy united by personal union with Russia. In this way, the Kingdom of Poland was completely subordinated to the tsarist power, also with regard to the organisation of religious instruction in schools. It was not until the revolutionary events initiated in Russia in 1905 that a number of changes were brought about in the Kingdom of Poland, which, among other things, ensured more freedom of teaching and educating children and young people, as well as organising teachers' associations and national conventions. This also applied to teachers of religion, who decided to organise meetings of teaching priests in the Russian partition zone and to take action to unify catechetical work in this area.

The aim of this study is to shed some light on the history of all catechetical congresses in the Kingdom of Poland based on the preserved source materials, in their organisational and substantive dimension, and to indicate their most important demands outlining further activities in the field of catechisation in the resurgent Polish state.

### 1. First catechetical congress in Czestochowa (18th–19th April 1906)

The first congress of teaching priests of the Kingdom of Poland was held in Czestochowa on 18th and 19th April 1906.<sup>2</sup> It was addressed to clerical teachers

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<sup>2</sup> *Ważna wiadomość*, “Wiadomości Pasterskie” 1 (1905), nr 2, p. 128.

with regard to whom the term “priest prefect” or “school prefect” was used from the second half of the eighteenth century to describe priests teaching religion at school. As a rule they were not involved in the pastoral activity in the parish, but were delegated by the bishop of the place to work exclusively in schools where they were responsible for the education and religious formation of children and young people.<sup>3</sup>

The congress was attended by more than 60 school prefects from almost all the dioceses of the Kingdom of Poland.<sup>4</sup> In addition, there came priest prefects from Lithuania (Vilnius) and Ruthenia (Kiev). Due to this fact, the local press described the meeting as a gathering of school prefects not only from the area of the Kingdom of Poland, but also from the Russian Empire.<sup>5</sup> It should also be mentioned that it was also attended by a school prefect from the Austrian partition zone, namely Father Walenty Gadowski, who represented the catechetical milieu of Galicia. The meetings were held in a room in the vicarage belonging to St Barbara’s parish in Czestochowa where the proceedings were conducted.<sup>6</sup> They were preceded by a prayer meeting in the Chapel of the Miraculous Image of Our Lady at Jasna Góra.<sup>7</sup>

The meeting began with the appointment of the Presiding Committee of the Congress. Fr Stanisław Maciejewicz (Vilnius) was elected the Chairman. As he could not stay until the end of the congress, from the middle of the second day of the congress this position was entrusted to Fr Lukasz Janczak (Siennica). The Committee was supplemented by assessors (advisors) Fr Władysław Budny (Warsaw) and Fr Jan Gralewski (Warsaw). Fr Michał Ciesielski (Czestochowa) and Fr Julian Brylik (Piotrków Trybunalski) were elected the secretaries.<sup>8</sup>

The topic of the congress was widely understood problems of teaching religion in secondary schools. When analysing the scarce archival materials surviving from that time, it can be indicated that the dominant issues were those related to the curricula and methods as well as educational work among young people. This is evidenced by the subject matter of the papers delivered and the contents of the debates held.

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<sup>3</sup> S. Wesołowski, *Prefekt*, in: *Encyklopedia Wychowawcza*, red. T. Lubomirski, E. Stawiski, S. Przysański, J.K. Plebański, Warszawa 1912, vol. 8, pp. 542–544; R. Ceglarek, *Koło Księży Prefektów w Wieluniu*, “Rocznik Wieluński” (2014), t. 14, p. 327.

<sup>4</sup> W. Gadowski, *Pierwszy zjazd XX. Prefektów w Królestwie Polskim*, “Wiadomości Pasterskie” 2 (1906), nr 5, pp. 314–320.

<sup>5</sup> *Dwudniowy zjazd prefektów w Częstochowie*, “Wiadomości Częstochowskie” 1 (1906), nr 47, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> M. Szkopowski, *1-szy krajowy zjazd prefektów*, “Kurier Warszawski” 86 (1906), nr 108, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> *Dwudniowy zjazd...*, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> W. Gadowski, *Pierwszy zjazd XX. Prefektów w Kongresówce*, “Dwutygodnik Katechetyczny i Duszpasterski” 10 (1906), nr 9, p. 284.

The first speakers at the congress were Fr Władysław Budny (Warsaw) and Fr Józef Jamiołkowski (Warsaw). They discussed the issue of curricula for religious instruction, addressing at the same time the question of creating new curricula, common for the Kingdom of Poland. They pointed out the need for the current education system to be taken into account in this process, i.e. different types of schools and a different number of years devoted to education in them. It was suggested however that a religious curriculum should always constitute a coherent whole regardless of the number of classes; where there were fewer classes, the approach should be more concise, with a more expanded curriculum where there were more classes.<sup>9</sup>

When discussing the question of creating a curriculum for the study of religion, the question of including apologetics within it was considered. In the early 20th century it was understood as a theological discipline that vindicates the fundamental truths of faith and deals with their defence. Two possibilities were considered, whether to introduce systematic apologetics as a separate subject within religious education or occasional apologetics discussed episodically in some classes in connection with selected topics. There were also other proposals submitted concerning the curriculum which differed considerably between them, such as the question of starting religious education either with biblical stories or with the study of the catechism. As a result of these differences of opinion, only an outline of the curriculum was drawn up. The work on making it more detailed was delegated to a specially appointed commission which was to work out its official draft and present it at the next congress.<sup>10</sup>

An important thematic area of the meeting was the methodology of teaching religion. The discussion was preceded by papers on this subject given by Fr Rudolf Filipiński (Pabianice) and Fr Włodzimierz Jasiński (Kalisz).<sup>11</sup> The attention of the participants at the congress was basically focused on two methods, i.e. the exegetical (analytical) one and the Munich oMeunier returned at the beginning of the 20th century opposing it to the Munich method, which appeared at that time as a novelty in the teaching of religion.<sup>12</sup> In simple terms it can be summarised as explaining the catechism sentence by sentence, word by word, based on the model of the exegesis of the biblical text, hence the name of this method. Catechesis was commenced by simply reading out an extract from the catechism (a question and an answer), and then explaining its content in detail.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *Dwudniowy zjazd...*, p. 2; W. Gadowski, *Pierwszy zjazd [...] w Królestwie...*, p. 316.

<sup>10</sup> W. Gadowski, *Pierwszy zjazd [...] w Królestwie...*, pp. 316–317.

<sup>11</sup> *Ze zjazdu prefektów*, "Wiadomości Częstochowskie" 1 (1906), nr 48, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> See W.H. Meunier, *Die Lehrmethode im Katechismus-Unterricht. Ein Beitrag zur heutigen Bewegung auf dem Gebiete der Katechetik*, Köln 1905.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

The other method of teaching religion discussed at the congress was the Munich method. Its origins are associated with the work of Johann Friedrich Herbart – a philosopher and pedagogue who developed a new theory of teaching. It introduced several formal steps (stages), according to which the lesson should be conducted. Over the time this method was improved by his successors. The Munich method was brought into catechesis by Antoni Weber, who worked out its basic theoretical principles, and Fr Henryk Stieglitz, who devoted himself to making attempts at its practical application.<sup>14</sup> It was intended to replace the traditional exegetical method of teaching religion. The whole process of teaching was built on the principle of clarity, which was a novelty in teaching at that time. The approach during lessons of religion was to strive towards extrasensory cognition, starting with sensory cognition, which moved from details and sought to generalise. If a teacher wanted a religious concept to be formed in the child's mind, he first had to visualise it. He did it on the basis of the principle of clarity, i.e. learning by experience, according to five successive stages referred to as formal ones, i.e. preparation, lecture, explanation, summary and application.<sup>15</sup>

The last of the speakers, Fr Jan Gralewski (Warsaw) spoke about the position of a teacher of religion as a pastoral guide for young people. He drew attention to the need to develop special pastoral care for young people, leading to the formation of a good moral attitude in them, e.g. through participation in religious practices and Catholic associations. He called for an intensification of educational work, so that it would be even more responsible, being focused on the mature religious formation of pupils, giving them a strong foundation of moral principles so that they could develop a Christian worldview and follow Catholic ethics in life.<sup>16</sup>

After the conclusion of the deliberations, the Presiding Committee of the Congress drew up some proposals that were intended to guide further work of school prefects. First and foremost, they were intended to define the main guidelines for the work on the new curricula for religious instruction. The participants of the congress recognised this question as one of the most important catechetical problems and therefore appointed a special commission to work out curricula for rural and urban primary schools, secondary schools of various types and teacher-training colleges. They also accepted the call for preparing new textbooks according to the newly devised curricula. The third important resolution of the congress was to emphasise the practical dimension in the teaching of religion at school. Prefects were to take care of deep spiritual formation of pupils leading to sacramental life and developing good habits related to Christian virtues.

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<sup>14</sup> W. Kubik, *Rozwój myśli dydaktycznej w polskiej literaturze katechetycznej w latach 1895–1970*, Warszawa 1987, pp. 36–45.

<sup>15</sup> *Monachijska metoda katechizowania*, “Dwutygodnik Katechetyczny i Duszpasterski” 11 (1907), nr 3, pp. 88–92.

<sup>16</sup> W. Gadowski, *Pierwszy zjazd [...] w Królestwie...*, p. 318.

## 2. Second catechetical congress in Warsaw (21st–23rd August 1906)

The second congress was scheduled in the same year as the first, i.e. 1906, from the 21st to the 23rd of August.<sup>17</sup> The meetings were held in one of the halls in a building belonging to the Warsaw Rowing Society. It was attended by almost 70 school prefects. The deliberations began with a joint prayer and the election of the chairman of the congress. The elected one was Fr Jan Gralewski (Warszawa), and he in turn appointed Fr Aleksander Sokolik (Kampinos) and Fr Józef Scipio del Campo (Siedlce) as his assessors, and Fr Józef Jamiołkowski (Warsaw) and Fr Michał Ciesielski (Czestochowa) as secretaries.

Topics of the congress were centred on the issues of religious education and formation of children and young people, the catechetical pastoral care, the role of the teacher of religion in the school environment and the curricula for teaching religion in primary and secondary schools. The first speaker, Fr Władysław Gacek (Kielce), discussed the issue of participation of priest prefects in school boards dealing with pedagogical, welfare and educational matters. In his judgement, teachers of religion should seize each such opportunity to take action aimed at ensuring the appropriate profile of religious and moral formation of the pupils at school. The second speaker, Fr Stanisław Szabelski (Piotrków Trybunalski), discussed the issue of religious practices and customs at school. He appealed to the priest prefects to make efforts so that the integrating factor of the Polish nation would be the culture of Christian morality, which they should pursue and nurture. He reminded that catechetical activities at school should also have a practical dimension oriented at celebrating faith by pupils and motivating them to follow the principles of Catholic ethics in life.<sup>18</sup>

On the same day, two more papers were scheduled for the afternoon session. The first was delivered by Fr Marcin Szkopowski (Warsaw). His subject was the Polish Teachers' Association. The speaker acquainted the participants with the ideological assumptions of the Association and its goals by presenting its resolutions. This gave the impulse to adopt a joint declaration of accession to the Association as an organisation of educational and social importance. The author of the second presentation was Fr Józef Jamiołkowski (Warsaw) who outlined the draft curriculum of religious instruction for secondary schools adopted at the congress in Czestochowa. The main assumptions of the concept of the curriculum were accepted. The only doubt concerned the eighth form, to which apologetics was originally assigned. At the request of Fr Adam Pyzowski (Warsaw) the resolution

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<sup>17</sup> *Zjazd księży prefektów*, "Słowo" 25 (1906), nr 229, p. 3; *Drugi zjazd księży prefektów w Warszawie*, "Świat" 1 (1906), nr 35, p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> S. Szabelski, *Praktyki i wycieczki religijne w szkole*, "Wiadomości Pasterskie" 2 (1906), nr 11, pp. 651–656.

of the first congress was rejected, and apologetics was finally removed from the curriculum. In this way a new variant of the curriculum of religious instruction crystallised and was accepted.<sup>19</sup>

The second day of the congress began with a paper by Fr Jan Skwara (Puławy) who highlighted the personality of a priest prefect in his presentation. He pointed out that the task of such a person should be to integrate faith with life so that the religious knowledge gained should have a real impact on the Christian life of children and young people.<sup>20</sup> The next speaker, Fr Stanisław Szabelski (Piotrków Trybunalski) also raised the issue of religious and moral education referring to school celebrations. He treated them as one of the elements of pupils' formation. Therefore, he encouraged priest prefects to organise them in the form of religious and national celebrations.<sup>21</sup>

The thoughts taken up in the papers were continued during the discussion. Fr Alfons Trepkowski (Warsaw) proposed that the annual feast days of the deceased benefactors of pupils (scholarship donors) should be added to school celebrations. Next, Fr Jan Gralewski (Warsaw) appealed for the educational activities to have a positive and creative dimension, encouraging good behaviour, and not to be aimed only at showing the negative aspects of their attitudes and constant shortcomings. Others called for such formation of young people that their future professional work would be an opportunity to provide reliable service to society and God while respecting the principles of Catholic ethics.<sup>22</sup>

The next part of the congress on that day was a meeting with Dr Cecil Reddie, Headmaster of Abbotsholme School in England. He had been invited by Fr Jan Gralewski, who paid an official visit to that school in 1904 and familiarised himself with the way it functioned. The school attached great importance to religion, treating it as the foundation of human life and an element of man's integral development.<sup>23</sup> Not surprisingly then, the conversation concerned religious education of children and young people, the dangers in this dimension and the challenges faced by the teachers.<sup>24</sup>

This meeting was followed by the presentation of the remaining papers planned for this part of the congress. They were initiated by Fr Stanisław Szabelski (Piotrków Trybunalski) with a presentation on school trips with a special emphasis on pilgrimages to places sanctified by religious and national tradition.

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<sup>19</sup> [L. Fulman], *Drugi zjazd ks. prefektów*, "Wiadomości Pasterskie" 2 (1906), nr 9, pp. 561–562.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 562–563.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 563.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 563–564.

<sup>23</sup> J. Gralewski, *Nowa szkoła w Abbotsholme*, "Kurier Warszawski" 84 (1904), nr 314, p. 1; nr 316, p. 1; nr 317, pp. 1–2.

<sup>24</sup> L. Fulman, *Drugi zjazd XX. Prefektów w Kongresówce*, "Dwutygodnik Katechetyczny i Duszpasterski" 10 (1906), nr 21, pp. 620–622.

The speaker saw in it a form of religious instruction related to the transmission of theological knowledge concerning truth of faith or a Christian tradition cultivated in a particular place.<sup>25</sup>

The next two papers also concerned the work of education with those being catechised. First, Fr Antoni Grochowski (Piotrków Trybunalski), whose paper was read out by Fr Marcin Szkopowski, dealt with the issues of alcohol prevention, spreading the abstinence movement among the youth and promoting a healthy lifestyle.<sup>26</sup> Next, Fr Franciszek Choiński (Warsaw), focused on the involvement of school prefects in pupils' associations because, in his opinion, they created opportunities for developing the personality of children and young people, making their religious and moral life more profound, encouraging conscious involvement in social activities, and shaping the Catholic worldview.<sup>27</sup>

The last day of the deliberations was devoted entirely to curricula for religious instruction for folk (primary) and secondary schools. Fr Józef Jamiołkowski (Warsaw) presented his concept of a curriculum for urban primary schools.<sup>28</sup> As well as urban primary schools, there were also folk rural schools in the period concerned. Those were usually schools with the lowest level of organisation and therefore only having one classroom where one teacher typically taught for four years. For this type of schools the curriculum for religious instruction was developed by Fr Alfons Trepkowski (Będków).<sup>29</sup> His draft was met with overall approval, and after some fine tuning by a special committee it was published as the curriculum for teaching Roman Catholic religion in rural folk schools.<sup>30</sup>

Work on a curriculum of religious instruction for secondary schools was postponed to the end of the congress. Unfortunately, lack of time did not allow a thorough discussion of the draft or the development of a comprehensive curriculum for all forms. This issue was to be dealt with by the Curriculum Committee after the congress. In the meantime, the curriculum for the first six forms of secondary schools was adopted.<sup>31</sup>

The congress drafted a number of resolutions that were intended to further stimulate the direction of catechetical work in the Kingdom of Poland. The first

<sup>25</sup> S. Szabelski, *Wycieczki i pielgrzymki młodzieży szkolnej*, "Wiadomości Pasterskie" 2 (1906), nr 11, pp. 656–660.

<sup>26</sup> L. Fulman, *Drugi zjazd...*, nr 22, p. 652.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Zjazd...*, Słowo, p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> L. Fulman, *Drugi zjazd...*, nr 22, p. 653.

<sup>30</sup> *Plan nauki religii w szkołach ludowych wiejskich Królestwa Polskiego*, in: *Program nauczania religii rzymsko-katolickiej w szkołach Królestwa Polskiego, proponowany przez II Zjazd XX. Prefektów w Warszawie*, Warszawa [1906], pp. 3–18.

<sup>31</sup> *Program nauczania religii rzymsko-katolickiej w szkołach średnich*, in: *Program nauczania...* [1906], pp. 22–46.

proposal was to ensure religious practices in schools. Moreover, the congress recognised the importance of parochial catechesis, especially in the preparation for the first confession and Holy Communion by introducing additional classes apart from religion classes at school in order to prepare children for these sacraments in the best possible way.<sup>32</sup> A lot of attention in the draft proposals was given to the issue of building a sense of unity and pride among pupils, and at the same time promoting culture, customs and Polish traditions.<sup>33</sup> The resolutions also summarised the work on curricula for religious education. In the course of the deliberations, a detailed curriculum for rural and urban primary schools was worked out as well as a division of learning material for all forms of female and male secondary schools (teaching contents).<sup>34</sup> An important resolution of the congress was the establishment of an organisation bringing together school prefects. It was decided not to establish an association of teaching priests for the time being, but to create a club of priest prefects within the existing Polish Teachers' Association.<sup>35</sup>

After three days of deliberations, the congress ended on 23rd August 1906. It was supplemented with a solemn service celebrated the following day in the post-Piarist church by Fr Jan Gralewski. Afterwards, a delegation consisting of Frs Franciszek Choiński, Jan Niedzielski and Marcin Szkopowski went to the Archbishop of Warsaw in order to deliver a report on the course of the deliberations and the proposals accepted for implementation.<sup>36</sup>

### 3. Third catechetical congress in Warsaw (24th–26th August 1907)

The third congress of school prefects of the Kingdom of Poland, like the second one, was held in Warsaw. The sessions lasted three days, from the 24th to the 26th of August 1907, in the same place as previously. The congress began with a joint service in the Visitationist Church.<sup>37</sup> It was held under the patronage of Archbishop Vincentas Chostak-Popiel who opened the convention with a pastoral word to the participants. Fr Tomasz Kowalewski (Płock) was elected the Chairman of the Congress, and Fr Józef Jamiołkowski (Warsaw) was elected the secretary.<sup>38</sup>

The first session was inaugurated by a paper delivered by Fr Alfons Trepkowski on the subject of the historical development of religious instruction in

<sup>32</sup> *Uchwały drugiego zjazdu księży prefektów*, "Wiadomości Pasterskie" 2 (1906), nr 9, p. 570.

<sup>33</sup> *Uchwały 2-go i 3-go Zjazdu XX. Prefektów*, Warszawa 1906–1907, pp. 1–2.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Uchwały drugiego zjazdu...*, p. 571.

<sup>37</sup> *Trzeci zjazd księży prefektów*, "Słowo" 26 (1907), nr 216, p. 3.

<sup>38</sup> *Zjazd ks. ks. prefektów*, "Kurier Polski" 10 (1907), nr 233, p. 1.



Polish literature.<sup>39</sup> Subsequent speeches can be divided basically into three modules, i.e. curricula and textbooks for religious instruction; demonstration lessons of religion, and extracurricular activities.<sup>40</sup>

During the past school year teaching priests had time for a thorough analysis of the curriculum proposals prepared by the second congress, for their verification in school practice and for drawing up a list of deficiencies requiring reconsideration and possible correction. These contents were referred to by, among others, Fr Jan Mauersberger (Warsaw), Fr Jan Kabata (Włocławek) and Fr Walenty Gadowski (Tarnów).<sup>41</sup> The last named made a thorough evaluation of religious instruction curricula for primary (folk) and secondary schools. He pointed out their shortcomings, such as sticking to the old scholastic principle of dividing teaching material into theological treatises and transferring the way of teaching them from seminaries to folk and secondary schools. In the broadest terms, he considered it wrong to use the catechism and discuss the truths of faith contained therein (from definition to explanation) in the first two forms of folk school. Instead, he proposed that biblical stories be used as these are more accessible and facilitate the learning of these truths; in other words, analysing catechism formulas should be replaced by reaching these contents based on specific examples taken from biblical stories (from example to definition). As far as secondary schools were concerned, he saw the need for the curriculum to depart from the exposition of systematic theology in the form of categorised treatises (e.g. liturgics, dogmatics, or ethics) towards socio-ethical and apologetic issues which should be dealt with in a more comprehensive way based on the secondary catechism. In addition, he saw the need to expand the scope of Church history and devote two years to it altogether regardless of the type of school.<sup>42</sup>

Next, Fr Franciszek Choiński (Warsaw) took up the problem of a curriculum for commercial schools.<sup>43</sup> The point of reference that was adopted was the religious instruction curriculum intended for eight-year secondary schools (of various types).<sup>44</sup> Since commercial schools typically comprised seven years, it was decided to reduce the teaching content in the field of Church history, assigning

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<sup>39</sup> *Trzeci zjazd XX. Prefektów w Kongresówce*, "Dwutygodnik Katechetyczny i Duszpasterski" 11 (1907), nr 16, p. 623.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 624.

<sup>41</sup> Fr W. Gadowski, who at that time was staying in Tarnow in Galicia (the Austrian partition zone), did not obtain permission from the state administration of the Russian partition to enter the Kingdom of Poland. His paper was sent by post to Warsaw and read out at the third congress, and its contents was published in "Dwutygodnik Katechetyczny i Duszpasterski".

<sup>42</sup> *Plan nauki religii w Królestwie Polskim*, "Dwutygodnik Katechetyczny i Duszpasterski" 11 (1907), nr 13, pp. 491–498; nr 14, pp. 536–539; nr 15, pp. 583–586.

<sup>43</sup> *Trzeci zjazd XX. Prefektów...*, p. 623.

<sup>44</sup> *Program nauczania religii rzymsko-katolickiej w szkołach średnich*, Warszawa 1907.

not two years but one year for its study. In this way, these schools had the same content components as secondary schools in the first five forms, Church history in its entirety in the sixth form, and fundamental dogmatics (in connection with ethics) in the seventh. It was assumed that female secondary schools would have exactly the same distribution of teaching content.

The curricula for dogmatics and ethics were also revisited, as well as the curriculum of Church history. The group of speakers presenting these matters included: Fr Czesław Sokołowski (Warsaw) – dogmatics; Fr Stanisław Rostański (Radom) – ethics; and Fr Antoni Grochowski (Piotrków Trybunalski) – Church history. Furthermore, the curriculum for religious instruction for teacher-training colleges was analysed after a paper delivered by Fr Ludwik Stępowski (Siennica) and for rural schools after presentations by Fr Kazimierz Sobolewski (Mińsk Mazowiecki) and Fr Aureliusz Chwiłowicz (Radomsko).<sup>45</sup>

In conjunction with the curricula, the question of textbooks for religious instruction was discussed as they were the basic aid for teaching priests in conducting lessons of religion and an important tool for working with pupils. And so, Fr Włodzimierz Jasiński (Kalisz) discussed the question of the catechism for lower forms, intended for younger children; Fr Józef Kruszyński (Włocławek) evaluated textbooks on biblical history; Fr Józef Jamiołkowski (Warsaw) dealt with textbooks on liturgy; Fr Czesław Sokołowski (Warsaw) dealt with textbooks on dogmatics; and Fr Kazimierz Kobrzyński (Warsaw) dealt with textbooks for primary schools. It can only be assumed that while analysing the curriculum for religious instruction in the field of ethics and history of the Church, both Fr S. Rostański and Fr A. Grochowski also touched upon the question of textbooks for these subjects, just as Fr Cz. Sokołowski touched upon the question of a textbook for dogmatics while discussing the curriculum for dogmatics.<sup>46</sup>

Already at the first congress in Czestochowa there appeared the suggestion that such assemblies should include demonstration lessons of religion in their agenda. It was not until the third congress that this became reality. Fr W. Jasiński conducted such a lesson with emphasis laid on the ability to use a religious instruction book for younger children (lower catechism). Afterwards, Fr J. Gralewski was going to present a model lesson of religion on a selected topic in the field of biblical history.<sup>47</sup>

The congress participants were also interested in matters related to the extra-curricular activities run by teaching priests. One of them was the functioning of school libraries. The task of the prefect was to monitor the selection of appropriate literature for children and young people, and the extension of the collection at

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<sup>45</sup> *Trzeci zjazd XX. Prefektów...*, p. 623.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

the library with books and religious magazines. A paper on this subject was delivered by Fr Adam Pyzowski (Warsaw). He also presented his point of view on the activity of pupils' organisations in schools and the role to be played by the prefect in them. This issue was supplemented by an address by Fr Cezary Pęcherski (Piotrków Trybunalski). In addition, a joint reflection on the school prayer was provided based on the speech by Fr Dionizy Bączkowski (Kiev) and the activities of some culture and education organisations, such as the Polish Educational Society (Polska Macierz Szkolna) and the Polish Culture Society (Towarzystwo Kultury Polskiej) based on the presentation by Fr Seweryn Popławski (Warsaw).<sup>48</sup>

It is also noteworthy that a speaker from outside the clergy was invited to the assembly, namely Stefania Marciszewska, who ran an establishment for female folk teachers in Warsaw, which was combined with a shelter (preschool) and a primary school.<sup>49</sup> She intended to share her remarks about religious education in her school, which was extremely important from the point of view of the teaching priests who were striving to improve religious education. Due to her absence, her paper was read out by Fr A. Trepkowski.<sup>50</sup>

Also during the third congress, Fr J. Jamiolkowski submitted the annual report on the activities of the Prefects' Club at the Polish Teachers' Association.<sup>51</sup> As early as in November 1906, a section of priest prefects was formed within the Association, which at that time had 80 members. The Club's Board consisted of Fr S. Popławski (President), Fr S. Jamiolkowski and Fr W. Budny.<sup>52</sup> The Club organised conferences for school owners and teachers on matters of morality and religion; it also worked on developing a catalogue of Christian works, strove to increase the number of hours of religious instruction, organised courses for those wishing to teach religion in folk schools, and took care of pupils in and out of school.<sup>53</sup>

The culmination of the third congress was the formulation of several proposals which were meant to become the work programme for teaching priests for the next year. As a token of appreciation of the importance of the Priest Prefects' Club, plans were made to create sub-sections within thereof (catechetical, bibli-

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> *Szkoła Nauczycielek Ludowych*, "Słowo" 26 (1907), nr 285, p. 1.

<sup>50</sup> *Zjazd ks. ks. prefektów*, "Kurier Polski" 10 (1907), nr 235, p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> *Trzeci zjazd XX. Prefektów...*, p. 623.

<sup>52</sup> J. Schoenbrenner, *Początki Polskiego Związku Nauczycielskiego i Stowarzyszenia Nauczycielstwa Polskiego w materiałach Zespołu Towarzystwa Nauczycieli Szkół Wyższych Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie*, "Rozprawy z Dziejów Oświaty" 21 (1978), p. 100.

<sup>53</sup> W. Jasiński, *Stan nauki religii w Królestwie Polskiem*, in: *Księga pamiątkowa kursu katechetycznego w Krakowie*, wyd. S. Hanuszek, Kraków 1916, pp. 260–261; J. Schoenbrenner, *Początki...*, p. 100.

cal, liturgical, dogmatic, ethical, and historical) in order to improve and intensify its activities, taking into account the school prefects' aptitudes and interests.<sup>54</sup>

There were also some demands concerning curricula and textbooks for religious instruction. The concept of a curriculum for rural folk schools and urban primary schools was accepted in its entirety, leaving it in the form in which it was adopted at the second congress.<sup>55</sup> A correction was only made in the area of the curriculum for secondary schools.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, a curriculum was worked out for religious education for male and female commercial schools and for private female schools. This curriculum of religious instruction was not published as a separate publication, but was included in the collective curricula for the schools concerned.<sup>57</sup> The final versions of the religious curricula worked out at the congress were a compromise solution, which means that they were not satisfactory for all the priest prefects. Therefore, it is not surprising that soon modifications of the curricula began to appear.<sup>58</sup> Nevertheless, the curriculum adopted at the third congress was always a point of reference for all other curricula in the Kingdom of Poland.

The proposals that were formulated also included an appeal to the authors of religious textbooks to adapt them to the new curriculum their next editions.<sup>59</sup> All teaching priests were called upon to take more interest in matters concerning school libraries. Apart from this, a special commission was to prepare a list of bibliographical items with notes on the content of each work.<sup>60</sup> A proposal was also accepted that a special prayer should be recited before and after religion lessons at school.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, the desire was expressed to establish an official body of priest prefects in the form of a professional catechetical journal.<sup>62</sup> This proposal appeared already at the first congress in Czestochowa, but had not yet been implemented. A periodical of this kind had already been functioning in Galicia since 1897, run by Fr W. Gadowski. The work of establishing it in the territory of the Kingdom of Poland was entrusted to the Priest Prefects' Club.

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<sup>54</sup> *Uchwały 3-go Zjazdu XX. Prefektów w Warszawie d. 24, 25 i 26 sierpnia r. b.*, "Wiadomości Pasterskie" 3 (1907), nr 9, p. 570.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Program nauczania...* [1907].

<sup>57</sup> *Szkic programu szkół handlowych zestawiony przez komisję kierowników szkół handlowych Królestwa Polskiego*, Warszawa 1909; *Program nauk. Szkoła Handlowa VII-klasowa Zgromadzenia Kupców m. Warszawy*, Warszawa 1908.

<sup>58</sup> *Program nauki religii rzymsko-katolickiej w szkołach niższych i seminariach nauczycielskich*, Warszawa 1908; *Program nauki religii rzymsko-katolickiej dla szkół średnich*, Warszawa 1908.

<sup>59</sup> *Uchwały III-go Zjazdu księży prefektów*, "Goniec Częstochowski" 1 (1907), nr 233, p. 3.

<sup>60</sup> *Uchwały III-go zjazdu księży prefektów*, "Kurier Warszawski" 87 (1907), nr 236, p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> *Uchwały 3-go Zjazdu...*, p. 572.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 570.

#### 4. Fourth catechetical congress in Warsaw (20th–22nd June 1917)

School prefects had to wait ten years for the next congress in the Kingdom of Poland. It was the Tsarist regime's policy that contributed to this state of affairs. After a temporary relaxation of the regulations of the partitioning authorities related to education and the activity of associations in the years 1905–1907, the situation from before that period was restored, and the policy of combating all manifestations of Polishness continued. Some changes in this respect occurred only after the outbreak of the First World War and the occupation of these lands in 1915 by the armies of the Central Powers (Germany and Austria-Hungary), which translated into the development of various forms and manifestations of social, political and cultural life. The fact that the Polish nation gained greater freedoms in these areas made it possible to revive old endeavours including those related to teaching priests' congresses.

The fourth congress was planned for three days, from the 20th to the 22nd of June 1917. The sessions were held in the building of St. Stanislaus Kostka Gymnasium in Warsaw.<sup>63</sup> It was preceded by a mass celebrated by Archbishop Aleksander Kakowski in the Visitationist Church<sup>64</sup>, which was attended by about 200 participants.<sup>65</sup> For the first time since the loss of independence, the congress was attended by representatives of the three annexed territories as teaching priests from the Kingdom of Poland were joined by priests from Galicia (Lviv) and Wielkopolska (Greater Poland) (Poznan).<sup>66</sup>

At the inauguration of the Congress the Presiding Committee was first elected. Fr Jerzy Matulewicz (Bielany) was elected its President.<sup>67</sup> Additionally, the following vice-presidents were elected: Fr Tomasz Kowalewski (Płock), Fr Karol Dębiński (Lublin), Fr Jan Gajkowski (Sandomierz), Fr Jan Woroniecki (Krakow), Fr Karol Sikorski (Kielce), Fr Michał Ciesielski (Czestochowa), Fr Józef Wojtkiewicz (Włocławek), Fr Kazimierz Gostyński (Lublin), Fr Franciszek Flaczyński (Pułtusk), Fr Brunon Palmowski (Popów) and Fr Leon Sobierajski (Radom). The group was supplemented by the elected secretaries, all from the Warsaw catechetical circles: Fr Aleksander Fajęcki, Fr Mieczysław Węglewicz, Fr Bolesław Żukowski, Fr Antoni Pachnicki and Fr Józef Goździk. Such a great number of committee members was due to the fact that debates

<sup>63</sup> *Zjazd prefektów*, "Nowa Gazeta" 12 (1917), nr 296, p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> *Zjazd księży prefektów*, "Głos" 1 (1917), nr 138, p. 2.

<sup>65</sup> *Zjazd księży prefektów w Warszawie*, "Ziemia Lubelska" 12 (1917), nr 311, p. 2; *Zjazd prefektów*, "Kurier Polski" 20 (1917), nr 167, pp. 3–4.

<sup>66</sup> J. G[ajkowski], *IV-ty ogólny zjazd X. X. prefektów Królestwa Polskiego*, "Kronika Diecezji Sandomierskiej" 10 (1917), nr 7–8, p. 107.

<sup>67</sup> *Zjazd prefektów*, "Głos" 1 (1917), nr 143, p. 2.

were conducted in several thematic sections (primary schools, secondary schools and teacher-training colleges).<sup>68</sup>

The Fourth Congress had three characteristic vectors, i.e. qualifications and professional competencies of school prefects, curricula and textbooks for religious education, and catechetical pastoral care of children and adolescents. The deliberations began with an analysis of the first issue, the thematic framework of which was defined by three leading papers (and complementary papers). The first of these concerned religion at school. Due to the absence of the speaker, Fr Antoni Szymański (Włocławek), it was read out by Fr J. Mauersberger. In this presentation the author drew attention to the educational dimension of school.<sup>69</sup> The next speaker, Fr Józef Wojtkiewicz (Włocławek), concurred with this train of thought and reminded that religious instruction should give a true concept of God and encourage those being catechised to love Him and follow His guidance.<sup>70</sup> On the other hand, Fr Florian Krasuski (Lublin) in his complementary paper encouraged running Catholic schools and relying on Christian values in the whole process of education.<sup>71</sup> A unique role in this respect was to be played by priest prefects, which was emphasised by the next speaker, Fr Adam Wyrębowski (Warsaw).<sup>72</sup> Fr Aleksander Fajęcki (Warsaw) discussed the issue of responsibility for this work in its historical aspect.<sup>73</sup>

The second leading paper of the day was presented by Fr Józef Wojtkiewicz (Włocławek) who raised the issue of professional preparation of priest prefects. He stressed the need to constantly improve one's own professional qualifications in order to respond competently to the challenges of the times and the problems experienced by pupils. In this context he called for raising the requirements for candidates for lay catechists.<sup>74</sup> The next speaker, Fr Adam Wyrębowski (Warsaw), noted that catechetical courses were more and more often organised for them, preparing them to assist the clergy in teaching religion. It was therefore necessary to make sure they are properly educated and prepared for catechetical work.<sup>75</sup> These contents were supplemented by a paper by Fr Józef Archutowski (Warsaw), who called for creating libraries for catechists so that they should have access to professional literature.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> *Pamiętnik IV-go ogólnego zjazdu ks. ks. prefektów Królestwa Polskiego w Warszawie w dniach 20, 21 i 22 czerwca 1917 roku*, wyd. A. Fajęcki, Warszawa 1917, pp. 6–16.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17–27.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27–30.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30–32.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 32–36.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 36–40.

<sup>74</sup> J. G[ajkowski], *IV-ty ogólny zjazd...*, p. 108.

<sup>75</sup> *Pamiętnik...*, pp. 53–55.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 52–53.

The third main paper on a priest prefect's attitude towards school and associations was given by Fr Stanisław Wesołowski (Warsaw). In it he encouraged teaching priests to strive for the revival of the Polish school in the spirit of religious, ethical and national ideals, condemning the concept of a non-religious and cosmopolitan school.<sup>77</sup> Fr Kazimierz Gostyński (Lublin), in turn, showed in his paper the need to establish a catechetical magazine as a source of reliable knowledge on religious education.<sup>78</sup> This part of the congress was framed by the speech by Fr Alfons Trepkowski (Warsaw) who indicated that the Polish Educational Society, which guarantees the propagation and support of education in the national and Catholic spirit, could be an effective help in the revival of Polish education.<sup>79</sup>

As for the other two days of the congress, two characteristic lines can be ascribed to them. The first mostly concerned curricula and textbooks for teaching religion, and the second was related to catechetical pastoral work. They were considered in three sections. Deliberations in the section concerning secondary schools began with a speech by Fr Tomasz Kowalewski (Płock) who first provided a brief historical outline of the development of curricula for religious education for this type of schools in the Kingdom of Poland. He reminded that the first of them was created in 1907<sup>80</sup> and was the result of previous catechetical congresses. It was already in 1908<sup>81</sup> that school prefects of the Archdiocese of Warsaw, under the aegis of the school council of that ecclesiastical province, began work on elaborating the details, and in 1916 they published the revised version.<sup>82</sup> Since then it has been commonly referred to as the Warsaw curriculum. The speaker presented its contents and conducted a detailed analysis.<sup>83</sup> He also provided the main assumptions for an alternative curriculum for religious education developed in his catechetical circles by the Bishop of Płock Antoni Julian Nowowiejski.<sup>84</sup> There also appeared a Krakow draft for the reformed secondary school.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, Fr Bartłomiej Szulc (Lviv) provided an outline of the curriculum for religious instruction for Lviv schools<sup>86</sup> and several other prefects shared their original proposals.<sup>87</sup> It turned out that at this stage, with such different concepts,

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 57–62.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., pp. 62–68.

<sup>80</sup> *Program nauczania...* [1907].

<sup>81</sup> *Program nauki religii rzymsko-katolickiej dla szkół...* [1908].

<sup>82</sup> *Program nauki religii rzymsko-katolickiej dla szkół średnich oraz wskazówki metodyczne*, Warszawa 1916/17.

<sup>83</sup> *Pamiętnik...*, pp. 72–80.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>85</sup> *Plan nauki religii, proponowany dla szkoły średniej zreformowanej*, "Dwutygodnik Katechetyczny i Duszpasterski" 12 (1908), nr 6, pp. 215–221.

<sup>86</sup> *Pamiętnik...*, pp. 90–91.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., pp. 83–94.

there was little chance of working out a common curriculum proposal for secondary schools. In these circumstances, it was decided to provisionally accept the Warsaw curriculum as binding and to set up an inter-diocesan commission to work out a common curriculum version for the whole country.<sup>88</sup>

The complement to the problems of secondary school curricula was the issue of textbooks for religious education. The first topic that was discussed concerned the textbook for the first form, i.e. the catechism that was presented by Fr Jan Niedzielski (Warsaw). In his presentation he emphasised its importance, referring to the hints given by Pius X who saw in it a valuable catechetical aid.<sup>89</sup> Fr Józef Archutowski (Warsaw) urged the authors of textbooks on the history of salvation to arrange the biblical history in such a way as to emphasise its Christocentric nature.<sup>90</sup> Fr Władysław Korniłowicz (Warsaw) talked about a textbook on liturgics, and called for it to prepare pupils for a lively and full participation in the liturgical life of the Church.<sup>91</sup> The issue of dogmatics textbook was taken up again by Fr J. Niedzielski. He pointed out that it should be composed in such a way as to show pupils that all dogmas and the whole economy of God are for the sanctification and salvation of man.<sup>92</sup> Fr Jacek Woroniecki, on the other hand, took up the question of ethics textbooks, stressing the fact that the aim thereof should be a rational justification of the laws of moral life.<sup>93</sup> Fr Franciszek Flaczyński (Pułtusk), in turn, referred to the textbook on the history of the Church, and condemned its then current approach emphasising the political dimension and reducing the internal life of the Church.<sup>94</sup> The last speaker, Fr Jan Szmigielski (Warsaw), discussed a textbook on apologetics that was supposed to give pupils an explanation and proof of the fundamental religious truths.<sup>95</sup>

Closely related to the above issue was the paper by Fr Koronat Piotrowski (Siedlce) on teaching aids for the exposition of religion in secondary schools. He focused exclusively on the textbook for learning religion as the most important teaching aid in the catechetical work.<sup>96</sup> After this presentation Fr A. Fajęcki pointed out that it should be used, but classes should be made more attractive by using other teaching aids, including the use of various models, maps, atlases, slides, pictures, diagrams or mock-ups.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 191–196.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 196–199.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 199–204.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 204–207.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 207–219.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 219–220.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 220–222.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 94–117.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 118–120.



The second section dealt with primary school curricula. It was inaugurated by a paper by Fr Bolesław Maliszewski (Dąbrowa Górnicza) on the curriculum of religious instruction in municipal schools. In his opinion, it was necessary to divide the six-year primary school into three levels (cycles) to which the teaching content should be assigned in the form of main thematic threads, namely religious talks, catechism and Bible stories. These speeches were complemented by voices from the floor presenting various opinions on the problem of the curriculum for religious instruction in rural schools.<sup>98</sup> In conclusion, the head of the section, Fr Karol Dębiński (Lublin), proposed that the Warsaw curriculum be accepted as a temporary measure; work on a curriculum adjusted to the structures of the reformed school would be commenced after the establishing of the new type of primary schools, and this would be the responsibility of the inter-diocesan commission.<sup>99</sup>

The textbook was intrinsically related to the curriculum; therefore it is not surprising that these issues were discussed and proposals were put forward for new versions, and reference was made to those currently used in schools. Fr Aleksander Fajęcki (Warsaw) referred to the issue of textbooks on Church history in primary schools. He claimed that at this stage of education they should convey the sum total of the most essential information about the history of the church, taking into account the fate of the Polish Church.<sup>100</sup> Next, Fr Jan Mauersberger (Warsaw) spoke about textbooks on liturgy which, in his opinion, should familiarise children with the principles of faith and prepare them for communal life in the ecclesial community.<sup>101</sup> As regards the textbook on biblical history, Fr Franciszek Flaczyński (Pułtusk) expressed the opinion that it should include the messianic idea as well as the figures and prophecies related thereto and their fulfilment in the Son of God, and then it should acquaint children with His life and activity.<sup>102</sup> The next paper concerned a textbook for the learning of the catechism. Due to the absence of the author, Fr Kazimierz Kobrzyński (Warsaw), it was read out by Fr A. Fajęcki. In the paper, attention was first drawn to the fact that the catechism should become a guide for the catechist in conducting religion lessons and define the content of teaching for a particular form (class) in accordance with the guidelines of the curriculum.<sup>103</sup>

Complementary to these issues was the matter of other teaching aids in the teaching of religion in primary schools. A paper on this subject was prepared by Fr Kazimierz Kobrzyński (Warsaw) and read out by Fr A. Fajęcki. The paper explained that the task of all teaching aids is to stimulate pupils, to make classes

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., pp. 147–148.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., pp. 248–251.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 253.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., pp. 253–254.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., pp. 255–259.

more attractive, to illustrate the content learnt during the catechesis and to help them memorise it. The author also presented the principles of using them in religion classes.<sup>104</sup> The next paper in this stream was delivered by Fr Henryk Osiniński (Warsaw) discussing the use of transparencies,<sup>105</sup> and Fr Bronisław Szmidt (Warsaw) talked about the use of the school blackboard.<sup>106</sup>

The third section was devoted to teacher-training colleges. The introductory (main) paper on the curriculum was given by Fr Jan Mauersberger.<sup>107</sup> He pointed out that the curriculum should take into account two dimensions, i.e. theoretical preparation – related to the transmission of specific theological knowledge; and practical preparation – concerning the acquisition of skills in conducting religion lessons. In the complementary papers, the speakers presented their views on the issue of the curriculum. Considering substantial differences on this matter, it was decided, as in the case of the other sections, to delegate the responsibility to work out new curricula and textbook editions for religious instruction to the inter-diocesan commission.

The third theme module of the fourth congress concerned catechetical pastoral ministry in schools. The importance of the prefect's aptitude (as a school chaplain) in conducting this type of activities was emphasised, and above all, the love of working with children and young people, which was of fundamental importance for the effectiveness of the work, regardless of the type of educational institution, which was emphasised in the papers by e.g. Fr Florian Krasuski (Lublin)<sup>108</sup> and Fr Adam Pyzowski (Warsaw).<sup>109</sup> The pastoral ministry included the prefect's care for the pupils belonging to various school organisations, such as scouting, self-help groups, singing groups,<sup>110</sup> good children's clubs,<sup>111</sup> Jesus' childhood's associations, guardian angel associations, Sodality of Our Lady and altar boys' associations.<sup>112</sup>

The next speaker, Fr Alfons Trepkowski (Warsaw), highlighted in his presentation religious practices of secondary school youth.<sup>113</sup> The speaker specified and defined a catalogue thereof. Among them he mentioned the Christian greeting, individual and collective prayers, school mass, school confession, celebration of the first Holy Communion, school retreats, monthly adoration, and celebra-

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., pp. 159–167.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., pp. 167–170.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., pp. 170–171.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., pp. 284–286.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., pp. 302–308.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., pp. 308–314.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., pp. 172–182.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., pp. 182–185.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., pp. 314–329.

<sup>113</sup> *Zjazd ks. prefektów*, "Kurier Warszawski" 97 (1917), nr 171, p. 2.

tions in honour of St. Stanislaus Kostka.<sup>114</sup> The other participants of the congress who spoke about religious practices (also in teacher-training colleges)<sup>115</sup> did so in a similar vein, calling school prefects to be zealous in this matter and to take responsibility for the Christian formation of young people entrusted to them.<sup>116</sup>

In the section of primary schools, the teaching priests spoke in the same vein as the prefects of secondary schools. Appreciating the importance of religious practices in pupils' overall development, they called for increasing activity in this area. Among the pastoral tasks in this type of schools they included exactly the same religious practices as in secondary schools. Additionally, Fr Karol Niemira (Warsaw)<sup>117</sup> and Fr Roman Archutowski (Warsaw)<sup>118</sup> included religious reading habits and the duty of the prefect to recommend appropriate books to pupils, to establish religious libraries and to equip them. Fr Bronisław Szmidt (Warsaw), in turn, included the organisation of religious excursions connected with visiting historic churches, chapels and diocesan museums among the pastoral tasks.<sup>119</sup>

The Congress also raised the issue of expanding teaching priests' pastoral activities outside school. This issue was discussed by the Warsaw prefects, e.g. Fr Henryk Hilchen,<sup>120</sup> Fr Leon Kulwieć,<sup>121</sup> Fr Roman Archutowski<sup>122</sup> and Fr Józef Szkudelski.<sup>123</sup> The primary concern was that the prefect should be more acquainted with his pupils as well as their passions, plans and aspirations or problems so that he could support them more effectively and take educational measures appropriate to their life situation.

The Congress ended on the evening of 22nd June. Summarising its results, the President of the Congress, Fr J. Matulewicz, emphasised the importance of those debates, drawing attention to a number of issues that were to become the programme of action for the nearest future. Among other things, he pointed to the necessity of making efforts to ensure that schools would have a Catholic and national character in the resurgent Polish state, and religion would become a fundamental factor in shaping the young generation. The new curricula and textbooks on religion, which had to be prepared as soon as possible, as well as religious education, which complemented the teaching process and formed a mature Christian, were to help in conducting in-depth education. The effectiveness of these ac-

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<sup>114</sup> *Pamiętnik...*, pp. 225–235.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 288–291.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 255–247.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 264–275.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 347–349.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 275–278.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 329–347.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 349–354.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 354–357.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 357–359.

tivities depended on the high qualifications and competencies of teaching priests, and for this reason it was seen as necessary to raise the requirements for the profession of the Polish school prefect. In his speech he particularly emphasised the integrating value of the congress, not only for the school prefects' milieu, but also heralding the unification of the whole country.<sup>124</sup>

The conclusions formulated during the plenary sessions and in the sections were collected in the form of a synthetic note addressed to the Polish Episcopate.<sup>125</sup> Its approval was needed so that concrete steps could be taken in the areas indicated in the letter.<sup>126</sup> Afterwards, the priest prefects went to the Visitationist Church for a thanksgiving service, after which they all went to the residence of the Archbishop of Warsaw, A. Kakowski, to wish him well on the occasion of his fourth anniversary of consecration which fell on the very day the congress ended, that is on 22nd June.<sup>127</sup>

## Conclusion

At the beginning of the 20th century there was considerable interest throughout Europe in matters of teaching and educating children and young people. This was also reflected in the catechetical field, and involved initiatives to improve the catechesis, but also to raise the qualifications of teachers of religion. To this end, associations of teaching priests were founded in which problems of religious education were discussed and means were sought to solve them; professional journals on the subject of teaching and religious education were published, and catechetical courses were organised, which enabled a wide exchange of views and the dissemination of new teaching ideas and methods of work with pupils in religion lessons. This current also includes the congresses of school prefects of the Kingdom of Poland. These congresses made them join the other teaching priests under Austrian and Prussian rule who had already joined in the implementation of projects aimed at raising the level of religious instruction and their own professional qualifications in the period of national bondage. These congresses show that the priest prefects were aware of the achievements and catechetical activities in other countries; they followed the current literature on the subject and took part in catechetical courses organised there. They also reveal a sense of responsibility for catechetical matters, e.g. by striving to develop a uniform

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 362.

<sup>125</sup> *Wnioski Zjazdu Ks. Ks. Prefektów, podane Episkopatowi Polskiemu dla ostatecznego zaaprobowania*, "Wiadomości Archidiecezjalne Warszawskie" 7 (1917), nr 7–8, pp. 263–266.

<sup>126</sup> A. F[ajęcki], *Po Zjeździe Ks. Ks. Prefektów w Warszawie*, "Wiadomości Archidiecezjalne Warszawskie" 7 (1917), no. 7–8, pp. 261–262.

<sup>127</sup> *Zjazd księży prefektów*, "Kurier Polski" 20 (1917), nr 168, p. 5.

curriculum for religious education and new textbooks to improve religious instruction by implementing new methods and to carry out educational work with pupils with greater commitment and dedication. They show their mature attitude directed at professional development, which was reflected in the actions related to the establishment of the Priest Prefects' Club, and the desire to establish a professional catechetical magazine.

The congresses were an extremely valuable initiative from the school prefects. They gave a strong impulse to intensify activities related to religious education and formation in schools and to unify catechetical work in the territories of the Kingdom of Poland in the years 1906–1917.

## Historia zjazdów księży katechetów w Królestwie Polskim (1906–1917)

### Streszczenie

Przedmiotem artykułu jest problematyka zjazdów katechetycznych prefektów szkolnych w Królestwie Polskim, które odbywały się w Częstochowie i w Warszawie w latach 1906–1917. Całość zagadnienia ujęto w sposób sumaryczny, prezentując je w dwóch aspektach: organizacyjnym (przygotowania i przebieg) i merytorycznym (referaty, dyskusje, postulaty). Dzięki temu przedstawiono nie tylko historię zjazdów katechetycznych w zaborze rosyjskim, lecz także ich dorobek związany z teorią i praktyką katechetyczną tego okresu w tak ważnych obszarach, jak: programy i podręczniki do nauki religii, kwalifikacje i kompetencje zawodowe prefektów szkolnych, duszpasterstwo katechetyczne dzieci i młodzieży oraz tworzenie struktur stowarzyszenia katechetów polskich.

### Słowa kluczowe

zjazd, prefekt szkolny, katecheta, nauczanie religii, Królestwo Polskie

### Keywords

congress, school prefect, teaching priest, religious education, Kingdom of Poland

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