

**An aristocrat among missionaries – a missionary among aristocrats.  
Father Bernard Łubieński in the service to Abundant Redemption**

Gilbert Keith Chesterton once said with his characteristic sagacity that ‘tradition does not mean that the living are dead but that the dead are alive.’ Such a living icon of the Redemptorists’ apostolic zeal and missionary ardour is the Servant of God Fr Bernard Łubieński. This year marks the 80th anniversary of his death. It was thanks to him that the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer could officially return to the Polish lands 130 years ago. In his long and eventful life, Łubieński combined in an extraordinary way his aristocratic descent and upbringing with sincere and fervent piety, his untiring pastoral diligence with intellectual and physical humility, experienced in the mystery of his disability that he had coped with for 50 years. He was a religious and priest whose versatile apostolic activities contributed remarkably to the growth of religious life in the Polish lands at the turn of the 19th and the 20th centuries. This article attempts to synthesize only one element of his activities: parish missions and retreats – the main principle of the Redemptorists’ charisma. It has been based on various analyses of the topic and selected archival sources of different provenience.

**Biographical sketch**

The permanent presence of the Redemptorists in the Polish lands has been inseparably connected with the person of the Servant of God Bernard Alojzy Łubieński, who was born to the landed gentry of Tomasz Wentworth and Adelajda Łempicka in Guzów near Warsaw on 9 December 1846.<sup>1</sup> Wanting to provide thorough education for their son, they sent him to the elitist, humanistic St Cuthbert’s College in Ushaw, Durham,<sup>2</sup> in September 1858. During the religious retreats conducted in the school by the Redemptorist Father Robert Aston Coffin in 1860, the young Polish aristocrat got to know the Alphonsian spirituality for the first time,

---

<sup>1</sup> B. Łubieński, *Wspomnienia. Mościska 1908 – Warszawa 1918* [Memories. Mościska 1908 – Warszawa 1918], ed. S. Pawłowicz, Kraków 2009, pp. 11–12.

<sup>2</sup> The insufficient knowledge of English and initial lack of diligence of the young Polish count caused that in 1864 he did not pass his final graduate examinations; cf. M. Pirożyński, *O. Bernard Łubieński (1846–1933)*, Wrocław 1946, pp. 31–32.

and this spirituality exerted an indelible impression on him.<sup>3</sup> At first, he intended to take up a career as a diocesan priest, being fascinated by the famous parish priest St John Vianney of Ars. Finally, on graduating from the English college he decided to dedicate his life to God becoming a religious. He knocked at the Dominicans' and Jesuits' gates but neither of these communities wanted to accept him. The Jesuits told him to go to the Redemptorists who considered his request.<sup>4</sup> In 1864, young Count Łubieński had a short postulancy, and then the canonical novitiate in Bishop Eton near Liverpool. In May 1866, despite the disapproval of his father and uncle, Bishop Konstanty Łubieński of Sejny, he took religious vows. Then he continued his philosophical studies. In September 1867, he began a four-year programme of theology, together with 16 seminarians from the provinces of England, Holland and Belgium, in the international Redemptorists' seminary in Wittem, Holland.<sup>5</sup> The practice of frequent Holy Communion, the cult of Eucharistic Jesus and Our Lady of Perpetual Help played a prevailing role in the seminary formation. Fr Bernard received the Sacrament of Holy Orders from Bishop Johann Theodor Laurent on 29 December 1870 in Aachen.<sup>6</sup>

In September 1871, the newly ordained Łubieński was sent to the monastery of Clapham in London where he helped priests in the local ministry. Following the order of his superior, he cared for the poor and forlorn as well as the Polish immigrants. As he himself mentioned later this work was 'a perfect school of life in which I learnt the art of approaching souls in the pulpit and confessional booth.'<sup>7</sup> During his free time, he prepared sermons and completed his theological education since in those days the religious constitutions allowed men to conduct apostolic activities on their own only after they turned 30. In 1872, he did his second novitiate in the Scottish town of Perth, preparing himself to missionary work. In 1873, the Provincial Fr Coffin appointed him as his secretary, archivist and chronicler of the English Province. This service let him get to know better the Congregation and the specification of the Catholic

---

<sup>3</sup> Robert Aston Coffin (1819–1885), an English Redemptorist, outstanding missionary and preacher. In the years 1865–1883, he was the superior of the English Province of the Redemptorists. During the period of Kulturkampf he helped his German confreres who had been expelled from Bavaria. In 1883–1885, he was the Bishop of Southwark; cf. S.J. Boland, *R.A. Coffin and the English Oratory*, SHCSR 28 (1980), pp. 147–174.

<sup>4</sup> The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer was suggested to him by the esteemed English Jesuit, Provincial Alfred Weld; cf. B. Łubieński, *Wspomnienia*, op. cit., pp. 56–58; M. Brudzisz, *Łubieński Bernard (1846–1933)*, 'Słownik Polskich Teologów Katolickich' [Dictionary of Polish Theologians], vol. 6, p. 377.

<sup>5</sup> 'Catalogus Congregationis Sanctissimi Redemptoris' 1867, pp. 55, 73.

<sup>6</sup> Bishop Johann Theodor Laurent (1804–1884) – born in Aachen, from 1839 Vicar Apostolic for the Nordic Missions and Titular Bishop of Chersonesus, and from 1841 Vicar Apostolic of Luxemburg. Cf. AWPR, without call number, M. Pirożyński, *Articuli ad processum informativum*, Wrocław 1956, pp. 4–5.

<sup>7</sup> B. Łubieński, *Wspomnienia*, op. cit., pp. 198–199.

Church in England and Ireland. At that time, he preached during at least 20 parish missions conducted by the Redemptorists mainly in the English industrial centres.<sup>8</sup>

From the beginning of his priestly way in the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer Fr Bernard was occupied with the thought of the Redemptorists' return to the Polish lands. The Redemptorists were present in Poland from 1787 when St Clement Hofbauer and Fr Tadeusz Hübl founded their first Polish house beyond the Alps at the Church of St Beno in Warsaw.<sup>9</sup> In Warsaw, the Redemptorists, called 'Bennonites,' conducted their intensive pastoral activities for two decades, and their pioneering pastoral model was called 'Perpetual Mission.'<sup>10</sup> After 20 years of social-religious, fruitful work in the Polish capital, Napoleon ordered them to leave their monastery and expelled them from Warsaw in June 1808. However, the expulsion of the Warsaw Redemptorist community did not finish the Redemptorists' activities in the Polish lands. Some Polish pupils of St Clement returned to the lands under the Russian partition and with time, they began their work as diocesan priests, for example in Pruszyń in Podlasie. The plan to create a Redemptorist community in Janów Podolski did not succeed. However, in the years 1824-1834 Fr Jan Podgórski (1755-1847), together with five brothers, attempted to found a community following the rules of St Alphonsus in the secret monastery in Piotrkowice near Kielce.<sup>11</sup> Yet, this episode of the Redemptorists' history turned out to be short.

Throughout his seminary formation and then after his ordination Łubieński carried out correspondence with his family, especially with his younger brother Roger, who in 1872

---

<sup>8</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 97, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Bishop Anatol Nowak, Kraków, 17 October 1921, col. 32; cf. J. Sharp, *The Alphonsian Mission in Britain and Ireland in the Nineteenth Century*, SHCSR 45 (1997), pp. 292–306.

<sup>9</sup> A. Owczarski, *Le relazioni tra il vicariato transalpino (di Varsavia) e il governo generale dei Redentoristi durante il soggiorno di S. Clemente M. Hofbauer a Varsavia (1778–1808)*, SHCSR 46 (1998), pp. 311–323; W. Szoldrski, *Redemptoryści w Polsce* [The Redemptorists in Poland], vol. 3, [Wrocław 1953] pp. 4–6, (manuscript copies in the Archives of the Redemptorist Province of Warsaw, further: AWPR); M. Sadowski, *Wierni dziedzictwu św. Klemensa – otwarci na znaki czasów* [Faithful to St Clement's Legacy – open to the signs of the times]. *Geneza i początki Polskiej Prowincji Redemptorystów (1883–1909)* [The origin and beginnings of the Polish Redemptorist Province (1883-1909), in: *Wierni Tradycji – otwarci na znaki czasu. Materiały Sympozjum na Stulecie Warszawskiej Prowincji Redemptorystów i kanonizacji Św. Klemensa Marii Hofbauera, Tuchów 9–10 października 2009* [Faithful to the Tradition – Open to the Signs of the Times. Proceedings of the Symposium on the Centenary of the Redemptorist Province of Warsaw and the Canonisation of St Clement Maria Hofbauer, Tuchów 9–10 October 2009], ed. M. Sadowski, Kraków 2009, pp. 177–178 (Studia do dziejów redemptorystów polskich [Studies of the History of the Polish Redemptorists], vol. 1).

<sup>10</sup> J. Heinzmann, *Der „Homo apostolicus” Klemens Maria Hofbauer*, SHCSR 34 (1986), pp. 357–378; cf. A. Owczarski, *Redemptoryści Benonici w Warszawie 1787–1808* [The Redemptorists Bennonites in Warsaw 1787-1808], Kraków 2000, pp. 157–183.

<sup>11</sup> B. Łubieński, *O. Jan Podgórski, redemptorysta towarzysz św. Klemensa* [Fr Jan Podgórski, Redemptorist and Companion of St Clement], Kraków 1913, pp. 93–97; cf. K. Szrant, *Redemptoristi in Polonia dispersi post suppressionem conventus S. Benonis an. 1808*, SHCSR 7 (1959), pp. 134–144; M. Brudzisz, *W diasporze i w tajnym klasztorze w Piotrkowicach 1808–1834 (1841). Karta z dziejów redemptorystów-benonitów w Polsce*, [In the Diaspora and the Secret Monastery in Piotrkowice 1808-1834 (1841). A Chapter from the History of the Redemptorists-Bennonites in Poland] Kraków 1994, pp. 21–25, 45–47.

made his first attempts to bring the Redemptorists to the lands of the former Polish Commonwealth.<sup>12</sup> However, in those times the superiors of the Congregation were not interested in these plans. It was only in 1879 that the Provincial Fr Robert Coffin supported Łubieński's intention to attend a family meeting in Babica. The Provincial suggested the Superior General, Fr Nicholas Mauron, to treat this trip as a kind of reconnaissance to see the conditions for a possible Alphonsian foundation in the Polish lands.<sup>13</sup> Thanks to the support of numerous religious and secular people, Fr Bernard succeeded to begin a new foundation in Mościska in 1883 and this monastery became the motherhouse for the third generation of the Redemptorist Fathers in the Polish lands.<sup>14</sup> Before his final arrival in Mościska Łubieński wrote to his sisters, "Thank God, my [...] wandering is about to finish and it seems to me that I will reach the aim of my life, i.e. I will see the house of the Congregation in Poland. But I should expect a lot of work and suffering."<sup>15</sup>

These words turned out to be prophetic since at the turn of 1884 and 1885 Fr Bernard was paralysed as a result of hard living and working conditions. After a several month treatment and convalescence in Baden near Vienna and in Katzelsdorf, he partly recovered, but in a short time, he changed from a very energetic man in his prime, glowing with health, into a disabled man who had to use a walking stick till the end of his life. 'The more he lost in the body, the more he gained in the spirit,'<sup>16</sup> his biographer Fr Marian Pirożyński noticed rightly.

The extraordinary personality of the aristocrat wearing a humble missionary habit, his knowledge of the affairs of the Polish Church as well as his personal contacts with the spiritual elite caused that in 1908 Łubieński was a serious candidate for the vacant Metropolitan of Mohylev. He refuted this proposal directly because of his disability although the proposal matched well the Łubieńskis' family history and tradition. He preferred the Gospel's imperative, *Evangelizare pauperibus missit me*,<sup>17</sup> to privileges and authority. Besides

---

<sup>12</sup> Roger Łubieński (1849–1930), MP in the Diet of Galicia, historian, publicist and Catholic activist. In 1871, he entered the seminary in Poznań, sent to Rome where he took part in a retreat under the spiritual guidance of Fr Piotr Semenenko, CR, who made him leave the seminary. He married Countess Aleksandryna Dunin-Borkowska, owner of the estate in Babica near Rzeszów. He died on 13 September 1930 and was buried in Wiskitki; cf. J. Zdrada, *Roger Łubieński (1849–1930)*, PSB, vol. 18, pp. 473–474; M. Pirożyński, *O. Bernard Łubieński...*, op. cit., pp. 63–73.

<sup>13</sup> B. Łubieński, *O powrocie Kongregacji Najświętszego Odkupiciela do Polski* [On the Return of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer to Poland], p. 3 (manuscript copies in AWPR).

<sup>14</sup> Archives of the John Paul II Pontifical University in Kraków (further: AUPJPIIKr), call number H–308, M. Sojka, *Dzieje redemptorystów polskich w latach 1883–1939* [The History of the Polish Redemptorists in the Years 1883–1939], Kraków 2004, pp. 34–35 (manuscript copies).

<sup>15</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ E 98, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Sr. M. Amata and Sr. M. Irena Łubieńska, Babica 15 June 1883, col. 8.

<sup>16</sup> M. Pirożyński, *O. Bernard Łubieński...*, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>17</sup> S. Ryznar, *Śługa Boży o. Bernard Łubieński CSsR* [The Servant of God Fr Bernard Łubieński CSsR], 'Nasze Wiadomości' 37 (1982), p. 15; cf. M. Brudzisz, *Łubieński Bernard...*, op. cit., p. 378.

his missionary and retreat activities as well as fruitful writings Fr Bernard Łubieński contributed to the Polish religiosity and Marian piety of the turn of the centuries by spreading the cult of the icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help – he brought a Roman copy of the icon to the first monastery in Mościska himself.<sup>18</sup>

In restored Poland ‘the lame missionary,’ as he was called, had to stop going for tiresome parish missions because of his deteriorating health. He decided to give only closed retreats, first in the monastery in Kraków and from 1926 in Warsaw. A sign of respect that the doyen of the Polish Redemptorists enjoyed in the Polish Church was the retreat given for the whole episcopate of all rites in Gniezno in September 1928.<sup>19</sup> ‘Poland’s Apostle’ – as Cardinal Aleksander Kakowski called him in his letter of condolence – died in Warsaw on 10 September 1933.<sup>20</sup>

### **Tireless missionary – ‘Poland’s Apostle’**

The apostolic zeal of the Servant of God Fr Bernard Łubieński was expressed by dozens of parish missions and retreats conducted in all of the three partitions and then in the independent Second Polish Republic. From the beginning of their presence in the Polish lands, the Redemptorists were seen through their service of the word. The first Polish sons of St Alphonsus based their activities on the systems of parish missions and traditions of the environments that formed them.<sup>21</sup> Both Łubieński and his confreres adjusted their various methods and forms, brought from the missionary traditions of England, Belgium, Holland and Austria, to the local religious-social conditions.<sup>22</sup> Łubieński, who represented the English tradition, admitted himself that the version of his Austrian confreres, being part of the

---

<sup>18</sup> A. Bazieli, *Sluga Boży O. Bernard Łubieński apostoł kultu Matki Bożej Nieustającej Pomocy* [The Servant of God Fr Bernard Łubieński – apostle of the cult of Our Lady of Perpetual Help], Tuchów 1995, pp. 32–41; cf. S. Piech, *Kult Matki Bożej Nieustającej Pomocy w Polsce* [The cult of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Poland], in: „*Uczyńcie Ją znaną całemu światu*”. *Kult i symbolika ikony Matki Bożej Nieustającej Pomocy w zarysie* [‘Make her known to the whole world.’ An outline of the cult and symbolism of Our Lady of Perpetual Help], ed. M. Sadowski, Kraków 2011, pp. 58–60.

<sup>19</sup> AUPJPIIKr, call number H–308, M. Sojka, *Dzieje redemptorystów polskich...*, op. cit., p. 180.

<sup>20</sup> AWRP, call number BŁ E 104, Cardinal Aleksander Kakowski to the Provincial Fr Franciszek Marcinek, Częstochowa, 19 September 1933, col.1–2; *Episkopat polski o śp. O. Łubieńskim* [Polish Episcopate about the late Fr Łubieński], ‘Wiadomości Diecezjalne Lubelskie’ 16 (1934), no. 1, p. 31.

<sup>21</sup> A. Schedl, *Das Ringen um eine zeitgerechte Volksmission in Österreich. Eine historische Besinnung (1823 - 1985)*, SHCSR 33:1985, pp. 229-241; cf. S. Boland, *Early Redemptorist Missions in England and Ireland (1848 - 1865)*, SHCSR 33:1985, pp. 283-320.

<sup>22</sup> AWRP, BŁ, E 91, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Engelbert Janeček, České Budějovice 12 August 1890, col. 64; *ibid*, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Engebert Janeček, Amsterdam 10 July 1891, col. 99-101.

Galician tradition, was more suitable in the Polish lands.<sup>23</sup> Thus the first parish mission in Kulików in the Archdiocese of Lvov (23 October – 1 November 1886) was conducted – as Łubieński wrote – ‘according to the traditional Austrian way of giving a mission, according to the spirit of St Alphonsus, adjusted to the needs and relationships of the local people in Galicia, i.e. to the Polish people.’<sup>24</sup> An important difficulty in the initial stage of the Redemptorists’ missionary activities, including those of Fr Bernard Łubieński, was the fact that ‘the first missionaries were either foreigners or have been educated abroad. Although they were great preachers and missionaries they spoke Polish badly or incorrectly.’<sup>25</sup> This was the reason why they had to prepare the first mission in Kulików for three years after their arrival in Mościska. The next missionary work in Laszki (14-23 November 1886) involved Fr Antoni Jedek, Fr Józef Drobisz and Łubieński himself who delivered five talks to the local intelligentsia.<sup>26</sup> It should be remembered that the Redemptorists brought their method to the lands where other congregations, including the Jesuits, Capuchins, Bernadines, Reformed Franciscans and the Missionaries of St Vincent de Paul worked with success.<sup>27</sup> Facing doubts Łubieński himself gave the following significant answer to the Jesuit Provincial Fr Henryk Jackowski, ‘If we conduct our parish missions in a different way, may you, Reverend Father, at your earliest convenience tell your missionaries that we do not condemn the way which the Society of Jesus has been used so far. We do not think that our way is better, either. It is the best way for us because we have it from our holy founder.’<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the Redemptorists’ missions became increasingly more popular, and more and more parish priests liked them and promoted them among other priests. Among the Redemptorist missionaries Fr Łubieński gained greater fame as excellent though ‘lame preacher,’ and his visible disability made a great impression on his listeners. Suffice it to notice that only in 1894 the small Redemptorist

---

<sup>23</sup> An example of the adaptation of the English missions introduced into the practice of the Polish Redemptorists by Fr Bernard Łubieński was the exposition of the image of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Łubieński initiated this practice during the famous missions conducted in Borysław (28 September – 10 October 1888). Cf. E. Nocuń, *Kult Matki Bożej Nieustającej Pomocy w drugiej połowie XIX wieku* [The Cult of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the second half of the 19th], in: *Niepokalana. Kult Matki Bożej na ziemiach polskich w XIX wieku* [Immaculate. The Cult of Our Lady in the Polish Lands in the 19th Century], ed. B. Pylak and Cz. Krakowiak, Lublin 1988, pp. 616-620.

<sup>24</sup> AWRP, without call number, *Kronika domu mościskiego* [The chronicle of the House in Mościska], vol. 1, p. 129.

<sup>25</sup> AUPJPIIKr, call number H-308, M. Sojka, *Dzieje redemptorystów polskich...*, op. cit., p. 142.

<sup>26</sup> E. Nocuń, *Misje parafialne Redemptorystów polskich w latach 1886-1918* [The Parish Missions of the Polish Redemptorists in the Years 1886-1918], Kraków 1998, pp. 82-84.

<sup>27</sup> AWRP, call number BŁ, E 91, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Engelbert Janeček, Vienna 21 January 1899, col. 134-136; call number BŁ, E 104, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Sr. Teresa Małgorzata of the Blessed Sacrament and to other Carmelite sisters, Kraków 1 September 1925, col. 69; cf. K. Drzymała, *Ks. Karol Antoniewicz TJ* [Fr Karol Antoniewicz, SJ], ‘Homo Dei’ 27:1958, pp. 21-27.

<sup>28</sup> AWRP, call number BŁ, E 97, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Henryk Jackowski, Mościska 29 March 1887, col. 86.

group of missionaries conducted 24 parish missions, 11 renewed missions, 20 series of retreats and two series of retreats for the clergy and seminarians.<sup>29</sup> The leader of these apostolic activities was tireless Fr Bernard Łubieński. Of special attention are the missions carried out in the Kraków's churches: St Mary's, Corpus Christi and St Peter and Paul's. Łubieński wrote about the latter, 'the listeners included neither senators nor people of higher social level, only our beloved folk who did not listen to Skarga's words,<sup>30</sup> and yet with God's help the folk was crushed and after a few days the confessional booths were crowded.'<sup>31</sup>

With this apostolic zeal, despite the difficulties piling up because of Kulturkampf, the Servant of God conducted dozens of series of parish missions and retreats, both open and closed, in the lands under the Prussian partition. The missions were preached in Polish and German. At first, referring to the May decrees the Prussian authorities did not allow the Redemptorists to conduct their activities in the territory of the Reich. The German police especially disliked missionaries from Galicia. They often interrupted the Redemptorists' activities and expelled the missionaries from those places where the missions had been conducted (the missions were supported by the local authorities). Consequently, in 1889 Fr Bernard Łubieński, and then the other confreres, disguised as diocesan priests, went to Poznań. After having received the jurisdiction of Archbishop Edward Lisowski, they began a series of missions in his archdiocese, in such places as Rzegocin, Sobótka, Zbąszyn and Kościan. It happened with a silent permission of the Diocesan Curia, which had no official knowledge of the missionaries' activities in its territory and even reprimanded some parish priests for having invited 'foreign' preachers. In order to keep their presence in silence the missionaries moved from parish to parish in hired carriages. Despite all precautions the missions conducted by Fr Łubieński and his confreres were publicised in the local papers and this was the reason why the missionaries had to leave Great Poland earlier. After several months, having obtained the silent permission of Bishop Edward Likowski, the Redemptorists were again granted consent to undertake their missionary activities if they would not advertise them in press. However, it turned out to be unreal since the missions conducted in St Mary Magdalene's in Poznań in December 1889 by Fr Łubieński, Fr Jedek and Fr Drobisz, gathered so many people that the local police became interested in that event. In result, the missions were shortened but Łubieński remained in Great Poland for two more months, carrying out

---

<sup>29</sup> AWPB, call number BŁ E 100, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Sr. Marie Marguerite Josephine Busschots, Mościska, 8 January 1895, col. 17.

<sup>30</sup> Piotr Skarga was the famous Jesuit preacher who worked in the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Kraków.

<sup>31</sup> W. Szoldrski, *Redemptoryści...*, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 15.

more missions and retreats as a diocesan priest. He returned there once more in the years 1890-1891.

After having preached in Great Poland Łubieński was accused of instigating his listeners to rebel against the legitimate authorities and of politicizing. He himself answered the accusations made after the missions in Mielec, writing to the Governor of Galicia Kazimierz Badeni that those exercises aimed at improving the morals of the local community, ‘Those who know me better think of me as much too high an aristocrat and say that I preach to the higher classes too delicately and cautiously. And thus I have no inborn inclination to incite the lower class against the higher one.’<sup>32</sup> In his arguments the Servant of God stressed the threats flowing from the spread of socialism. Moreover, he firmly asked the governor to discipline his officials in religious problems and to oblige them to participate in retreats and missions.’<sup>33</sup>

Similar accusations were made after his missions conducted in Strzelce Opolskie in 1905 when Łubieński was accused of reprimanding those Poles who had sold their estates, which led to another ban on apostolic work in the lands under the Prussian partition.<sup>34</sup> Łubieński always maintained good relationships with the local bishops – in the spirit of ecclesiastical and religious obedience. Before undertaking the next missions in Great Poland the Servant of God wrote, ‘As for politics, patriotism and polemic with Protestants, etc., we will follow the advise, we have been given, with the most faithful obedience.’<sup>35</sup>

Despite his physical limitations Fr Łubieński did not hesitate to accept the invitation of the German Redemptorists from the Province of Cologne to joint the common missions that would embrace the numerous Polish immigrants doing seasonal work in Westphalia. The missions organised in Barop near Dortmund, Braubauerschaft and Gelsenkirchen in the summer of 1891 were preached in Polish and German.<sup>36</sup> During the missions in Gelsenkirchen ‘not only the local Poles – about one thousand – but also those living in remote areas came for the missions. Sermons for men were given twice because of the day and night shifts in the mines. Since moral bestiality was here bigger than elsewhere our work was not easy.’<sup>37</sup> The fathers from the monastery in Glanerburg conducted missions for German

---

<sup>32</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 103, Rough copy of the letter of Fr Bernard Łubieński to Kazimierz Badeni, the Governor of Galicia, Sułkowie 17 June 1893, col. 70.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, col. 72-73.

<sup>34</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 97, Rough copy of the letter of Fr Bernard Łubieński to the Consistory of the Archdiocese of Poznań, [Mościska] 5 December 1905, col. 53-55.

<sup>35</sup> APWR, call number E 97, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Walerian Strykowski, Kraków 26 March 1897, col. 77.

<sup>36</sup> AGHR, call number 30160109.0024, Fr Engelbert Janeček to Fr Maksymilan Rau, Mościska 6 March 1891, col. 1-4.

<sup>37</sup> APWR, call number BŁ, E 91, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Engelbert Janeček, Langendreer 28 June 1891, col. 89-90; call number BŁ, E 91, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Engelbert Janeček, Langendreer 3 July 1891, col. 91-



Catholics and Fr Łubieński, Fr Jedek and Fr Paweł Meissner – for the Polish immigrants.<sup>38</sup>

The German Fathers were pleasantly surprised seeing so many Poles listening to the sermons delivered in Polish and German in Bochum. They admired the Polish immigrants' patience as they had to queue to the confessional booths and had to queue to receive Holy Communion in the evening after a whole day's Eucharistic fast.

For Fr Łubieński the work in Bochum was a special experience. He reported that the church 'was packed with Polish workers. This was a wonderful sight and inspiring for the one standing at the pulpit. However, St Alphonsus held me back from any national outbursts. I spoke about heaven and getting oneself prepared to life for heaven.'<sup>39</sup> The church in Bochum became the centre of Polish immigrants' work conducted by the German Redemptorists.<sup>40</sup>

A special form of the missionary ministry of the 'lame count' was visiting the known Polish aristocratic families in their estates, e.g. the Stadnickis, the Sapiehas, the Zamoyskis, the Branickis and the Potockis. He used these meetings as a kind of retreats for both the nobles and their servants. He was sad to have noticed religious negligence among most Polish aristocrats. In his opinion this condition was caused partly by the clergymen themselves. During his mission for the local gentry conducted in Sokołów Gostyński in 1910, at the end of his talk concerning the need of improving life he explained the reasons for his uncompromising attitude, 'I apologise to you, Gentlemen and Ladies, for having spoken so openly but I smell of a count myself and I know your lives very well. I have said all these things to save your precious souls.'<sup>41</sup> Łubieński, a well-brought up and educated aristocrat, fluent in several languages, having lived abroad for almost 25 years, combining elegant manners with thorough theological knowledge and sincere asceticism, was perceived by the elites as a trustworthy and respectful priest, which allowed him to cause positive changes.<sup>42</sup>

Łubieński's language of preaching abounded in numerous images and similes and even dialogues; hence his skills of depicting the truths of faith. Moreover, he had an extraordinary ability of dramatising and his words were loaded with emotions. Łubieński might not have

---

93; call number BŁ, E 91, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Engelbert Janeček, Glauerbrück 9 July 1891, col. 94-97; cf. W. Szoldrski, *Redemptoryści...*, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 10.

<sup>38</sup> 'Litterae Annales de Rebus Gestis Provinciae Austriacae Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris' 1891, pp. 35-37.

<sup>39</sup> APWR, call number BŁ, E 91, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Engelbert Janeček, Amsterdam 10 July 1891, p. 101; call number BŁ, B 28, B. Łubieński, *Rekolekcje dla kapłanów* [Retreats for priests]. Parate Viam Domini, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> H. J. Brandt, *Das Kloster der Redemptoristen in Bochum und die Polenseelsorge ...*, pp. 146-199.

<sup>41</sup> M. Pirożyński, *O. Bernard Łubieński*, op. cit., p. 263.

<sup>42</sup> Fr Łubieński wrote a significant note after the mission in Sucha Beskidzka, which he conducted with three confreres on 17-24 October 1896, 'The sons of St Alphonsus also bless those who were absent at the end of the Mission, and therefore, I, the superior of the Mission bless my Aunt [Anna Holyńska Branicka] and Cousin [Władysław Michał Branicki] and my confreres also bless them.' Cf. The Library of the Ossolińskis National Institute in Wrocław, call number 17746, Commemorative book of the castle in Sucha, 1882-1898, col. 89.

been a master of literary language, and although he made some grammatical mistakes he had the gift of winning people's hearts. Despite his disability, he was the most active Polish Redemptorist missionary. After the Servant of God had returned to Poland he participated in 244 parish missions and 58 renewed parish missions, which is an impressive number.

### **Esteemed retreat preacher for clergy and laity**

Fr Bernard Łubieński proved himself to be an active and extremely valued retreat preacher for both clergy and laity. His ministry was conducted in the period of the revival and popularisation of closed retreats in the Polish lands. The bishops played an important role in that since they encouraged priests to participate in monthly days of reflection and annual retreats.<sup>43</sup> From the beginning of their presence in the Polish lands the Redemptorists wanted to follow their tradition. In this area Łubieński was also 'a pioneer of retreats for priests and seminarians, retreats which were relatively little known under the Austrian partition, and completely unknown under the Prussian and Russian partitions.'<sup>44</sup>

The difficulties connected with retreats were similar to those with missions. The prevailing problem was the lack of churches or too small chapels that could not contain all believers. Therefore, retreats were frequently held in adapted venues, e.g. in barns, whereas Masses were celebrated at field altars. The retreats conducted by Łubieński in the Church of Holy Saviour in Warsaw in 1911 had wide repercussions.<sup>45</sup> The friendly priests, including Fr Michał Tokarski from Rzeszów and Fr Józef Leja from Maków Podhalański, invited the Redemptorist preachers to give retreats in their parishes.<sup>46</sup> Fr Łubieński, as the superior of the monastery in Mościska, declared that 'although in the Kingdom [under the Russian partition] we were asked to preach we will continue to serve in Rzeszów in Lent in the year 1918 as long as I am the rector of this place; since I feel obliged to return to those places where we have already conducted missions not only being a son of St Alphonsus but also because the

---

<sup>43</sup> Pius XI, *O znaczeniu rekolekcji zamkniętych. Orędzie z dnia 20 grudnia 1929 r.* [About the significance of closed retreats. Message of 20 December 1929], Kraków 1931, pp. 5-8, 23-34; cf. AUPJPIIKr, call number H-308, M. Sojka, *Dzieje redemptorystów polskich...*, op. cit., p. 171.

<sup>44</sup> M. Pirożyński, *Articuli ad processum ...*, p. 7.

<sup>45</sup> *Kronika miejscowa* [Local chronicle], 'Wiadomości Archidiecezjalne Warszawskie' 1:1911, p. 311; J. Daniłowicz, *Ambona i życie. Parafialne rekolekcje wielkopostne. Próba rozwiązania trudności* [The pulpit and life. Lenten parish retreats. An attempt to solve difficulties], 'Przegląd Homiletyczny' 9:1931, pp. 269-277.

<sup>46</sup> AWRP, call number BŁ, E 103, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Michał Tokarski, Mościska 30 December 1913, col. 51; *ibid*, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Michał Tokarski, Mościska 12 January 1916, p. 53.

region of Rzeszów has been especially dear to me since 1879 when I found myself there after I had left England for the first time.’<sup>47</sup>

Łubieński also conducted retreats aiming at discerning one’s vocation. They were called ‘elective.’ The participants of these retreats were the future known diocesan priests, including Adam Woroniecki, Władysław Kornilowicz, Antoni Marsylski and Antoni Tencer, whereas Marian Pirożyński and Witold Czapliński joined the Redemptorists.<sup>48</sup> Some other participants, including Count Stanisław Rostworowski, Count Jan Tarnowski and Count Paweł Dzieduszycki ‘left without having decided to join the congregation; their callings must have not been mature.’<sup>49</sup>

Łubieński was generally known as a retreat preacher for priests. In his introduction to the published retreat teachings of the Servant of God Fr Marian Pirożyński clearly stated that ‘under their [retreats] influence priests’ hearts crashed, got rid of vices and strained to fly high.’<sup>50</sup> In his sermons he ‘sketched the priestly ideal so loftily, demanded that priests should offer sacrifices so great that seemed almost beyond them, and at the same time he made priests have confidence in God’s help and the sweet protection of Our Most Holy Mother.’<sup>51</sup>

The Servant of God gave close retreats for priests for almost 50 years. The first participants of his retreats in Mościska were: the Resurrectionist Father Adolf Bakanowski, known for his pastoral ministry among the Polish community in America, the founder of the Congregation of Saint Michael the Archangel, Fr Bronisław Markiewicz (21-29 July 1884) as well as Bishop Jan Puzyna (1895) and Bishop Henryk Kossowski (1895, 1900, 1902).<sup>52</sup> The listeners of Łubieński’s preaching included Archbishop Wincenty Teofil Popiel (1896) and Fr Władysław Zaleski (1896), who was then an archbishop and Apostolic Delegate to India, Msgr. Władysław Kornilowicz (20-25 December 1932).<sup>53</sup> The doyen of the Polish Redemptorists conducted retreats for Leon Wałęga (1901) and Anatol Nowak (1901) before

---

<sup>47</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 103, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Michał Tokarski, Mościska 15 December 1917, col. 56.

<sup>48</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 93, Fr Bernard Łubieński to the Provincial Fr Emanuel Trzemeski, Mościska 25 January 1921, col. 8-9; The Archives of the Redemptorist Monastery in Kraków (further: AKRK), The chronicle of the Our Lady of Perpetual Help House of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in Kraków, the district of Podgórze, vol. 2, col. 405-449, 480; vol. 3, col. 148.

<sup>49</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, B 26, B. Łubieński, Retreats and talks for priests, col. 14, 19; AKRK, The Chronicle of the monastery in Kraków, vol. 2, col. 230, 349-394.

<sup>50</sup> B. Łubieński, *Pastor Bonus. Trzydniowe ćwiczenia duchowne dla kapłanów* [Pastor Bonus. Three-day spiritual exercises for priests], Wrocław 1949, p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> M. Pirożyński, Fr *Bernard Łubieński* ..., p. 271.

<sup>52</sup> ‘Litterae Annales de Rebus Gestis Provinciae Austriacae Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris’ 1895, p. 54.

<sup>53</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 97, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Bishop Anatol Nowak, Mościska 14 December 1900, p. 13; AKRK, The chronicle of the monastery in Kraków, vol. 2, col. 31, 100, 105, 182; vol. 3, col. 182; ‘Litterae Annales de Rebus Gestis Provinciae Polonicae Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris,’ 1911-1918, col. 9-16, 31-40, 64-70.

they became bishops.<sup>54</sup> Bishop Adam Sapieha (29 November – 3 December 1919) also listened to Fr Bernard Łubieński's retreat talks. The other bishops – retreat participants included: Stablewski, Bilczewski, Cieplak, Teodorowicz, Nowak, Gall, Szlagowski, Komara, Tymieniecki, Jełowiecki, Niemira, Wetmański, Tomczak and Choromański.<sup>55</sup> After having heard the retreat teachings of the Servant of God, the following Cardinals: Albin Dunajewski, Jan Puzyna, Aleksander Kakowski, August Hlond, Adam Sapieha, Archbishops: Szczęsny Feliński, Teofil Popiel, Józef Bilczewski, Teodorowicz, Cieplak, Twardowski, and Bishops: Józef Pelczar, Anatol Nowak, Władysław Krynicki maintained close contacts with him and asked him for advise concerning ecclesiastical matters and issues of conscience. Most of the eminent Polish bishops in the period of 1900-1939 came from the group of Fr Łubieński's friends, as Fr Marian Pirożyński wrote. Furthermore, numerous priests participated in Łubieński's retreats.

Łubieński also initiated the community retreats for priests, having been invited by the bishops from almost all Polish dioceses. He conducted such a series of retreats for the priests of the Archdiocese of Lvov in March 1887.<sup>56</sup> Basically, they were held in diocesan major seminaries or adjusted monasteries. Most of them were carried out by Łubieński. He preached in Gniezno in 1889 and in Poznań two years later. Fr Łubieński also conducted a three-day retreat entitled 'De caritate sacerdotali' in Poznań, Tarnów and Lvov in 1894, and in the next year in Przemyśl, then again in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Włocławek, Kielce and Sandomierz in 1910. Cardinal J. Puzyna and Bishop A. Nowak participated in the retreats, which Fr Bernard Łubieński conducted in the Cracow seminary on 17-21 September 1903. It is worth mentioning that in Vilnius (Polish: Wilno) in the year 1909, the arrival of a considerable number of priests for the retreats given by the famous preacher evoked the concern of the local police and provoked their reaction.<sup>57</sup>

Many a time Father B. Łubieński preached the parable of the Good Shepherd. In his first sermons, he most frequently talked about the call to shepherding, priestly piety, good example and eternal matters. The next sermons concerned judgement, spiritual direction, teaching the faithful as well as the faults and punishment of bad priests. The third day was dedicated to the Good Shepherd's love of souls, pastoral work, care for your parish and love of Our Mother.

---

<sup>54</sup> 'Litterae Annales de Rebus Gestis Provinciae Pragensis Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris' 1901, p. 38.

<sup>55</sup> M. Pirożyński, Fr *Bernard Łubieński* ..., p. 270.

<sup>56</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, B 17, B. Łubieński, Retreats, part I, col. 2-124, 197-252; cf. *Rekolekcje dla kapłanów* [Retreats for priests], 'Homo Dei' 8:1939, p. 193.

<sup>57</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 97, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Adam Sapieha, Warszawa 28 May 1906, col. 68-69; call number BŁ, E 97, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Adam Sapieha, Warszawa 24 June 1906, col. 67; call number BŁ, E 99, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Maria Karłowska, Warsaw 3 September 1909, col. 121; call number BŁ, E 97, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Cardinal Jan Puzyna, Włocławek 9 July 1910, col. 57.

Talking on relying on God's will and how the Eucharist and confession could be the ways of sanctification he used the example of the parable of the rich young man as well as the parable of the lost drachma and parable of the lost sheep. The thematic individual retreats, which the Servant of God particularly liked, were the exercises which he called "Retreats for holy priests. Retreats for priests, with the loving Peter and Magdalene. *Transfiguratio* for priests. Reflections on mercy and agreeing with God's Will. About the Blessed Sacrament."<sup>58</sup> Only in the years 1895-1902 Łubieński conducted sixteen of such retreats for priests.<sup>59</sup>

Another important, frequent pastoral involvement of the doyen of the Polish Redemptorists was retreats for seminarians.<sup>60</sup> "During [these] retreats, Łubieński's appearance and teaching impressed listeners. He carried his paralysed leg loudly up the stairs to the pulpit, blessed people with the missionary cross, which he received from the Holy Father [Leo XIII] for his trip to Poland; he spoke strongly about death and eternal things; he moved our conscience very deeply. He put the scapular on us, gave us prayer books, urged cordially to serve Our Virgin, Mother of Perpetual Help."<sup>61</sup> Łubieński's radicalism caused that "bishops were afraid that his words spoken to some seminarian, «Little soul, you have no vocation!» will make their seminaries desolate."<sup>62</sup> At this point, it is worth mentioning the other initiatives aiming at increasing the level of spiritual formation in major seminaries. Fulfilling the wish of Fr Aleksander Kakowski, the regent of the Warsaw seminary, Łubieński delivered talks entitled 'If you want to be perfect' to over 120 alumni every week from September 1905 until January 1906.<sup>63</sup>

Three generations of priests of all Polish dioceses and numerous religious congregations cherished vivid memories of the spiritual exercises given by Fr Bernard as Bishop Ignacy Świrski of Podlasie recollected, "I, like many others, am debtor to Fr Bernard because I was also lucky to have retreats under his spiritual direction, and feel the whole power of his

---

<sup>58</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, B 26, B. Łubieński, Retreats and talks for priests, col. 22-39, 81-151.

<sup>59</sup> AWPR, without call number, Official Journal of the Board of the Polish Redemptorist Province 1895-1945, col. 13; *Rekolekcje dla kapłanów O. Bernarda Łubieńskiego w 1893 r. (według zapisków X. abp. L. Wałęgi)* [Retreats for priests of Fr Bernard Łubieński in 1893 (according to the notes of Archbishop L. Wałęga), 'Homo Dei' 6:1937 pp. 192-203.

<sup>60</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 100, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Mother Norberta Zajączek, Warsaw 13 March 1907, col. 81; call number BŁ, B 27, B. Łubieński, Retreats and talks for seminarians and priests. Projects and sketches, col. 191-211; call number BŁ, E 104, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Sr. Maria Weronika of the Most Holy Face, Lvov 12 April 1917, col. 63; call number BŁ, E 97, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Bishop Anatol Nowak, Kraków 17 October 1921, col. 32.

<sup>61</sup> W. Urban, *O wpływie o. Bernarda Łubieńskiego na duchowość ks. prof. Szczepana Szydelskiego* [On the influence of Fr Bernard Łubieński on the spirituality of Rev. Prof. Szczepan Szydelski], 'Homo Dei' 37:1968, pp. 60-61.

<sup>62</sup> S. Ryznar, *Sluga Boży o. Bernard Łubieński CSsR (1846 - 1933)* [The Servant of God Fr Bernard Łubieński, CSsR (1846 - 1933)], 'Nasze Wiadomości' 37:1982, p. 19.

<sup>63</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, B 27, B. Łubieński, Retreats and talks for seminarians and priests. Projects and sketches, pp. 71-72.

spirit.<sup>64</sup> Father Bernard Łubieński conducted a total of 208 series of retreats for diocesan priests, 51 for seminarians and 30 for religious.<sup>65</sup> The culmination and appreciation of his activities was the invitation to preach to the Polish Bishops' Conference in Gniezno on 14-17 September 1928.<sup>66</sup> The participants of the retreat included 36 bishops. He gave ten talks based on the parable of the Good Shepherd.<sup>67</sup>

From the very beginning, the Polish Redemptorists were engaged in closed retreats for women's and men's orders. During his six-month stay in Kraków in 1833 Łubieński led days of reflection and gave ascetical talks to the local Visitation Nuns, the Augustine Nuns, the Felician Sisters, the Norbertines and the Ursulines. In the years 1889-1902, Łubieński conducted numerous retreats for nuns in Galicia: for the Franciscan Sisters of Kęty, the Felician novices in Kraków and the Good Shepherd Sisters.<sup>68</sup> The Redemptorists conducted this ministry in the land under the Russian partition in 1905. The first series of retreats was conducted by Fr Łubieński for 80 Sisters of the Our Lady of Mercy in Warsaw. It was a great feast for them because 'since the 50s [1850s] the sisters have never had more than one talk a day during their retreats and the talks have been given by diocesan priests. However, Fr Łubieński delivered four talks each day for eight days.'<sup>69</sup> Despite his disability, Łubieński gave retreats for nuns in other European countries, including the retreats for the Little Sisters of Saint Clare in Rotterdam, England, in 1891 and for the Redemptoristine Sisters in Bruges, whereas in 1911 he conducted two series of retreats for the Sisters of Maria Teresa Ledóchowska in Petersburg and in Mariastadte, Finland.<sup>70</sup> The Servant of God conducted a total of 119 retreat series for nuns and 30 for men's congregations.<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>64</sup> A. Bazieliński, *Biskupi polscy ...*, p. 20.

<sup>65</sup> M. Pirożyński, *O. Bernard Łubieński ...*, p. 252.

<sup>66</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 104, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Sr. Maria Antonina of Jesus, Warsaw 2 September 1928, col. 36.

<sup>67</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 93, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Emanuel Trzemeski, Toruń 17 September 1928, col. 85-86; AWPR, Chronicle ... of the house in Tuchów, vol. 1, col. 52; *Provincia Polonica. Exercitia spiritualia pro Episcopis*, ACSR 8:1929, pp. 35-36.

<sup>68</sup> [B. Łubieński], *Wszystko z Bogiem i dla Boga przez Maryję. Pamiątka rekolekcji odprawianych roku 1889* [All things with God and for God through Mary. A memento of the retreats conducted in 1889], Przemysł 1890, (passim).

<sup>69</sup> M. Pirożyński, *O. Bernard Łubieński ...*, p. 174.

<sup>70</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, E 91, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Engelbert Janeček, Rotterdam 24 July 1891, col. 118-119; call number BŁ, E 91, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Fr Engelbert Janeček, Gillingham Hall-Beales 30 July 1891, col. 123-130; call number BŁ, B 19, B. Łubieński, *Retreats*, part II, vol. 2, col. 224-235; call number BŁ, E 99, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Maria Karłowska, Warsaw 3 September 1911, col. 126; cf. M. Sojka, *Apostolat redemptorystów polskich wśród męskich i żeńskich zgromadzeń zakonnych w latach 1883-1939* [The apostolate of the Polish Redemptorists among men's and women's congregations in the years 1883-1939], in: *Wierni Tradycji – otwarci na znaki czasu. Materiały Sympozjum na Stulecie Warszawskiej Prowincji Redemptorystów i kanonizacji Św. Klemensa Marii Hofbauera, Tuchów 9–10 Października 2009* [Faithful to St Clement's Legacy – open to the signs of the times]. *Geneza i początki Polskiej Prowincji Redemptorystów (1883–1909)* [The origin and beginnings of the Polish Redemptorist Province (1883-1909)], in: *Wierni Tradycji – otwarci na znaki czasu*.

Besides closed retreats, the Redemptorists carried out retreats for various lay groups. The precursor of such retreats was Łubieński who preached to ‘the intelligentsia, pupils, children, male teachers, female teachers, those working in orphanages, military men, Marian Sodalitys, the Societies of St Vincent de Paul, nurses, women working in factories, the Children of Mary, the poor in poorhouses and for governesses.’<sup>72</sup> In the Polish lands, he conducted such retreats for the family of Prince Adam Stefan Sapieha in Krasiczyn as early as 1887 as well as for the family and household of Prince Władysław Sapieha in Oleszyce.<sup>73</sup> Being invited by Princess Helena Sanguszko, he conducted a three-day retreat in Gumniska for the Sanguszko family, their guests and servants (1924). He also preached for the gentry in the estate of the Szeptyckis in Łaszczów and for the carers in Feliks Sobański’s House in Warsaw (1908).<sup>74</sup>

## Epilogue

Apostolic zeal in the service to Abundant Redemption is one of the most important arguments of the sanctity of Fr Bernard Łubieński whom the Polish historiography includes among the most meritorious workers in the Church’s field of the recent times.<sup>75</sup> He himself clearly said, ‘If I seek the cross and fall into its arms, He will make miracles but not without my activity. God connected the salvation of souls with my work. If I do not do it they will be damned.’<sup>76</sup> Despite his disability, from which he suffered almost all his life, he was demanding much of himself in his missionary proclamation and retreats but he also challenged his listeners to demand much of themselves, at the same time showing them helpful ways and means to meet these Christian aspirations. The scale of his involvement is testified by the numbers. He began his missionary-retreat activities in England where he participated in over 30 apostolic works for 12 years. In the Polish lands, he took part in 244 parish missions and 58 renewed missions. He conducted a total of 508 series of retreats. After

---

*Materiały Sympozjum na Stulecie Warszawskiej Prowincji Redemptorystów i kanonizacji Św. Klemensa Marii Hofbauera, Tuchów 9–10 października 2009* [Faithful to the Tradition – Open to the Signs of the Times. Proceedings of the Symposium on the Centenary of the Redemptorist Province of Warsaw and the Canonisation of St Clement Maria Hofbauer, Tuchów 9–10 October 2009], ed. M. Sadowski, Kraków 2009, p. 158.

<sup>71</sup> M. Pirożyński, *O. Bernard Łubieński ...*, p. 252.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.

<sup>73</sup> ‘Litterae Annales de Rebus Gestis Provinciae Austriacae Congregationis Ss. Redemptoris’ 1887, p. 42.

<sup>74</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, B 17, B. Łubieński, Retreats, part I, col. 281-284; call number BŁ, E 97, Fr Bernard Łubieński to Bishop Ignacy Łobos, Rożnów 16 February 1888, col. 45; J. Palewski, *Dostojny czciciel Matki Boskiej N[ieustającej] Pomocy, śp. Książę Paweł Sapieha (+31. V. 1934)* [Distinguished Worshipper of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the Late Prince Paweł Sapieha (+31 May 1934)], ‘Chorągiew Maryi’ 31:1935, pp. 149-150.

<sup>75</sup> A. Sapieha, [Foreword], in: M. Pirożyński, *O. Bernard Łubieński...*, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>76</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ, C 35, p. 4.

Fr Łubieński's death in 1933, many important figures of the Church's life and numerous ordinary believers sent their recollections and opinions of his sanctity. All these statements were centred in the testimony of Cardinal Aleksander Kakowski, Metropolitan of Warsaw, who wrote on behalf of the Polish Bishops' Conference, 'Since a monk of great and invaluable merits died in the common opinion of sanctity: in odore sanctitatis; a faithful priest 'who kept my commandments and laws' (1 Kings 11:35) died; a missionary, Poland's apostle, died; in all districts of our country his inspired voice sounded for several dozen years; all strata of our society benefited from his fervent ministry in the confessional booth and in the pulpit.'<sup>77</sup> For successive generations Father Bernard Łubieński, a true aristocrat wearing a habit and at the same time, a tireless missionary and servant to Abundant Redemption, is a vivid symbol of this tradition which does not mean that the living are dead but that the dead are alive.

### **Summary:**

The hero of this article is the doyen and icon of the Polish Redemptorists' missionary zeal the Servant of God Fr Bernard Łubieński (1846-1933), whose 80th death anniversary falls on this year. His figure is connected with the return of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer to the Polish lands and the foundation of the Polish Province 130 years ago. The article presents his missionary-retreat activities. Łubieński, educated in the Province of London, participated in over 30 apostolic works in England for 12 years. In the Polish lands, he took part in 244 parish missions and 58 renewed missions as well as conducted 508 series of retreats for laity, clergy and religious. Despite his disability, the tireless missionary worked in various environments and won the deserved name of 'Poland's apostle.' His process of beatification is being conducted now and is at the last stage in the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

---

<sup>77</sup> AWPR, call number BŁ E 104, Cardinal Aleksander Kakowski to Father Provincial Franciszek Marcinek, Częstochowa, 19 September 1933, col.1-2.