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Bands of Brothers: The Negotiation of Identity in the Congregation of the Mission's Polish Vice-Province in the United States, 1903—1975.

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Bands of Brothers: The Negotiation of Identity in the Congregation of the Mission's Polish Vice-Province in the United States, 1903—1975.

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The historical literature on late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Polish Catholic immigration to the United States includes numerous studies of conflicts between the immigrant laity and members of the Catholic clergy, both Polish- and American-born. While scholars have closely studied the laity's motivations and the conflicts' outcomes, little attention has been given to the Polish immigrant clergy who came to the United States to minister to the spiritual needs of the laity and their perspective on these tensions.

This dissertation fills a gap in this historical literature by examining the history of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States of the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentian Fathers) from the first Polish Missionaries' arrival in 1903 to the reconstitution of the Polish Vice-Province as the autonomous New England Province in 1975. Drawing on theoretical frameworks developed by T. H. Breen and Benedict Anderson, this dissertation analyzes the role that competing ethnic and clerical identities played in the Polish Vice-Province's ability to resolve conflicts with its Mother Province in Poland and the Eastern Province of the United States as well as with Polish secular priests serving in Catholic dioceses throughout the eastern half of the United States. While these conflicts were, in themselves, difficult to solve, negotiations between these different groups of priests were further complicated by global events, such as the First

World War, the Great Depression, and the Second World War, as well as by the assimilation of later generations of Polish Americans.

Utilizing materials collected from archives in the United States and Europe and oral interviews with members of the New England Province and alumni of the Polish Vice-Province's former high school in Erie, Pennsylvania, this dissertation concludes that ethnic identity continued to be a significant factor in the history of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States well into the second half of the twentieth century.

This dissertation by Charles R. Kaczyński fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in United States Catholic History approved by Leslie Tentler, Ph.D., as Director, and by Christopher Kauffman, Ph.D., Timothy Meagher, Ph.D. & Father John Carven, C.M., Ph.D. as Readers.

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Charles R. Kaczyński
Greenpoint, Brooklyn, New York
The Feast of Corpus Christi
June 14, 2009

Foreword

Pentecost Sunday, May 30, 2004: As I walked toward it, a throng of people grew in front of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Church in the Greenpoint neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. Mixing with the crowd on the sidewalk, listening to the conclusion of the Polish-language Mass, was a second wave of people—also Poles, men in shirtsleeves and ties and women wearing spring dresses. The usual card table with Polish-language religious periodicals stood opposite the church portal, its owner quietly taking money and making change. As the Mass ended, the sidewalk became impassable, as couples and families spilled out from the church onto Humboldt Street. The throng soon turned into a scrum of handshakes, embraces, and neighborly conversations as the waiting crowd struggled to push into the church to secure a seat at the special afternoon Mass.

As the pews filled, the majority of whispered conversations filling the air were in Polish. At the front of the church, however, a smartly dressed group of special guests of the Eucharist's principal celebrant seemed to be an English-language island in the midst of a Polish sea. The church's remaining pews soon groaned under the weight of people sitting shoulder-to-shoulder, forcing late arrivals to stand at the back of the church, along the side aisles, or back out on the sidewalk. With the last peal of the church's bells, a man stepped into the pulpit, greeted the congregation in Polish and explained the special significance of the Eucharistic celebration. When he finished, a woman took his place, repeating the message in English.

As the announcements ended, the sonorous tones of the organ and the voices of a choir echoed through the church. Below the choir loft, a procession began its way up the main aisle: a dozen red-cassocked altar servers, members of the parish's women's

sodalities, identified by the banners behind which they walked, and ten concelebrating priests, members of the Congregation of the Mission, the Community of priests who had served the parish since 1923.

Walking slowly at the end of the line of clerics was Father Joseph M. Lachowski, C.M., appropriately bedecked in an orange-and-gold chasuble for the Eucharistic celebration of his fiftieth jubilee as a priest. After reaching the altar and standing amidst his concelebrants, five of whom were born in Poland, the other five native-born Americans, Father Lachowski intoned the opening prayer in English. Throughout the Mass, the responses to the English-language prayers were muted, while the responsorial psalm and hymns, sung in Polish, echoed throughout the church. Later in the Mass, the congregation listened to the second reading from Saint Paul's Letter to the Corinthians: "As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ." After the Gospel, Father Paul M. Murphy, C.M. gave the English-language homily; Father Wojciech Paluchowski, C.M. next addressed the congregation in Polish. When time came for the consecration, Father Lachowski said the prayer over the bread in English and the one over the wine in Polish. The Mass concluded with the singing of *Boże coś Polskę* and *God Bless America*.

While I had attended services at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish since I had moved to Greenpoint, Brooklyn in January 2002 and had participated in both English- and Polish-language Eucharistic celebrations, the bicultural nature of Father Lachowski's jubilee Mass and the co-mingling of the two languages led me to question the nature of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, the Community to which Father Lachowski and most of his concelebrants belonged. Established in 1975, the New

England Province had its roots in the efforts of three confreres from Poland, who arrived in the United States in late 1903 to serve the spiritual needs of the members of the Polish Diaspora. In 1920, the confreres working in the United States were organized into the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. Almost eighty-four years after the establishment of the Vice-Province, the membership of the New England Province consisted of both individuals of Polish ancestry born in the United States and individuals born in Poland. Considering the place of birth of its members, as well as that of the laity it served, I began to wonder: How *American* was the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission?

My interest in the role of ethnic identity in the history of Polish immigrants in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States began with a paper I wrote for an undergraduate class in American labor history at Cleveland State University. What began as a study of a strike at the Cleveland Rolling Mill, a dispute that led to the establishment of a Polish immigrant enclave on Cleveland's Southeast Side, evolved into an analysis of the role of a Polish immigrant priest, Father Franciszek Kołaszewski, in the development of the Warszawa neighborhood. In time, this paper served as the basis for my Master's degree study of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, an independent Polish congregation established by Father Kołaszewski in 1894. As pastor of this dissident parish, Father Kołaszewski sought to merge old-world ethnic and religious identity with the tenets of American democracy. Under the guidance of the schismatic Bishop J. Rene Vilatte, Father Kołaszewski also attempted to parlay this ideological mix into the basis

for a multiethnic denomination independent of Vatican authority, the "American Catholic Church."[1]

The curious mixture of Polish ethnic identity and American republican ideals evident in the establishment of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish and the American Catholic Church continued to interest me throughout my course work in the doctoral program at The Catholic University of America. It was not until I moved to New York City, however, that I had the opportunity to explore this topic further. In 2003, while working on a history of the Saint John the Baptist Parish, a Vincentian community located in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, I engaged in research in the archives of the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission in Germantown, Pennsylvania. It was there that I first met Father John W. Carven, C.M., who, with an off-hand comment about the history of tension between the Eastern Province and New England Province, set me on the road that led to the writing of this dissertation.

While surveying the literature on Polish Catholic unrest in the United States during my preliminary work on this dissertation, I came across a journal article that added further impetus to my proposed study of the activities of the Polish Vincentians in the United States. Entitled "Factionalism and the Competition of the Polish Immigrant Clergy," the article, written by John J. Bukowczyk, examines the role "competition between younger clerics and older established pastors" played in the establishment of Polish parishes in the United States. In exploring the changing composition of the Polish clergy and its increasing homogeneity, Bukowczyk recognizes the role of "competing ambitions" and "conflict between divergent regional and socio-economic backgrounds

[1] Charles R. Kaczyński, "'What Mean Ye By These Stones?' Cleveland's Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish and the Construction of a Polish American [sic] Rhetoric." *Polish American Studies*, vol. LV no. 2 (1998), *passim*.

and conditioning" in the tensions that characterized the history of the Roman Catholic Church in American Polonia.[2]

In his concluding remarks, Bukowczyk writes: "After the 1920s, sources, as well as historians' and journalists' accounts, are relatively silent about intra-clerical rivalry and competition. Perhaps we can conclude from this that the pattern of strife often observed during the immigration years has actually disappeared." After posing a possible reason for this alleged change and the limits of the historical record in proving this point, Bukowczyk continues: "Here, too, the sources are often silent: if intra-clerical rivalry and competition in the distant past was a distasteful subject, discussion of the recent past has been downright taboo. But has there not been friction between Polish émigré priests and American-born clergymen of Polish extraction? . . . What implications this holds for recent Polish-American history, or for current Polish-American affairs, is open to debate. But herein lies a promising field for further discussion and historical research." It was with the objective of answering this question that I began my research on the Polish Vincentians in the United States.[3]

My findings in this dissertation are grounded in the theoretical writings of scholars in the fields of history, political science, and anthropology and tend to concentrate on the subjects of nationalism, nation-building, assimilation, and group identity. The Congregation of the Mission, with its own unique governing system and culture, shares certain characteristics of a nation-state. Therefore, a study of the Polish Vincentians in the United States and their clashes with clerics from the Eastern Province

[2] John J. Bukowczyk, "Factionalism and the Competition of the Polish Immigrant Clergy" in *Pastor of the Poles: Polish American Essays Presented to Right Reverend Monsignor John P. Wodarski in Honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary of His Ordination*, edited by Stanislaus A. Blejwas & Mieczysław B. Biskupski (New Britain, CT.: Polish Studies Program Monographs, 1982), pp. 38 & 47.
[3] Ibid.

of the Congregation of the Mission and the diocesan clergy will be enhanced by concepts borrowed from Benedict Anderson's "imagined community" model of nation-building.

Anderson describes a "nation" as a collection of "cultural artifacts of a particular kind," the full understanding of which requires the student "to consider carefully how they have come into historical being, in what ways their meanings have changed over time, and why, today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy." The political and cultural contexts within which its members find themselves serve as structural limitations restricting how a nation may imagine itself. These "imagined communities," as described by Anderson, are "inherently limited and sovereign." The "imagined" nation-states are limited in the sense that they possess "elastic," yet "finite" boundaries, "beyond which lies other nations." They are "sovereign," emerging "in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained hierarchical dynastic realm." Anderson also argues that these groups are communities, "because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship." All of these qualities are evident in the Congregation of the Mission and its Provinces in the United States and Poland.[4]

A second concept used in analyzing the history of the Polish Vincentians in the United States comes from the American colonial scholar, T. H. Breen, in his work on the seventeenth-century European settlement of North America. Recognizing the fact that both Europeans and Africans arriving in North America at this time came from particular localities, Breen argues that, once across the Atlantic Ocean, individuals of the same race

[4] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991) pp. 4, 6 & 7.

were forced to interact with their fellows who came from different localities. Very quickly, these groups recognized their cultural similarities and used these shared norms to create a "charter societies." Once established, the communities devised a "set of rules for the incorporation of later arrivals." Individuals and groups who arrived afterward either complied with these rules or "moved on" in an effort to find their own place to create a community based on different norms. Breen adds that "the influence of the initial immigrants . . . was disproportionate to their actual numbers."[5]

The transferability of Breen's "charter societies" to the study of the Polish Vincentians in the United States is supported by research on the American Roman Catholic Church undertaken by Jay P. Dolan. In his introduction to *In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension*, Dolan defines "culture" as "those values and beliefs that a group or society uses to identify itself." Analogous to Breen's "charter society," the Catholic Church in the United States contains groups with distinct secular differences, but, nonetheless share "certain core values and defining beliefs." For the American faithful at the Turn-of-the-Century, a primary characteristic of the "Catholic Ethos" was obedience to a hierarchical authority. With roots in the "ultramontane revival" of the mid-nineteenth century, the authority structure of the Catholic Church in the United States was distinctly "monarchical." As a result of the Third Baltimore Council in 1884, the local hierarchy received "a ringing affirmation of their authoritative position in the church, and subsequent decades did little to change this." By the early twentieth century, following the squelching of democratization efforts, "Roman Catholicism steadily marched toward a more monarchial, less

[5] T. H. Breen, "Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures," in Jack P. Greene & J. R. Pole, editors, *Colonial British America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), p. 216.

democratic style of church government." This hierarchical system of authority was the one to which the Polish Vincentians attempted to assimilate.[6]

Although they arrived in the United States as the American hierarchy consolidated its control over the Church, the Polish Vincentians, like their immigrant predecessors, brought with them a distinctly different "Polish Catholic dialect." Defined by Barbara Strassberg, a "dialect" is "one of the many variants of the supranational Roman Catholic culture." "[S]ecular, humane, and social," the Polish Catholic dialect is better described as more anthropocentric than theocentric, with "[l]ove, goodness, forgiveness, [and] compassion" being traits more often attributed "to the Virgin Mary and then to the saints" than to God, the "angry father." This anthropocentric quality of Polish Catholicism is further evident in "the sphere of ethics, where horizontal relationships (person-to-person) have always played a more important role than vertical relations (human beings-to-God)." According to Strassberg, "certain patterns of behavior" are adhered to more "because that is the way in which their forebearers acted" than because people believe "they are prescribed by God." This horizontally oriented ethic brought by Polish immigrants to the United States frequently served as a philosophical foundation from which they called for greater democracy in the running of their own parish affairs. This merger was quite evident in my study of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish and Father Kołaszewski's American Catholic Church. When confronted with the monarchical and ultramontane attitudes evident among the American Catholic hierarchy, a significant number of Polish Catholic immigrants sought to establish their own charter

[6] Jay P. Dolan, *In Search of an American Catholicism: a History of Religion and Culture in Tension* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 8, 44, 59, 83; Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), pp. 221-240.

societies in parishes independent of the American hierarchy's authority. While not as radical in their thinking as their lay immigrant countrymen, the Polish confreres brought a particular dialect of the Congregation of the Mission with them to the United States—one often at odds with their fellow Vincentians of American origin.[7]

Clifford Geertz offers anthropological grounding for the competing "styles" of Catholicism and, by extension, of the Congregation of the Mission. Being a system of "sacred symbols," both physical objects and ritualistic actions, Geertz argues, a religion "synthesize[s] a people's ethos—the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic styles and mood—and their world view—the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order." The practiced Catholicisms of different immigrant groups, both lay and clerical, draw as much on historical and cultural contexts as Anderson's "imagined" nations.[8]

For the Polish Vincentians who began arriving at the beginning of the twentieth century, the establishment of a foothold in the United States required the confreres not only to adapt to the cultural norms of the Catholic charter society in America but also to negotiate with pioneers of the Congregation of the Mission and the Polish secular clergy in the United States. When one takes into consideration the triple accommodation confronting the Polish Vincentians in working in the United States over the next seven decades, one gets a better picture of the complex negotiations and potential pitfalls the confreres faced. The corporate identity of the Polish Vincentian Missionaries in the United States between 1903 and 1975 was a result of a complex series of conflicts

[7] Barbara Strassberg, "Polish Catholicism in Transition" in *World Catholicism in Transition* edited by Thomas M. Gannon, S.J., (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988), pp. 186-187; Kaczyński, "'What Mean Ye By These Stones?' Cleveland's Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish," *passim*.
[8] Clifford Geertz, "Religion As a Cultural System," in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973) pp. 89-90.

between them and Polish- and American-born members of both the American secular clergy and the Congregation of the Mission, as well as between their own members of these two origins. By understanding these conflicts, one acquires a fuller appreciation of the continuing importance of ethnicity in the maintenance and vitality of Roman Catholic men's religious Communities in the mid- to late-twentieth century.

This dissertation consists of five chapters. In the first chapter, "Imagining a Community: The Origins of the Congregation of the Mission & Its History in Poland," I explore the activities of Saint Vincent de Paul, the establishment of the Congregation of the Mission, and the Community's work in France and Poland. Drawing on the ideas of Benedict Anderson and Barbara Strassberg, this chapter identifies the process by which a unique Vincentian culture was developed as well as the process by which this culture adapted to conditions within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. While chronologically distant from the story of the Polish Vincentians in the United States in the twentieth century, these events nevertheless are significant. They established both the norms of the Congregation of the Mission—ideas and apostolates that would become points of contention between the Polish confreres and members of the American-Catholic, Polish-immigrant, and Vincentian charter societies—as well as the unique culture that characterized Polish Roman Catholicism.

In chapter two, "Casting Bread Upon the Water: The *Zgromadzenie Misjonarzy* in American Polonia," I examine the arrival of the first mission band of Polish Vincentians and their efforts in securing a niche in the multiethnic Roman Catholic Church in the United States. By the early-twentieth century, the Catholic Church in America was an institution defined by the activities and attitudes of an earlier charter society of clerics.

The early history of the Polish Vincentians in the United States is characterized by negotiations over the maintenance of a transplanted Polish-Catholic identity in the Church—negotiations that often pitted these first confreres from Kraków against the Bishop and clergy of the Hartford, Connecticut Archdiocese.

The clergy of the Archdiocese of Hartford and the American confreres of the Congregation of the Mission were not the only charter societies confronted by the Polish Vincentians in the years before the First World War. In chapter three, "Working in the Harvest: The *Zgromadzenie Misjonarzy* in Pennsylvania," I recount the challenges faced by the Polish Vincentians as they negotiated a place among the clergy of American Polonia. This was a society chartered by members of Polish immigrant priests serving as members of the secular clergy in Philadelphia and Erie, Pennsylvania.

During the first ten years of the Polish Vincentians' work in the United States, regular contact with the Motherhouse in Kraków allowed the confreres to receive instructions from their Visitor as well as refresh their ranks with new recruits. With the outbreak of the First World War, however, this link was severed, forcing the Polish Vincentians to renegotiate their relationships with both the secular clergy and their fellow Vincentians in the United States. In chapter four, "Syncretic Discord: The Polish Vice-Province in the United States, 1914-1939," I discuss the jarring process of assimilation faced by the confreres in the interwar period. Circumscribed by structural changes resulting from the First World War, the reestablishment of Poland on the map of Europe, the postwar American nativism, and the Great Depression, the confreres of the recently established Polish Vice-Province also faced the internal challenge posed by the ordination of increasing numbers of American-born candidates.

This internal evolution continued in the second half of the twentieth century. In the final chapter of this dissertation, "Reimagining a Community: Becoming the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, 1945-1975," I analyze the changes within the Polish Vice-Province in the United States and the continued assimilation of American Polonia. No longer possessing immediate ties to the Motherhouse in Kraków, the confreres of the Vice-Province, increasingly of American birth, sought to reestablish themselves as an American Community within the Congregation of the Mission, a process challenged by both the Polish Province and the Eastern Province of the United States. Begun by confreres as early as the 1930s, this process was advanced by the Americanization campaign of Father Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M. (d. 2009) and culminated in the establishment of the New England Province in 1975.

The seventy years of Polish Vincentian history in the United States covered in this dissertation were ones in which the country and the Catholic Church underwent numerous transformations. As the assimilation of the children and grandchildren of European immigrants redefined what it meant to be an American, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States likewise experienced a series of clashes that resulted in a new shared sense of a common Catholic culture. In both of these cases, the process was one characterized by brutal battles between those established and those recently arrived in the country. Like the Catholic clergy, the immigrants, and the Americans who preceded them, the bands of brothers that compose the Polish Vice-Province in the United States are the products of an unfinished syncretic process that merged ethnic and religious identities from both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

Chapter One: Imagining a Community:
The Origins of the Congregation of the Mission & Its History in Poland.

> Each one of you is a son of God because of your faith in Christ Jesus. All of you who have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with him. There does not exist among you Jew or Greek, slave or freeman, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus.
>
> Galatians 3: 26-28.
> *New American Bibile*

The Polish Vice-Province in the United States is, like Benedict Anderson's nation-states, an "imagined community," described as a collection of "cultural artifacts of a particular kind" that require the historian "to consider carefully how they have come into historical being, in what ways their meanings have changed over time, and why, today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy." Like the secular nations studied by Anderson, the bands of brothers who traveled from partitioned Poland in the early twentieth century to the United States were products of a historical process with roots reaching back into seventeenth-century France and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Although chronologically and geographically distant from the Missionaries' efforts in the eastern half of the United States in the early twentieth century, the founding of the Congregation of the Mission and the Community's expansion into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth form the foundation on which the Vice-Province was built.[1]

Like other religious communities, the Congregation of the Mission possesses qualities and traditions rooted in the life and early activities of its founder. Vincent de Paul was born on March 28, 1581 in the parish of Pouy, located four kilometers north of

[1]Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991) p. 4.

the town of Dax, to Jean de Paul, a small landowner, and Bertrande de Moras, a woman with a bourgeois or petty-noble background. At age eleven or twelve, Vincent traveled to Dax, where he began his education and received minor orders approximately four years later. In 1597, he moved to Toulouse to study at the university. After receiving a series of dimissorial letters from the subdiaconate and diaconate, nineteen-year-old Vincent was ordained a priest on September 23, 1600.[2]

Inspired, in part, by a desire to assist his family, Vincent sought to establish himself in a stable pastorate. After receiving a bachelor's degree in theology and on a voyage to Narbonne, Vincent was captured by Turkish pirates and sold into slavery, serving under four masters. After almost two years of captivity, he escaped. He spent the next year in Rome as a guest of Monsignor Pierre-François Montorio and returned to France in the last days of 1608. By 1610, Vincent's religious career received a major boost when he became "counselor and chaplain" of Queen Marguerite of Valois. In May, he took possession of the rundown Abbey of Saint-Léonard-de-Chaume. That same year, he met Father Pierre de Bérulle, an individual who, influenced by the Council of Trent (1545-1563), believed that the Church's ability to defend itself against the external threats of Protestantism and internal heresies depended on the reformation of the

[2] Bernard Pujo, *Vincent de Paul: The Trailblazer* translated by Gertrud Graubart Champe, (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2003), pp. 4, 9-10, 14 & 17-18; "Dimissorial Letters for Subdiaconate," 10 September 1598, "Letters for Subdiaconate," 19 September 1598, "Dimissorial Letters for Diaconate," 11 December 1598, "Letters for Diaconate," 19 December 1598, "Dimissorial Letters for Priesthood," 13 September 1599, and "Letters for Priesthood," 23 September 1600" in St. Vincent de Paul, *Correspondence, Conferences, Documents (S.V.P.)*, volume XIIIa, trans. Pierre Coste, C. M. (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1985) pp. 3-8. Dimissorial letters are "Testimonial letters given by a bishop or by a competent religious superior to his subjects in order that they may be ordained by another bishop. Such letters testify that the subject has all the qualities demanded by canon law for the reception of the order in question, and request the bishop to whom they are addressed to ordain him." See: New Catholic Dictionary website: http://saints.sqpn.com/ncd02719.htm.

priesthood. To help facilitate this reformation, Father Bérulle looked to establish "a congregation that would restore and elevate the very idea of the priesthood."[3]

With Father Bérulle's assistance, Vincent became the Pastor of a parish in Clichy-la-Garenne in May 1612. A "model pastor," Vincent cared for the physical and spiritual needs of his parishioners and "made himself all things to all men to gain all to Christ." Approximately one year after becoming pastor, Vincent, at the urging of Father Bérulle, took on a new responsibility, one that eventually led to the establishment of the Congregation of the Mission.[4]

Vincent's new position was tutor to the sons of Philip Emmanuel de Gondi, France's "General of the Galleys." Once engaged by the Gondi household, Vincent became a counselor and confessor of Madame de Gondi, often accompanying her on visits to the family's various estates, where he witnessed the poor religious formation the peasants received from the local clergy. With the de Gondis' insistence, Vincent began tending to the spiritual needs of the peasants at Joigny, Montmirail, and Villepreux. To be most effective in his work, Vincent preached in a language easily understood by these rural folk.[5]

At the request of Madame de Gondi to instruct the peasants on making a proper confession, Vincent used his simple yet effective preaching in a sermon at the church at Folleville on January 25, 1617. Reflecting on his success, Vincent later wrote, "I pointed out to them its [a general confession's] importance and usefulness, and then I instructed them how to make a good one . . . and all these good folks were so touched by God that

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[3] Pujo, pp. 21, 25, 29, 36-37, 42, 44 & 46; *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, pp. 8-11.
[4] "Act of Taking Possession of the Parish of Clichy," 2 May 1612 in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, pp. 22-24; Pujo, p. 47; Pierre Coste, C.M., *The Life and Works of Saint Vincent de Paul*, trans. Joseph Leonard, C.M. (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1952) volume 1, p. 55.
[5] Pujo, p. 55; Coste, vol. 1, pp. 57, 63-64.

they all came to make their general confessions." The number of peasants who responded to Vincent's message was so great that Madame de Gondi had to ask for assistance in hearing confessions from a nearby Jesuit Community. With this initial success and the assistance of Madame de Gondi, Vincent conducted similar missions in a number of other villages, developing a program of "preaching, catechizing, and confessing," which ran for several weeks. To maintain these missions, however, Vincent continued to rely on assistance of priests from the area.[6]

While concentrating on the spiritual needs of the rural faithful, Vincent was soon distracted by other projects. After becoming pastor of a parish in Châtillon in August 1617, Vincent established the first "confraternity of charity," consisting of eight women bound by a charter to assist the needy in both their physical and spiritual needs as well as developing within themselves a great sense of charity, humility, and simplicity. His stay in Châtillon, however, was short-lived, for in December 1617 Madame de Gondi convinced Cardinal de Bérulle to direct Vincent to return to her household in Paris. In February 1619, King Louis XIII appointed Vincent "Royal Chaplain" of the galleys, a position in which he saw to the physical and spiritual needs of convicts.[7]

With the continued success of the rural missions, Vincent had to confront the ongoing challenge of staffing. How could he attract new, properly trained priests willing to assist in the rural missions? With the consent of the Archbishop of Paris, Jean-François de Gondi, the Gondis convinced Vincent to establish a new Community with an apostolate of mission work among the rural faithful. In April 1625, Vincent de Paul and the Gondis signed the founding contract of the Mission. The document established a

[6] Pujo, pp. 59, 60 & 71; Coste vol. 1, pp. 68-69.
[7] Pujo, pp. 62, 65-66, 78; Madame de Gondi to Vincent de Paul, September 1617, in *S. V. P.*, vol. I, pp. 19-20; "Commission as Chaplain General of the Galleys," 8 February 1619, in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, pp. 58-59.

"pious association of some priests recognized for their knowledge, piety, and ability, who would be willing to renounce the conveniences of the said towns as well as all benefices, offices, and dignities of the Church, so that, in accord with the wishes of the Prelates, each within the limits of his own diocese, they could devote themselves entirely and exclusively to the salvation of the poor common people." The mission work of the new Congregation would be undertaken from October to June. During the remaining three months, the confreres would "use their time to teach catechism in the villages on Sundays and feast days, to help the Pastors who ask for them, and to study so as to become more capable later on of assisting their neighbor for the glory of God." While it had been a challenge to staff the mission team with clerics, the recruitment of priests to serve permanently in such an apostolate was even more difficult. This task, however, was made easier when the Archbishop of Paris officially approved the Congregation in April 1626 and when King Louis XIII recognized it in March 1627.[8]

Soon after its establishment, the Mission faced opposition from two rather powerful quarters. In Rome, opposition developed around the claim that Congregations and Orders undercut the secular clergy by receiving appointment to the most lucrative benefices and by escaping direct Papal control. In addition, some opponents of the Mission argued that with such a limited apostolate, any success in it would result in a diminishing need for the Mission itself. With these points in mind, the Vatican limited the size of Vincent's group to twenty to twenty-five members and restricted their work to

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[8] Pujo, p. 85 & 87-88; "Foundation Contract of the Congregation of the Mission," 17 April 1625 in *S.V.P.*, vol. XIIIa, pp. 213-217; "Approval of the Congregation of the Mission by the Archbishop of Paris," 24 April 1626 in
S. V. P., vol. XIIIa, p. 218; "Royal Letters Patent for the Approval of the Congregation of the Mission," May 1627 in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, pp. 226-227; José María Román, *St. Vincent de Paul: A* Biography translated by Sr. Joyce Howard, D.C. (London: Melisende, 1999), p. 180.

the Kingdom of France. Authority over the band would rest with the diocesan bishops. The second quarter from which opposition came was the members of the secular priests of Paris. Motivated primarily by material interests, a council of priests charged that such congregations as the one proposed by Vincent, while initially driven by pure and pious ideals, would quickly clash with the secular clergy over control of parishes and their revenue.[9]

In an effort to address these concerns and alleviate this opposition, Vincent appealed to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith for a special papal blessing. Granted on November 5, 1627, the blessing referred to Vincent and his eight companions as a "Mission" that with "the permission and consent of the local Ordinaries in due time" was authorized to conduct "missions or mak[e] use of the faculties granted them by the Holy Office." No longer restricted to the Archdiocese of Paris, the Mission required the local Ordinary's approval of faculties, which would be limited to a period of seven years. In addition, at the personal suggestion of Pope Urban VIIII, the Archbishop of Paris would serve as the new group's protector.[10]

Between November 1627 and June 1628, the growth of the Mission's membership and the demand for its services led Vincent to turn again to the Vatican. With opportunities to receive priests from other dioceses, as well as serving Communities in these other Sees, Vincent sought greater control over the "internal life of the society." On August 22, 1628, the Sacred Congregation rejected Vincent's proposal on the grounds

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[9] Pujo, pp. 88 & 89.
[10] "Minutes of the Session of Propaganda Fide Approving the Mission," 5 November 1627 in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, p. 239; "Request to the Nuncio to Inform Saint Vincent of Papal Approval for the Mission," 13 November 1627 in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, p. 240; Román, pp. 210-211.

that "the Apostolic See does not think it well to establish either religious Communities, or Confraternities, or Congregations of Missions."[11]

For the next four years, Vincent and his Mission struggled against the limitations placed on them, especially from some pastors in Paris, who petitioned that the members of the Mission "renounce any ministry in the parishes and churches of all the cities of the kingdom," "refrain from entering any church unless they are sent there expressly by the Bishop of the Diocese, with the permission and authorization of the Pastor or Prior-Pastor of the church, and not perform any function during the regular hours for the service customary in each of the churches."[12]

Finally, in January 1633, after further negotiations by Father François du Coudray, Pope Urban VIII issued his Bull, *Salvatoris Nostri*, which established the Congregation of the Mission as a "religious institute of pontifical right." While the Bull required the Congregation to submit to the Ordinary and parish priest in matters related to their mission activity and to limit their work to rural areas, it granted the Vincentians autonomy regarding internal matters. Walking a fine line between a religious order and a group of secular priests under the authority of the local ordinary, the Congregation was a new type of community dedicated to "the salvation of those who live on the estates, in the countryside, on farms, in hamlets, and in insignificant places," as well as the continuing religious formation of "Rectors of parish churches" through monthly retreats. In May

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[11] Stafford Poole, C.M., *A History of the Congregation of the Mission: 1625-1843* (Santa Barbara: Vincentian Fathers and Brothers, St. Mary's Seminary, 1973) p. 47; "Report to Propaganda Fide on the June 1628 Petition of Saint Vincent," 22 August 1628 in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, p. 249.

[12] "Opposition of the Pastors of Paris to Approval of the Congregation of the Mission," 4 December 1630 in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, p. 254

1642, the King of France granted his royal approval to the Bull, further securing the future of a community of "extraordinary originality."[13]

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The early years of the Congregation of the Mission were ones of religious revivalism in France. At a time when France struggled against Spain and Austria for supremacy in Europe, domestically, the crown had to defend itself against dissent coming from both the Huguenot community, the Jansenists, and the nobility. These earthly struggles found parallels in the spirituality of the kingdom. Strongly influenced by now Cardinal Pierre de Bérulle, the dominant religious attitude in the kingdom was "primarily theocentric" and "markedly anti-humanistic" placing emphasis on the "power and majesty of God" in contrast to humanity's "weakness and powerlessness." The Cardinal was suspicious "of intellectual values which at times amounted almost to hostility . . . of spontaneity, freedom, and of the affective as opposed to the rational and practical." It was in this environment that the Congregation of the Mission began to expand its reach.[14]

True to Vincent's original vision, the Congregation continued to focus its attention on rural missions, utilizing the "Little Method" of preaching developed by its founder. While few in number, the followers of Vincent preached approximately 140 missions in the first six years. As word of the new Community spread, invitations to preach came from bishops in a number of French dioceses, often leading to tensions

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[13] "*Salvatoris Nostri*, Bull of Erection of the Congregation of the Mission," 12 January 1633 in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, pp. 296-304; "Royal Approval of the Bull *Salvatoris Nostri*," 16 May 1642 in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, pp. 321-322; Coste, vol. 1, pp. 158-159; Román, pp. 216, 218, 220.
[14] Román, p. 162.

between the Congregation and other religious communities that opposed the Vincentians' work in towns and villages.[15]

For Vincent, the *raison d'être* of the Congregation of the Mission was the proper religious education of the peasantry. Seeking the root cause of the problem, however, Vincent was urged to improve the formation of the rural clergy. After he began to investigate the Eucharistic practices of the rural clergy, Vincent found drastic inconsistencies, with some priests, for example, beginning Mass with a *Pater Noster*. He later wrote, "[T]here was such a diversity as to make one weep." Recognizing the futility of trying to reform "priests who have grown old in the habits of vice," Vincent, influenced by a number of French bishops, argued that the only solution lay in the proper formation of future priests.[16]

Beginning in early 1631, on the grounds of the *College des Bons Enfants* in Paris, a kind of preparatory school for the children of the aristocracy, the fledgling Congregation, on the orders of John Francis de Gondi, the Archbishop of Paris, instructed and tested clerics on "their obligations and the functions of their orders." Originally serving as retreat masters for men preparing for their ordination, the members of the Congregation expanded their instructional apostolate by instituting the "Tuesday Conferences," meetings dedicated to maintaining the "good spiritual disposition" developed in the ordination retreats. While initially resistant to the idea of running a "major seminary," Vincent soon concluded that the proper formation of new priests was a logical extension of the principal apostolate of the Congregation. By 1642, the *College*

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[15] Pujo, p. 90; Román, p. 340.
[16] Coste, vol. 1, pp. 69-70, 247, 256.

des Bons Enfants contained a preparatory school for children and a residence for ecclesiastics.[17]

With the success of its apostolates, the Congregation of the Mission received more requests for their services, placing an even higher premium of recruiting and maintaining new confreres. The early years of the Congregation witnessed a trickle of vocations, averaging three to four men per year. By 1636, the Community's ranks numbered approximately fifty, thirty of whom being priests and the remainder consisting of clerics preparing for ordination and lay brothers. The following year, Vincent established an "internal seminary," or novitiate, which very quickly began to welcome an average of twenty-three new candidates per year. As a result of the unrest of the *Fronde*, numbers dropped between 1648 and 1652, when only three new entrants took up residence. By the following year, however, numbers rebounded to their original level with twenty-five men beginning their formation. Most of the early vocations came from areas regularly served by the confreres, such as Champagne, Artois, Picardy, Ile de France, Normandy, and Brittany. Vincent refrained from packing the Congregation with unqualified confreres. "It is for God alone," he wrote, "to choose those whom He wishes to call to it, and we are sure that one Missionary given by His fatherly hand will do more good by himself than many others who would not have a true vocation."[18]

Closely related to the issue of recruitment was the retention of men. For much of its early history, debate over the making of vows divided the Congregation of the Mission. Vincent explained: "God was pleased to give the Company the desire to place

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[17] Pujo, pp. 100-101; Coste, vol. 1, pp. 257-259, 261.

[18] Román, pp. 277 & 280-281; Stanisław Rospond, C.M., editor, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce (1651-2001) Dzieje*, vol. 1 (Kraków: Instytut Wydawniczy Księży Misjonarzy "Nasza Przeszłość," 2001) p. 281; Vincent de Paul to Pierre de Beaumont, Superior, in Richelieu, 2 May 1660 in *S.V.P.*, vol. VIII, p. 342. The *Fronde* was a civil war in France that took place from 1648 to 1653.

itself in the most perfect state possible, without entering the religious state itself; that, to this end, we had taken vows to unite ourselves more closely to Our Lord and to His Church, the Superior of the Company to its members, and the members to the head. . ." As the number of early members grew, however, some confreres exhibited an attitude of independence that flew in the face of a communal lifestyle. Others, after completing their education and ordination at the Community's expense, left for more lucrative assignments. Concern over the continued stability of the Congregation and proposed change within it, resulted in confreres "tak[ing] vows, after a certain period of probation, from which they could only be dispensed by the Pope and the Superior General." The proposed modification, however, came very close to changing the Congregation of the Mission from a group of secular priests living in a community to a religious Order, a type of religious body with almost absolute autonomy and independence from the local Ordinaries—qualities that would result in opposition of much of the French hierarchy.[19]

As defined by Canon Law of 1917, a Congregation, *Congregatio*, is "a religious body in which only simple vows are taken, which vows may be either perpetual or temporary." A simple vow is a declaration of obedience. An Order, *Ordo*, on the other hand, is "a religious organization in which solemn vows are taken." Solemn vows are "recognized as such by the Church." Vows, in turn, may be described as either "public," when they are "accepted in the name of the Church by a legitimate ecclesiastical superior," or "private," consisting of an individual's promise to God, for example, a promise of "perfect and perpetual chastity," and "the vow to enter a religious Order."[20]

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[19] Vincent de Paul to Edme Jolly, Superior, in Rome, 29 October 1655 in *S. V. P.*, vol. V, p. 463; Coste, vol. 1, pp. 481-482.

[20] Stanislaus Woywod, O.F.M., *The New Canon Law: A Commentary on and Summary of the New Code of Canon Law* (New York: Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 1940) pp. 85 & 269-270; T. Lincoln Bouscaren, S.J. &

Between 1633 and 1642, the Congregation of the Mission had no clear position on the issue of vows. The bull, *Salvatori nostri*, did not mention vows and an individual confrere could take them "after he had prayed about it and sought advice." In an effort to guarantee the Community's stability while maintaining its autonomy, Vincent proposed various plans in 1639 and 1640, including replacing solemn vows with four simple vows, instituting a single vow of poverty and obedience, making three simple vows at the completion of the internal seminary and a "solemn vow of stability some years later, declaring a "single vow of stability," and a later proposal of taking "a simple vow of stability after two years novitiate to be followed by a solemn oath binding under the pain of excommunication instead of the three other vows. As described by Román, it seemed that "the congregation was prepared to declare itself a religious order."[21]

With continued opposition toward religious orders coming from Rome, Vincent sought an alternative solution in the form of an Ordinance whereby "all future members of the Congregation would, at the end of their second year in the novitiate, pronounce simple vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and stability in working for the salvation of poor country people." The vows would be made during Mass with the Superior of the Community present "but not addressed to him." The only individuals empowered to dispense individuals from their vows were the Pope and the Superior General. The Archbishop of Paris, after three years of consideration, finally approved the ordinance on October 19, 1641. While Vincent and many of the confreres took or renewed their vows

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Adam C. Ellis, S.J., *Canon Law: A Text and Commentary* (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1957) pp. 712-714..

[21] Román, pp. 318-320.

in February of the following year, debate over the ordinance's validity continued to divide the Community.[22]

For the next decade, the debate over the taking of vows continued to plague the Congregation. Vincent's initial efforts at reinforcing the practice were interrupted by the death of Pope Urban VII and the succession to the throne of Saint Peter by Pope Innocent X, who strongly opposed religious communities. Vincent had to bide his time and wait for a more sympathetic pontiff. Internally, the debate over vows came to a head in the July 1651 Second Assembly of Superiors, where four proposals were discussed, including the abandoning of vows. One factor that colored the debate was the opposition of some Italian confreres to the vows, a position that precipitated a rather chauvinistic response from one confrere: "So what, if the Italians do not like them? The daughter should follow the mother, not the mother follow her daughter." Finally, the Assembly concluded that, in an effort to lift the "state of uncertainty" hanging over the Congregation, consultation with Rome was necessary. In an effort to buttress his position, Vincent secured the apostolic approval of the Archbishop of Paris of simple vows, an improvement over the "personal concession" granted in 1641.[23]

In April 1655, Pope Alexander VII succeeded Innocent X. Under the direction of Father Edme Jolly, C.M., the Congregation once again presented its case for vows. On September 22, 1655, the new Pontiff published the Brief, *Ex commissa nobis*, which stated, in part: "we confirm and approve the said Congregation of the Mission, already begun and approved in the manner we have stated, with the taking of simple vows, which should be done after two years' probation, of chastity, poverty and obedience, as also

[22] Ibid, pp. 320-321.
[23] Ibid, pp. 322-331.

stability in the said Congregation, with the object of devoting oneself all one's life to the salvation of poor country folk . . . [O]nly the Sovereign Pontiff, as well as the Superior General of the said Congregation, shall have power to dissolve the said holy vows when dismissing anyone from the said Congregation." The Pope, in an effort to eliminate any future problems, stated that, excluding its "external functions," the Congregation existed outside the jurisdiction of local Ordinaries. This conclusion of the debate over the nature of the Congregation of the Mission helped stabilize the Community and advance its mission; other divisive issues, however, threatened its continued existence.[24]

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At the time when the Congregation was struggling with the issue of vows, a wider debate was splitting the leadership of the Catholic Church in France. Citing the "corruption of humanity" and its moral laxity, a group of thinkers, including Cornelius Jansen, Antoine Arnauld, and Jean Duvergier de Hauranne called for severe reforms in the Church. Jansenism, as the movement came to be called, had its origins in a Calvinist-influenced dispute over the nature of grace. Jansen, a one-time professor of theology and Bishop of Ypres, in a work published posthumously in 1640, supported earlier claims of "the total corruption of human nature and the irresistibility of grace," opinions previously condemned by the Vatican. From a Jansenist center at the Cistercian Nuns' convent of Port-Royal in Paris, Arnauld charged that the Church had slipped away from the rigid requirements set down by its early leaders, especially in regards to absolution and Communion. In 1641, Urban VIII placed Jansen's "Augustinus" on the Index of

[24] Coste, vol. 1, pp. 494-495.

Prohibited Books and a year later forbade its reading. The call for rigorous reform, however, found support in a number of quarters of French society.[25]

At the urging of Vincent de Paul, eighty-eight bishops petitioned Rome to examine five central propositions of "Augustinus," which Pope Innocent X declared heretical at the end of May 1653. Led by Arnauld, the Jansenists countered that, while the propositions from "Augustinus" were heretical, they were not "the teachings of Jansen." In 1664, after four years of opposition to Jansenism, King Louis XIV came to support Pope Alexander VII in threatening to withhold benefices from priests who supported the movement.[26]

While the tensions emerging from the Jansenist controversy lessened during the papacy of Clement IX (1667-1669), it reemerged at the beginning of the next century. This revival developed around a renewed debate over granting absolution to individuals who merely remained silent on the issue of Jansenism rather than outwardly condemning it. In July 1705, in part at the request of King Louis XIV, Pope Clement XI, in his Bull, *Vineam Domini*, declared that the propositions of Jansenism had to be actively condemned. While the General Assembly of French Clergy received the papal Bull, it declared, "the constitutions of popes oblige the Universal Church only when the bishops give their assent." During the second and third decade of the eighteenth century, French bishops, priests, and scholars continued to challenge papal authority, resulting in a severe split within the French Church.[27]

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[25] Karl Bihlmeyer, *Church History*, vol. 3, trans. Victor E. Mills, O.F.M. & Francis J. Muller, O.F.M. (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1966) pp. 236-238.
[26] Ibid, pp. 238-240.
[27] Ibid, pp. 240-243. Jansenism had a more drastic impact on the Catholic Church in Holland, where the removal of a vicar apostolic in Utrecht on grounds of "suspicions of Jansenism," led to the "Utrecht Schism." In the wake of the First Vatican Council's declaration of papal infallibility, Dutch Jansenists and "Old Catholics" formed a cooperative alliance. During the Polish Catholic Church Wars of the late-

Although Jansenism tended to concentrate on matters of religious rigor, a second conflict over claims of royal control over temporal matters, Gallicanism, focused on political power and control of property and wealth. With roots in the twelfth-century, the French Crown claimed the right to receive revenue and assign benefices while a diocese was without an ordinary. By the sixteenth century, court jurist considered this *right of regalia* "an inherent right of the king." In an effort to eliminate regular tensions between the Vatican and the Crown, King Louis XIII renounced the temporal right of receiving revenues, insisting instead that he would merely protect them until the appointment of the next bishop. The right to assign benefices, however, remained a contested point, so much so, that in 1673, King Louis XIV declared the right "inherent and inalienable," an action that brought little resistance from the French clergy.[28]

In 1682, the General Assembly of the French Clergy codified royal authority over Church matters in the four Gallican Liberties. Along with recognizing papal power over only spiritual matters, leaving "[k]ings and princes" free from "ecclesiastical power in temporal matters," the Liberties claimed that Church councils were meant as permanent curbs to the pontiff's authority; papal decisions regarding "questions of faith" required "the consent of the whole Church." "[T]he principles and customs of the Gallican

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nineteenth and early-twentieth century, clerics with links to the different strains of Old Catholicism provided assistance to various fledgling independent Polish congregations. See: Laurence Orzell, "A Minority within a Minority: The Polish National Catholic Church, 1896-1907," *Polish American Studies* vol. XXXVI no. 1 (spring, 1979), pp. 5-32; Laurence J. Orzell, "A Pragmatic Union: Bishop Kozłowski and the Old Catholics, 1896-1898," *Polish American Studies* vol. XLIV, no. 1 (spring, 1987), pp. 5-24; Charles R. Kaczyński, "'What Mean Ye By These Stones?' Cleveland's Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish and the Construction of a Polish Americanist Rhetoric," *Polish American Studies* vol. LV, no. 2 (autumn 1998), pp. 25-54.

[28] Bihlmeyer, *Church History*, pp. 232-233.

Church, which are of ancient origin," the *Declaratio cleri Gallicani de ecclesiastica* stated, "must remain in force."[29]

These nationalist tensions evident in the French Church played a significant role in the early growth of the Congregation of the Mission beyond the borders of the Kingdom of France. In 1642, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, niece of Cardinal Richelieu, offered money to the Congregation for the establishment of a House in Rome. While facing tight financial conditions, Vincent authorized Father Bernard Codoing, C.M., accompanied by a student, to travel to the Eternal City to establish a house. Like other Vincentian houses, the one in Rome attempted to offer "retreats and exercies for ordinands" and to sought to receive "from the vice-gerent of Rome an order that all candidates had to make these retreats." The following year, after struggling to establish a permanent seminary, Father Codoing informed Vincent of the limited support he received in opening a seminary from Italians suspicious of the "Vincentians as Frenchmen." To curry popular favor, Father Codoing recommended relocating the Superior General's residence to Rome, a suggestion not enacted.[30]

The following decade, tensions arose between the Crown and the Church hierarchy, when, in 1652, King Louis XIV arrested and imprisoned the Co-Adjutor Bishop of Paris, Cardinal de Retz. Two years after being placed in the Castle of Vincennes, de Retz received word of the death of the Archbishop, his uncle. Opposed by Cardinal Jules Mazarin and his supporters who hoped to break the de Gondi family's grip on the Archbishopric, de Retz resigned in exchange for money and seven abbeys. Following his escape, de Retz withdrew his resignation in early August 1654 and made

[29] Ibid, p. 234.
[30] Poole, pp. 131-132.

his escape to Rome. In December, Pope Innocent X elevated de Retz and decided that he should reside with the Vincentian Fathers in Rome, an action opposed by the superior, Father Thomas Berthe, C.M., on the grounds that the house was too small and such arrangement would attract the ire of the King.[31]

Papal orders to house de Retz placed the Vincentians in Rome in an awkward position—follow the directive of a spiritual leader or enforce that of the temporal ruler of France. In January of the following year, the King had his ambassador to the Holy See report to him and gave strict instructions. On February 3, 1655, in the wake of the Cardinal taking up residence in the Vincentian house, orders arrived from Paris calling for the withdrawl of all French confreres in Rome, leading to the dispersal of men to surrounding dioceses. On March 12, 1655, Vincent wrote to Father Charles Ozenne, C.M., the Superior in Warsaw: "It is true that our house in Rome is in a painful situation, as you have learned from the gazette of that Court. This is because it gave hospitality to Cardinal de Retz, by order of the Pope, before knowing that the King had forbidden communication with him. . . . As a result, M. Berthe is now in France—or on the point of arriving—out of sheer obedience." In turn, Vincent appealed to Cardinal Mazarin, who allowed him to appoint another French confrere, Father Edme Jolly, C.M., Superior in Rome.[32]

Even with these tensions, the Vincentian apostolate in Italy grew. In 1656, the confreres became the spiritual directors of the College of the Propaganda; the following year they opened a Novitiate at Monte Citorio. In 1658, Italy became an independent Province with Father Jolly as its Visitor. During the papacy of Alexander VII, priests

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[31] Coste, vol. 2, pp. 7-20.
[32] Ibid, pp. 10-13; *S.V.P.*, vol. V, pp. 333-336.

from Rome and the surrounding dioceses were required to attend retreats at Monte Citorio, as well as any bishop coming to Rome for consecration. By the mid-1680s, with the success and prominence of their activities, Italian confreres, in preparation for the General Assembly of the Congregation in 1685 proposed that one of the assistants to the Superior General should be an Italian, a request that while granted "was a portent of troubles to come."[33]

A decade later, as Superior General, Father Jolly wrote of the dangerous "nationalistic spirit" and "anti-French prejudice" of a number of Italian confreres. To dispel the tensions, he proposed the mixing of nationalities in the various Vincentian Houses. Within a few years, however, growing chauvinism among the confreres, as well as royal opposition would scuttle such plans. Following precedent, Father Jolly named Father Maurice Faure, C.M. his Vicar-General. With Father Jolly's death and the General Assembly in 1697, it was expected that Father Faure would be elected leader of the Congregation of the Mission—a logical expectation except for one fact, he was from the Principality of Savoy.[34]

At the suggestion of the Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal de Noailles and his son, the Duc du Maine, King Louis XIV intervened in the situation and, through the superior of the Versailles house, Father François Herbert, C.M., announced that he would not permit anyone but a Frenchman to be Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission. The royal veto brought howls of protest from the Italian delegates, as well as Father Michał Bartłomiej Tarło, the first Visitor of the Polish Province of the Vincentian Fathers. Citing the precedent of previous civil rulers interfering with papal elections, the Italians

[33] Poole, pp. 134-135 & 139.
[34] Ibid, p. 161.

proposed a candidate of their own. Tarło was satisfied with voicing his opposition "in order to preserve the rights of his province." The Polish Visitor succeeded in tempering back the Italian confreres and accepting his suggestion of "a simple reservation of the right of any nationality to be elected." In September 1698, the new Superior General, Father Nicholas Pierron, C.M., sent a delegation to Rome to request a review of the situation and a ruling by the Pope. On March 17, 1699, in his "brief of pacification," Pope Innocent XII declared Father Pierron's election valid but confirmed that the office of Superior General of the Congregation was free from any nationality restrictions.[35]

Between 1699 and 1703, relations between the two groups of Vincentians continued to deteriorate. At the General Assembly of the Congregation in 1703, Italian and Polish confreres, resuming their efforts from the 1697 Assembly, drove through a statement confirming that any confrere, regardless of nationality, was eligible to become Superior General. Animosity between the two groups continued, so that when Father Jean Bonnet, C.M. became Superior General in 1711, Pope Clement XI cautioned him: "First of all, you must, as is right, hold and show that you hold the Italians in a place of esteem and love, especially those who earn an upright reputation, both within the Congregation and outside of it, for their doctrine, prudence, and piety. . . . Since we love this Congregation with a singular love as one most useful to the Holy Church of God, so quite plainly can we scarcely permit it to run headlong into any danger because of counsels which are totally alien to your institute and thus we would be compelled to intervene with our pontifical authority, albeit unwillingly, because of present and future

[35] Poole, pp. 162-163; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce,* p. 80.

dangers." Tensions, however, remained a regular part of French-Italian relations within the Congregation well into the middle of the nineteenth century.[36]

Along with the tensions between its French and Italian confreres, the Congregation of the Mission underwent further internecine conflicts as a result of its efforts to expand into Spain. The War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714) was the immediate context in which the scenario played out. With the death of King Charles II, the last of the Spanish Habsburg rulers, England, the Dutch Republic, and France vied to control succession to the Spanish throne. In 1703, Father Francisco Senjust y Pages, a Catalan priest, wrote to the Vincentian Fathers in Rome, petitioning them to accept a foundation in the city of Barcelona. Recognizing the delicacy of the political situation, Father Senjust requested that Spaniards, or at least confreres with "nationalities acceptable to the Spaniards, such as Italians or Portuguese" be assigned to the new house. He continued, suggesting that the Barcelona house be attached to the Italian Province until such time that sufficient Spanish houses existed to constitute a new province. With resistance coming from both the Superior General and the Ordinary of Barcelona, Senjust pressed the Pope, who pressured for the establishment of the Barcelona foundation. With its papal patronage, the new House became the target of Father François Wattel, Superior General from 1703 to 1710, to make it "immediately dependent and subject to him." Father Wattel's plan was to maintain jurisdiction over the Barcelona house until a sufficient number of Spanish houses would allow for the establishment of a new province.[37]

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[36] Poole, 164-166; Pope Clement XI quoted in Poole, pp. 172-173.

[37] Ibid, pp. 211 & 214-215. Father Wattel's efforts, evolved, in part, from his belief that the Barcelona house was "too independent of the Community," introducing a number of divisive "novelties," including eliminating the novitiate and the taking of vows, as well as changing the priestly attire. Poole quotes a

Reports of independentist tendencies and conspiracies appeared in a 1705 report from the Superior of the Barcelona house, who argued that dissidents within it wanted to eliminate all connections with the Superior General and prohibit any French confreres from entering Spain. In November 1707, Archduke Charles codified this sentiment in a decree prohibiting dependence of any house in Spain or Italy on a French Superior General. Confreres residing in these lands could either leave or stay and petition the Pope for a non-French Superior General. This state of confusion continued into the mid-1720s, when it was recommended that the Provincial of Rome visit Spain to assess the situation. While the historical record appears incomplete, Poole concludes: "Evidently it [the situation in Spain] turned out well, though there is no specific evidence other than the fact that the Barcelona house remained in the Community, its works flourished, and other houses began to be founded in Catalonia."[38]

While the stalemate in Spain continued, a similar series of events were taking place in Portugal. Father Jose Gomes da Costa, C.M., a Vincentian Father received into the Italian Province at the height of the Italian-French controversy, who shared the strong nationalist sentiments of Father Senjust, sought to establish a house in Portugal independent of the Superior General in Paris. In 1711, the Congregation's Superior General, Father Jean Bonnet, C.M., rejected Father Gomes's idea, a decision that the confrere hoped to overturn with an appeal to the Pope. On September 10, 1712, Pope Clement XI authorized the creation of such a foundation proposed by Father Gomes and attached it to the Roman Province. A little less than two years later, the King John V of

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1704 letter of Father Wattel: "In a word, it seems that he [Senjust] wants to form a congregation completely different from ours. If things continue like this, it will be better that our confreres return to Italy or rather notify the said founder that he ought not change anything in our institute."

[38] Poole, pp. 216-218 & 220.

Portugal permitted the establishment of a House at Guardia on the condition that no French confreres be assigned there and that, contrary to the Constitutions and Rules of the Congregation of the Mission, the House be immediately dependent on the Pope. Tensions between the Pope and Superior General grew over the next few years, fueled by the Pope's appointment of Father Gomes as the Superior of the new House, which remained, in the face of the king's opposition, attached to the Province in Rome. Father Bonnet contemplated dispensing Father Gomes's vows and dismissing him from the Community.[39]

Within less than a year, Father Gomes expressed an interest in relocating the foundation to Lisbon. In January 1717, the King appointed Father Gomes Superior of the Lisbon House, a position, he decreed, having complete independence from the Superior General in Paris. The next month, Father Bonnet, under severe pressure from the Pope, granted his approval of Gomes's Vincentian House in Lisbon. Over the next four years, all but one of the confreres returned to Italy. Less than a year after Father Gomes's death in November 1725, Pope Benedict XIII announced that the Lisbon House would remain outside the control of the Superior General, "subject to the Archbishop of Lisbon." The House's status remained such until 1738, when, in the wake of the canonization of Vincent de Paul, King John V allowed the lone Vincentian in Lisbon, Father Jose Joffreau, C.M., to reorganize the House according to the Congregation's Constitutions, maintaining, however, the ban on French confreres. After Father Joffreau suffered a stroke in October 1739, a French priest and brother arrived in Lisbon, ordered there by the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission.[40]

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[39] Ibid, pp. 228-232.
[40] Ibid, pp. 233, 236.

Like Anderson's nation-states, the above re-imaginings of the Congregation of the Mission took place during periods of philosophical and political upheaval. Like Enlightenment debates over the body politic and the nature of citizenship, the Congregation, in its early years, struggled with the definition of membership and the need for and nature of its vows. The Vincentian character of secular priests living in a community outside of the immediate authority of the local ordinary was a unique and revolutionary form of autonomy, which required constant renegotiation as the Community moved beyond the borders of the Kingdom of France. This "internationalization" of the Vincentian Fathers brought the Community into direct contact with different secular nationalisms, a second, and often conflicting, form of collective identity.

In the two hundred years following its establishment, the Congregation of the Mission, while exhibiting an "inequality and exploitation," maintained a "deep, horizontal comradeship." While the trials resulting from its expansion into Italy, Spain, and Portugal tested the mettle of the Community, its expansion eastward into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth would place the Community in a Catholic culture and political arena distinct from that of western Europe. Arriving at the request of the French-born Queen of Poland, the first band of Vincentians found themselves in a kingdom besieged by Swedish and Turkish invaders. While the international Vincentian Community adjusted to political unrest in late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century western Europe, confreres in Poland had the additional burdens of maintaining contact with the motherhouse as well as preserving their Houses in a land torn asunder by the partitioning powers of Prussia, Russia, and Austria.

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The genesis of the Polish kingdom is inextricably linked to western Christianity and the political power of the Vatican. In 966, Mieszko I, Prince of the Polonians, after marrying the Czech princess, Dobrava, was baptized by Christian missionaries from Bohemia. Two years later, the Vatican established a "missionary bishopric" in Poznań and appointed its first bishop. Mieszko's motivation for his conversion, in part, grew out of a political realism regarding the territorial advances then being made by forces from the West. Following in the wake of these troops were German priests, whose missionary activity, often conducted at the point of a sword, would bind converts to their western co-religionists. Mieszko's decision was an attempt "to put some distance between himself and the emperor's [Otto III's] ambition, and in particular to keep the missionary instincts of the German clergy at bay." In 990-991, he advanced his plan by having Pope John XV place his kingdom under direct papal protection, "presumably to avoid the closer patronage of one or other of his Christian neighbors." The status of the Polish Kingdom received an additional boost in 1000, when the Vatican established an archbishopric in the town of Gniezno and suffragan diocese in Kołobrzeg, Wrocław, and Kraków.[41]

In the three-and-a-half centuries following the conversion of Mieszko, the Polish Kingdom's relationship with the Vatican exerted great influence on its domestic and foreign affairs. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries new suffragan dioceses were

[41] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, second edition, volume 11, s. v. "Poland, The Catholic Church In," p. 438; Davies, vol. 1, pp. 63 & 67. Mieszko's baptism by Methodius exposed the Polish lands to a Bohemian-accented Catholicism, which, until the eleventh century, had been influenced by the "Slavonic liturgy of the Cyrillo-Methodian tradition." Norman Davies argues: "Although there is no direct evidence that the baptism of the Vistulanian chieftain by Methodius left any lengthy imprint on religious life north of the Carpathians, there is no doubt that much of the religious vocabulary of the Polish language was adopted from Czech and Slavonic forms, not from German or Latin ones." See: Davis, vol. 1, p. 69.

erected in Poznań, Włocławek, Płock, and Lebus. This regular contact between the Polish Kingdom and Rome, however, did not lead the Crown or the Polish Church to the same fate as the kingdoms or the Church of western Europe. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, for example, while various heretical movements and the Black Death wrecked havoc in Western Europe, bringing both agnostic and mystic reactions in its wake, the Church in the Polish lands remained comparatively unaffected. The hierarchy, instead, focused its attention on maintaining the Polish language in religious life—an effort made more important by the arrival of growing numbers of German settlers.[42]

With religious tolerance greater than that of its western counterparts, the Polish Church accepted the existence of other Christian denominations and soon attracted the attention of neighboring states looking for aid in fending off the advances of other western missionaries. During the reign of King Kazimierz III the Great, for example, the Crown restored the Orthodox Galician metropolitanate with eparchies in Przemyśl, Chełmno, and Vladimir and recognized the Armenian denomination with its cathedral in Lwów. In 1339, after Pope Benedict XII had granted permission for the Teutonic Knights to bring the faith to the pagans of Lithuania, Jogaila, the Lithuanian sovereign, in an effort to avoid such conversion "at the point of a Teutonic sword," instead welcomed Polish missionaries. In 1415, at the Council of Constance, Paul Włodkowic, the rector of the University of Kraków, argued that forced conversion of non-Christians should be

[42] Adam Zamoyski, *The Polish Way: A Thousand-Year History of the Poles and Their Culture* (New York: Franklin Watts, 1988), p. 80. The only major unrest came with the Hussite Movement, which in the Polish lands, was seen as more of a political, rather than heretical, movement. See also: Davies, vol. 1, p.125; *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, volume 11, p. 439.

condemned and the Teutonic Knights could not be trusted to convert the Lithuanians, being motivated more by hunger for booty and land than the saving of souls.[43]

It was during the Jagiellonian Dynasty (1385-1572) that this sense of independence in the Polish Church came into full bloom. In 1415, for example, Archbishop Mikołaj Trąba created the title "Primate of Poland," which included responsibilities as papal legate and synod leader. Approximately sixty years later, Jan Ostroróg, the Castellan of Poznań, launched a campaign against "papal power" such as the "abolition of annates, of juridical appeals to the Court of Rome, and of clerical exemptions from royal taxation." The Polish hierarchy began the practice of "appointing all abbots and bishops . . . without reference to the Roman Curia" in 1463, a right recognized fifty years later by Pope Leo X. The Polish Church's sense of independence can also be seen in 1515, when Archbishop Jan Łaski took the title *Legatus Natus*, ("hereditary legate"). When the Archbishop clashed with the Vatican's Pro-Habsburg policies in 1530, Pope Clement VII demanded, "on pain of excommunication," that King Zygmunt remove him. The King took no such action.[44]

This independent attitude was accompanied by an ethnic and religious diversity in the Polish Kingdom. While the Union of Lublin brought the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish Kingdom together in a constitutional union in 1569, the resulting Polish-

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[43] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, volume 11, p. 439; Janusz Tazbir, *A State Without Stakes: Polish Religious Toleration in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, trans. A. T. Jordan, (New York: The Kościuszko Foundation, 1973), pp. 33-34; Davies, vol. 1, pp. 116, 124-125 & 166.

[44] New Catholic Encyclopedia, volume 11, p. 439; Davies, vol. 1, pp. 125-127. Along with maintaining a certain degree of autonomy from Rome, the leadership of the Polish Church became more restricted. In 1421, ordinaries began limiting membership to cathedral chapters to individual with noble backgrounds, thereby placing a ceiling on clergy from lower ranks of society. As the sense of autonomy grew in the Polish Kingdom, corruption in the Church ranks, however, remained comparatively low. In addition, the Polish Church maintained "an unusual element of realism in the face of other religions and of candour with respect to corruption." See also: Zamoyski, p. 79 A *legatus natus* is a legate who is nominated "ex officio" to the position rather than on an individual basis.

Lithuanian Commonwealth actually consisted of three major ethnic groups—Poles, Lithuanians, and Ruthenians. Negotiations between these groups over the generations resulted in a collective identity founded on a "common allegiance to the ruler and the law" that superseded any particular ethnic identity, creating a political entity "as completely decentralized as the Russian state was centralized."[45]

This decentralization, in turn, provided the space for populations with divergent, often clashing, religious views to coexist in comparative peace. Calvinism, for example, with its "democratic spirit" and "the absence of pomp and ceremony," attracted large numbers of the *Szlachta*, who, in addition, were drawn to the movement by the fact that it was "a pleasantly cheap religion to support." A second popular dissenting religion, whose adherents were known by a number of names, including "Arians, Antitrinitarians, Unitarians, Polish Brethren, Racovians, Pinchovians, Socinians, Samosatenians, Farnovians, Sabellians, Budneans, Theists, Ditheists, and Tritheists," carved out niches and won converts among the landed gentry and former Catholic priests and clerics. In addition, in the southern reaches of the Commonwealth, Armenians, "who were Monophysites (recognizing only the divine nature of Christ) with "obedience to the Patriarch of Ecsmadzin in the Caucasus," practiced their faith, having a cathedral in Lwów and a church in Kamieniec Podolski.[46]

This religious tolerance culminated in the 1573 Warsaw Confederation, which "granted to the nobility effective religious freedom." While this "[t]olerance did not

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[45] Zamoyski, p. 159 ; Davies, vol. 1, pp. 32-33 & 53.

[46] Tazbir, pp. 32 & 55; Zamoyski, p. 81. Norman Davies notes that, in the period from 1588 to 1608, Calvinists made up "an absolute majority among the lay members of the Senate" and had the "allegiance of an estimated 20 percent of the nobility." Davies, vol. 1, pp. 183-185; Stanisław Kot, "Polish Brethren and the Problem of Communism in the XVIth Century" (A lecture delivered on the 18th of April, 1956, at the Unitarian Historical Society in London) reprinted from: *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society in London* vol. XI, #2 (1956): p. 13.

enjoy universal approval," with all but one Catholic bishop and the Silesian nobles opposing it, the Confederation was an effort to maintain the tenuous balance of power between the *szlachta* and the king by removing dogmatic difference as a potential source of political unrest. Although the Confederation failed to address the "spontaneous attacks against Protestants and their houses of worship," or their clergy's legal status, it succeeded in replacing the coercive "inquisitional methods" common in western Europe with more benign efforts at persuasion.[47]

Like the nobility, the clergy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth underwent a significant transformation during this period. This shift was characterized by the revitalization of men's religious orders and an increase in their membership. Between 1579 and 1599, for example, the Dominicans grew from three-hundred members to nine hundred. The number of monasteries also grew at this time from 220 in 1572 to 565 in 1648.[48]

The resulting rigorous Catholicism swayed both the popular piety and material culture of the Church in the Commonwealth. Interest in reliquaries, pilgrimages, and

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[47] Tazbir, pp. 91, 98-99 & 106; Davies, vol. 1, p. 166. The degree of religious tolerance in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth is evident when one compares the negotiations underway there to the turmoil taking place in France. In late-August 1572, tens of thousands of Huguenots died at the hands of "their Catholic royalist enemies." It is even more interesting to note that "one of the perpetrators of the massacre," Henri de Valois, duke of Anjou, and third son of Henri II and Catherine de Médici, was elected king of the Commonwealth less than one year after the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre. Upon the death of his brother, Charles IX, Henri returned to France, happily leaving the Commonwealth with its Polish- and Latin-language debates, "argumentative demeanour of its senators and envoys," and "extravagant drinking habits of the Polish court." See: Davies, vol. 1, pp. 413, 416; G. de Bertier de Sauvigny & David H. Pinkney , *History of France* (Arlington Heights: Forum Press, Inc., 1983), pp. 121-122. Paweł Jasienica, *The Commonwealth of Both Nations: The Silver Age*, (New York: Hippocrene Books/ Miami: The American Institute of Polish Culture, 1987), 27; Tazbir, pp. 98-99. Comparable religious freedom were not codified in other European kingdoms until the early nineteenth century: France (1788), Denmark (1824/Jews, 1849/Catholics), and England (1829). See Jasienica, p. 27. It is interesting to note that the Catholic Church, while objecting to the fact that the Confederation "allowed the unfettered existence in the country of all kinds of heresies capable of poisoning human minds and condemning them to eternal hellfire," did not hesitate to use it in reclaiming churches taken over by Lutheran congregations in Prussia. See: Tazbir, p. 130 & 134.

[48] Davies, vol. 1, p. 168; Zamoyski, p. 145.

complex outdoor Stations of the Cross grew. Men's confraternities, *bractwa*, "with their devotion to the Rosary" and "marathon prayer meetings and processions, and . . . displays of repentance and even of communal flagellation," attracted large numbers. "[T]he most obvious expression of Catholic solidarity against the Protestant, Orthodox, and Judaic challenges of the age," however, was the Marian Cult, which found expression in the numerous shrines to the "miraculous icon of the *Matka Boska*, 'the Virgin Mother of God, Queen of Heaven.'"[49]

A change in interdenominational relations also took place in the early-seventeenth century, evidence of which appears in the debate over the modification of the covenant of the Warsaw Confederation in 1632. Originally meant to guarantee religious rights, "for the purpose of securing religious peace in the nation," the revised covenant instead became a statement of "tolerance toward the Protestants" on the part of the Catholic nobility. The original definition of a "dissenter" had applied to any individual who disagreed with the teaching of an established denomination. It was now circumscribed to apply only to individuals "seceding from the Catholic Church." Some of the tolerance found in the original document, however, remained. The 1632 covenant continued to allow members of the nobility to settle foreign Protestants on their land. The potential danger posed by such an allowance was neutralized by the geographical and linguistic isolation of these groups.[50]

Along with the reinterpretation of the Confederation of Warsaw, the year 1632 also witnessed the election of a new king, Władysław IV Vasa. Thirteen years after claiming the throne, Władysław married Louise Marie de Gonzague, the Duchess de

[49] Davies, vol. 1, pp. 170-171.
[50] Tazbir, pp. 173-174 & 177.

Nevers and Princess of Mantua. A child of the French Court, whose grandfather had accompanied Henri de Valois when he took the throne of Poland in 1573, Louise Marie was raised "in the intellectual atmosphere of the Paris salons," and transplanted her "love of the arts and sciences with her to Poland." Along with her refined culture and education, Louise Marie also brought with her Jansenist beliefs and a strong desire to promote them among her new subjects. In 1648, amidst a devastating plague, Władysław died and was succeeded by his brother, Jan Kazimierz, who, in turn, married his brother's widow.[51]

Emblematic of the future fate of the Commonwealth was this odd joining of Jan Kazimierz and Louise Marie. Described as a "complex and not very inspiring figure," prone to "fits of depression and listlessness," Jan Kazimierz, a former soldier, Jesuit priest, and Cardinal, was a poor match for the cosmopolitan widow. The Queen, described by the French ambassador as capable of "get[ting] everything she wants out of him [Jan Kazimierz], by exhausting rather than convincing him," drew the ire and suspicion of many nobles, who suspected her of attempting to place the Commonwealth firmly within the "French orbit" by "plac[ing] a Bourbon on its throne." Amidst the mid-seventeenth-century duel crises of the Swedish and Muscovite invasions and in the face of growing animosity of the nobility, Queen Louise Marie proposed to her husband that, to avoid adding unnecessarily to the chaos to the next royal election, "his successor should be elected in his lifetime." Considering the proposal a challenge to their political power, as well as a *fait accompli* shifting the Commonwealth into the Bourbon sphere of influence, the *szlachta* hardened its opposition to the royal couple. "[I]n the sorry reign

[51] Maria Świątecka, "Św. Wincenty a Polska." in *Nasza Przeszłość: Studia z Dziejów Kościoła I Kultury Katolikiej w Polsce* XI (1960): p. 55; Zamoyski, pp. 167-168.

of Jan Kazimierz," Norman Davies writes, "all the existing strands of internal and external conflict were suddenly twisted together into a web of strangulating complexity." The religious and political privileges of the nobility, their close relations with many of the Commonwealth's neighbors, and the continuing debate over religious freedom and tolerance came together in a political and military maelstrom that tore at the weakening seams of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It was into this political and religious chaos that Vincent de Paul sent his first band of confreres.[52]

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Although correspondence between Louis Marie and Vincent de Paul is limited, records seem to indicate that the initial plan of sending confreres to the Commonwealth in 1650 had to be postponed because of fighting in the area of the Ukraine, the exact territory where the Missionaries were to begin a campaign to convert members of the Armenian denomination. In the spring of 1651, the first band of Vincentians, consisting of Fathers Lambert aux Couteaux (Superior) and William Desdames, clerics Nicholas Guillot and Kazimierz Żelazowski, and lay brother James Posny, began final preparations for their trip to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. On September 4, 1651, Vincent de Paul formally authorized the mission. In his letter to Father Couteaux, Vincent wrote: "In accordance with the Bull of Erection of our Congregation, we are bound to apply ourselves to the salvation of the neighbor in harmony with the manner indicated therein and the Rules of our Institution, wherever Divine Providence shall call us. For some

[52] Zamoyski, pp. 167-168 & 183-184. Amidst a number of military defeats, some prominent noble families began calling for Jan Kazimierz's abdication. One such family, the Radziwiłł, the members of which considered themselves "quasi-royal," hoped to lead Lithuania out of the Commonwealth. With the advance of Muscovite forces from the East, however, Janusz Radziwiłł realized any effort to end the Commonwealth would, most likely, turn the population of the Grand Duchy into "Muscovite subjects." While failing in his ultimate objective, Radziwiłł did the next best thing and "appealed for help to the King of Sweden." See: Zamoyski, p. 168. Davies, vol. 1, pp. 462-463.

years now, the Most Serene Marie de Gonzague, Queen of Poland, wife of the Most Invincible and Most Serene Casmir, King of Poland, has deigned to request for the kingdom of Poland some of our men who, applying themselves to our ministries and functions at the good pleasure of the Most Distinguished and Most Reverend Bishops, might labor in this vineyard of the Lord. Therefore, desiring earnestly to comply with the commands of so great a Princess, with all humility and due reverence in keeping with our insignificance, and duly informed long ago of your integrity in all matters, your competence, and your practical experience in many things: in consequence of the request of the Most Serene Queen, and by the present letters, we send you to the mission of Poland to devote yourselves to all functions of our Congregation.[53]

While Żelazowski, a Pole who was in formation in Paris, came with the first group of Vincentians, this first band of confreres shared a common weakness. "They do not know the language of the country," Vincent wrote the Queen on September 6, 1651, "but, since they speak Latin, they can begin immediately to work at forming young seminarians in piety and the practice of virtue and in all the other things they have to know and do." Confidently, he predicted that within a year, the newly ordained priests would "be trained workers, whom our men can take on the mission to instruct the country people."[54]

The confreres' missionary activity initially remained confined to Warsaw, where they ministered in French to members of the foreign political and business community, as well as other Francophones. The confreres conducted their first retreat there during

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[53] Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 48-49; Davies, vol. 1, pp. 168 & 170; "Authorization for Lambert aux Couteaux and Companions to Travel to Poland," September 4, 1651 in *S. V. P.*, vol. XIIIa, p. 398.
[54] Vincent de Paul to Louise Marie Gonzague, September 6, 1651, *S.V.P.*, vol. IV, pp. 251-253.

Easter 1652. Limited in their activity, the Vincentians were perceived as outsiders associated with the politically suspect Queen.[55]

When the band of Missionaries arrived in November 1651, Louise Marie established them in a cottage on the grounds of Holy Cross Parish in hopes of headquartering the Vincentians in Warsaw. The plan never came to fruition. Undeterred, the Queen continued to make plans for the future and optimistically envisioned the establishment of a seminary that would allow her to "have priests from it for other places and for Warsaw." A proposal for such a seminary came from Bishop Jerzy Tyszkiewicz of Wilno, who hoped to lure the confreres to his diocese. The proposal was well received by the Queen and Vincent de Paul, who authorized Fathers Couteaux and Desdames to take control of a parish to be given to them in Wilno. Bishop Tyszkiewicz's plan, however, was blocked by the Jesuits, who expressed concern over possible Jansenist leanings among the confreres. While prevented from serving in Wilno, the Vincentians finally were granted a foundation by the Queen in Sokołka near Grodno.[56]

As witnessed by the Jesuits' response to it, the Congregation of the Mission was also seen as an unwelcome foreign rival in competition with religious orders in the Commonwealth. In June 1652, Vincent de Paul cautioned Father aux Couteaux about how to interact with other religious Orders in the See of Poznań. "Even if it were true,"

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[55] Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, p. 52.

[56] Stanisław Rospond, C.M., "Rola Kościoła św. Krzyża w Warszawie w Dziejach Polskiej Prowincji Zgromadzenia Księży Misjonarzy w XVII i XVIII Wiecznej Polsce." in *Księga Pamiątkowa: Kościół Świętego Krzyża w Warszawie w Trzechsetną Rocznicę Konsekracji 1696-1996* (Warszawa: Instytut Teologiczny Księży Misjonarzy, 1996), pp. 27-30; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w* Polsce, p.52; Coste, vol. 2, p. 41; Vincent de Paul to Lambert aux Coutraux, Superior, in Warsaw, April 12, 1652, *S.V.P*. vol. IV, pp. 352-355; Louise-Marie, Queen of Poland to Saint Vincent, November 13, 1651, *S.V.P*.. vol. IV, p. 273-274; Świątecka, p. 48. The Polish Jesuits' concern that the Queen would use the Vincentians to spread Jansenist beliefs prompted Vincent de Paul in 1655 to write the Superior of the Society of Jesus in Paris to request his assistance in convincing his brothers in the Commonwealth that the Vincentian confreres posed no such threat. See: Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, p. 56.

Vincent wrote, "that those persons mentioned to you might be envious of us and do the worst they could against us, I would still do all in my power to esteem, love, and serve them either here or elsewhere." Anticipating future problems, however, he enclosed in his letter copies of various documents and letters from "officials of Paris," verifying the validity of the Vincentians. Exacerbating the inter-clerical tension was the fact that the Queen had taken one of the French confreres as her personal confessor, breaking the longtime hold of the Jesuits on the office. By the end of the seventeenth century, the Vincentians also clashed with the Benedictines over property in Kraków, the Franciscans after receiving a prominent parish in the town of Chełmno and the Dominicans for the right to preside over funerals and celebrate *kolędy*, the singing of carols and blessing of homes at Christmas.[57]

After the death of Father aux Coutreaux in January 1653, Vincent de Paul faced the task of selecting a new Superior for the Missionaries in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. On August 9th, he selected Father Charles Ozenne, C.M., the Superior of the Troyes House. Very shortly after the announcement, Father Ozenne set sail for the Commonwealth. His voyage, however, came to an abrupt end when English pirates seized the ship and its passengers. By October, the English Parliament authorized the release of the priests and nuns detained, but further action was postponed until the Admiralty approved the decision. Vincent de Paul reported to Father Nicholas Guillot, C.M. that the delay was "beginning to weary them." Because of the rough conditions at

[57] Vincent de Paul to Lambert aux Coutreaux, June 21, 1652, *S. V. P.*, vol. IV, pp. 396-400 ; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 118-120. The toll these pressures took on the band of confreres is evident in Vincent de Paul's response to a letter written by Father Nicholas Guillot, C.M. in June 1653: "Please, Monsieur," Vincent writes, "allow yourself to be moved with compassion for Poland, where ignorance, sin, and so many heresies have established their thrones. . . . The blessing He [God] has given you in Warsaw should encourage you to go on. I ask Him to give you an even greater participation in His Spirit and total abandonment to His guidance." See: Vincent de Paul to N. Guillot, June 6, 1653, *S. V. P.*, vol. IV, pp. 571-574.

that time of year and the continuing danger posed by pirates, Ozenne's release brought him back to France. Finally, in January 1654, Father Ozenne, accompanied by a small group of fellow Vincentians arrived in Warsaw.[58]

While Ozenne's detention in England complicated matters for the Vincentians in the Commonwealth, the last two months of 1653 were fruitful ones. Of particular importance was the Vincentians' acquisition of Holy Cross Parish, a prominent parish located near the Palace on Krakowskie Przedmieście in Warsaw. While initiated by the Queen, who hoped to position the Vincentians more prominently, negotiations for control of the parish were hindered by the ongoing plague sweeping across the Commonwealth and the opposition of the Society of Jesus to the Queen's Jansenist leanings. Because of the Jesuit's opposition, the Vincentians received the benefice of the Holy Cross Parish only on a temporary basis. With the consent of Bishop Kazimierz Florian Czartoryski, the Vincentian Fathers finally took permanent control of Holy Cross Parish on March 2, 1655. For the next two hundred years, Holy Cross Parish would be one of three important centers of Vincentian activity in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.[59]

The progress of the Vincentians' work, however, continued to suffer as a result of the shortage of confreres and their difficulty with the Polish language. Concerned about the "instability" evident among the pioneer band of Missionaries, Vincent de Paul worried about losing Father Kazimierz Żelazowski, still the only confrere capable of preaching in Polish. In late March 1654, in an effort to persuade Żelazowski to remain, Vincent expressed his anxiety over the priest's resolution "to withdraw from the

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[58] Coste, vol. 2, pp. 43-45; Vincent de Paul to Nicholas Guillot, October, 10, 1653, *S.V.P.*, vol. V, pp. 26-28; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, p. 54.

[59] Świątecka, pp. 53-54; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, p. 53. In an effort to resolve this issue, Vincent de Paul promised to contact the French Jesuits and ask for their assistance. See: Świątecka, p. 55.

Company, abandoning in this way God's work when it would seem that you are even more obliged to commit yourself to it." Vincent further cautioned him against deserting "the little boat in which God has placed you, where you can render great service through the graces He attached to it and the talents He has given you." The same day, anticipating the worse, Vincent de Paul ordered Father Ozenne to ordain Brother Duperroy at the earliest opportunity, arguing: "One good soldier is worth ten, and God will certainly bless your little flock even if the loss you fear should occur."[60]

In February 1654, Vincent de Paul, in an effort at keeping Father Guillot in the Commonwealth, wrote him to thank him for welcoming the new Superior to Warsaw and to caution him against the "obstacles the devil and the world may put in the way" of the Vincentians' mission. Mentioning the fact that he had read a note written by Guillot expressing his interest in returning to France, Vincent de Paul asks rhetorically, "Ah, Monsieur, what do people say of those who abandon the children they have brought into the world? Oh! How many regrets you will have on judgment day for having deserted the Lord's army. In the name of God, Monsieur, let us not be shipwrecked in the harbor."[61]

With a predominantly French-speaking band of Missionaries and the increasing likelihood of losing two of his confreres, Vincent de Paul lamented the ongoing lack of contact with the peasantry and feared losing the support of Louise Marie de Gonzague. In a letter dated May 22, 1654, Vincent expressed the reasons behind his anxiety: "I

[60] Vincent de Paul to Kazimierz Żelazowski, March 27, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 110-113. Born in Warsaw, Father Żelazowski joined the Congregation of the Mission in October 1647 at the age of eighteen in Paris. Ordained sometime between 1651 and 1655, Żelazowski remained "a trial to Superiors" until his withdrawal from the Vincentians in 1655. See footnote 9, Vincent de Paul to Lambert aux Couteaux, December 21, 1651, *S. V. P.*, vol. IV, pp. 292-293; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, January 8, 1655, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 257-258; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, September 24, 1655, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 434-435 ; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, March 27, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 113-115.
[61] Vincent de Paul to Nicholas Guillot, February 20, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 83-85.

recognize that it is time that the people there [in Poland] see our works and that the Queen, who has gone to such great expense for us, would have good reason to complain about a further delay. May God forgive those two men [Guillot and Żelazowski] who have left you in your time of need!" One piece of good news at this time, however, was the fact that Father William Desdames had acquired a knowledge of Polish sufficient to preach in public.[62]

While they struggled to solve these personnel problems, the Vincentians received new inquiries for their services and attempted to clarify some administrative issues. In June 1654, Vincent de Paul reported to Father Ozenne that a Polish noble, the Count of Wielopolski, while in Rome, spoke with Father Thomas Berthe, the Superior of the Vincentians' House there, about "founding a mission" in a town on his estate. At the end of that month, the Queen announced to Vincent the King's plan of opening a small seminary and "to entrust it to some of your Missionaries." In addition, Vincent cautioned Father Ozenne to confirm that any future Superior of the Vincentian Missionaries would be granted authority over the Holy Cross Parish.[63]

Evidence of the increasing stress resulting from the growing demands on his confreres in the fall of 1654 is evident in correspondence between Vincent de Paul and Father Ozenne. Agreeing with the Superior's decision to pass over additional offers of parishes, Vincent stressed "the more universal good of missions and seminaries." When Father François de Fleury, the Queen's chaplain, who had played an important role in

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[62] Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, February 13, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 81-83; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, April 3, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 117-118; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, April 17, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 126-129; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, May 22, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 141-144.

[63] Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, June 5, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 151-152; Louise-Marie de Gonzague to Vincent de Paul, June 30, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 164-166 ; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, October 16, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 201-202.

placing the Vincentians at Holy Cross Parish, proposed having the confreres serve at an area college, Vincent counseled, "Ask him, with the respect and submission you owe him, if it might not be taking on too much to offer your services in the college you mentioned to me. Tell him also that it would seem sufficient—at least at the beginning—to work at giving missions in the rural areas and in a seminary in the city." In turn, Vincent rejected the proposal by Count Jan Wielopolski to establish a mission on his land while recognizing the importance of remaining in the good graces of the nobility.[64]

Just as the Vincentian mission began gaining a foothold in the Commonwealth, fate struck a damaging blow. In 1655, Swedish forces invaded, in what became known as "The Deluge." Escaping the invaders in July, Louise Marie de Gonzague moved first to Kraków and then to Śląsk (Silesia), taking with her a retinue that included members of the Daughters of Charity, the Visitation Nuns, and Father Ozenne as her chaplain and confessor. In the face of escalating fighting, Fathers Durand, Eveillard, Guillot, and Simon, however, returned to France. The Vincentian presence in the Commonwealth was then limited to Fathers Desdames and Duperroy at Holy Cross Parish in Warsaw. In an effort to provide some protection for the confreres, Vincent de Paul wrote to the French ambassador at the court of Swedish King Charles Gustavus pleading for his intervention. Little, however, could be done. In a letter to Father Ozenne, Vincent wrote: "I come back to those poor Missionaries, who are very much on my mind because of the siege of Warsaw. Surrounded by the troubles and hazards of war, they are greatly to be

[64] Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, October 2, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 192-193; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, November 6, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 213-214; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, November 13, 1654, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 218-219.

pitied and are in danger. I also hope, however, that God and the King will protect them so that none of the things we fear will happen to them."[65]

As the tide of war waxed and waned over the territory of the Commonwealth, the Vincentians there struggled to maintain the Congregation's apostolates and improve their mastery of the Polish language. Vincent wrote to Father Ozenne approving his plan temporarily to place confreres with other religious Communities, thereby providing an opportunity for "practicing Polish and making progress on it." At the same time, Father Desdames began translating some of the Congregation's "mission materials" into Polish in anticipation of "work[ing] with the poor people after the harvest."[66]

When Father Ozenne returned with the royal retinue to Warsaw in October 1657, he found all eight of the Congregation's houses there in ruins. This loss, however, was counterbalanced later that year by the offer of Bishop Wojciech Tolibowski of a parish in the Poznań diocese, a planned seminary in Wiskitka, a house with garden in Kraków, and a renewed offer of a house on the estate of Count Józef Wielopolski. In March 1658, Vincent de Paul wrote Father Ozenne: "You tell me that the Bishop of Poznań is getting a parish for you in his city, and M. Falibowski a house in Kraków, and that the latter wants to make a donation to you of some money that is due him. All that is worthy of our gratitude, even though those things are only in the planning stage. May God in His mercy make you worthy of the effects of their good will, for which, after God, we are

[65] Coste, vol. 2, p. 47; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, p. 55 ; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, July 7, 1656, *S. V. P.*, vol. VI, pp. 5-7.
[66] Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, July 23, 1655, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 402-403.

indebted to the Queen's charity!" In the end, however, his first proposal was rejected due to the lack of personnel, while the Kraków house was rejected by the city's Archbishop.[67]

By the end of 1657, Ozenne wrote to Vincent requesting the return of the confreres who had fled the Swedes. Vincent replied that these priests were needed in other houses, especially as problems were developing between French and Italian confreres. He, however, was considering sending a small number of candidates to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth so they could learn the language and adjust to Polish culture while finishing their formation. Discussion of the proper mix of younger and older confreres was also a prominent topic in the period's correspondence between the Superior of the Polish Community and Vincent de Paul. The principal reason for the intensity of this exchange was the fact that throughout much of "The Deluge" the members of the Community lived isolated lives away from each other. In a letter discussing the possibility of the confreres in the Commonwealth taking on a new benefice at the Queen's behest, Vincent warned: "The Queen must be obeyed in all things, but it is greatly to be feared that the separation of some members of the Company in Sokólka or elsewhere will lead them into bad ways and will suffocate, or at least weaken, the spirit of the Mission, especially in those living alone." As the tide of battle began to ebb in 1658,

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[67] Coste, vol. 2, p. 49; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 56-57; Vincent de Paul to William Desdames, June 20, 1659, *S. V. P.*, vol. VII, pp. 625-627. The idea of a seminary in Wiskitka had been proposed earlier in 1655. See: Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, June 4, 1655, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 388-390. The Congregation of the Mission did not take possession of Holy Cross Parish until early 1659. See: Vincent de Paul to William Desdames, February 21, 1659, *S. V. P.*, vol. VII, pp. 474-475; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, March 1, 1658, *S. V. P.*, vol. VII, pp. 107-108. The offer of the house and garden by Falibowski came to naught, being prohibited by the Bishop of Kraków. Responding to the news of the Bishop's rejection of the proposal, Vincent de Paul writes to Father Desdames: "Since we must not undertake anything unless we are resigned to God's good pleasure, we must also receive refusals and a lack of success willingly, especially the latter, in which God's special Providence is obvious. The reason is that, if the establishment had been made, you would have found it hard to supply the men and the maintenance required for the two houses." See: Coste, vol. 2, p. 49 & Vincent de Paul to William Desdames, March 28, 1659, *S. V. P.*, vol. VII, pp. 490-491; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 56-57.

Father Ozenne's successor, Father William Desdames, C.M., asked Vincent for older confreres "capable of guiding them [the younger confreres] and of doing all our work," in particular the running of missions.[68]

The fate of the Congregation of the Mission in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth remained tenuous for most of the next decade. While the Peace of Oliwa, signed in May 1660, brought an end to the fighting between Sweden and the Commonwealth, a conflict that concluded with "a return to the *status quo ante*," Muscovite forces continued their separate offensive in the East. The ongoing fighting, of course, continued to disturb the Vincentians' efforts to conduct missions and stabilize some of their houses. Aid finally came to the confreres in the Commonwealth in mid-January 1660, when Father Michael de la Briére, clerics Michael Get and Ignatius de Marthe, along with one brother and three Sisters of Charity arrived in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. A severe blow to the confreres' efforts, however, came with the death of the Queen in 1667. By the following year, Jan Kazimierz gave up the throne and departed for France, where he resided at a monastery in Nevers-sur-Loire until his death in 1672. With the loss of their patron, the Vincentians in the Commonwealth began a new phase of their mission.[69]

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[68] Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, December 21, 1657, *S. V. P.*, vol. VII, pp. 36-37. Vincent de Paul made a similar statement to Ozenne's replacement, Father William Desdames, C.M., in August 1659. See: Vincent de Paul to William Desdames, August 22, 1659, *S. V. P.*, vol. VIII, pp. 98-99. In an April 1655 letter to Ozenne, Vincent de Paul suggests copying some of the Jesuits' methods in acquiring mastery of foreign languages. "Could they [confreres in the Commonwealth] not make some rule for themselves with a penalty attached for those who fail to speak Polish? That is how the Jesuits learn the language everywhere and do so much good in the Indies and in Canada."; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, April 9, 1655, *S. V. P.*, vol. V, pp. 361-364. Vincent de Paul expresses this same opinion to requests in November 1657 and March 1658. See: Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, November 16, 1657, *S. V. P.*, vol. VI, pp. 620-622; Vincent de Paul to Charles Ozenne, March 22, 1658, *S. V. P.*, vol. VII, pp. 127-128; Vincent de Paul to William Desdames, December 13, 1658, *S. V. P.*, vol. VII, pp. 415-417; Vincent de Paul to William Desdames, April 11, 1659, *S. V. P.*, vol. VII, pp. 506-507.

[69] Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 57 & 59; Zamoyski, pp. 169-170 & 184; Davies, vol. 1, pp. 466 & 469.

Even without the patronage of the Queen, the Vincentians continued to forge ahead with their parish and seminary work. First among the achievements of the Congregation of the Mission during this period was its success in the field of seminary administration and instruction. In the mid-1670s, with the newly crowned, pro-French King Jan Sobieski on the throne of the Commonwealth, the Vincentians welcomed their first group of seminarians from the Diocese of Poznań to the diocesan seminary at Holy Cross Parish. A year later, the Congregation opened its first novitiate dedicated to the formation of future Polish Vincentians. At the same time, the Right Reverend Jan Małachowski, the Bishop of Chełmno, invited the Vincentians to establish a house and to take on the administration of the diocesan seminary—a offer that drew criticism from the Franciscans in the diocese. The Congregation's presence in Kraków grew further in 1681 when three confreres, two priests and a brother, joined the staff of the diocesan seminary, commonly known as the *Zamek* seminary. Over the next eighty years, the Vincentians took on additional administrative and teaching responsibilities at other seminaries: Przemyśl (1687), Gniezno (1700), Wilno (1765), a novitiate in Wilno (1725) and a novitiate and diocesan seminary in Kraków, Stradom (1732).[70]

In addition to their expanding seminary apostolate, the Vincentians renewed their attention to the physical and spiritual needs in the towns and countryside of the

[70] Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 60, 63-64, 77, 79, 90-91, 93-94, 107. Additional animosity for the Vincentians in Chełmno came as a result of their acquisition of parishes and a prestigious school, which had been opened in the fourteenth century. "Zamek" translates into English as "castle." The designation of the Zamek seminary comes from the fact that it was located on the grounds of the royal palace and cathedral on the Wawel Hill, situated at a bend in the Wisła River in Kraków. By 1683, with a shortage of housing on the Wawel Hill, the Vincentians receive permission to open a new house on Ulica Stradomska at the base of the hill on the condition that the Vincentians conduct missions and clerical retreats in the area. The original site for a new house in Kraków was Ulica Szpitalna, across the Main Square from Ulica Stradomska. The property, however, was assigned to another order. See: Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 74 & 76. In the 1760s, Polish confreres also served in seminaries in Vienna and Vác, Hungary. See: Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 105-107.

Commonwealth, especially in the environs of Warsaw. By the mid-1680s, the confreres had established a hospital at Holy Cross Parish in Warsaw as well as a parish school with an enrollment of approximately one-hundred students. Before the end of the 1690s, the Holy Cross Church underwent significant renovation. In 1765, the Vincentians opened a second school at Holy Cross Parish—this one for German children. By 1708, twenty students were studying at the Seminary at Holy Cross in Warsaw. Over the next decade, the Vincentian presence in the Commonwealth expanded to seven houses (Warsaw, Chełmno, Kraków-Zamek seminary, Kraków-Ulica Stradomska, Wilno, Przemyśl, and Łowicz) staffed by twenty-nine priests and twenty lay brothers.[71]

Recognizing the growth of the Vincentian presence in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Superior General Edme Jolly, C. M. established the Polish Province at the General Assembly in 1685. The newest of the seven Vincentian Provinces, the Polish Community was only the second one established outside the Kingdom of France. The first Visitor of the Province, Father Michał B. Tarło, C. M., studied at the college at Monte Citorio in Rome, entering the novitiate there in 1677. After his ordination in 1685, Father Jolly ordered Father Tarło to return to the Commonwealth initially to serve as a lecturer at the Holy Cross seminary. As the Commonwealth faced numerous political crises, the Vincentians continued to receive requests for their services, leading Father Tarło to turn to other Provinces for the necessary personnel to fill them. Father Tarło also played a prominent role at the General Assembly in 1698, when he and three

[71] Ibid, pp. 61, 72, 80-81 & 98. Holy Cross Church was a forum for patriotic sermons throughout Poniatowski's reign. See: Magdalena Ślusarska, „Kościół św. Krzyża Jako Miejsce Patriotyczenej Działaności Kaznodziejskiej w Dobie Stanisławowskiej" in *Księga Pamiątkowa: Kościół Świętego Krzyża w Warszawie w Trzechsetną Rocznicę Konsekracji 1696-1996*, (Warszawa: Instytut Teologiczny Księży Misjonarzy, 1996), pp. 41-56. The Vincentians' acquisition of Chelmno (1676), Kraków—Zamek (1682), and Kraków—Ulica Stradomska (1686) came with the assistance of Bishop Jan Małachowski. See: Rospond, "Rola Kościoła św. Krzyża," p. 30.

Italian confreres actively opposed King Louis XIV's interference in the selection of the Superior General. His success in leading the Polish Province later brought him recognition in the Church in the Commonwealth and his elevation to Bishop of Poznań in 1710.[72]

In the six decades between Father Tarło's appointment as Bishop of Poznań and the First Partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1772, six other men led the Polish Province. Tarło's immediate successor, Father Michał Tadeusz Kownacki, C. M., (1710-1714) served in Łowicz and Kraków's Zamek seminary before going to Warsaw, where he was Director of the Novitiate. Of the remaining Visitors, two were non-Poles: Father Giovanni Antoni Fabri, C. M. (1714-1723), a native of Ripi, Italy, and Father Jean Aumont, C. M. (1730-1739), a native of Domjean, France. Both men, however, had resided in the Commonwealth for a number of years before their appointment. Pole and Frenchman, alike, each of these men faced the challenges of maintaining the Vincentian apostolates in the face of severe cultural and political changes within the Commonwealth.[73]

While growing numbers of Vincentians were native-born Poles, nationalist and linguistic problems continued to plague the Province, a situation epitomized by the short Visitorship of Father Szymon Steffen, C. M. (1724-1725). While the historical record is inconclusive, conflicts between French and Polish confreres seem to have contributed to his resignation. Although not facing as intense a situation as Father Steffen, Father Jean

[72] Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 70, 72, 80-81. The erection of the Polish Province came at the beginning of a period of growth among men's religious communities in the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth. In the period from 1680 to 1780, 352 new houses were opened in the Commonwealth. Membership in religious orders is estimated between 10,000 and 12,000 men, sixty percent of whom were priests. In some areas, the membership of religious orders surpassed that of the diocesan clergy. The first Province outside the Kingdom of France was established on the Italian Peninsula in 1658. See: Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, p. 69.

[73] Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 82, 86-87& 92-93.

Aumont, C. M. was also compromised by his struggle with the Polish language, a difficulty that limited his preaching and mission work. These shortcomings, however, did not prevent him from establishing both the Major Seminary and Novitiate at the Kraków—Ulica Stradomska House in 1732.[74]

The persistent cultural and linguistic problems evident in the Polish Province were mostly surmounted in the "golden age" Visitorship of Father Piotr Jacek Śliwicki (1739-1774). A native of Warsaw with *szlachta* origins, Father Śliwicki was popular with members of the aristocracy, giving him the necessary political advantage to surmount a number of political roadblocks. Under his direction, the Polish Province grew dramatically between 1738 and 1772, the number of houses doubling from fifteen to thirty. During these years, the Province's growing membership—168 men in 1741 and 395 men in 1772—conducted eleven missions. Along with working in eleven domestic diocesan seminaries, Polish confreres served in Houses of Formation in Vienna, Tyrnawa, Slovakia, and Vác, Hungary.[75]

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The dissecting of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the partitioning powers' campaigns to place the Church under the immediate power of the Crown in the second half of the eighteenth century shattered the Polish Church and forced members of the Polish hierarchy and clergy, scattered over three political and ecclesiastical

[74] Ibid, pp. 89-90 & 92-93. The influence of foreign-born confreres in the Polish Province is evident between 1651 and 1685 in the number of Superiors born outside of Poland. Seventeen of the forty-two Superiors of houses in the Polish Province were foreign-born (15 French and 2 Italian confreres). In the formative years between 1651 and 1680, every Superior was French-born. Father Aumont first came to the Commonwealth in the second decade of the eighteenth century as a result of Father Kownacki's petition for additional confreres. See: Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, p. 58-59 & 82.
[75] Ibid, pp. 95-96.

jurisdictions, to fend off continual efforts to "de-polonize" the Church. For those religious Orders not suppressed, political borders and restrictive legislation led to limited communication between Houses, as well as between the Polish Provincials and their Superiors in Houses outside the territories of the three partitioning powers.

The Polish Province of the Congregation of the Mission, with its numerous Houses spread throughout the Commonwealth, felt the brunt of the occupiers' policies. On the eve of the First Partition, the Polish Vincentians ministered to the needs of the faithful from thirty Houses, including two each in Kraków, Lwów, Warsaw, and Wilno. Along with its three novitiates in Kraków, Warsaw, and Wilno, Vincentians served in eighteen diocesan seminaries and sixteen parishes. As cross border visitations became more difficult, however, the morale and discipline of the confreres began to suffer. To stem any further deterioration, renewed consideration was given to subdividing the Polish Province, thereby matching the jurisdictional boundaries of the Vincentian Community to the changing political borders. Even during the Partitions themselves, however, the Vincentians continued to establish Houses and attract vocations.[76]

The task of maintaining the Polish Province in the wake of the First Partition in 1774 fell to Father Mikołaj Siemieński, C. M. The son of an impoverished member of the *szlachta*, Siemieński was born in the Włocław Diocese and after joining the Congregation of the Mission, served at the seminaries in Przemyśl and Kraków before becoming the Director of the novitiate at Holy Cross Church in Warsaw and a Provincial Consultor. Before his death in 1788, Siemieński supervised the erection of seven new houses: Wornie (1774), Poznań (1781), Żytomierz (1783), Oświej (1786), Iłłukszta

[76] Ibid, pp. 111-112.

(1787), and Mohylew (1788). In 1795, the year of the Third Partition of the Commonwealth, the Polish Province consisted of 295 members, 193 priests, 59 brothers, and 43 seminarians and scholastics.[77]

For the next decade, the Vincentians continued to serve at Holy Cross Parish and the General Hospital of the Little Child of Jesus in Warsaw, as well as Houses in Chełmno, Gnieźno, Łowicz, Mława, Płock, Poznań, Tykocin, and Włocławek and one outside of Gdańsk. The continuing prominence of the Congregation of the Mission and Holy Cross Parish is evident in the fact that the last king of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, Stanisław August Poniatowski, selected the church as the site for his coronation and made his pre-coronation confession to Father Piotr H. Śliwicki, C. M. Throughout his reign, Poniatowski celebrated most important feasts and anniversaries with Masses and processions at Holy Cross Parish. After the First Partition, the Church served as an important forum for patriotic activity, including a laudatory speech by the royal preacher, Father Ignacy Witoszyński, following the passage of the May Third Constitution in 1791 and patriotic statements from the pulpit during the Kościuszko Uprising of 1794.[78]

In the two decades following the Final Partition, communication among the various Vincentian houses became extremely difficult. A rare window of opportunity opened for the Polish Vincentians with Napoleon Bonaparte's establishment of the Duchy of Warsaw in 1807. In 1809, the Polish Visitor, Father Józef Jakubowski, C. M. and Vicar-General, Father Dominique-François Hanon, C. M. corresponded about simplifying future succession decisions. Father Jakubowski requested signed nomination

[77] Ibid, pp. 110-111 & 113.
[78] Ibid, pp. 134-135 & 137; Ślusarska, pp. 41-42, 51-53 & 56. Poniatowski was not the first king to be crowned at Holy Cross Parish; the first one was Stanisław Leszczyński in 1705.

forms from Father Hanon and the authority to appoint future Polish Visitors. The first confrere appointed using these forms was Jakubowski's Vice-Visitor, Father Jakub Basiński, C. M in 1814.[79]

With the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte and the conclusion of the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the Congregation of the Mission faced a new round of political changes, which continued to endanger the Community's property holdings and viability. Throughout this period, nevertheless, the Vincentian Fathers maintained their mission apostolate, conducting eleven missions in the Congress Kingdom between 1818 and 1822. Drawing on the influence of the wife of Russian Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovich, whose personal influence helped the Vincentians to clear the necessary governmental hurdles, the confreres continued to give missions top priority throughout the 1820s.[80]

With the advent of the November Uprising in 1830, however, the Vincentians found themselves in a dilemma: how to preserve their good relations with the government while exhibiting their Polish patriotism. Soon after the outbreak of violence, insurgents requested material assistance as well as moral support from the Holy Cross seminarians in Warsaw. The Visitor, Father Paweł Rzymski, C. M., offered only his blessing. The Community, however, did provide financial assistance for injured insurgents and made Holy Cross Church available for patriotic services. Even with this aid, however, the confreres were labeled by some of their detractors as "supporters of Russia and enemies of the fatherland." During the tenure of Rzymski's successor, Father Mateusz Gorzkiewicz, C. M., (1833-1838) the Community's relations with the government were

[79] Ibid, pp. 135-136, 138 & 140.
[80] Ibid, pp. 140-141 & 165-167.

endangered as rumors began to spread of the Czarist government's plan to suppress some of the Vincentian houses.[81]

The apostolates of the Polish Province deteriorated further throughout the remainder of the 1830s and 1840s. The erosion of the Vincentians' position in the Church in Partitioned Poland became more evident in the 1850s as disputes between the confreres and the Chapters of various diocesan seminaries developed over the issue of property ownership. In 1853, the Polish Visitor, Father Andrzej Dorobis, C. M., wrote Superior General Jean Étienne informing him that the unrelenting pressure was taking its toll on the confreres. Each year, the numbers of confreres in the Polish Province continued to fall. With rumors circulating that the Polish Province would separate from the Congregation of the Mission, Father Étienne traveled in May 1860 to Warsaw, where he recommended reforms to the Novitiate and closer adherence to the letter of the Vincentian Constitutions.[82]

It was under Father Dorobis's successor, Father Walenty Dmochowski, C. M. that the Polish Province experienced its most severe repression, which reached its culmination in the suppression of the Province in 1864. From the start of Dmochowski's Visitorship, the Russian government charged that priests had engaged in a variety of political activity, ranging from the singing of patriotic hymns and the delivering of insurrectionary sermons to active support of and participation in revolutionary violence—activities that brought fines totaling 15,000 rubles. One confrere, Father Rafał Drewnowski, C. M., an

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[81] Ibid, pp. 142-144 & 167-169. The quotation in the original Polish reads: ". . . że są oni stronnikami Rosji i nieprzyjaciółmi." The perceived lukewarm patriotism of the Congregation of the Mission was the subject of numerous articles in the newspaper *Młoda Polska*, (*Young Poland*). See: Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 167-169.

[82] Ibid, pp. 144-149. In 1852, the Polish Province consisted of 61 priests and ten brothers. Approximately one-third of the priests (19) and four-fifths of the brothers resided at the Holy Cross house in Warsaw. The next largest houses were those in Kraków (Stradom) and Lublin with seven priests each.

instructor in Płock, was an active member of revolutionary organizations, earning him the moniker "Ksiądz Rewolwer" (Father Revolver) and eventual exile to Irkuck, where he died in 1870. Between February and August of 1865, a number of confreres, including Father Dmochowski, were imprisoned in Warsaw.[83]

Along with imprisoning many of the confreres, the Russian government used the Vincentians' patriotic activism as justification for action against houses of the Congregation of the Mission. With the division of the Holy Cross territory into five smaller parishes in 1866, confreres relocated to the diocesan seminary at the Cathedral of Saint John. Given the opportunity of becoming diocesan priests or leaving the Partition, most Vincentians chose the former option. Following the transfer of all Vincentian property to the government, Father Dmochowski joined the small band of Polish confreres in exile in Paris. Broken by his experiences, the former Visitor of the Polish Province experienced a mental collapse and was placed in an asylum in Lille, where he died in July 1881.[84]

Along with the suppression of the Polish Province and its Motherhouse in Warsaw, the Czarist government also closed the Houses of the Lithuanian Province, an entity established in 1794 in response to the growing communication difficulties between the houses located in the eastern regions of the Commonwealth and Warsaw, as well as between these Houses and Paris. Recognizing the increasing difficulty of communications between the Motherhouse and the Houses in the eastern reaches of the Commonwealth, the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, Father Jean

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[83] Ibid, pp. 150, 169-171; Izabella Rusinowa, „Kościół Św. Krzyża w Dziewiętnastym Wieku." in *Księga Pamiątkowa: Kościół Świętego Krzyża w Warszawie w Trzechsetną Rocznicę Konsekracji 1696-1996* (Warszawa: Instytut Teologiczny Księży Misjonarzy, 1996) pp. 87-91.
[84] Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 150, 154, 173, & 176-177; Rusinowa p. 92.

Cayla, C. M. appointed Father Sebastian Woliński, C. M. the first Visitor of the Lithuanian Province. Under his guidance, the Lithuanian Province added members over the next ten years, so that, by 1804, it consisted of 87 priests, 20 clerics, 22 seminarians, and 10 brothers. While faced with strong government opposition, this group of Vincentians succeeded in conducting a number of missions in their territory.[85]

By the beginning of the second decade of the nineteenth century, however, the burden of government repression began to take its toll on the confreres, leading some to leave the Community. As a result of this growing personnel problem, the Province closed down the Saint George House in Wilno. The situation grew worse in 1816, when rumors spread that Pope Pius VII was planning to suppress the Congregation of the Mission, a rumor that resulted in an additional twenty-nine confreres leaving the Community.[86]

Like the Polish Province, the Lithuanian Province found itself in a precarious political situation in regards to the use of its churches in the wake of the November Uprising of 1830. Seen as "public places of congregations cultivating Polish language in sermons, celebrations, and songs," the Czarist government considered Catholic churches dangerous centers of religious nationalism. Even more threatening were monasteries and seminaries hidden behind walls that provided "possible sanctuaries for patriots." In September 1832, the Russian government ordered that all religious orders move into their monasteries and relinquish all remaining property to the national treasury. For the Vincentians of the Lithuanian Province, this action meant the loss of five houses: Saint

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[85] Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 180-182. Rospond's description of the inevitability of the establishment of the Lithuanian Province in the original Polish reads: "Utworzenie nowej prowincji stało się koniecznością."

[86] Ibid, pp. 182-183. The explanation of the closure of the Saint George house reads in the original Polish: "cały dom misjonarski przestał istniec."

Kazimierz in Wilno, as well as the houses in Glinciszki, Siemiatycze, Śmiłowicze, and Ihumeń. Soon afterwards, the government announced the takeover of cloister estates and capital funds of religious Orders.[87]

On December 8, Czar Michael I signed the order of suppression of the Congregation of the Mission in the Russian lands. By the spring of 1844, most confreres were serving in diocesan parishes. Seminary instructors were permitted to transfer to diocesan institutions and the retired Vincentians were relocated to the Augustinian monastery in Wilno. While the Superior General continued to appoint Visitors up through 1898, the Lithuanian Province ceased to be a viable entity by April 1844.[88]

The third and shortest-lived of the Vincentian Provinces to emerge from the Partitions of the Commonwealth was the Galician Province, existing only from 1799 to 1815. When Franz II ascended to the Austro-Hungarian throne in 1792, the oppressive practices of the government were eased and previously suppressed religious Communities were reestablished. While seventy-three houses reopened in Galicia, these Orders came under more direct control of the local ordinary. Recognizing the opportunities arising from these changes and the demands of the Austrian government for religious provincial borders to match those of the Empire, Superior General Cayla de la Garde, C.M. authorized the establishment of the Galician Province of the Congregation of the Mission and appointed Father Józef Dębkowski, C. M. its first Visitor.[89]

In 1801, the Vincentians ended their services to the Zamek seminary in Kraków. Further damage was done when the government interfered with both the Vincentians'

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[87] Ibid, pp. 211-212.
[88] Ibid, pp. 211-215.
[89] Ibid, pp. 217-220. The original reads: "Nominacji wizytatora i utworzenia odrębnej prowincji w Galicji domagał się rząd austriacki."

oversight of the Daughters of Charity and communications with the Superior General. This contact was eventually restored during the Napoleonic Wars, when Bonaparte established the Duchy of Warsaw. The Galician Province continued under the direction of its second Visitor, Father Stanisław Bieńkowski, C. M., until 1815, when it was reincorporated into the Polish Province with its Motherhouse at Holy Cross in Warsaw.[90]

After the suppression of the Polish Province in 1864, only three Vincentian houses "were saved": the Stradom and Kleparz Houses in Kraków and the Chełmno House. While the two Kraków houses were placed under the direction of the Austrian Province of the Congregation of the Mission, the Chełmno House was overseen by the German Visitor from Cologne. Recognizing the need to maintain a Polish Vincentian presence "on Polish soil," as well as the spiritual development of the Daughters of Charity, Superior General, Father Jean-Baptiste Etienne, C. M., established the Kraków Province in the spring of 1865. Consisting of a mere fifteen priests and three brothers, the Province was authorized to work in Galicia and, until Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*, the territory of the Prussian Partition. Father Etienne selected as the new Province's first Visitor a French confrere, Father Pierre Oudiette, C. M.[91]

Sent to Kraków less than two years earlier to be the Superior of the Kleparz House, Father Oudiette was ill-suited for work among the Poles, lacking the requisite understanding of the Polish language. Within a year of his appointment, Father Oudiette asked to be relieved and returned to Paris in June 1866. The following month, the

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[90] Ibid, pp. 222-223 & 226-227. Contact between the Superior General and the Province was restored with Napoleon Bonaparte's establishment of the Duchy of Warsaw (1807-1813).

[91] Ibid, pp. 230-233. The explanation of Father Etienne's motivation in establishing the Kraków Province reads in the original Polish: "Głownym więc motywem utworzenia prowincji krakowskiej była chęć zapewnienia Zgromadzeniu ciągłości istnienia na ziemiach polskich." As part of the reorganization effort, the Daughters of Charity relocated their motherhouse from Lwów to Kraków.

Kraków Province welcomed its second Visitor, another French confrere, Father Pierre Soubielle, C. M. The thirty-two-year-old, former Superior of the seminary at Chalons-sur-Marne, Father Soubielle initially oversaw the Province without the advice of Consultors, a source of vexation among the Polish confreres. Even after the establishment of a full administration, an act requiring the Superior General to travel personally to Kraków in 1871, Father Soubielle continued to make most of the important Provincial decisions himself, discounting the role of the Province's Econome, who arguably, as Procurator of the Kleparz House, had little time to address larger Provincial issues.[92]

Relations between the new Visitor and the Polish confreres remained cool as Father Soubielle concentrated on his duties as the Superior of the Kleparz House and Director of the Daughters of Charity at the expense of the Province. Further animosity grew from the fact that Father Soubielle integrated a number of "French customs" into the daily regulations, the custom of dress, conduct, and work of the Kraków Province. His control over provincial matters continued over the next thirty years, leading a number of confreres to leave the Community. In 1896, citing the Visitor's age, the Provincial Council recommended that Father Soubielle appoint an assistant and delegate the task of visiting the Province's houses to a subordinate. He rejected both proposals.[93]

Throughout the Visitorship of Father Soubielle, a number of foreign priests served in the Kraków Province, many of whom left soon after arriving, becoming diocesan priests in partitioned Poland or returning to their home Province. In an attempt to stem the continuing personnel shortage, Father Soubielle established a Novitiate at Kleparz in

[92] Ibid, pp. 234-236. Along with Father Oudiette, the newly established Kraków Province welcomed two other foreign priests, two German confreres.
[93] Ibid, p. 237

1867. The harvest of new confreres, however, remained rather meager, with only eight priests and twelve brothers joining the Congregation of the Mission over the next fourteen years. Even with the paucity of confreres, the Province erected a number of houses in the years around the turn-of-the-century, including ones in Poznań, Jezierzany, Chełmno, Kaczyka, Milatyn Nowy, Odporyszów, Sarnki Dolne, Sokołówka, Tarnów, Biały Kamień, and Witków Nowy, and two in Lwów.[94]

When time came to elect a new Visitor in 1900, it was expected that another French confrere would succeed Father Soubielle. The Polish Vincentians, however, became adamant in their opposition, leading Superior General, Father Antoine Fiat, C. M., to promise that the next Visitor would be selected from among their ranks. Divided by this decision, the confreres of the Province split into two camps. The older confreres of the Province supported the candidacy of Father Józef Kiedrowski, C. M., while the younger ones stood behind Father Kaspar Słomiński, C. M.[95]

The differences between the two candidates in regards to their age, formation, and duties within the Province were not insignificant but also not unusual. Born in 1836, Father Kiedrowski, an average student, studied philosophy and theology in Poznań and Gniezno and celebrated his first Mass as a diocesan priest in May 1861. After serving for two years as the prefect of a boy's boarding school, he began work as a hospital chaplain. It was while serving in this capacity in 1863 that Father Kiedrowski met with the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, Father Jean-Baptiste Etienne, C. M., and requested permission to become a Vincentian. After studying in Paris for eight months, Father Kiedrowski returned to Partitioned Poland in August 1865 and began

[94] Ibid, pp. 238-239 & 256-272.
[95] Ibid, p. 241.

work as a hospital chaplain. A good preacher and confessor, he made a name for himself as a missionary. Two years after becoming Superior of the Kleparz house, Father Kiedrowski became the Director of the minor seminary there in 1881. His tenure lasted until 1889, when he helped establish new houses in the Podole region. Along with his pastoral responsibilities, Father Kiedrowski served as the director of the Chełmno Province of the Daughters of Charity.[96]

A generation younger than Father Kiedrowski, Father Słomiński was born in 1869. He entered the minor seminary at Kleparz in 1882, a year after Father Kiedrowski had been put in charge of it. Two years after entering the Vincentians' Novitiate, Father Słomiński made his perpetual vows in August 1888. Along with his pastoral duties in Kraków, Father Słomiński lectured on Slavic philology at the Jagiellonian University. From 1894 to 1896, he served as Director of seminarians, leaving this position to become prefect of seminary studies. In this position, Father Słomiński launched a number of formational reforms resisted by the older confreres of the Province—actions resulted in his resignation. After a three-year term as Director of the Novitiate, Father Słomiński was assigned to a newly established House in Lwów. It was there that Father Słomiński served as Rector of the diocesan minor seminary, where his reform efforts, which included appointing members of the laity to the teaching faculty, drew criticism, he once again resigned in November 1902. It was in that year, that Father Słomiński was selected as a delegate to the General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission.[97]

In late April 1900, Father Fiat announced that Father Kiedrowski would be the next Visitor of the Kraków Province. Suffering from ill health and growing deaf, Father

[96] Jan Dukała, C. M., editor, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce (1651-2001), volume II-1 Biografie* (Kraków: Instytut Wydawniczy Księży Misjonarzy, 2001), pp. 263-267.
[97] Ibid, pp. 486-488.

Kiedrowski, soon after becoming Visitor, announced the appointment of additional Provincial Consultors, yet maintained, in the opinion of many of the younger confreres, a rather "dogmatic" posture on a variety of issues related to the daily confreres' routine. While he drew criticism from certain quarters of the Province, a body continually handicapped by personnel shortages, Father Kiedrowski oversaw the establishment of eight houses in Galicia, and directed the first transatlantic missions of the Congregation of the Mission among the Polish diaspora in Brazil and the United States of America.[98]

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Although geographically and chronologically distant from the events examined in the rest of this dissertation, the history covered in this chapter was the source of the "cultural artifacts of a particular kind" of the "imagined community" that was the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. The apostolates and actions as well as the practice and procedures that emerged over the centuries discussed here came to define, by the early-twentieth century, what it meant to be a Vincentian. Equally important to this dissertation is the historical development of the Roman Catholic Church in the Poland, a kingdom plagued by domestic and foreign conflicts, which resulted, in the words of Barbara Strassberg, in a unique "Polish Catholic dialect." In December 1903, when the first three Polish confreres disembarked in Hoboken, New Jersey, they carried with them a collective identity that contained elements from each of these two cultures.

With roots stretching back to the early works of Vincent de Paul, the Vincentian culture carried across the Atlantic Ocean by the Polish confreres was defined by the Congregation's mission and parish apostolates. Like the peasants served by Vincent and

[98] Ibid, pp. 241-244. Rospond's description of the Polish confreres' opposition to a new foreign Visitor reads in the original Polish: "Tymczasem nikt z polskich misjonarze nie życzył sobie przełożonego obcej narodowści."

his early confreres, the Polish Vincentians came to serve a Polish diaspora with roots in the rural regions of their homeland. These uprooted peasants suffered in the United States from the paucity of properly trained, Polish-speaking priests. The "Little Method" developed by Vincent was instrumental in the Polish confreres' mission to preserve the faith of these immigrants in an environment frequently considered incompatible with the tenets of Roman Catholicism.

A second quality that defined the Congregation of the Mission and shaped the history of the Polish Vincentians in the United States was Vincent's innovative concept of a group of secular priests living in a community. While possessing an internal governance system of its own, the Community remained responsible to the bishops in whose dioceses it served. Not members of the diocesan clergy, or members of a religious Order, the Vincentians were a new kind of religious Congregation. This characteristic came to play a significant role in the early years of the Polish Vincentians in the United States as they sought to establish themselves in parishes in Connecticut and Pennsylvania.

Along with its apostolates and unique identity, the Congregation of the Mission came to be defined by occasional conflicts between confreres of different nationalities—disputes that were often associate with claims to position and authority in the Community. In the 1650s, for example, the dispute over the housing of Cardinal de Retz in a Vincentian House in Rome led to disputes between French and Italian confreres. Approximately fifty years later, disputes arose in Spain and Portugal over control of Vincentian Houses in these kingdoms. Although it is not immediately connected to the interethnic tensions that characterized much of its history, an awareness of these

interethnic disputes in the Congregation of the Mission during the mid-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries provides important context for the study of Polish Vice-Province in the United States.

Equally important to this dissertation is an understanding of the second identity that the first Polish Missionaries brought with them to the United States. Polskość, the collection of "cultural artifacts of a particular kind" that makes one a Pole, was closely tied to Roman Catholic Church. From Mieszko I's conversion to western Christianity in 966, to the struggle against the petitioning powers of Prussia, Russia, and Austria-Hungary in the second half of the eighteenth century, to the failed uprisings in the nineteenth century, the Catholic Faith continued to be a primary touchstone for a "genuine" Polish identity. With a homeland divided between three occupying empires, Roman Catholicism was one of the few ties that bound Poles together.

These political events left an indelible mark on the development of the Polish Vincentians. The religious policies of the Partitioning Powers, for example, led to the closing of Houses and the resulting changes in the political map of Eastern Europe required the reconfiguration of those that remained. During the various uprisings in the nineteenth century, members of the Congregation lent support to the Polish cause, either by providing shelter and aid to combatants or, in the case of Father Rafał Drewnowski, C. M., known by the alias, "Ksiądz Rewolwer" (Father Revolver), actively participated in the fighting. These expressions of Polish patriotism often brought the Vincentians to the attention of the occupying authorities. It was with similar motives to defend the Faith and Fatherland that the first Polish sons of Saint Vincent departed for the United States.

Chapter Two: Casting Bread Upon the Waters: *Zgromadzenie Misjonarzy* in American Polonia

> It is scarcely possible to realize how contagious even to the clergy and to men otherwise well disposed, are the principles of freedom and independence imbibed by all the pores in these United States. Hence, I have always been convinced that practically all the good to be hoped for must come from the Congregations or religious Orders among which flourish strict discipline.
>
> Bishop Louis W. V. Dubourg (1826)

As their train pulled into the station in Wrocław, the three confreres were still grappling with the reality of their situation. Passing through numerous towns along the way, they remembered their family and the events of their youth. As the locomotive steamed out of Opole, Father Jerzy Głogowski, C.M., the group's Superior, recalled, "Every one of us squeezed into the railcar's compartment, closed his eyes, and thought of the confreres and families." While they already had gone through myriad emotions since leaving Kraków, the priests were still less than two-hundred miles from their Provincial House. Still awaiting them was the port of Hamburg and the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean. Their travels had just begun.[1]

The confreres' melancholy and apprehension was mirrored by the weather, which continued dreary and gray, casting a pall on the journey from Wrocław to Berlin to Hamburg. On November 24, 1903, the day after purchasing their steamship tickets at the port, Father Głogowski, accompanied by Fathers Franciszek Trawniczek, C.M. and

[1] Jerzy Głogowski to Józef Kiedrowski, January 15, 1904 published in *Roczniki* X no. 3 (1904), p. 129.

Paweł Waszko, C.M. set sail for New York City on board a Hamburg-American steamship.[2]

As their ship traversed the rough ocean waters, the three confreres alternately fought sea-sickness and boredom, growing more cognizant of the distance between them and their fellow Vincentians in Partitioned Poland. With waves violently rocking the ship, occasionally lifting its screws out of the water and "making a terrible noise," Father Głogowski counseled his fellows against being seduced by images of the United States and its wealth, recommending instead constant vigilance in their ministry to the spiritual needs of the growing Polish Catholic community there. Contact with Americans during the voyage reinforced Father Głogowski's concern. Struck by the fact that American passengers tended to not congregate in the ship's common dining room, instead eating meals specially prepared in "gourmet kitchens," Father Głogowski commented that this extravagance was typical of Americans, who "toss dollars on all sides."[3]

The confreres' anxiety escalated further when they arrived in New York Harbor on the afternoon of December 4, 1903. While most of the passengers, as the ship made its way through the lower harbor toward Ellis Island, turned their attention to the Statue of Liberty, the three Vincentians worried about clearing customs and finding their host,

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[2] Ibid, pp. 131-133; Franciszek Trawniczek & Paweł Waszko to Father Superior, n.d., Archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Kraków (A. C. M. K.). Born in 1872, Father Jerzy Głogowski was born in Zabrze in Upper Silesia in April 1872. He enrolled in the Vincentian Fathers' Novitiate in Kraków at the age of fourteen. Following his ordination in 1898, Father Głogowski taught at the Novitiate and served as the Procurator of the diocesan seminary in Kraków. Before being selected to work among the Polish diaspora in the Americas, he also preached missions in Silesia. A year younger than Father Głogowski, Father Franciszek Trawniczek was born in Wieliczka, Poland. He also was ordained a priest in 1898. Father Paweł Waszko was born in September 1873 and, along with his two companions, was ordained in 1898. Before departing for the United States, Father Waszko taught classical languages at the Vincentian Seminaries in Kraków and served in a Parish in Kaczyka, Romania ministered to by the Polish Vincentians. See: Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M, *Growth of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, 1904-2004* (Manchester: Vincentian Fathers, New England Province, 2004), pp. 57-59 & 107.

[3] Głogowski to Father Superior, December 2, 1903, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Kiedrowski, *Roczniki*, pp. 135-136.

Father Wojciech Nawrocki, an acquaintance of Father Trawniczek and pastor of Saint Kazimierz Parish on Adelphi Street in Brooklyn, New York. They were to meet Father Nawrocki on the docks in Hoboken, New Jersey. Father Trawniczek later recalled: "Since the morning, I was nervous. On the one hand, I was happy that I was getting off the sea, yet, on the other hand, there were so many things to worry about on land. I thought, 'Oh, God, what is going to happen in America? How are we going to find Father Nawrocki?' That was one problem. A second—we had to deal with the duty. 'They will start to look in our bags, and we will have to pay money, and we do not have much money.'" To their consternation, the confreres initially failed to locate Father Nawrocki. Relief, however, soon came. "When we were walking, someone said something in Polish to Father Waszko," Father Trawniczek wrote to the Visitor in Kraków. "We turned and it was Father Nawrocki. We kissed each other. . . . Father Nawrocki was visiting a sick person--that was why he was late." Father Trawniczek went on to explain that Father Nawrocki and the organist who was accompanying him recognized the Vincentians by the furs they were wearing—an uncommon sight in the United States. Finally united with their host, the Vincentians started off for Brooklyn and a new chapter in the Province's history.[4]

The clashing fashions of the Polish confreres was emblematic of their "outsider" status upon their arrival, the first of many barriers they would have to overcome as they made their way in the United States. A much more difficult task facing the priests was the buttressing of themselves and the laity of Polonia against what they saw as the

[4] Głogowski to Kiedrowski, *Roczniki*, pp. 138-141; Trawniczek & Waszko to Father Superior, n.d., A. C. M. K.; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 8.

corrosive influence of the American lifestyle. As they settled into their accommodations at Saint Kazimierz Parish, the scale of this challenge came into finer focus.

Father Trawniczek quickly came to lament the fate of New Yorkers, in general, and Polish inhabitants of the city, in particular: "Here the people are anemic because of the changing climate, at one point freezing, another warmer or rain." The conditions in which they lived seemed to have a corrosive affect on local residents. "The Poles who were born here," Father Trawniczek continued, "barely speak the Polish language" and cared only about making money. The conditions at Father Nawrocki's Parish were no better. "Where Nawrocki lives, there are very thin walls; if you scream, everything trembles. If there would be a fire, there would be nothing to save. If there would be an earthquake, it would teach them a lesson that it is better to have a good house than dollars in the pocket."[5]

Any sense of solidarity that the immigrants had brought with them from their partitioned homeland soon loosened in these living conditions and the daily press of humanity in the metropolis. In a postscript to Father Trawniczek's letter, Father Waszko reported: "These Polish brothers here—they do not have the same relationships like in Poland. In the parish, the relationships are colder. . . . Too bad we could not have been here earlier." The souls the confreres came into contact with, in their opinion, were endangered by American culture and American-accented Roman Catholicism. Although faced with such a daunting task, Father Głogowski, however, remained upbeat: "I think to myself: the perspective for the future is all fine."[6]

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[5] Trawniczek & Waszko to Father Superior, n.d., A. C. M. K.
[6] Ibid; Głogowski to Kiedrowski, *Roczniki*, p. 142.

As they disembarked, wrapped in their conspicuous fur coats and lugging their satchels and suitcases in December 1903, the three Polish Vincentians were also swaddled in three separate, yet interrelated, identities that would define their mission in the United States. The first and the most general of these identities was that of a Roman Catholic priest—a member of an international band of brothers that, despite differences in political loyalty, ethnicity, and language, served the Universal Church in its salvational mission. Within this global fraternity, the three confreres possessed a second, and more specific, identity—members of a particular religious brotherhood, the Congregation of the Mission. While they shared common sacramental and spiritual missions with their fellow priests, both secular and religious, the Vincentians lived by a unique body of Common Rules and apostolates developed over the Congregation's history. The three confreres' third identity was that of members of the fraternity of Polish clergy, a body shaped by interdenominational relations within Poland and the nation's powerful neighbors who sought to bridle Poles' religious faith and squelch their secular patriotism.

Arriving in the winter of 1903, the three confreres were latecomers to each of these three cohorts. As a result, they had to hew a niche for themselves in an American religious environment defined by earlier arrived clerical "charter societies." From the early English and French clergy, who struggled to make the Catholic community more acceptable to the Protestant majority, to the Irish and Irish-American priests, whose numbers and influence rechartered the institution in the United States, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States had developed a specific identity long before these pioneer Polish Vincentians arrived.[7]

[7] Building on John Porter's definition of the term, T. H. Breen characterizes a charter society as "[t]he first colonists [who] established rules for interaction, decided what customs would be carried to the New World,

Like the wider fraternity of Catholic clerics in the United States, the Congregation of the Mission had a firmly established identity and culture in the United States by the first decade of the twentieth century. From its start in Missouri in the second decade of the nineteenth century, the Congregation expanded throughout the United States, serving in a number of parishes, making an indelible mark on the seminary and post-secondary educational systems in a number of American dioceses, and conducting missions across the country.

Among the ranks of Polish priests in the United States, even, the confreres from Kraków were not pioneers. By the time of the Polish Vincentians' arrival in 1903, religious Communities such as the Congregation of the Resurrection (the Resurrectionist Fathers) had been in North America for approximately fifty years, laying spiritual and cultural foundations in settlements in Illinois, Texas, and Wisconsin. Drawing heavily from the "Polish-accented" Catholicism practiced in their partitioned homeland, these Polish clerics sought to secure control over the Americanization of Polish Catholic immigrants by serving as intermediaries between them and the American hierarchy. By the time the Vincentians arrived in the United States, these pioneering Polish priests as well as the "outsider" bishops from whom they took their orders were challenged by parish-level revolts in a number of Polish settlements, a movement that often culminated in the establishment of independent parishes free from the authority of Rome and the local ordinary. In order to understand the challenges facing the first Polish Vincentians,

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and determined the terms under which newcomers would be incorporated into their societies." While Breen recognizes the fact that "newcomers could tinker with what they found . . . the hand of the past restricted the choices available to them." In adjusting to their new surroundings, these later groups had the choice of either assimilating into the society established by the charter society or moving off into the frontier, thereby becoming a new charter society. See: T. H. Breen, "Creative Adaptations: Peoples and Cultures," in Jack P. Greene & J. R. Pole, editors, *Colonial British America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), p. 216.

it is necessary to understand the process by which American-accented Roman Catholicism developed.

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The debate over an American Catholic identity had undergone a number of transformations in the approximately one-hundred-and twenty-year period from the 1763 Treaty of Paris to the arrival of the Polish Vincentians. Two dialectical tensions were instrumental in this process: the first one being between the increasingly centralized Roman Catholic hierarchy, with its center in Rome, and the democratic ideals and individualism of the American Republic, and the second one being between the earlier-arrived English and French immigrant clergy and later-arrived Irish and German Catholic clerics. Together, these two antagonistic dynamics determined the rules and defined the contours of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States in the early twentieth century.

The roots of these two conflicts stretch back to the early history of Catholic America, to the appointment of Father John Carroll, S.J. as the first Roman Catholic Bishop in the United States. While he recognized the need for "a superior on the spot" responsible for the formation of both an American Catholic clergy and a faithful American Catholic laity, Carroll also railed against the interference and authoritarianism of Rome. "No authority derived from the Propaganda [Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith]," Carroll stressed, "will ever be admitted here." Father Carroll's opinion, however, was not shared by all of the American clergy. Father Bernard Diderick, S.J., "a good but wrong-headed Walloon Jesuit," wrote to the Vatican in 1785, rejecting the idea of falling under the authority of a bishop. Carroll, himself, when named Prefect

Apostolic, expressed reservations about the method by which he was appointed "Superior of the Mission in the Thirteen United States of North America" in 1784. He argued that receiving "his appointment from a foreign state, and only hold[ing] it at the discretion of a foreign tribunal or congregation" would not be tolerated by American Catholics.[8]

The republican style of Catholicism that Carroll promoted was the product of the Enlightenment and the "early Anglo-American Catholics," a charter group that promoted a strong lay influence and the compatibility of American and Catholic identities. With the power of the papacy over the Universal Church at ebb tide at the time, Carroll strove to "secure a degree of independence from Roman control," creating an American national Church, "but without the Gallican association with the state." An essential prerequisite for this American "state-less" Gallicanism was a native-born clergy. Free from the entanglements of the Propaganda, this body, "belonging to the Church in the United States," would require an American-style formation, an education Carroll saw them getting at the academy he planned in Georgetown in the District of Columbia.[9]

Carroll's Republican Catholicism, however, had its limits. In the wake of the French Revolution, Carroll and other members of the Catholic clergy read of the excesses of civil democracy in the "First Daughter of the Church" and feared that it would foul the waters of ecclesiastical democracy in the United States. Carroll believed the excesses evident in France, and their impact on the Roman Catholic Church, would fuse with "the American spirit of independence," leading American Catholics down a path that would end in the questioning of "legitimate ecclesiastical authority" and contribute to a

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[8] James Hennesey, S.J., *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 70-72.
[9] David J. O'Brien, *Public Catholicism* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1996), pp. 5, 16, 18-19; Hennesey, *American Catholic*, pp. 85-86.

dangerous distancing of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States from the Vatican. In an effort to circumvent such separatism, Carroll, after he was consecrated bishop in 1790, abandoned a number of his previously proposed programs such as the conducting of consultations, a practice he saw as essential for the election of bishops (1807), and the promoting of a vernacular liturgy (1810).[10]

A second factor that contributed to the resulting conservative shift of the American Catholic Church was the shortage of a native-born clergy and Bishop Carroll's continued reliance on "imported" priests. Evidence of the straits he found himself in is found in the composition of the 1791 synod in Baltimore, where eighty percent of the thirty-two attending clergy were immigrants. The lion's share of these Early-Republican priests came from revolutionary France, bringing with them an animosity towards the "spirit of independence" so vital to the United States and much of its Catholic laity. These refugee priests carried with them a "traditional European model of Roman Catholicism grounded in a monarchical view of authority." While Carroll sought to alleviate this condition with the opening of Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore that same year, between 1791 and 1829, sixty percent of the institution's graduates were foreign-born. As new dioceses were erected in Bardstown, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, this paucity of native-born clerics was again evident as newly appointed bishops turned to the foreign clerics to serve their flocks.[11]

Magnifying the influence of this foreign cadre of priests was the fact that, along with their parish ministerial duties, they also staffed the houses of formation attended by the next generation of American priests. Prominent in this charism was the Society of

[10] Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History form Colonial Times to the Present* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), p. 117.
[11] Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, pp. 118 & 120.

Saint Sulpice (Sulpicians), who took charge of Baltimore's Saint Mary's Seminary and trained priests who were disbursed throughout the United States. The strength of the Sulpicians' influence was especially evident in the West, in Kentucky, where a "stern code of morality that discouraged dancing and theatergoing" and "severity in the confessional" contrasted sharply with the enlightened ideas of Early Republican Catholicism.[12]

The French influence evident in Baltimore also rocked the recently established Georgetown College, where the Jesuit Community was divided between American-born and French-émigré members. The president of the College, Father Louis William Valentine Dubourg, who had completed his formation at Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, joined the Sulpician Fathers in 1795. Arriving at Georgetown College the following year, Father Dubourg was deemed "too French for the former Jesuits attached to the college." While he evinces the inter-ethnic tension that characterized the Roman Catholic Church in the United States in the first half of the nineteenth century, Father Dubourg played a more immediate role in the establishment of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States.[13]

From a rather humble beginning in Missouri, Father Dubourg's efforts bore fruit in the form of an American Province that grew throughout the rest of the century. With its educational and parish apostolates, the American Province, which, in September1888, was divided in two, established a particular institutional presence in the United States. With this presence came the rules and customs that came to define the American Vincentian charter society. A brief outline of this history will provide insight into the

[12] Ibid, p. 118; Jay P. Dolan, *In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 39.
[13] Dolan, *American Catholic Experience*, pp. 120-121.

development of the extensive and complex Community that the first group of Polish confreres encountered upon their arrival in the United States.

In 1815, following his appointment as Apostolic Administrator of Louisiana, Father Dubourg set sail for Rome in search of priests. By the time he reached Rome, the Propaganda had elevated Louisiana to a diocese and named Father Dubourg its first bishop. While in Rome, Bishop-Elect Dubourg lived at the Vincentian house at Monte Citorio; it was there that he heard Father Felix De Andreis, C.M. speaking at a spiritual conference. "So deeply impressed was the bishop-elect that he resolved to have this priest, and perhaps more of his Community, for his sparsely settled diocese. Not willing to lose one of his finest confreres, however, Father Carlo Domenico Sicardi, C.M. refused to let Father De Andreis to leave, forcing Bishop-Elect Dubourg to appeal to Pope Pius VII, who, two days after Dubourg's consecration, authorized Father De Andreis and five other Vincentian Fathers to serve in the Diocese of Louisiana. The contract formalizing the agreement was signed on September 27, 1815. At midnight on June 13, 1816, Father De Andreis and a mixed group of Vincentian confreres and diocesan priests began the process of assimilating into American Catholic culture by laying "aside their cassocks and donn[ing] the black suits, ties, and round hats that were characteristic of the American clergy." They joined Bishop Dubourg and set sail for the United States and arrived in Baltimore on July 26, 1816. It was this first group of pioneering confreres who established the Vincentian charter society that the Polish priests entered upon their arrival in the United States in late 1903.[14]

.[14] The Editorial Staff of the Vincentian Studies Institute, "A Survey of American Vincentian History: 1815-1987" in *The American Vincentians: A Popular History of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, 1815-1987* (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1988), pp. 8, 11-12. The first group of Vincentians to go to the United States were members of the Roman Province of the Congregation of the Mission, a

By the fall of 1817, Bishop Dubourg and the charter-group of Vincentian Fathers began the process of institution-building that started in the Midwest and expanded throughout the United States in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In September 1817, at the request of Bishop Dubourg, Father De Andreis along with two other priests and Bishop Benedict Joseph Flaget, the first Bishop of Bardstown, Kentucky, traveled to Saint Louis to prepare for the Bishop's arrival. While in Saint Louis, Bishop Flaget received a delegation from the Barrens Settlement, located eighty miles south of the city, that offered land on which they hoped a seminary would be established. By October 1818, after a slow start, the Seminary of Saint Mary's of the Barrens consisted of three crude, yet sufficient, log cabins. While work in the Barrens Settlement proceeded, Father De Andreis remained in Saint Louis, serving as Bishop Dubourg's Vicar-General and the pro-cathedral's rector. It was there that Father De Andreis opened the first Vincentian American novitiate, Gethsemane, in December 1818. Together, these two institutions served as the first institutional footholds of the Vincentian Fathers in the United States.[15]

With the paucity of priests in the West from which to draw episcopal candidates, the ultramontane confreres of the Vincentians became ideal candidates for the American hierarchy. After the death of Father de Andreis, C.M., Father Joseph Rosati, C.M., who was born in the Italian Province of Frosinone in 1789 and joined the Vincentian Fathers in 1811, became Superior of the American mission as well as Saint Mary's of the Barrens. In 1822, Father Rosati received word that Archbishop Ambrose Maréchal, S.S.,

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body that "had not suffered a serious interruption of Vincentian life" during the Napoleonic period and that "was to inherit the strong ultramontane (or pro-papal) orientation of the Roman Province. See: "A Survey of American Vincentian History," p. 8; Editorial Staff, "A Survey of American Vincentian History," pp. 18-20 & 23.

[15] Editorial Staff, "A Survey of American Vincentian History," pp. 23-35. N.B. Father De Andreis never saw the Seminary of Saint Mary's at the Barrens. He died in Saint Louis on October 15, 1820. See: "A Survey of American Vincentian History," p. 26.

the third Archbishop of Baltimore, had selected him to become the Vicar-Apostolic of Mississippi and Alabama. Supported by Bishop Dubourg, Father Rosati persuaded the Archbishop to rescind the order and, instead, he became Vicar-General under Bishop Dubourg with the right of succession. Two years later, Dubourg consecrated Father Rosati Coadjutor Bishop of New Orleans. The stamp of the Congregation of the Mission on western American Catholicism was further impressed when, after Bishop Dubourg's resignation in 1826, the Vatican divided the diocese and appointed Bishop Rosati Ordinary of the Diocese of Saint Louis, who, in turn, consecrated another Vincentian, Father Leo de Neckère, C.M., bishop of the Diocese of New Orleans. The influence of the Congregation of the Mission received a new dimension with the elevation of these Vincentians to the ranks of the American Hierarchy.[16]

The process of Americanization among the Vincentians slowly began to yield a small number of American-born vocations, including Father John Timon, C.M., who became the first Visitor of the newly established American Province of the Congregation of the Mission. In 1835, the French-born confrere, Father Jean-Marie Odin, C.M. wrote to the Superior General of the Community, Father Jean-Baptiste Nozo, C.M., recommending that the Vincentians in the United States concentrate their efforts on their seminary work and that the Superior General establish an American Province. In September, Father Nozo granted Father Odin's request, establishing the first Vincentian province outside of Europe. While headed by a native-born confrere, the American Province continued to rely on a steady stream of confreres from Belgium, France, Italy,

[16] Editorial Staff, "A Survey of American Vincentian History," pp. 29-30.

and Spain, where "religious and dynastic wars" and "anticlerical legislation" displaced a number of refugee clerics.[17]

With this mostly foreign-born membership, the American Province of the Congregation of the Mission expanded its educational, parochial, and missionary apostolates. In 1838, Bishop Anthony Blanc of the Diocese of New Orleans transferred the title of property for the diocesan seminary over to the Vincentian Fathers. The Seminary of Saint Vincent de Paul, more commonly known as Assumption Seminary, opened in March 1839. The following year, Bishop Francis P. Kenrick invited the Vincentian Fathers, under the supervision of Catalan confrere, Father Mariano Maller, C.M., to take over the administration of the financially troubled Saint Charles Seminary in Philadelphia. Along with supervising the seminary program, the confreres were attracted by Bishop Kenrick's promise of a foundation in Philadelphia, where a minor seminary, mission house, or a novitiate could be erected. In September 1842, the Vincentians took control of Saint John the Baptist Seminary in the Diocese of New York as well as two diocesan seminaries in Bardstown, Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio. At the request of Bishop John Timon of the newly established Diocese of Buffalo, who had formerly served as the Superior of the American Province of the Congregation of the Mission, the Vincentians opened a diocesan seminary in Buffalo, New York. Additional offers came from the bishops of Nashville, Mobile, Alabama, Pittsburgh, Vincennes, Emmitsburg, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Galveston, Texas, Dubuque, Iowa,

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[17] Ibid, pp. 26, 38 & 41. Father Odin, like fellow confreres, Fathers Rosati and de Neckère, was elevated to the American hierarchy, serving as the first bishop of the newly established Diocese of Galveston, Texas in 1847 and the second archbishop of the New Orleans Diocese in 1861. See: *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, s.v. "Odin, Jean-Marie (1800-70).

and the North American College in Rome. For various reasons, all of these offers, however, were rejected.[18]

In the eastern portion of the American Province, the Vincentians' work in the seminary apostolate also led to new pastoral opportunities. In 1849, facing stiff Know-Nothing opposition, the Vincentians established Saint Vincent de Paul Parish on Price Street in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Very soon afterward, confreres traveled to Baltimore, where they founded the Immaculate Conception Parish. Three years later, the Vincentians took over the administration of Saint Joseph Parish in Emmitsburg, Maryland.[19]

Two parishes were also established at this time that would contribute later to the educational mission of the Congregation of the Mission. Begun in 1868, Saint Mary, Queen of the Isle Parish in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York became the home of Saint John's College (now Saint John's University) in 1870 and five years later and half a continent away in Chicago, Illinois, the Vincentians established Saint Vincent Parish, from which today's DePaul University developed.[20]

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[18] Stafford Poole, C.M. "Ad Cleri Disciplinam: The Vincentian Seminary Apostolate in the United States," in *The American Vincentians: A Popular History of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, 1815-1987* (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1988) pp. 110-127. Because of conflict with Bishop Hughes over the joint seminary-college nature of Saint John the Baptist, the Vincentians left the seminary in July 1844. Forty-seven years later, at the request of Bishop John Loughlin of the Diocese of Brooklyn, the Vincentians would establish a diocesan seminary with the same name. Two factors contributed to the decision to turn down these parish opportunities. In 1847, Father John Timon, after rejecting six previous requests, agreed to become the first bishop of the Diocese of Buffalo, New York. Soon after, three other confreres became bishops: Father Thaddeus Amat (Monterey-Los Angeles), Father Michael Domenec (Pittsburgh), and Father John Lynch (Toronto). The American Province suffered an additional blow when "the restoration of political and religious peace in Spain and other parts of Europe brought about the recall of many of the Vincentians who had been working in the United States." See: Editorial Staff, "A Survey of American Vincentian History," pp. 43-44.

[19] John E. Rybolt, C.M., "Parish Apostolate: New Opportunities in the Local Church" in *The American Vincentians: A Popular History of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, 1815-1987* (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1988) pp. 252-253.

[20] Ibid, p. 257.

The original apostolate of the Congregation, missionary work among the Catholic laity, began more slowly in the United States. Limited by a shortage of qualified confreres and competition from other Religious Orders, the Vincentian Fathers struggled "to gain a place for themselves in that endeavor." By the middle of the 1850s, the Congregation of the Mission competed with the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists), and Congregation of the Passion (Passionists) for parish missions throughout the United States. While requests for better qualified missionaries were frequent, many of the confreres sent to the United States were siphoned off for the seminary apostolate. Even with a renewed attention to the mission apostolate during the Visitorship of Father Stephen Vincent Ryan, C.M. (1857-1868), the Vincentians' efforts continued to lag behind their competitors. While they conducted ninety-six missions between 1873 and 1880 and an additional ninety-eight in the East between 1880 and 1888, the Redemptorists conducted 3,955 missions and the comparatively young Missionary Society of Saint Paul the Apostle (Paulists) conducted 1,111 missions.[21]

As the American Province of the Congregation of the Mission grew, evidence of ethnic clashes, not too unfamiliar to those found in earlier periods among Vincentian confreres in Europe, became apparent. With the growth of anti-Catholic and nativist sentiment in the United States, ethnic tensions were also evident in the American Province of the Congregation of the Mission in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, which was composed then of a "mélange of nationalities—Italian, French, German, Americans, and Irish." Divided over how to "turn the natural ardor of the

[21] Douglas J. Slawson, C.M., "'To Bring Glad Tidings to the Poor': Vincentian Parish Missions in the United States" in *The American Vincentians: A Popular History of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, 1815-1987* (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1988) pp. 168-169 & 175.

Americans to the good of religion," the confreres split into two camps, one composed of Italian priests, the other led by Irish and American confreres. While the Irish and Americans pushed for a more progressive effort to "grasp the spirit of the country," the Italians claimed that "piety, simplicity, and regularity" had already been lost and further efforts to adjust to American culture would destroy the Congregation. The American Visitor, Father Mariano Maller, C.M., concluded in 1877 that a choice between two courses confronted the confreres: either counter the creeping progressivism with a renewed influx of European confreres or "turn all authority over to the Irish-American group." The American Province followed the second path; a rechartering of the Vincentian Fathers in the United States was underway.[22]

In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, in what became known as the "Americanist Controversy," debate over the compatibility between Roman Catholicism and American republican ideals as well as the intervention of Rome in the American Church came to a head. While nationality played an important role in this conflict, a more fundamental cause was the discord "between two radically differing views of the church and its relation to culture." One camp in this debate, two-thirds of whom, by the end of the century, were Irish or Irish-Americans, labeled either liberals or Americanists, believed, that for their own spiritual well-being and the continued acceptance of Roman Catholicism in the United States, immigrants should leave their cultural baggage, including their home-country dialects of faith, behind them and assimilate into an American-style Roman Catholicism that strove "to join its eternal truths to the best

[22] Editorial Staff, "A Survey of American Vincentian History," p. 53.

features of modern civilization, building a Christian commonwealth based on free acknowledgement of Catholic truths."[23]

The second camp, consisting of ultramontane immigrant priests and bishops, saw their mission as one that concentrated on "protecting and preserving the truths of faith and guiding people to an otherworldly salvation." Such a defense required "a monarchical model of the church that was unchanging and fixed regardless of its local environment." For some individuals, this timeless ecclesiology had its roots in Rome, for others, its source was the towns, villages, and diocese of the German, Italian, and Polish lands.[24]

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In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the contrasting positions of these camps of bishops became evident when an episcopal vacancy developed in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Wisconsin—a situation that eventually led to the arrival of the first Polish Vincentians in the United States. The Ordinary who played the pivotal role in this scenario was Archbishop Frederick X. Katzer. Born in Austria in 1844, Katzer began his formation with the Jesuits but emigrated to the United States to serve as a missionary. After completing his education in Milwaukee's Saint Francis Seminary, Father Katzer was ordained by Bishop John M. Henni in December 1866. Nine years later, Father Katzer was incardinated into the Diocese of Green Bay and became its Bishop in 1886. While in Green Bay, Bishop Katzer was a vocal opponent to

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[23] Dolan, *In Search*, pp. 83 & 98; Gerald P. Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy from 1870 to 1965* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1985), p. 84; Hennesey, *American* Catholics, pp. 173-174; O'Brien, *Public Catholicism*, p. 125.

[24] Dolan, *In Search*, pp. 83; O'Brien, *Public Catholicism*, p. 125. A contemporary movement among immigrant Polish clerics, a phenomenon well advanced by the time of the Polish Vincentians arrival in 1904, drew inspiration from similar preservationist roots. This topic will be addressed in chapter three of this dissertation.

Wisconsin's Bennett Law, "which made the teaching of English compulsory in all Wisconsin schools." When Archbishop Michael Heiss of Milwaukee died in 1890, Bishop Katzer found himself center-stage in the drama of the ongoing Americanist debate.[25]

For liberals like Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop Ireland, Katzer's nomination, along with those of Bishop Kilian Flasch of the La Crosse Diocese and Bishop Henry Richter of the Grand Rapids Diocese, was a setback. In a letter to Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Ireland characterized Bishop Katzer as "a man thoroughly unfit to be an archbishop." At a meeting of American Ordinaries that July, the clerics assembled rejected the candidacy of the Bishop of Green Bay.[26]

On December 15, 1890 the Propaganda dismissed the liberal American hierarchy's criticism and selected Bishop Katzer, third Archbishop of Milwaukee. At the imposition of Archbishop Katzer's pallium in August 1891, Cardinal Gibbons took the opportunity to preach a sermon "against discord and against the tendency of some immigrants to regard their birth-place as their real country."[27]

This clash of cultures was clearly evident in Archbishop Katzer's response to the crushing blow struck against Americanism in Pope Pius X's Papal Letter, *Testem benevolentiae*. Reaching beyond the lukewarm response of Archbishop Ryan of Philadelphia, who "thanked the pope for the letter, but did not acknowledge the existence of the heresy," Archbishop Katzer criticized how, "in Jansenistic fashion," the liberals

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[25] *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, s.v. "Katzer, Frederick Xavier (1844-1903)
[26] Anthony J. Kuzniewski, *Faith and Fatherland: The Polish Church War in Wisconsin, 1896-1918*. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980), p. 10.
[27] Fogarty, *The Vatican*, pp. 51 & 60.

claimed that the charges made against them were erroneous, a position very close to the one taken by the conservative newspaper, *Civiltà Cattolica*.[28]

It was Archbishop Katzer's concessions, characterized by some as reckless, to recently arrived Catholic immigrants, especially Poles, that provided the first opportunity for the Kraków Province of the Congregation of the Mission to establish a foundation in the United States. In 1895, the founding pastor of Saint Josaphat Parish in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Father Wilhelm Grutza, inspired by his curate's (Father Wacław Kruszka) description of Rome's Saint Peter's Basilica, began plans for a new church. The Latin-cross structure would measure 128 feet by 212 feet, with a seating capacity of 2,500 and additional standing room for 1,500. Father Grutza, in an effort to come under the estimate cost of construction of $100,000, bought stones from a demolished post-office building in Chicago and had them shipped to Milwaukee. While the material itself was purchased at a bargain price, the cleaning and preparing of the stones actually added to the cost of the project. Such well-intentioned, yet poorly planned, efforts soon caused severe financial problems for the parish. Within a month of the building's consecration on July 30, 1901, Father Grutza, who had been dogged throughout his pastorate by charges of financial impropriety and mismanagement of funds, died.[29]

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[28] Fogarty, *The Vatican*, pp. 181-182; McAvoy, *The Americanist Heresy*, pp. 250-251.

[29] Estimates of the total cost of Saint Josaphat Basilica ranged between $382,000 and $500,000. Kuzniewski, *Faith and Fatherland*, pp. 41-42. In his historical sketch of the situation of the parish in his *Historya Polska w Ameryce* (*A History of the Poles in America*), Father Kruszka laid the blame for the financial fiasco at the feet of Archbishop Katzer, recalling a conversation he had with Monsignor Diomede Falconio, the Apostolic Delegate to the United States. "Excellency, Father Grutza was not responsible for these debts as much as the bishop, who allowed him to incur them. Why do bishops allow so many debts? What are bishops of supervisors for? . . . But, it seems that the foreign bishops allow the Poles to make great debts on purpose so that they can then taunt us and say: these Poles do not know how to manage!" Quoted in Wacław Kruszka, *A History of the Poles in America to 1908, Part IV: Poles in the Central and Western States* edited by James S. Pula (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001), p. 69. Father Kruszka played a public role in the debate over the assimilation of Polish immigrants into American culture. He was instrumental in the effort to have the Vatican appoint a Polish auxiliary

While Archbishop Katzer initially appointed the parish's longtime assistant pastor, Father Antoni Prądzyński, to succeed Father Grutza, he began to search for a religious order that would be willing to take over the parish and take on some of its debt. In June 1902, Archbishop Katzer was in Lwów, where he told Archbishop Józef Bilczewski that he hoped "to recruit some priests from whatever community who [sic] would be ready and willing to work in my archdiocese . . . [and] undertake missions among the Poles." One of the Congregations that the Ordinary of Milwaukee contacted was the Vincentian Fathers in Kraków.[30]

The Polish Vincentians were well prepared to accept the Archbishop's offer. In late June 1901, the Visitor of the Kraków Province, Father Józef K. Kiedrowski, C.M., wrote to the Superior General of the Congregation, Father Anton Fiat, C.M., informing him that six confreres were prepared to travel to Milwaukee and other locations in the Americas. On January 27, 1903, the Kraków Provincial Council met and accepted the offer of Saint Josaphat Parish. Three weeks after this meeting, Father Kiedrowski wrote Father Fiat to inform him that Archbishop Katzer had renewed his request for the Polish Missionaries to serve in Milwaukee. In early March, Father Kiedrowski forwarded Archbishop Katzer's description of Saint Josaphat Parish to the Superior General. Characterizing the facilities in Milwaukee as a "beautiful Polish parish" with a "beautiful house" and "excellent school," Archbishop Katzer proposed that the Polish Vincentians

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bishop in an American diocese with a large Polish population and clashed with other leaders of the Polish clergy in the United States.

[30] Kruszka, *A History of the Poles . . . Part IV*, p. 71; Boleslaw S. Kumor, S. T. D., *Saint Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr Parish, New Haven*, translated and edited by Rev. Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M., Ed.d. (New Haven: Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish, 1987), p. 19.

consider making Saint Josaphat their "motherhouse in America." The Archbishop further enticed the Polish Vincentians by describing the potential for vocations among the young men of Milwaukee Polonia. Father Kiedrowski added that if the plan suited the Superior General, he should select two priests from the previously submitted list of Missionary candidates and assign them to go to Milwaukee. On March 8, 1903, Father Fiat wrote to the Kraków Visitor: "We accept for your Province the two houses mentioned in your letter, that is to say, Curitiba in Brazil and Milwaukee in the United States." On April 7, 1903, the Polish Provincial Council selected the mission team of Fathers Jerzy Głogowski, Franczisek Trawniczek, and Paweł Waszko.[31]

Before the mission team could depart for the United States, however, events in Milwaukee scuttled their plans. On August 29, 1903, Father Kiedrowski wrote Father Fiat, informing him of the death of Archbishop Katzer on July 20th, but hastened to add that he still hoped to send his confreres to the United States. The Milwaukee plan remained in limbo as the search for a replacement for Archbishop Katzer began. When the new Ordinary of Milwaukee, Archbishop Sebastian G. Messmer, took up his duties, he announced that he expected the Polish Vincentians to accept responsibility for Saint Josaphat Parish's large debt. The Polish Province quickly rejected this condition and

[31] Kiedrowski to Fiat, 23 June 1901; Kiedrowski to Fiat, 22 February 1903; Kiedrowski to Fiat, 2 March 190; Fiat, Archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome (A.C.M.R.); excerpt from Fiat to Kiedrowski, 8 March 1903 in "Origins of the Utica Vice-Province, Archives of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, Manchester, Connecticut (A. N. E. P.); Kumor, *Saint Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr, New Haven*, p. 19; Bolesław S. Kumor, S.T.D., *Saint Michael The Archangel Parish, Derby, Connecticut* translated and edited by Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M., (Derby: Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish, 1989), p.83. A more detailed explanation of the events leading up to Archbishop Katzer's offer of Saint Josaphat Parish to the Vincentian Fathers is prohibited by the small number of the Archbishop's extant correspondence. Of the limited number of letters extant in the collections of both Archbishops Katzer and Messmer in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, none are written by Father Kiedrowski or even mention the Polish Vincentian Fathers. Correspondence between the author and Ms. Shelly Solberg, Associate Director of the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Archives, 23 June 2006.

abandoned its Milwaukee plan. The beginning of the Polish confreres work in American Polonia had to be postponed, but not for long.[32]

With only three houses in Austrian-Poland and limited opportunities for acquiring new ones in partitioned Poland, the confreres idled by the loss of Milwaukee had to be put to profitable work. An opportunity to work in the United States soon presented itself when, while visiting Kraków, Father Wojciech Nawrocki, the pastor of Saint Kazimierz Parish in Brooklyn, New York, invited the Vincentian Fathers to conduct a two-week mission. Along with his invitation, Father Nawrocki described the mission opportunities among Polish immigrants in the Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn. It was with the opportunity to preach a two-week mission at Saint Kazimierz Parish and the hope of future work in the diocese that Fathers Jerzy Głogowski, Franciszek Trawniczek, and Paweł Waszko left for the United States.[33]

While the mission team was traversing the rough waters of the Atlantic Ocean, a permanent opportunity to serve Polish-Catholic immigrants in the United States emerged.

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[32] Kiedrowski to Fiat, 29 August 1903, A. C. M. R.; Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M., *Growth of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, 1904-2004*. (Manchester, Connecticut: Vincentian Fathers, New England Province, 2004), p. 8. In his history of the New England Province, Father Gicewicz claims that Archbishop Messmer "elected to offer St. Josaphat's Parish to the Conventual Franciscan Fathers. This offer was made much later than the time implied by Father Gicewicz. By 1908, the estimated debt of Saint Josaphat Parish was as high as $700,000. Archbishop Messmer continued to seek a "religious order to assume responsibility for the parish and its financial obligations," traveling as far as Rome searching for potential candidates. By the end of the year, Archbishop Messmer "announced that the Conventual Franciscans, with American headquarters in Buffalo, would take the parish and assume $400,000 of the debt." See: Kuzniewski, *Faith and Fatherland*, p. 79. With such a large debt and the Archbishop's ongoing search to find a Religious Order, the evidence indicates that the Vincentian leadership was more active in the decision than what is implied in Father Gicewicz's history. While the opportunity of establishing a foundation in Milwaukee was lost, the Polish Vincentian Fathers did succeed in sending missionaries across the Atlantic Ocean, but not to North America. In June 1903, a mission team left Europe, sailed to Africa, and then continued on to South America, where it took up mission and parish work in the Catholic Diocese of Curitiba, Brazil. It was hoped that this mission would provide not only salvation to the Polish Catholic community there, but also important funds and possible vocations. See: Hugo Dylla to Kiedrowski, 18 August 1903, published in *Roczniki Obydwóch Zgromadzeń Św. Wincentego A Paulo* IX no. 4, pp. 210-234; Ks. Wiktor Paszek, C.M., *100-Lecie Pracy Misyjnej Polskich Księży Misjonarzy Św. Wincentego A Paulo w Brazylii*, (Kraków: Instytut Teologicznego Księży Misjonarzy, 2003), pp. 13 & 15.

[33] *Historia 50-lecia Księży Misjonarzy w Ameryce Północnej: 1904-1954.* (Erie, PA.: Księży Misjonarzy św. Wincentego a Paulo, 1954), pp. 7-8.

As part of a campaign to recruit Polish priests, an effort that had previously met with tepid responses, Bishop Michael A. Tierney of the Diocese of Hartford, Connecticut, visited the Vincentian motherhouse in Kraków in 1903. Unlike his previous encounters with Superiors of other religious Communities, who regularly cited personnel shortages, Father Kiedrowski informed Bishop Tierney that he had a team of missionaries well prepared for work in American Polonia. On December 28, 1903, Father Kiedrowski wrote to the Superior General, Father Fiat, in Paris, describing Bishop Tierney's offer of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven, Connecticut. He expressed his deepest confidence in Father Głogowski's leadership and urgently requested Father Fiat to give his blessing to the proposal. That same day, having concluded the mission in Brooklyn, Fathers Głogowski, Trawniczek, and Waszko boarded a northbound train for Connecticut.[34]

When the three confreres arrived in New Haven, they were met by Bishop Tierney, Father Charles J. McElroy, the pastor of Saint Mary Parish in Derby, Connecticut, who also served the town's Polish immigrant community, and the founder their new parish, Father Stanisław Musieł. Once settled in, Father Głogowski was to serve as pastor in New Haven while Fathers Trawniczek and Waszko were to concentrate on missionary work in Derby and Terryville. On December 31st, *The Catholic Transcript* reported: "The three missionary priests who make up the nucleus of the new community are said to be men of learning, anxious only to provide for the spiritual welfare of their

[34] Thomas S. Duggan, *The Catholic Church in Connecticut*. (New York: The State History Company, 1930), p. 120; Kiedrowski to Fiat, 28 December 1903, A. C. M. R.; *Historia 50-lecia Księży*, p. 8. Father Kiedrowski must have been confident in his decision to send the confreres to Connecticut, a decision that would not be opposed by Superior General Fiat. While he wrote to his Superior asking his permission to accept the New Haven parish on December 28, 1903, he must have contacted Father Głogowski previously, for they were in transit before Father Fiat had read the Father Kiedrowski's request.

countrymen. Their advent will, no doubt, prove of immense benefit to the Polish Catholics scattered throughout Connecticut."[35]

Established only three years before, Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish consisted of approximately six-hundred adults, who worshipped in a former grocery store on the corner of Dwight and Edgewood Avenues. For the confreres, conditions in New Haven could not have been worse. In a letter to Kraków they reported that the "church does not deserve to be a chapel; the altar is a table with two legs; the confessionals are very poor." The house provided for the priests was "very old and the heating is poor." Even as they ministered to their flock in the parish's crude conditions, the confreres anticipated conflicts with the priests and hierarchy in Hartford. "If I am not mistaken," Father Głogowski wrote to the Visitor in Poland, "we are going to be the ones who will be doing all the work and they will merely take the money." Recognizing the ethnic tensions and potential for discrimination in the Hartford Diocese, the letter went on to claim that the Irish clergy tended to stick together, while the French priests "are more with us." American bishops, the letter concludes, would rather send American candidates to Polish seminaries instead of accepting priests from Polish seminaries.[36]

Following the models of other Ordinaries, Bishop Tierney sought to develop "the most ambitious program devised by an American Catholic bishop of the time" for the

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[35] *Historia 50-lecia Księży*, p. 8; Jerzy Głogowski, "Początki naszych domów w Północnej Ameryce," in *Roczniki Obydwóch Zgromadzeń Św. Wincentego A Paulo* XIV, no. 2 (1908): p. 71; "Lazarists In New Haven," *The Catholic Transcript*, 31 December 1903, p. 4.

[36] Głogowski to Father Superior, 30 December 1903, A. C. M. K. Father Głogowski's last comment may be a veiled criticism of Bishop Tierney. Father Głogowski's Anti-Irish clerical remarks exhibit the "obvious and profound cultural and religious differences between the Polish immigrants [and clergy] who engulfed the American Catholic Church at the turn of the century and the second generation Irish-Americans who assumed a dominant position in that Church." See Daniel S. Buczek, "Polish-Americans and the Roman Catholic Church," *The Polish Review*, vol. XXI, No. 3 (1976), pp. 39-40. The style of Catholicism practiced by the Irish and Irish-American charter group, occasionally referred to as the "Hibernarchy," was "too cold and puritanical" for Catholic immigrants arriving in the United States at the turn-of-the-century. See: Hennesey, *American Catholics*, p. 194.

assimilation of Catholic immigrants. For Bishop Tierney, this process was a simple matter of "providing qualified clergy to work among the ethnic minorities; . . . establishing national parishes wherever certain requirements could be fulfilled; and . . . encouraging a general attitude of respect and appreciation for the newcomers." Through such a program, he "strove to give personal witness to the positive attitudes and commitments which a truly 'Catholic' Church should espouse."[37]

The most critical component of Bishop Tierney's three-pronged program was the formation of "qualified clergy." Following the precedent set by his predecessors, who attracted Polish-speaking priests to Connecticut from the American College in Louvain, Belgium and other European seminaries and a previous visit to the Vincentians' Motherhouse in Kraków, Bishop Tierney looked across the Atlantic to fill the clerical ranks serving Polish parishes, visiting seminaries in Italy, Switzerland, and the Austrian-Hungarian and Russian Empires. In addition, Bishop Tierney developed relations with Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary, located at the time in Detroit, Michigan. Along with his recruiting of Polish-speaking priests, Bishop Tierney also developed a plan to send English-speaking seminarians to Europe and Detroit to learn Polish so that they also could serve the spiritual needs of Connecticut Polonia. By 1903, Bishop Tierney had placed approximately forty American candidates in European seminaries, where they

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[37] *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, s.v. "Tierney, Michael, A. (1839-1908); Dolores Ann Liptak, "The Bishops of Hartford and Polish Immigrants in Connecticut, 1880-1930" in *Pastor of the Poles: Polish American Essays Presented to Right Reverend Monsignor John P. Wodarski in Honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary of His Ordination* edited by Stanislaus A. Blejwas & Mieczysław B. Biskupski (New Britain: Polish Studies Program Monographs, Central Connecticut State College, 1982), p. 50; Dolores Ann Liptak, *European Immigrants in the Catholic Church in Connecticut, 1870-1920* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1987), pp. 46-47. Daniel Buczek characterizes the programs of members of the American clergy, like Bishop Tierney, as "sincere, well-intentioned, but misguided." See: Daniel Buczek, "Equality of Right: Polish American Bishops in the American Hierarchy?" *Polish American Studies*, vol. LVII, no. 1 (Spring 2005), p.6.

would learn "the language of the natives" as well as their "'national customs' and traditions."[38]

While well-intentioned, this effort was divisive, and, in the eyes of many Polish Catholics, particularly insulting. In a letter published in the Vincentian publication, *Roczniki*, Father Konieczny described the response of the Polish community in Rockville, Connecticut to an Irish priest trained at a seminary in Lwów. When the priest went to the parishioners' houses asking for money, the Poles turned him away empty-handed. By the time Father Konieczny conducted a mission in Rockville, dissenters stopped attending Mass at the "Irish church" and substituted a service conducted by an "elder member of the parish," who led those assembled in the rosary and songs. It was evident that some parishioners would join the growing ranks of Polish independents.[39]

Relations between Poles and Bishop Tierney were encumbered further by the Ordinary's refusal to "accept ordained immigrant priests unless their canonical transfer papers were in perfect order." The Bishop's policy had been developed in response to the threat of "bogus priests" who could wreak havoc in parishes already suffering from preexisting home-country divisions. One example of such disquieting influence was Father Edward Umiński, whose presence in 1901 at Sacred Heart Parish in New Britain,

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[38] Liptak, "The Bishops," pp. 49-50 & 51-54; Liptak, *European Immigrants*, p. 48. Bishop Tierney's program of "Polonizing" American clerics faced a major challenge when increasing numbers of Polish Catholic immigrants settled the Hartford Diocese. For the new arrivals, their collective identity, their sense of *polskość*, had deep roots in the history of Poland, especially in the wake of its late-eighteenth-century partition. As Orthodox Russia and Protestant Prussia sought to marginalize and to eliminate the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, Austria-Hungary, itself a Catholic empire, waged a campaign to bring the Church in its partition under more immediate control. With its relative isolation from Rome and cultural encroachment by Austrian clerics, the Catholic Church in the Polish lands felt isolated and abandoned by the Vatican, whose ear was monopolized by Vienna.

[39] Konieczny to Father Editor, 9 April 1905, A. C. M. K.

Connecticut, led dissenters in the parish to charge their pastor, Father Lucyan Bójnowski with abandoning "their 'Polish kind of faith.'"[40]

Such conflicts with the Irish clergy were part of a larger problem—the consequence of the Americanization of Polish Catholic immigrants. Father Głogowski characterized this concern in his description of the Poles he encountered during the mission in Brooklyn. "Our people become more spoiled living in America. This is horrible. . . . People are singing that 'America is a free country.' They don't even respect the Pope." Father Głogowski further shuddered at the corrupting influence of the United States, where fathers raise their sons as friends and people want to be the "boss," checking the parish bills and wanting to remove any strong-willed priest. The Superior was not alone in his opinion of the dangers to Polish immigrants of living in the United States. Commenting on Poles born in America, Father Waszko lamented, "Oh, God! What a litter they are and what hypocrites. . . . They are walking with their heads up but

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[40] Buczek, "Polish-Americans and the Roman Catholic Church," pp. 43-44; Daniel S. Buczek, *Immigrant Pastor: The Life of the Right Reverend Monsignor Lucyan Bójnowski of New Britain, Connecticut*. (Waterbury: Heminway Corporation, 1974), p. 36; Daniel Buczek, "Equality of Right: Polish American Bishops in the American Hierarchy?' *Polish American Studies*, vol. LVII, No. 1 (2005), p. 15; Liptak, *European Immigrants*, pp. 48 & 126. The "Umiński affair" was one incident in an ongoing battle within Connecticut Polonia and between it and the Diocese of Hartford. As early as 1889, for example, Polish Catholics in New Britain split over the selection of the site for a church. Failing to come to an agreement, one faction decided to establish a parish independent of diocesan authority. In an effort to stabilize the situation, Bishop McMahon sent the newly ordained Father Lucyan Bójnowski to New Britain. Father Bojnowski's task was to rally those Poles still loyal to the Diocese. By the time the Polish Vincentians arrived in the diocese, however, Father Bójnowski had resigned as pastor of Sacred Heart Parish. In 1893, tensions emerged in another of the diocese's Polish parish, Saint Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr in Meriden, where its founder, Father Anthony Klawiter was charged with financial mismanagement. His critics, he cautioned Bishop McMahon, "would soon undermine the efforts of good Catholics to fulfill their obligations as members in good standing of the Diocese of Hartford." By the following year, however, it was Father Klawiter who abandoned the parish. For the next twelve years, the pastorate in Meriden was a revolving door and was not stabilized until the arrival of Father John Ceppa, who arrived in 1906 and would serve as pastor until 1948. Father Bójnowski returned as pastor soon before the Vincentians arrival in New Haven. Father Klawiter played an important role in the Independentist struggle among Polish immigrants, especially in the Polonia of Buffalo, New York. See: Liptak, *European Immigrants*, pp. 122-127.

they haven't gotten rid of the stink from manure. . . . We have to keep them short and with the steel glove on their heads, but they will wake up."[41]

The importance of the synonymy between Catholicism and *polskość* was further emphasized when the members of American Polonia began assimilating into the American ideals of individual liberty and personal freedom, taking on responsibilities previously reserved for the nobility and endangering the clergy's position in the hierarchical ecclesiology evident in the Polish lands. When Polish Catholic immigrants began arriving in the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century, they transplanted long-established ideas of the social relationship between the Church and the laity. In the Polish lands, it was often the local nobleman, a member of the *Szlachta*, who paid for the erection of a church on his land. By the commonly held "right of patronage," these noblemen then had the right to select the priest to serve the community as well as to "exercise control over parish affairs." When peasants raised in such rural districts began to emigrate to the United States in the *Za Chlebem* wave of nineteenth-century Polish immigration, they brought this "right of patronage" idea with them and fused it to the American "unalienable rights [of] . . . Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." For many local Polonias, chaffing under the American Church's interpretation of property rights, a *Polish-Americanist* rhetoric began to emerge that challenged the assimilationist efforts of the preexisting Irish-American charter-group leadership in the Catholic Church in the United States. The Polish clergy tapped by American bishops to serve as

[41] Ibid. Father Głogowski's criticism of the corrupting influence of the United States on Polish immigrants echoes his warnings to his fellow confreres while still crossing the ocean against becoming too enamored with the United States.

intermediaries between themselves and the newest members of their flock were also affected.[42]

The initial effort to reawaken the faith of New Haven Polonia, Father Głogowski argued, depended on providing the proper environment in which to worship so as to maintain the Catholicity of its inhabitants. The converted grocery store, while proof of the financial sacrifice of the poor community, he believed, was detrimental to its future spiritual well-being. Initially, the new pastor considered purchasing a plot of land and constructing a new building, a plan that Bishop Tierney argued was beyond the financial capabilities of the parish at that time. Instead, by early July 1904, Father Głogowski decided on purchasing a Swedish Lutheran church. With the thousand-dollar profit from the sale of the building on Dwight and Edgewood Avenues and a loan of $16,000 from the Derby Savings Bank secured with the assistance of Father McElroy, the Vincentians relocated the parish to Saint John's Street. Work began almost immediately on the church's renovation and proceeded so quickly that the parish celebrated its last Mass in its former site, dubbed by Father Głogowski the "Bethlehem stable," on August 11th. The following Sunday, the parish celebrated its first Mass in the basement chapel of the new Saint Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr Church.[43]

The dedication of the new church took place on October 23, 1904. After Bishop Tierney, assisted by both Polish and American priests, had celebrated Mass, a parade, complete with "uniformed organizations," marched through the neighborhood. While he

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[42] Dolan, *In Search*, p. 81; "Peoplehood as a Cocoon," in Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion: The Irony of It All, 1893-1919*, vol. I. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986) passim. An example of this *Polish-Americanist* rhetoric and its development can be found in "'What Mean Ye By These Stones?' Cleveland's Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish and the Construction of a Polish American [sic] Rhetoric." *Polish American Studies*, vol. LV no. 2 (1998), passim.

[43] Głogowski, "Początki naszych domów," pp. 71-73; Kumor, *Saint Stanislaus Bishop and Martyr Parish*, pp. 97-98; Głogowski to Visitor, 8 November 1904, A. C. M. K.

claimed that the festivities caused “quite a mess,” Father Głogowski felt that the new church and its dedication had been just what the Polish community in New Haven needed. "I thought that it was actually good because they [the residents of New Haven] found out that the Poles exist and have their own church and parish." Just as the Vincentian Fathers began to revitalize the Parish of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr in New Haven, new opportunities in Pennsylvania began to compete for their attention. Success in balancing duties in two areas, however, remained circumscribed by a lack of manpower.[44]

After the establishment of houses in the Philadelphia area, the distance between them and the Vincentian parishes in Connecticut taxed the confreres’ sense of community and put pressure on Father Głogowski to accept under- or unqualified missionaries. As early as February 1904, he wrote the Visitor that a proposed candidate for mission work in the United States, who could not be controlled in Europe, was “a good man, but crazy” and would be ill suited for such an important assignment as ministering to the spiritual needs of Polish America as well as gaining an institutional foothold in the United States. A little over a year later, a Vincentian brother assigned to the New Haven House claimed to see visions of the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph and began “following them in the street.” When a physician recommended committing the brother to an institution, Father Głogowski decided to send him back to Poland. “I am sure he will be better in his country,” he wrote the Visitor, “than here surrounded by strangers. Here, his cure would lead us to bankruptcy.”[45]

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[44] Ibid. A fuller description of the Vincentians’ efforts in Pennsylvania can be found in chapter three.
[45] Głogowski to Father Superior, 9 February 1904, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 11 April 1905, A. C. M. K.

The stress of overwork also strained relations among the confreres and between individual confreres and the Superior. Writing from Derby, Father Stanisław Konieczny, C.M. opined on what to do with fellow Vincentian, Father Maksymilian Sołtysek, C.M. "I think we should give him [Father Głogowski] Father Sołtysek. This person, please forgive me, is insane. This guy is very self-conceited; he will not take orders from anyone." Father Konieczny's criticism also extended to Father Głogowski. Regarding his Superior, Father Konieczny wrote: "He is proud and closed inside himself. He is pushing people away from him. . . . He could be good because he is smart, but he must get rid of the pride and communicate with all his heart with the priests." Such pride, Father Konieczny continued, endangered the mission of the Polish Vincentians in the United States. He recommended that a director of missions be nominated and an Assistant Superior be selected "so he [Father Głogowski] will share all the decisions with someone."[46]

These personnel problems became more acute when a second opportunity in Pennsylvania led Father Głogowski to relocate to Philadelphia and required a new Superior to be appointed for the New Haven house. With his attention focused on Pennsylvania, Głogowski left the daily operations of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish to Father Sołtysek, who, in turn, expected to be named as the parish's new pastor. Father Głogowski, recognizing his assistant's vitriolic personality, thought it wiser to have the Visitor recall him to Poland and appoint "someone older who could fit in either

[46] Konieczny to Father Lewandowski, 26 March 1906, A. C. M. K. It is interesting to note that by the following January, Father Głogowski himself wrote to the Visitor requesting additional manpower and a replacement. Spurred on by ongoing problems with Father Sołtysek, Father Głogowski wrote: "Dear Visitor, I wish you would replace me or move me from this place [New Haven]. Maybe someone else could deal better with these problems. You have to remember, we need two priests. There is a lot of work. . . . Maybe you could send some priests, but not for good, but only for a duration of time, so this America will not get so deep into the blood and life and give such a sense of freedom." See: Głogowski to Father Visitor, 4 January 1907, A. C. M. K.

in New Haven or Philadelphia. Throughout the spring and summer, correspondence between Fathers Waszko and Głogowski and the Visitor returned to the question of the future of Father Sołtysek in the Congregation of the Mission and the proper confrere to fill the Superior's post in New Haven.[47]

In mid-September relief came when a new group of confreres arrived. Included among them was the newly appointed Superior of the New Haven house, Father Józef Sowiński, C.M. Attributed to the stress he experienced during the Atlantic crossing, the newly arrived Superior almost immediately suffered a nervous breakdown and became plagued by insomnia and headaches. He refused to "touch any money." With doctors recommending his immediate return to Poland, Father Konieczny and a lay brother were assigned to New Haven—a decision opposed by Bishop Tierney, who wanted Father Głogowski to remain in the Hartford Diocese. Concurrent with Father Sowiński's breakdown, the Visitor acceded to Father Głogowski's wishes and recalled Father Sołtysek to Poland—an action the confrere opposed. Father Sołtysek soon contacted the ordinary of the Catholic Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island in hopes of receiving an assignment to a Polish parish there.[48]

These personnel problems added to the pressure on Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz, who, in the wake of Father Sowiński's departure, served as the administrator of the New Haven parish. Along with personal complaints of having to live alone "like a hermit," a condition that was affecting his physical and spiritual strength, Father Mazurkiewicz

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[47] Ibid; Waszko to Father Visitor, 12 June 1907, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 19 June 1907, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 25 July 1907, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 February 1907, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 12 June 1907, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 19 June 1907, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 25 July 1907, A. C. M. K.

[48] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 4 October 1907, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 16 October 1907, A. C. M. K.

worried about the message the personnel turnover would give area Poles and the potential opening it may have given to independentist elements. "The constant change in pastors," Father Mazurkiewicz wrote the Visitor, "has made a bad impression on the people; this is especially easy to do in America. I hear different gossip and threats regarding the priests. They [the parishioners] want to examine the parish books; they have meetings. 'Priests are stealing and running away from the country.' These and similar rumors are spreading. . . . I am trying as much as I can to keep people quiet, but something is going to happen." The solution to these problems, Father Mazurkiewicz advised, was the appointment of a new superior.[49]

Kraków, however, did not dispatch a confrere to take the reins in New Haven. Instead, by the end of December 1907, Father Mazurkiewicz became Superior—a position he was reluctant to accept. "With your permission," he wrote the Visitor, "Father Głogowski made me Pastor and Superior in New Haven. Please forgive me but I have to be honest with you and tell you that this news made me feel sad. First, because a pastor in America is a difficult thing and I am not yet familiar with all the things here. Second, I do not feel worthy of the position [of Superior], which I received because of all the things that have taken place. One thing makes me happy—that the patent did not come yet, so it might still be changed if God wishes."[50]

Father Mazurkiewicz's fate, however, had been decided a month earlier. In a December 30th letter to the Visitor, Father Głogowski mentioned that Father Waszko and he would make regular trips to New Haven to render advice and assistance with administrative matters, but Father Mazurkiewicz would be new Superior and Pastor.

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[49] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 22 November 1907, A. C. M. K.
[50] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 31 January 1908, A. C. M. K.

With the need to closely oversee the construction of a new church in Philadelphia and maintain good relations with the laity there, however, Father Głogowski would visit New Haven only on a quarterly basis, forcing Father Mazurkiewicz to shoulder weightier burdens.[51]

Relief eventually came in mid-February 1908, when Father Józef Słupina, C.M. arrived in the United States. Like Father Słowiński, however, Father Słupina suffered from ill health. Less than a month after his arrival, he apologetically wrote to the Visitor: "I see that I am a pain in the neck for the priests with whom I live. . . . Every time the weather and climate changes I feel a horrible pain. And now, in addition, I also have stomach pain which makes me very weak. I have to be careful; I do not want to have explosions of blood again . . . . I was stupid not taking care of myself when I was in Kraków because I was always kind of shy with my condition, never telling anyone what was going on with me." That fall, Father Słupina's condition worsened, his bleeding ulcers keeping him and a confrere to watch over him from assisting with the important work of conducting missions. By December, while his condition had improved, Father Słupina's health continued to prevent him from advancing the work of the Vincentian Fathers in the United States, forcing Father Mazurkiewicz to ask for his return to Poland and again to petition the Visitor for assistance.[52]

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[51] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 30 December 1907, A. C. M. K.

[52] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 17 February 1908, A. C. M. K.; Słupina to Father Visitor, 10 March 1908, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 September 1908, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 30 September 1908, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 3 December 1908, A. C. M. K. The stress under which Father Mazurkiewicz worked is evident in the tone of his 3 December 1908 to the Visitor. "So, we need a new person," he wrote, "who is healthy and able to work. I cannot wait such a long time because I am not made of steel either. I feel exhausted. I need someone immediately who can help me." The situation in New Haven further worsened that December when a lay brother in New Haven, Brother Antoni, abandoned the Congregation, leading Father Mazurkiewicz to write to the Visitor: "I do not think it is a good idea to send brothers to America because they are wasted here, especially when they do not have a desire and are narrow-minded." See: Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 4 December 1908, A. C. M. K.

Assistance, when it did come, was limited. In the half-a-decade preceding the outbreak of the First World War, Father Mazurkiewicz welcomed a number of assistants, whose tenure in New Haven was truncated by various ministerial demands or clashes of personality. Father Marceli Słupiński, C. M. served at Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish from early August 1910 to late May 1912. Over the next two years, three other confreres, Fathers Konrad Tyżyński, Stanisław Włodarczyk, and Jan Tarłowski assisted Father Mazurkiewicz in New Haven.[53]

Illustrative of the ongoing personnel problems that circumscribed the confreres' activities is an incident that took place in New Haven in the summer of 1913. In mid-July, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote the Visitor that Father Włodarczyk was temporarily filling-in for the pastor of the Polish parish in Elmira, New York who was then in Poland. The following month Father Tarłowski disappeared from Saint Stanislaus Parish, leaving Father Mazurkiewicz stunned. Claiming to have never exchanged harsh words with his assistant, Father Mazurkiewicz described Father Tarłowski as "an exemplary confrere, hard-working, obedient, devout, humble, and a follower of the rules." Sometime on the evening of June 10, 1913, while Father Mazurkiewicz conducted vesper services, Father Tarłowski packed his bags and left. His absence was not noticed until the following morning. Attempting to squelch rumors that his assistant had stolen $3,000, Father Mazurkiewicz told anyone who asked that Father Tarłowski had gone to the Polish Vincentians' school in Erie, Pennsylvania.[54]

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[53] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 1 May 1912, A. C. M. K.; Kumor, *Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish*, p. 120.
[54] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 17 July 1913, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 7 August 1913, A. C. M. K.

The wayward Vincentian found a haven with Father Andrzej Ignasiak, the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in Erie, Pennsylvania, who had been instrumental in the establishment of Saint John Kanty College, the newly established Vincentian school. (see chapter four) In short order, Father Głogowski granted permission for Father Tarłowski to live outside the Community and to serve temporarily at a Lithuanian parish in the Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, New York. By the end of December 1913, however, Father Mazurkiewicz reported to the Visitor that "Father Tarłowski's whereabouts are not known for certain, but rumor has it that he is somewhere around Chicago or South Bend." So, as the European powers began drifting into war, a catastrophe that would cripple communication between the Polish confreres in the United States and the motherhouse in Kraków, the Vincentians continued to struggle with the personnel problems that had limited their ministerial effectiveness since their arrival in the United States.[55]

A second problem the Vincentians had to confront was the Americanization of the Polish immigrant community. In New Haven, of special concern was the parish's youth, whose acculturation, the Vincentians feared, endangered their faith. "I am preparing the children," Father Mazurkiewicz wrote the Visitor in February 1908, "for their first confession. They speak Polish very poorly and on the streets they speak English. I am

[55] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 7 August 1913, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 29 December 1913, A. C. M. K. The personnel shortage continued throughout the war. In one of the first letters to reach Kraków after its conclusion, Father Mazurkiewicz described the growing jingoistic rhetoric evident in New Haven. He claimed that even the Irish priests and Bishop Nilan exhibited this anti-immigrant sentiment as they "work[ed] at removing foreign languages from the parochial schools. In addition he complained: "If the Congregation cannot dispatch suitable confreres, it might be better to wrap things up in America and the Father Visitor to recall us to Poland." The following month, he reiterated his willingness to abandon work in the United States. "The confreres wait for the Father Visitor to give the order. In five minutes, they would be ready to pack and return to Poland. Fervor is great, but in America, if things are to remain as they were, more priests are necessary." See: Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 10 July 1919, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 13 August 1919, A. C. M. K.

thinking about building a Polish school as soon as possible because this is the only way for them not to forget about the old country." Popular response to the school, when it was completed, was quite good. By September the school had an enrollment of ninety-three students.[56]

The school, however, did not address the discord evident among the parish's adult population. "In our parish," Father Mazurkiewicz wrote the Visitor, "everybody commits sins, especially drinking alcohol, doing immoral things, and not going to church." The situation was so bad, that at a recent wedding reception, a knife fight broke out between some of the guests. A local physician who treated the injured "took pictures because he had never seen such things." Subsequently, Father Mazurkiewicz felt "ashamed to go out in the street because they [the local residents] will point fingers at me charging that my people fight with knives." This problem, he concluded, required a parish mission. With such a small number of priests stretched between Connecticut and Pennsylvania, however, conducting one proved difficult.[57]

The impact of this manpower shortage was exacerbated by the tenuous relations the Vincentians had with the secular clergy and the Ordinary of the Hartford Diocese. Less than four months after arriving in the United States, Father Sołtysek wrote to Kraków praising the assistance given by Father McElroy in establishing a Polish parish in Derby, Connecticut. He described Bishop Tierney, however, as cold and impersonal, whose motives in establishing national parishes and bringing the Vincentians to Connecticut were suspect. Characterized as "bizarre--a typical American," Father Sołtysek charged that the Bishop established Polish parishes and selected the Polish

[56] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 17 February 1908, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 30 September 1908, A. C. M. K.
[57] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 30 September 1908, A. C. M. K.

Vincentians to minister to the Polish immigrants to keep "Poles close to the Church, so they will slowly Americanize." The Bishop's plan, however, Father Sołtysek judged, would be a failure, for, as soon as possible, Poles pooled their money and built their own churches.[58]

Similar sentiments were expressed by Father Mazurkiewicz. As he attempted to remedy the social ills of the immigrant generation and to prevent the loss of the Americanizing second generation, he often clashed with secular priests over ministering to Polish immigrants residing within their parish boundaries. In February 1908, he wrote the Visitor: "I received other letters from a neighboring 'arjyski' priest in which he questioned how I can marry Polish people from his parish. I did not write him back. I told people to go there with money; I did not want to hurt him. Poles, no matter what, do not want to get married in his church. They are telling me: 'If you are taking money from Poles, you should learn how to speak Polish.'" Taken together, personnel problems, fears

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[58] Sołtysek to Father Superior, 20 December 1904, A. C. M. K. Bishop Tierney's policies that drew such pointed criticism from Father Sołtysek had deep roots in the history of the Hartford Catholic Diocese, having roots going back into the 1870s. Following the death of Bishop Francis P. McFarland in 1873 and the short episcopate of Bishop Thomas Galberry, Bishop Lawrence S. McMahon faced the challenge of a growing diversity of European immigrants. Conservative in his diocesan policies, Bishop McMahon "judged that it was no part of his duty to disorganize it [the Hartford Diocese] so as to rebuild it according to another plan, no matter whether better or worse, so long as it was a plan of his own devising." His policy on ministering to the needs of his immigrant flock is one example of his maintenance of the conservative status quo. While recruiting members of the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette for French-Canadian immigrants and the Congregation of the Missionaries of Saint Charles for Italian immigrants, Bishop McMahon continued the practice of his predecessors of "training American and Irish-born students in European and Canadian seminaries as a means of supplying priests to the growing immigrant Catholic population." His diocesan conservatism was matched by his attitude toward the "loquacious and incontinent zeal of the new prophets' at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore who boldly "announced that they were going 'to make America Catholic.'" See: *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, s.v. "Connecticut, Catholic Church in"; Dolores Ann Liptak, *European Immigrants and the Catholic Church in Connecticut, 1870-1920*, (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1987), p. 96; Duggan, *The Catholic Church in Connecticut*, p. 119.

of Americanization, and strained relations with the secular clergy severely tested the patience and stamina of the confreres of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish.[59]

Tensions between Father Mazurkiewicz and the clergy of the Hartford Diocese escalated when, in 1911, the Vincentian began work on a new church in New Haven. In the fall of 1910, while the project was in its initial phases, Bishop John J. Nilan assisted Father Mazurkiewicz in purchasing some disputed plots of land for the new church. As preparations continued, however, the relations between the Pastor and his Ordinary became strained. Claiming that Bishop Nilan, "like every Irishman—above all values Irishmen over others," Father Mazurkiewicz charged that the delays in construction were a result of the Ordinary's low opinion of non-Irish priests. The Bishop's meddling, however, in Father Mazurkiewicz's opinion, even threatened the stability of the parish itself. With the ongoing potential threat of independentism echoing in his words, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote the Visitor: "He [Bishop Nilan] even wanted me to call a parish meeting to ask the parishioners if they want a church or not." Father Mazurkiewicz questioned the Polish immigrants' ability to conduct a proper meeting, claiming that "if there is a meeting it is imperative [in the opinion of the immigrants] to fight and protest because otherwise what kind of meeting would it be?" With the possibility of such unrest, Father Mazurkiewicz worried that any incident would lead the Bishop to conclude that "the Poles are bad people."[60]

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[59] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 17 February 1908; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 31 January 1908, A. C. M. K. In a number of letters written by confreres in the United States to the Visitor in Kraków, a phonetic adaptation of the adjective "Irish" is used instead of the Polish equivalent, "Irlandzki."

[60] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 26 September 1910, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 28 November 1910, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 19 November 1911, A. C. M. K. In the same letter Father Mazurkiewicz informed the Visitor of the growing tensions in Ansonia, Connecticut and the Independents' rebellion in the Polish parish in Union City, Connecticut. "Our neighbor, Father Macijewski, is suffering a rebellion in his parish in Union City," he wrote Kraków. "The people demanded

During the First World War, a period of almost complete isolation from the motherhouse in Kraków, the challenge of complying with the Hartford Diocese's policies and maintaining the Poles' loyalty to the Catholic Church was growing more taxing for the Polish confreres. In October 1914, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote to the Visitor that the establishment of an "independent Polish national church" in the Hartford Diocese renewed Bishop Nilan's call for holding "our folks in the Irish churches in order to Americanize them." The following April, Father Mazurkiewicz expressed his growing concern over the possibility of placing Polish parishes in Ansonia and Shelton, Connecticut under the direction of "English priests." Failure to accommodate Polish immigrants, he argued, and the Bishop's unwillingness to "find Polish priests for the parishes" would open Connecticut's Polonia to further infiltration by the independents. Just as before, Father Mazurkiewicz traced the cause of this problem to the hegemony of Irish-American priests in the diocese. "For thirty *ajryszów* [Irish]," he wrote the Visitor, "one thousand Poles are sacrificed." Since their arrival in the United States almost a decade earlier, the Polish confreres of the Congregation of the Mission had struggled to accommodate themselves to the controlling influence of Irish and Irish-American clerics of the Catholic Church in the United States. As they did so, however, they faced competition from a different quarter.[61]

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from him the ledgers and parish treasury, and when he did not acquiesce, they voted at a meeting that anyone daring to go to the Polish church will pay a five-dollar fine."

[61] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 12 October 1914, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 22 April 1915, A. C. M. K. In addition to the challenge of working with the local ordinary and secular clergy, the Polish confreres had to adjust to the fact that they were working within the geographical borders of the Vincentians' Eastern American Province. Their initial opinions of their fellow confreres were mixed. During a 1904 visit to the Eastern Province's Niagara University, Father Waszko found the American confreres "stiff and cold." In contrast to Poles, who, Father Waszko argued, expressed genuine interest when meeting a person, the Americans merely asked "How are You?' and then were finished. The confreres, he stated, did not like their Eastern Provincial counterparts and would try to avoid them. For

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It was the necessity of finding a religious congregation to protect his recently arrived Polish Catholic flock from the threat of independentism that led Bishop Tierney first to invite the Polish Vincentians to the Hartford Diocese. While both protecting the immigrants from the dangers of Americanization and defending the faithful against the temptations of independentism were important goals of the confreres in New Haven, these efforts took on greater importance in Derby, Connecticut, where Poles clamored for the establishment of an ethnic parish. Unlike their compatriots in New Haven, the Polish immigrants in Derby were more directly exposed to the "corrupting" influence of the Irish-American clergy as they attended Mass at Saint Mary Parish. Further complicating the Vincentians' efforts was the lack of qualified confreres available to come to the United States.

The divisiveness that characterized the early history of the Vincentians' efforts in New Haven was also evident in Derby, Connecticut. In Derby, however, old-world intra-ethnic competition further complicated matters. As early as 1896, regional identities between immigrants from Tarnów and Kolbuszowa handicapped efforts to establish a Polish parish in the area. Led by parishioner, Francis Stochmal, fifty-four members of

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Father Trawniczek, on the other hand, the confreres of the Eastern Province were quite praiseworthy. During a 1904 visit to Saint John's College in Brooklyn, Father Trawniczek commented on the grand elegance of the Church of Saint John the Baptist and the income it generated. He found the director of the Brooklyn diocesan seminary, Father Patrick McHale, C.M. to be a fine and educated priest, who reminded him of a highly esteemed confrere of the Kraków Province, Father Kasper Słomiński, C. M. In a visit to Germantown, Pennsylvania, Father Trawniczek met the Visitor of the Eastern Province, Father James MacGill, C.M. and the Provincial Procurator, both of whose mastery of the French and German languages made deep impressions on the Polish confrere. See: Waszko to Father Superior, 13 July 1904, A. C. M. K.; Trawniczek to Lewandowski, 24 October 1904, A. C. M. K.

Derby Polonia overcame this internal division to establish the "Parish Society of Saint Michael the Archangel in Derby" on February 7, 1903. In September, a delegation from the society, having acquired land for a church, appealed to Bishop Tierney to establish a Polish parish and to provide them with a priest. The Ordinary turned them down, citing the shortage of Polish-speaking priests. As they continued to celebrate Mass at Saint Mary Parish, society members grew impatient with what they saw as the Bishop's failure to address their spiritual needs. Feeling justified by the Bishop's inactivity and the transplanted tradition of the rights of patronage practiced in Poland, a group of parishioners contacted "an unauthorized priest from Poland," Father Walter Stec, a former Redemptorist priest from Stochmal's "home parish of Tuchowo," who, in a rather short period of time, appealed first to Bishop Tierney and then to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, D.C. Both clerics rejected the idea of a Polish parish in Derby and Father Stec soon departed for Europe. It was in the wake of these two rejections that whispers were heard of plans to establish an independent parish.[62]

This talk of independentism in Derby was not merely a local rumor; recent events in nearby Union City, Connecticut gave the rumors greater credibility. *The Catholic Transcript* reported on December 24, 1903, four days before the Polish Vincentians' arrival in New Haven, that Father Charles J. McElroy, the pastor of Saint Mary Parish, during Mass, felt it necessary to comment on a meeting of dissenters held in Union City,

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[62] Liptak, *European Immigrants*, pp. 119-121; *Złoty Jubileusz Parafii św. Michała, 1905-1955*, (Derby: Saint Michael the Archangel Parish, 1955), pp. 52-53; Kumor, *Saint Michael The Archangel Parish*, p.10. The date of Father Stec's arrival in Derby is disputed. In the above source, Liptak states that Father Stec attended the Union City meeting with dissenters from Derby. The parish jubilee book dates the priest's arrival in 1904. The Saint Michael the Archangel Society in Derby records in its minutes of 12 June 1904 that $10.00 had been given to Father Stec and $5.00 has been spent on a letter to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, D.C. See: *Książka Protokółowa, Towarzystwa Parafijalnego pod opięką swiętego Michała Archnioła w Derby Conn., rok 1903*, p. 14, Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish Archives.

Connecticut. He emphasized that he firmly believed that those individuals claiming to represent the Poles of Derby were not "Catholics in good standing" and that those who were "would have nothing to do with a matter of this kind without consulting him." He also defended the Bishop's program of preparing non-Polish seminarians to serve in Polish parishes. Countering the "assertion about Irishmen being sent to Poland," Father McElroy stated that "the Bishop has selected and sent boys born right here in Connecticut to Poland to learn the language of that country, and to prepare in other ways for the high officers [sic] that await them." It was in an effort to stabilize the situation in Derby that Bishop Tierney turned to the Vincentian Fathers.[63]

The Polish Vincentians, however, were no strangers to the Polish residents of Derby. Immediately upon their arrival in Connecticut, the Vincentians began ministering to the spiritual needs of Derby's Polish community, hearing confessions and celebrating Mass on the weekends. Late in 1904, the relationship between the confreres and the Derby Poles was made permanent. In a December 20th letter, Father Sołtysek wrote to Kraków that "It seems that God remembers our Congregation." By the following spring, with the Vincentian Fathers, bringing requisite clerical supervision previously lacking in Derby, the last hurdle was cleared for the establishment of a Polish parish. On April 15, 1905, the Vicar-General of the Hartford Diocese, Father John Synott, informed a delegation of parishioners that they would receive a decision from the Bishop soon. To eliminate any remaining divisions among themselves that might jeopardize the project, Poles from the towns of Derby, Ansonia, and Seymour convened a special meeting on

[63] "Derby," *The Catholic Transcript*, 24 December 1903. For the readers of *The Catholic Transcript*, Father McElroy's distinction between "Irishmen" and "boys born right here in Connecticut," who might happen to be of Irish descent, would have been relevant. For many Polish Catholic immigrants and Polish priests, however, the difference between the two groups would have been negligible.

July 3, 1905, where they vowed to "shake hands and work hard for the Polish Roman Catholic Church." Twelve days later, Bishop Tierney established the Parish of Saint Michael, the Archangel. In a sermon delivered the next day, Father Głogowski declared: "The Most Reverend Bishop commissioned me to organize this parish and as soon as I conclude the more important business here, I will send you a priest who will be your Pastor. I ask for harmony; there should be no factions, but everyone should go hand in hand with me and this work will bear fruit."[64]

With the formal erection of the Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish, the Vincentian Fathers, after only about nineteenth months in the United States and barely one year after purchasing a new church in New Haven, faced the daunting task of unifying the local Polonia of Derby and building a church there. The latter task, to a great extent, depended on the confreres' ability to create a collective identity among the Poles of Derby. As work proceeded on plans for a church, the community continued to celebrate Mass in the basement chapel of Saint Mary Parish, but with a rental fee of half the weekly collection, Father Głogowski began searching for a new venue for the community. He found it in a hall on Main Street owned by Max Durrschmidt, a local building contractor, who rented the site to the parish for $120.00 per year in the hope of winning the good will of the parish and a contract for building the new church, which Bishop Tierney granted him in mid-May 1906.[65]

The success of the building project and the future of the parish continued to depend on the financial support of the area's working-class Poles. While Father Sołtysek succeeded in collecting a total of $1,788.75 for the building fund in the summer of 1905,

[64]Sołtysek to Father Superior, 20 December 1904, A. C. M. K.; *Złoty Jubileusz*, pp. 54-55; Kumor, *Saint Michael the Archangel Parish*, p. 10.
[65] *Złoty Jubileusz*, p. 56; Kumor, *Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish*, pp. 67-68.

the initial enthusiasm cooled by that fall with parishioners failing to respond to Father Głogowski's request to register with the parish and pay their membership dues. Their inaction forced the priest eventually to go door-to-door collecting money and signing-up families. To make up the shortfall, Father Głogowski diverted funds from New Haven initially earmarked for the financial support of the motherhouse in Kraków to support the struggling parish in Derby. This and later lukewarm support was attributable, in part, to the number of recently arrived Poles, whose previous experience in the Church did not include personal financial support for the maintenance of a parish. Writing to the Visitor in Kraków, Father Waszko expressed his frustration with area Poles' financial support. "You would not imagine what I have to listen to! Sometimes I feel like I would like to punch someone right in the mug." In late July 1906, he cajoled the parishioners from the pulpit: "Where do you get married or have your children baptized? Here and not in Poland. Decide, once and for all, to live the American way."[66]

As the confreres struggled to overcome divisions among the Poles in Derby, they faced tension within their own ranks. Initially, Father Głogowski selected Father Maksymilian Sołtysek, C.M. to be the first pastor of Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish. Arguing that he was "too young and injudicious," Bishop Tierney rejected the proposal.

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[66] *Złoty Jubileusz*, p. 56; Głogowski to Father Superior, 9 February 1906, A. C. M. K.; Kumor, *Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish*, pp. 11-12; Waszko to Father Visitor, 6 June 1906, A. C. M. K.; Sunday Announcements, 29 July 1906, *Książka Ogłoszeń dla Parafii św. Michała, Derby, Conn.*, p.22-23, Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish Archives. The translation of Father Waszko's announcement is from Kumor, p. 11. Father Waszko continued to struggle to collect money from his parishioners. In the summer of 1907 he wrote to the Visitor: "In order to cover these expenses [expenses for windows, pews, and an organ for the church], we had to collect money from the parishioners and listen to the comments of the sheep and billy goats." See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 6 July 1907. Beginning in 1907, Poles in Derby, like those in New Haven, were struggling through a severe economic downturn. Economic conditions continued to be tenuous and an assistant to Father Waszko in Derby, Father Józef Janowski sympathized more with the parishioners' plight. "Our poor parishioner—we are pressing them too much." See: Janowski to Father Visitor, 4 November 1907, A. C. M. K. In March 1910, Father Waszko wrote to the Visitor, describing strikes and limited job opportunities in the East. "It would be good," he argued, "if they went west to the farms, but for the most part, they stay in the nearby States." See: Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 17 February 1908 & Waszko to Father Visitor, 15 March 1910, A. C. M. K.

Father Głogowski then recommended Father Waszko, whose appointment was welcomed by the Bishop, but opposed by Father Stanisław Konieczny, C.M. On November 5, 1905, Father Głogowski announced his appointment of Father Konieczny as pastor of Saint Michel, the Archangel Parish. The following week, he appointed Father Waszko his assistant.[67]

While assigned to the Derby parish, Father Konieczny spent much of his time in mission work, requiring Father Głogowski to take on many of the pastoral duties there. Exhausted by these responsibilities and conducting a mission in Detroit, Michigan, where he came down with a bout of influenza, Father Głogowski petitioned the Visitor for additional confreres. Although desperate for help, he stressed the importance of sending priests of humble character. The problem, like in New Haven, was the shortage of personnel in Poland and the limited number of experienced Missionaries available for assignment in the United States. One possible candidate was Father Hugo Dylla, C.M., a veteran of the Vincentians' mission in Brazil. Father Głogowski's cautionary note to the Visitor, Father Józef Kiedrowski, regarding posting Father Dylla to Connecticut, captures the dilemma of filling the Polish Vincentian ranks in the United States. While a better candidate than two previously suggested confreres, Father Dylla's character is "horrible." "I do not mean to be so picky in choosing priests and make you upset. . . . [H]e could make more trouble than he did in South America. That is why I would be afraid to take him." Personnel shortages and tensions among the confreres in the United States would continue to be a problem for the Polish Vincentians.[68]

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[67] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 November 1905, A. C. M. K.; Kumor, *Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish*, pp. 55-56.

[68] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 27 December 1905, A. C. M. K. Father Dylla's questionable reputation stems from his activities as a Missionary in Brazil. Ordained in 1899, he was a member of the first mission

In the first quarter of 1906, the difficulties of properly staffing the parish were exacerbated by tensions between Fathers Głogowski, Konieczny, and Waszko. Relations between the confreres became so strained that Father Głogowski wrote to the Superior in Kraków in secrecy: "These matters [of which I write] are so repulsive that they would discourage any virtuous confreres from coming to America." The sources of the problem were relations between the two confreres in Derby, as well as those between Fathers Waszko and Głogowski. On February 5, 1906, Father Głogowski met with the other two priests to discuss their assignments at Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish and a troublesome letter from Kraków that attributed the successes in Derby to Father Głogowski. Father Waszko was so incensed by this last point, Father Głogowski recalled, that he "actually jumped off his chair when I smilingly told them [Fathers Waszko and Konieczny] that Kraków is heaping praise on me as if all the credit for the institution belongs to me."[69]

Less than a week later, Father Waszko wrote the Visitor explaining his reasons for turning down an offer to be Superior of the Derby house. After careful consideration, he concluded that he did not have the necessary personal qualities "that instill people's confidence in their pastor." Lacking personal warmth and suffering from a weak voice and speech impediment, Father Waszko argued that he could not win over the parishioners. He saw his own shortcomings as obstacles to the success of the parish.

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team to go to Curitiba, Brazil to serve the Polish community there. Living in Tomas Coelho, Father Dylla conducted missions and wrote about the "social, cultural, and political situation" in the area for the Polish publication, *Misje Katolickie*. In 1906, state authorities in Paraná charged him with slander and imprisoned the Vincentian for six weeks. While Father Dylla was released through the intervention of the Bishop Don Duarte Lepaldo e Silva, his public criticism of the government damaged the standing of the Catholic Church in Paraná and halted missionary work in the area. Upon his release, he returned to Kraków, but almost immediately left for the United States. See: *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce (1651-2001), II-1 Biografie*, s.v. Dylla, Hugo (1874-1966).

[69] Głogowski to Father Superior, 9 February 1906, A. C. M. K.

"When people do not like their priest," he wrote, "they usually do not put much money in the collection basket. That is true here in America."[70]

In late March, Father Konieczny wrote to Kraków in an attempt to persuade Kraków to convince Father Waszko to accept the Pastor and Superior positions in Derby. "We cannot replace him for he is building a church. The fact that he sent back the patent is not important; he wanted to find out if God or the people wanted him to manage others. . . . [H]e is managing in Derby like a Superior; all we have to do is to confirm this." The conflict was finally settled on April 29, 1906, when Father Głogowski recalled Father Konieczny and appointed Father Waszko as the second pastor of Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish.[71]

As hesitant as he was initially, Father Waszko quickly took on the responsibilities and challenges of leading the Parish of Saint Michael, the Archangel. To assist him in these tasks and to maintain the communal living of the Congregation of the Mission, a second confrere was needed in Derby. The man selected by Kraków was Father Hugo Dylla, C.M. Tensions between the two priests emerged soon after Father Dylla's arrival. While the new assistant was willing to work hard, "hearing confessions until very late in the evening," he seemed "upset by it." In addition, Father Dylla had a sense of personal independence that bothered his Superior. Instead of submitting money to Father Waszko

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[70] Waszko to Father Visitor, 14 February 1906, A. C. M. K.

[71] Konieczny to Lewandowski, 26 March 1906, A. C. M. K.; *Złoty Jubileusz*, p. 56. As late as the middle of May, Father Waszko was still writing to Kraków to confirm its reception and acceptance of his refusal of the pastorate in Derby. Father Waszko wondered in the letter if the process of electing a new Visitor for the Kraków Province might be contributing to the delay. On April 24, 1906, Father Kasper Słomiński, who was first discussed as a candidate for the Visitorship six years earlier, succeeded the man who was appointed Visitor in 1900, Father Józef Kiedrowski. Five days after Father Waszko penned his letter, Father Słomiński formally established a house of the Congregation of the Mission at Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish in Derby. See: Waszko to Father Superior, 18 May 1906, A. C. M. K.; Stanisław Rospond, C. M., *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce (1651-2001), I Dzieje* (Kraków: Instytut Wydawniczy Księży Misjonarzy, 2001), p. 246; Kumor, *Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish*, p. 11.

given to him personally while on missions, Father Dylla sent it to the Sisters of Charity in Poland. Father Dylla further upset Father Waszko by failing to submit his personal correspondences to him for review. The pastor speculated in a June letter that Father Dylla might have been sent by a confrere in Poland "to do some spying." He confided in Father Słomiński that he would "calm down" only after the Visitor's visit to the houses in the United States.[72]

For the next year, Father Waszko's relationship with his assistant remained strained, with any criticism being met with a harsh rebuttal. By December 1906, Father Dylla made it known that he was contemplating leaving the Congregation—a move, Father Waszko counseled, he would regret. "If you do not feel good here," Father Waszko recalled in a letter to the Visitor telling Father Dylla in a letter to "go back to the old country. And he again was offended. I told him that authority does not exist for him." In January 1907, Father Głogowski countered that Father Dylla had not been honest in his reasons for coming to the United States. On one of Father Głogowski's visit to Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish the previous month, Father Dylla clashed with Fathers Waszko and Głogowski. "He said so many things," Father Głogowski later wrote to the Visitor, "that no priest should say in front of someone else. . . . He did not want to hear any explanation. We had to force him to be quiet." That same month, Father Dylla left Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish. Father Waszko would not have another assistant pastor until September 1907.[73]

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[72] Waszko to Father Visitor, 6 June 1906, A. C. M. K.

[73] Waszko to Father Visitor, 6 December 1906, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 4 January 1907, A. C. M. K.; *Złoty Jubileusz*, p. 57. Father Waszko's stern demeanor, evident above, also brought him to loggerheads with the provincial leadership in Kraków. In a March 1907 letter to Father Janowski, Father Waszko speculated on the provincial leadership's opinion of him. "In Europe, at least what I know, they say that my high principles were the reason why Father Dylla left the Congregation. So let it be." In the same letter, Father Waszko characterized Kraków's intervention in local matters as troublesome. "Please

Strong-willed and often ill-tempered himself, however, Father Waszko quickly found fault with proposed assistants. When, in the early spring of 1907, Father Sołtysek requested that he be accepted in the Derby house, Father Waszko wrote to Father Jan L. Janowski, C.M.: "You and I do not have any secrets between us. I am afraid to take Father S [Sołtysek] for I do not trust him. He is an unhappy man and very hard to get along with. . . . I would rather resign than take him. Why should I go through the same thing I did with Father D [Dylla]?" A proper mix of confreres continued to elude the Polish Vincentians in Connecticut.[74]

As he continued to find fault with his fellow Vincentians in the United States, Father Waszko petitioned Kraków for suitable confreres to work among Polish Catholics. His letters to the Visitor exhibit a desperate, crusading tone. In describing the void created when Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz, C.M. left after a three-week stint in Derby in 1907, Father Waszko appealed to the Visitor: "I understand that confreres are needed in Poland but we need them even more here. Father Visitor, please send someone to me. We cannot quit our post where we put in so much work." No relief came. Two years later, the pastor's letters lost none of their urgency. "We need to enliven the [parish] organizations," Father Waszko wrote to Kraków in 1910, "before our enemies get to them." While apathy and home-country regional differences had characterized Derby

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let the Father Visitor know that both Father Kryska and Father Lewandowski should stay away from our business. All they do is confuse matters and then we have to suffer and solve matters." See: Waszko to Janowski, 28 March 1907, A. C. M. K. Father Dylla remained in the United States, where he became a diocesan priest and served in parishes in Massachusetts. He died in September 1966 and was buried in Fall River, Massachusetts. See: *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce (1651-2001), II-1 Biografie*, s.v. Dylla, Hugo (1874-1966).

[74] Waszko to Janowski, 28 March 1907, A. C. M. K.

Polonia from before the parish's erection, Father Waszko was recognizing more potent threats—independentism and Americanization.[75]

The horns of the dilemma on which Father Waszko found himself had their roots in the difficulty of blunting the Americanization efforts of the Diocese of Hartford while defending Polish Catholic immigrants against the corrupting influence of independentism. The complexity of the first task stemmed from the decree establishing Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish in July 1905. When announcing the erection of the parish, Father Głogowski stated: "On today's date a Polish parish begins in Derby. Derby, Shelton, Ansonia, Seymour and generally everyone speaking the Polish language and living in this area belongs to it. Inhabitants of Orange may belong to this parish or the New Haven parish." While Father Głogowski's comments indicate that Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish was to be considered in his mind an ethnic parish serving the needs of the area's Polish Catholics, it was de facto a territorial parish, having a significant number of Slovak and Moravian members from its inception. The multi-ethnic nature of the parish was extended in 1907 to include Italian and German immigrants, who felt alienated from the Irish-American clergy serving them at Saint Mary Parish. "The Germans would like to join our parish," Father Waszko wrote the Visitor, "and are going to ask the bishop's permission. The bishop forbade me '*curam pastoralem*' over the Italians, but they are disregarding it. . . . When I told them about the bishop's decision, their reply was 'You are a Catholic priest; your church is Catholic; and

[75] Waszko to Visitor, 6 July 1907, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Visitor, 10 February 1910, A. C. M. K.

we shall attend the church we choose to go to.'" German immigrants continued to petition Father Waszko for pastoral services into July 1910.[76]

Confusion over the nature of Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish also led to strained relations with the Bishop of Hartford and members of the diocesan clergy. In the wake of complaints against Father Waszko for ministering to individuals from Ansonia, Bishop Tierney "'separated' Ansonia from St. Michael's, withdrawing 350 of the wealthier Polish families." Bishop Tierney undertook this action after promising the Visitor in Kraków, Father Kasper Słomiński, C.M., that the confreres would continue to serve Poles in the towns stipulated in the original decree. With local economic conditions worsening in the winter of 1907-1908, Father Waszko faced-off against the diocesan priests in nearby Seymour, Connecticut over the issues of baptisms and stole fees. With a tinge of sarcasm, Father Waszko wrote to the Visitor: "My neighbor from Seymour complained about me to the Bishop again." He attempted to clarify the situation by relaying the story of a seventeen-year-old Polish girl engaged to a young man, "Franek," who, after having their vows announced twice during Mass at Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish, arrived at the rectory one day and asked Father Waszko to hear her confession. She explained that she had changed her mind and now planned to marry an "Americanized" Pole, "Janek," the next day in Seymour. After Father Waszko rejected the idea, "Janek" countered that they would marry "in court or . . . without a confession." The pastor "threw them out." The couple then went to the diocesan priest in Seymour and told him that Father Waszko refused to hear their confession. "The American priest," according to Father Waszko, "announced their bans of marriage three

[76] *Złoty Jubileusz*, p. 54; Kumor, *Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish*, p. 13; Waszko to Father Visitor, 19 August 1907, A. C. M. K.

times and blessed their marriage without hearing their confession and informed the Bishop that I refused to hear their confession."[77]

Father Waszko argued that this incident and the endemically high-handed Irish clergy's treatment of Polish priests required a drastic change in the thinking of the diocesan clergy, with special attention to greater tolerance by members of the American hierarchy and, more particularly, the appointment of a bishop for Polish Catholics in the United States. "There are among the Irish priests those who care for the spiritual needs of the Poles," Father Waszko wrote, "but there are ones who do not care and would like the Polish priests to work for them. I do not know how long this will go on. The Polish priests in other States simply cannot understand it. May God give us a Polish Bishop as soon as possible."[78]

Events over the next eight months seemed to fulfill Father Waszko's hopes. On July 28, 1908, Father Paul Rhode was consecrated an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Chicago, making him the first Polish Bishop in the United States. A little over eight weeks later, Bishop Tierney died on October 5, 1908. The possibility of greater equality and improved treatment seemed good. For Father Waszko, however, his recent statements had drawn the critical attention of the Visitor, who silenced the Derby pastor for one year. While cautioned to temper his tongue, Father Waszko exhibited his acerbic tone in a letter describing relations with the priests in Seymour after the death of Bishop Tierney. "Things in the parish are okay. Perhaps this month we will have a new Bishop. During the episcopal interregnum, my 'lovely' neighbors did not complain about me regarding the matters of baptisms and weddings. . . . I spoke with Bishop Rhode, who

[77] Kumor, *Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish*, p. 13; Waszko to Father Visitor, 5 November 1907, A. C. M. K.; Waszko & Janowski to Father Visitor, 21 February 1908, A. C. M. K.
[78] Waszko & Janowski to Father Visitor, 21 February 1908, A. C. M. K.

administered the sacrament of confirmation in our parish, about these problems and he gave me his approval. We are curious to see what the new Bishop will do." The policies of the new Bishop, however, would be a sad disappointment.[79]

Bishop John J. Nilan succeeded Bishop Tierney on February 14, 1910. In a meeting at the end of the year, the new Bishop presided over a conference of the priests of the Hartford Diocese. His pronouncements at the meeting disturbed Father Waszko, who saw them as an additional effort to circumvent Vincentian ability to serve the Polish immigrant community. In a letter to the Visitor, he described the prohibition on ministering to Poles outside his parish boundaries and the hegemony it granted Irish

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[79] Waszko to Father Visitor, 2 November 1909, A. C. M. K. The issue of the elevation of a Polish bishop in the United States was reaching a climax when the Vincentian Fathers first arrived in the United States. With independentism making inroads in Polonias throughout the country, Polish priests met in two conventions in 1899 and 1901, the latter one being held in Buffalo, New York in the immediate wake of the assassination of President William McKinley by Leon Człogosz, a Michigan-born, Polish-American from Cleveland, Ohio. The delegates argued that the appointment of a Polish auxiliary in a diocese with a large Polish population would be an effective deterrent against further dissent. Father Wacław Kruszka, a Wisconsin priest, who argued against the hegemony of the English-speaking, primarily Irish-American, clergy, claimed that with approximately two-million Catholic Polish immigrants, roughly twenty percent of the American Catholic population, the Poles deserved proportional representation in the American hierarchy. Members of the hierarchy, however, on several occasions, charged that the Poles were a "headstrong people." Fiercely patriotic, the Poles possessed an "unconquerable determination upon the part of this national spirit in their midst." They believed that no candidate possessed the "sound judgment, tried efficiency in the exercise of priestly and pastoral functions, recognized freedom from associations and prejudices which indicate partisan spirit, the ability and tact to conciliate opposing factions, and the power to hold the confidence of the ecclesiastical authorities as well as of the public." In 1905, Archbishop Sebastian Messmer of Milwaukee put an assimilationist spin on this theme in a letter to Cardinal James Gibbons: "The Polish are not yet American enough and keep aloof too much from the rest of us." Driven by a vision of a bishop as pastor and teacher who needed to speak the language and share the culture of his flock, Father Kruszka, in 1903 went to Rome to plead his case before the Pope. In April 1904, Pope Pius X informed Father Kruszka that "the decision will be made as soon as possible, and it will be made according to your wishes." In June, Archbishop Franciszek Symon, so as not to upset the members of the American hierarchy, "unofficially" toured the United States, visiting Polish communities and reporting back to the Pontiff on conditions. For the next few years, speculation and vitriolic debate ran rampant throughout American Polonia. One rumor was that Archbishop Józef Weber of Lwów, fulfilling a vow he made years earlier, wanted to resign and join the Resurrectionist Fathers in mission work in the United States. In spring 1907, Archbishop James Quigley traveled to the Resurrectionist motherhouse in Rome to inform the Superior General, Father Jan Kasprzycki, C.R., that "a local diocesan priest" would be selected as auxiliary bishop. On July 28, 1908, Father Paul Rhode, the pastor of Saint Michael Parish in South Chicago was selected. See: "American Bishops and Polish Catholics," *American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. XXIX (October 1907), pp. 350-351; Buczek, "Equality," pp. 9, 11-12, 14 & 15; Buczek, "Polish-Americans," p. 156; "A Close Observer", "Recent Schismatic Movements among Catholics of the United States," *American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. XXI, no. 1 (July 1899), pp. 9-10; John Iwicki, C.R., *Resurrectionist Charism,, Volume Two*, pp. 37, 220 & 233; Kuzniewski, *Faith & Fatherland*, pp. 54, 56 & 59; Kuzniewski, "Wenceslaus Kruszka," pp. 106-107; Wieczerzak, "Setting the Stage," p. 70.

priests. "The Irish," Father Waszko commented, "therefore, have the upper hand. I am curious as to what will now happen to those in Seymour. . . . If he [Bishop Nilan] had Polish-speaking chaplains in all the Irish parishes that would be doable. It will be difficult to explain this to the people. . . . Up until now, I never asked where they lived, and when they told me where they were from, I asked if they spoke English. Those who did not, I took. Now the Bishop put the entire onus on the local pastor." Father Waszko concluded that without an interpreter, "the sick one will pass into eternity" without the administering of last rites.[80]

For the Vincentian Fathers in Connecticut, this arbitrary drawing of territorial boundaries and the resulting placement of immigrants into parishes without a Polish-speaking priest added to the fear of independentism. Previously characterizing Ansonia as being populated by "many socialists and rebels," Father Waszko informed the Visitor that independentist literature began appearing in the parish and hoped that, unlike the Polish community in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Derby would escape the establishment of an independent parish. Complicating his task, however, was the chronic shortage of confreres. "I am telling you directly that one person," Father Waszko wrote the Visitor, "is not enough for this battle. . . . Only systematic and constant work in the school and the confessional can successfully stop them. I am begging you to send me a diligent and prudent priest."[81]

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[80] Waszko to Father Visitor, n.d., A. C. M. K. Relations between the Vincentians and Bishop Nilan and the diocesan clergy remained tense. Writing to Kraków, the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven, Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz, C.M., wrote: "In general, our Bishop is unfair to outsiders. For example, he told Father Waszko in writing that only Derby belongs to him, meanwhile, we took Derby on condition that Shelton and Ansonia will also be his [Father Waszko's]. . . . You, to whom Father Waszko will direct the Bishop, should not agree to this and give him an ultimatum—either you leave things as they are or we withdraw the Missionaries." See: Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 19 November 1911, A. C. M. K.

[81] Waszko to Father Visitor, 6 June 1906, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 19 August 1907,

By 1911, conditions worsened. That spring, Father Waszko was targeted by "liberal newspapers," which quickly toned down their rhetoric after the pastor read an article "from the pulpit . . . so the people would know what kind of pastor they have." In May, while hearing confessions in Stamford, Father Waszko and the other priests were threatened by a group of irate laymen brandishing pistols. By late summer, reports reached Kraków of "a horde of riff-raff" demanding to inspect the parish account books and bank records. That fall, similar activity in Union City led Bishop Nilan to consult Father Waszko. The Derby pastor recommended closing the parish until the parishioners repented their actions. Although Father Waszko explained that the dissidents did not have the necessary money, Bishop Nilan worried about the possibility of an independent church being established.[82]

The dual pressures of disputes with the diocesan clergy and the independentists came to a head in December 1911. With the battle over jurisdiction in Ansonia, Derby, Shelton, and Seymour still undecided, Father Waszko vented his frustration with the American clergy. "These are uncivilized people," he wrote the Visitor, "and those who have more contact with Americans are well aware of it." If Bishop Nilan did not make a decision on the disputed parishes soon, Father Waszko charged, "we will have to drag him all the way to Rome to clarify this." The Ordinary's reticence extended to the growing independentist threat. With an independent parish opening in the Hartford Diocese and Bishop Paul Rhode voicing greater opposition to the movement, Father

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A. C. M. K. The first reference to potential candidates leaving Connecticut for Europe was in August 1911. Two young men, Wojciech Rapiński and Adam Wiacek, went to Kraków hoping to become lay brothers. Father Waszko wrote the Visitor: "Please try them out—I told them plenty—maybe we will make something of them." See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 9 August 1911, A. C. M. K.

[82] Waszko to Father Visitor, 10 May 1911, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 9 August 1911, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 12 October 1911, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 19 November 1911, A. C. M. K.

Waszko charged that Bishop Nilan had "lost his independence" and was "acting under the influence of others"—conditions that would "not be to the Church's advantage." By the outbreak of the First World War, like their fellows in New Haven, a small group of Vincentians in Derby faced the dire challenge of preserving the faith of the local Polonia against the assaults of clerical Americanists and Polish independentists. Further complicating these efforts was the call to conduct missions in Polish enclaves throughout the United States.[83]

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Like the first followers of Vincent de Paul and the pioneer Missionaries who brought the Congregation of the Mission to Poland, the Polish confreres of the Kraków Province placed special emphasis on conducting missions among the former peasantry who, in the situation in the United States, had transplanted a Polish-accented form of Roman Catholicism from their partitioned homeland to the American urban industrial centers. In the United States, the revitalizing efforts of the Vincentian Fathers aimed at defending the faithful against Americanization and Polish Independentism as well as securing necessary funding to expand their efforts in the United States as well as in the Polish lands.[84]

Within eight months of their arrival, Fathers Głogowski, Trawniczek, and Waszko conducted a number of missions in which they discovered how rapidly the Polish laity had Americanized. In the summer of 1904, while in Trenton, New Jersey, the confreres recognized the corrupting influence of American culture on the pastor of the parish, who, while being "very friendly, . . . like an American does not know how to show his heart

[83] Waszko to Father Visitor, 21 December 1911, A. C. M. K.
[84] "Z podróży wizytacynej Ks. Wizytatora w Ameryce." *Roczniki*, Rok XIII no. 1, kwartał I (1907), p. 5.

[emotions]." The parishioners, as well, the confreres commented, had also changed, becoming stubborn.[85]

This stubbornness among Polish immigrants often found an outlet in the growing independentist movement. In the spring of 1905, the Vincentian Fathers conducted a mission in Rockville, Connecticut, where an "Irish priest" educated in Lwów had been rejected by the local community. Having begun to conduct prayer services on their own without the direction of an ordained priest, the community seemed to be a likely target for independentists. The Vincentians, by conducting the mission and hearing confessions, eased tensions between the congregation and Bishop Tierney, who soon afterward found for it a Polish-speaking Czech priest.[86]

The following February, while conducting a retreat in Erie, Pennsylvania, Fathers Konieczny, Trawniczek, and Waszko met Father Andrzej Ignasiak, the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish. While in Erie, Father Konieczny witnessed the pastor's efforts to prevent the Germanization of his parishioners, who came mostly from the Prussian partition of Poland. In a letter to the editor of *Roczniki*, Father Konieczny commented on the importance of winning the trust and support of the laity. If a priest did not succeed in this effort, Father Konieczny wrote, he ran the risk of an arrogance among the laity "acquir[ed] by being under German influence."[87]

A more pressing condition was evident among the Poles of Shamokin, Pennsylvania, when, in 1909, the Vincentians conducted a mission at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish. Established in the 1870s, the parish experienced conflict in the first years

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[85] Waszko to Father Superior, 13 July 1904, A. C. M. K.
[86] "List ks. Superyora Stanisława Koniecznego do ks. Redaktora." *Roczniki* Rok XII, no. 3 (Lipiec 1906), pp. 180-181.
[87] Konieczny to Father Redaktor, 8 February 1906, A. C. M. K.

of the twentieth century that led, in part, to the establishment of a Polish National Catholic Church. Led by Fathers Głogowski, Mazurkiewicz, and Waszko, the mission had as one of its objectives the elimination of "any further losses to the P.N.C.C." The mission's second objective was the elimination of the corrupting practice of going dancing at an area hotel. Responding to the Vincentians' rallying cry against such a threatening American activity, the mothers of the parish vowed to prohibit their daughters from "show[ing] themselves in the hotel." At the conclusion of the mission, Bishop Paul Rhode gave a sermon in which he warned the congregation against the pursuit of American prosperity, characterizing it as a pathway "to conceit, to drink and waste, to law suits and imbroglios, and to disobedience with regards to the Church," activities that ultimately would lead dissenters "into the arms of socialists and independents."[88]

Similar threats to the stability of Catholic Polonia were evident in a mission conducted in Medina, New York in early 1913. Like other communities visited by the confreres, Medina's Polonia had clashed with an area Irish priest. The corrupting influence of Americanization and the failure of the community to buttress itself against it was captured by Father Janowski, who commented on the number of young people, who, because the community lacked an area Polish school, had forgotten how properly to speak the language and had to make their confession "half in Polish, half in English."[89]

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[88] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 3 December 1909, A. C. M. K. Similar concern about the potential spread of independentism was expressed after missions in Buffalo and Lackawanna, New York in 1913. In both situations, opposition to previously assigned priests was noted. In the case of Buffalo, mentioned was made of the Parish of Holy Mother of the Divine Rosary, the congregation established by the independent priest, Father Stefan Kamiński, one of the two prelates elevated to the office of bishop of an independent Polish congregation. See: Ks. Józef Janowski, „Z Ameryki Północnej: Misye dawane przez księży Janowskiego i Ściskalskiego w r. 1913." *Roczniki*, Rok XXI, nos. 1 & 2 (1915), pp. 75-81.

[89] Ks. Józef Janowski, "Z północnej Ameryki: Misja w Buffalo, N.Y." *Roczniki*, Rok XIX, no. 4 (1913), pp. 317-319.

The Vincentians' concern over proper education for the second generation had been first expressed five years earlier when confreres conducted a mission in Chicago in 1908. While in Chicago, the Vincentians visited two parishes under the direction of the Resurrectionist Fathers as well as their Saint Stanislaus Kostka College. It was while visiting the college that Father Jan Rossman, C.M. commented on the importance of higher education for the sons of American Polonia. In preparing these young men for futures as "priests, teachers, lawyers, doctors, and businessmen," the Resurrectionists were shaping the future and guaranteeing a Polish voice in local, state, and national government. By establishing such schools, the Polish clergy could play an important arbitrating role in the Americanization of the second generation.[90]

The potential for corruption of both adults and youth was especially acute in locations that lacked a critical mass of Polish immigrants to establish the institutional networks evident in larger American Polonias. For the residents of these smaller Polish enclaves, the Vincentians' mission activity was even more vital in maintaining their sense of *polskość*. One of the more isolated clusters the Vincentians visited was in Wheeling, West Virginia. In the summer of 1910, Fathers Waszko and Trawniczek conducted a two-week mission there, hearing approximately 1,000 confessions. In his letter to the Visitor, Father Waszko commented on the facts that the closest priest resided four hours away from the mission and that there were only three Polish-speaking priests in a diocese that, at the time, included territory in the states of Virginia and West Virginia.[91]

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[90] Ks. Jan Rossman, "Misye w Stanach Zjednoczonych w r. 1908/9." *Roczniki*, Rok XVI, no. 1, kwartał I (1910), pp. 27-29. The Polish Vincentians establish their own secondary and post-secondary educational institutions in the Philadelphia area and Erie, Pennsylvania.

[91] Paweł Waszko,C.M., "Misya we Wheeling (West Virginia)" *Roczniki*, Rok XVII, no. 1, kwartał I (1911), p. 5. The Americanization of Polish immigrants, while always a point of concern for the Vincentians, did not always have such dire consequences. While conducting a mission in Floral Park, New

From Polish immigrant settlements in the coal fields of West Virginia and Pennsylvania to those in industrial towns and cities in Ohio and New York, the Vincentian Fathers fought a continuous battle against the forces of Independentism and Americanization, preserving the Polish-accented Catholicism of their partitioned homeland. But like the clerics of West Virginia, the Polish confreres in the United States remained hindered by a shortage of qualified confreres. This dilemma was made worse whenever a confrere fell ill. In September 1908, for example, Father Głogowski reported on the worsening health of Father Józef Słupina, C.M., who was thought to be suffering from either stomach ulcers or stomach cancer. Father Głogowski wrote the Visitor: "It is a blow for us because the missions are starting and he cannot be left alone. Father Trawniczek and I are to preach at two forty-hours devotions at the same time a mission will be held in Chicago. . . . I cannot cancel either the forty-hours or the mission because it is too late and we will again limp along for a time even though two [confreres] are coming to help. With God's help, we will make do as we can." Father Głogowski added that the personnel shortage made it more difficult to compete with the Jesuit Fathers in securing mission assignments.[92]

As their parish apostolate in Connecticut and Pennsylvania grew, the strain on the confreres increased. In March 1912, Father Głogowski informed the Visitor that while three confreres had just completed a mission in Trenton, New Jersey, he feared that the Vincentians would be unable to conduct any additional missions during Lent, having,

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York, a town on Long Island, in 1905, Father Konieczny, C.M. commented: "What a country, what a custom! Formerly, Maciuś or Kasia walked barefoot to church, carrying their shoes over their backs so as not to get them dirty. Now, only two or three months after leaving the old country, one has a 'bajsykl' [bicycle] on which one rushes about better than many a Galician dandy." See: „List ks. Superyora Stanisława Koniecznego do ks. Redaktora." *Roczniki* Rok XII, no. 3 (Lipiec 1906), pp.183-184.

[92] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 September 1908, A. C. M. K.

instead, to tend to their duties in the parishes. In pleading for additional qualified Missionaries, he claimed that the new arrivals would allow him to advertise in newspapers, thereby increasing both the number of missions and the income generated from them; additional confreres would also eliminate the embarrassment of having to ask the Jesuit Fathers to conduct missions the Vincentians would be unable to staff. One year later, Father Głogowski again wrote Kraków regarding the need for more priests: "Even if there were ten of us, there would be enough work for everyone. We sometimes have to refuse a plea for help, which makes for dissatisfaction when they reply to Father Konieczny's announcement that we are ready to help on demand."[93]

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As Father Głogowski penned the above words, Europe began its catastrophic descent into the maelstrom of the First World War, a conflict that would prevent the confreres from communicating with the Visitor in Kraków for four years, further complicating the task of carving out a niche in the religious topography of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. The impact of the resulting isolation complicated negotiations between the members of the American-Catholic and Polish-immigrant-clergy charter groups, two populations that previously had claimed control over particular identities in the American Catholic Church.

Forged over more than a century, the early-twentieth-century definition of an American Catholic cleric emerged from ethnic tensions between the English, French, German, and Irish reaching back to the early days of the United States and Bishop John Carroll's effort to create a Republican Catholicism, a campaign hindered by his reliance

[93] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 1 March 1912, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 6 April 1913, A. C. M. K.

on foreign-born priests. By the middle of the nineteenth centuries, Irish- and German-born bishops began to recharter the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, giving a religious culture transplanted from their home country a sense of exclusive legitimacy. As the sons of Irish Catholics rose through the ranks of the American hierarchy, this Irish-accented Roman Catholicism, being challenged by recurring waves of nativism, recast itself as the sole orthodox American Catholic culture and labeled any challenges anti-American. Struggling to maintain a degree of legitimacy in the eyes of wider American society, these clerics sought to blunt the efforts of more recently arrived Catholic immigrants to recharter the Church in the United States.

Like other religious Communities that came to the United States, the first band of confreres of the Congregation of the Mission, soon after its arrival in 1815, struggled with a similar internecine battle between confreres from different countries. By the second half of the nineteenth century, however, this cultural jousting among the different cohorts of American confreres came to an end. The resulting stability propelled the American Province forward as the Vincentians added colleges and seminaries to their list of foundations. Building upon the previous influence of confreres who had been tapped to serve as bishops in dioceses across the country, the American Vincentians, by the beginning of the twentieth century, controlled an impressive number of parishes and colleges. Adding to their influence on the Catholic Church in the United States was their work in a number of American diocesan seminaries. With such an array of institutions and offices developed over the nine decades since their arrival, the confreres of the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission had firmly chartered themselves as the “true” Vincentians by the time their Polish confreres arrived in 1903.

Taken together, these charter groups had laid claim to the religious landscape the Polish Vincentians found themselves in when they arrived in New York City in late 1903. The synergistic admixture of these groups' efforts came together in the Hartford Diocese of Bishop Michael A. Tierney. While not a vehement Americanist, Bishop Tierney sought to provide his Polish flock with priests who would assist in its assimilation into the American Church. Recognizing the paucity of Polish-speaking clerics, he embarked on a recruitment campaign, visiting seminaries and religious orders in Europe. It was during this campaign that he came in contact with the Congregation of the Mission. With few recruits to show for his effort, however, the Hartford Bishop also began sending American-born priests, many of whom were Irish-Americans, to seminaries in the United States and Europe to learn the Polish language and culture. While characterized by some scholars as an attempt to reach out to Polish Catholic immigrants, Bishop Tierney's program was seen by many in Connecticut Polonia as a campaign to smuggle a clerical "Trojan horse" into their midst, opening the way for their forced Americanization from within.

In their parish ministries in New Haven and Derby, Connecticut, the confreres of the Kraków Province were assigned the task of keeping their Polish congregants within the ranks of the Roman Catholic Church. This effort was recognized by some priests as a ploy by the bishop and the "Irish" clergy securing the financial benefits from these parishes without dirtying their hands with an unruly immigrant population . Soon after their arrival, confreres, including Fathers Waszko and Sołtysek, expressed such sentiment when they warned that while the Vincentians struggled to maintain the loyalty of the

Polish laity, the diocesan clergy would be feathering their nests with the financial contributions of the Polish congregations.

Conversely, their failure to maintain the immigrants' loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church endangered one of the central tenets of the Vincentians' sense of *polskość*, the synonymy of "Polishness" and the Catholic faith. In numerous letters to the Visitor in Kraków, confreres wrote of the corrupting influence of American culture on Polish immigrants and the tragedy of the loss of the Polish language among the second generation, who, in turn, became vulnerable to the Americanist agenda advanced by the diocesan clergy. Squeezed between a moderate Americanist bishop with his diocesan clergy and increasingly vocal Polish independentists, the Vincentians in New Haven and Derby sought to defend and preserve a Polish-accented Catholic faith from their rather narrow initial beachhead.

The success of this campaign, however, remained dependent on an unreliable inflow of qualified confreres from the Kraków Province. As early as the crossing of the first trio of confreres, their Superior, Father Jerzy Głogowski warned against the siren call of American culture. Individualism and freedom, the confrere cautioned, would corrode one's determination. Soon after the Polish Vincentians' arrival in the United States, the loss of Fathers Dylla and Sołtysek confirmed the validity of Father Głogowski's shipboard warning. Further adding to the strain experienced by the Polish confreres was the stressful conditions under which they worked. The physical strain and cultural clash experienced by these early Missionaries resulted in the physical or mental breakdown of two Vincentian priests and a lay brother within the first decade after the confreres arrival in the United States. To secure their future in American Polonia, the

confreres of the Kraków Province had to find a more stable supply of confreres. Without one, their foothold in the United States seemed tenuous. It was with this objective in mind that they turned their attention to opportunities in Philadelphia and Erie, Pennsylvania.

Chapter Three: Working in the Harvest:
The *Zgromadzenie Misjonarzy* in Pennsylvania

> After this, the Lord appointed a further seventy-two and sent them in pairs before him to every town and place he intended to visit. He said to them: "The harvest is rich but the workers are few; therefore ask the harvest-master to send workers to his harvest."
>
> Luke 10: 1-2
> *New American Bible*.

In the spring of 1912, the readers of the English-language press in Erie, Pennsylvania opened their newspapers to find a lengthy press release from Father Jerzy Głogowski, C. M., the Superior of the Polish Vincentian Fathers in the United States. Entitled "A Few Words of Clarification in the Matter of the Polish School of Higher Education in the name of Saint John Kanty in Erie, PA.," the piece served as a public rebuttal to various rumors that were making their way through both the Polish- and English-speaking communities of the city.

The first point addressed by Father Głogowski was the basic character of the school. Charged by "newspapers from the enemy camp," with being an educational institution "conducted in a Catholic, but not a Polish, spirit," the ethnic credibility of Saint John Kanty College was clearly being questioned. Further criticism concentrated on the "outlanders," non-Poles, who had been appointed officers in the Saint John Kanty College Association, the body established to oversee the legal and administrative aspects of the school's establishment. Father Głogowski dispelled these charges by explaining that these laymen, "at the very first meeting of the Association," had agreed to resign

their posts to the Vincentian Fathers immediately upon the completion of the school's construction.[1]

The Polish Vincentians' Superior hastened to counter a further charge of the confreres' lukewarm loyalty to their partitioned homeland. "It is enough to reiterate, and with emphasis, that the college will be administered by Polish Missionaries who no one has yet accused of a lack of Polish patriotism and soul." He further stressed the ongoing relationship between the confreres and their fellow Vincentians in Poland by announcing that two confreres from Kraków would soon join the priests already in the United States.[2]

Along with its maintenance of ethnic orthodoxy, Father Głogowski emphasized the school's second goal. This second objective was to provide the young men of American Polonia with a sound education, allowing them to hold "positions on an even keel with American youth who attend English [American] schools." Furthermore, Father Głogowski gave special attention to the fact that classes would be conducted in both the English and Polish languages, allowing the students to maintain a sense of polskość while advancing in American society.[3]

With its mission of preserving a Polish identity among its young men while preparing them to compete with non-Poles in American colleges and universities, it was only natural for the Vincentians to turn to "Polish hearts" in the United States for financial support. Father Głogowski explained, one of the Polish confreres, Father Józef

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[1] Father Jerzy Głogowski, C.M., "A Few Words of Clarification in the Matter of the Polish School of Higher Education in the Name of Saint John Kanty in Erie, Pa." Archives of the Congregation of the Mission Kraków
(A. C. M. K.). Modeled after post-secondary preparatory programs in Poland, Saint John Kanty College was designed to have five grade levels, similar to the four years of study found in American high schools with the last year being an equivalent of "the first year of Junior College [sic]." See: Edward P. Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, 1904-2004*. (Manchester: Vincentian Fathers, New England Province, 2004),p. 43.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

Janowski, C.M. had been recently crisscrossing the eastern United States, speaking at Polish parishes and soliciting funds from their members. With their support, as well as that of many Polish pastors, the Vincentians had amassed a $14,000 construction fund. While not adequate to cover costs, Father Głogowski mentioned that American Polonia's largess would be remembered in thanksgiving at Eucharistic celebrations in the school's chapel.[4]

Toward the end of the press release Father Głogowski singled out for special recognition the priest who had invited the Vincentians to establish the school, the founding pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish, Father Andrzej Ignasiak. For "his generosity for initiating this august work and . . . his tireless effort in managing the construction," Father Głogowski concluded that Father Ignasiak "deserves the gratitude not only of the Congregation of the Mission, but also of all Catholic-thinking and –feeling Polonia because thanks to his ambition there is rising a new hearth of culture, a new Polish outpost that, with God's help and the support of our countrymen, will weather all storms and will spread its beneficial inspirations on all fronts." It was because of a misunderstanding between Father Ignasiak and the Vincentian Fathers, however, that the Father Głogowski felt he had to publish the press release.[5]

Written in the spring of 1912, Father Głogowski's announcement came at the conclusion of an eight-year effort by the Polish confreres to establish an educational institution. Confronting both lay and clerical opposition, the Polish confreres time and again had to defend themselves against charges of tepid home-country patriotism. In addition, just as Father Głogowski recognized the need for second-generation young men

[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

to be able to compete academically, so too did the Polish Vincentians have to compete against non-Polish priests in winning support for their various plans to minister to Polish Catholic immigrants and to establish the proposed educational institutions.

This chapter examines the Polish Vincentians' efforts in the first three decades of the twentieth century to establish a presence in Pennsylvania. From Father Benedikt Tomiak's offer of property for a school in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, to one by Bishop Michael J. Hoban of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania, to the establishment of Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania, the confreres struggled to forge a distinct presence in American Polonia by attracting a new cadre of candidates to bolster the meager ranks of the Polish confreres in the United States.

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In order to achieve such lofty goals, however, the Polish Vincentians had to learn to navigate the swirling currents of identity and loyalty that characterized American Polonia in the early twentieth century. Fundamental to this conflict was the contested role religion played in Polish identity—*Polskość*. The Polish Vincentians' first encounter with the importance of ethnicity in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States came early on in their tenure in the Hartford Diocese. Sharing qualities with other American dioceses, Hartford, under the leadership of Bishop Michael A. Tierney, sought to provide for the spiritual needs of its more recently arrived immigrants by promoting the formation of native-born seminarians in European seminaries as well as recruiting priests from Polish dioceses.

Unfortunately, Bishop Tierney failed to recognize the complex interweaving of religion and ethnicity in the Polish identity. His simplistic perception of *polskość*, a

distillation focused primarily on language, overlooked the power of home-country patronage rights and the linking of it with the rhetoric of American freedom and liberty.

Further complicating meaningful relations between members of the American hierarchy and the Catholic Polonias throughout the United States was the fact that these communities, and their clergy, did not share a firm overarching identity, immigrants and their children should adapt to life in the United States complicated.[6]

While evidence of these fissures was most easily found among the laity of American Polonia, these divisions also characterized the Polish religious and secular clergy in the United States. Mirroring the split among the American hierarchy during the Americanist Controversy, the clergy of American Polonia was "divided on the vital issue of the role of the Polish parish vis-à-vis the majority Protestant culture and the Irish-American sub-culture" and clustered into two broad groups.

The first group, a confederation of conservative assimilationists included pioneer secular priests, such as Father Jan Pitass of Buffalo, New York and Father Lucyan Bójnowski of Connecticut, who "opted for a traditional 'polskość,' and a limitation of the definition of the Americanization to learning the English language and participating in civic life, but always under clerical tutelage." Clerics of religious orders who adhered to this position included the Franciscan Fathers of Pułaski, Wisconsin and, more significantly, the priests of the Congregation of the Resurrection, whose early arrival in

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[6] Daniel Buczek, "The Polish-American Parish as an Americanizing Factor," in *Studies in Ethnicity: The East European Experience in America*. Edited by Charles A. Ward, Philip Shashko & Donald E. Pienkos, (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1980), pp. 153-154. Buczek found that the relationship between the American hierarchy and Catholic Polonia was shaped by three "currents": the one between "the Polish immigrant communities . . . and the American Protestant culture"; a "second, between the Polish-parish communities and mainstream American Catholicism"; and a third, "the alternatively hostile and accommodations relationship between mainstream Protestantism and mainstream American Catholicism."

North America permitted them a controlling influence in the formation of a Polish-Catholic charter group in the United States.[7]

For members of the conservative Polish clergy, their primary roles were that of "taskmaster" and "disciplinarian whose authority was that of a quasi-bishop," and whose responsibilities included "the preserv[ing] and maintain[ing] [of] the Catholicism of the growing immigrant community." For these priests, being "a good Pole was to remain a good Catholic" and any "separation between the two [identities] would be inconceivable and disastrous," resulting in the first "step toward the Americanization of the immigrant."[8]

The Community that best embodied these beliefs was the Congregation of the Resurrection. Established in 1836 in Paris, the Resurrectionists was the creation of Bogdan Jański, a layman, who, like fellow émigrés Frederick Chopin, Adam Czartoryski, and Adam Mickiewicz, embraced a romantic nationalism for their lost homeland. For Jański, especially, the "Polish cause . . . reinforced his ties with Catholicism."[9]

While filled with setbacks, the growth of the Community was remarkable; just over two decades after its establishment, the Congregation of the Resurrection sent its first missionaries to North America. The charter-group role played by the Resurrectionist Fathers in Polish North America stems from this early arrival in August 1857, when a mission band disembarked in New York Harbor on their way to Saint Agatha, Ontario. Two years later, these pioneering Polish priests erected a "log-cabin orphanage" that, in

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[7] Buczek, "Polish-American Parish," pp. 158-159.
[8] Daniel S. Buczek, "Three Generations of the Polish Immigrant Church: Changing Styles of Pastoral Leadership" in *Pastor of the Poles: Polish American Essays Presented to Right Reverend Monsignor John P. Wodarski in honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary of His Ordination*. Edited by Stanislaus A. Blejwas & Mieczysław B. Biskupski (New Britain, Connecticut: Polish Studies Program Monographs), pp. 22-23.
[9] John Iwicki, C.R. with James Wahl, C.R., *Resurrectionist Charism: A History of the Congregation of the Resurrection, Volume One 1836-1886*, (Rome: Congregation of the Resurrection, 1986), p. 18.

January 1865, became Saint Jerome's College. By 1880, a group of six priests ministered to Catholics in three parishes and taught a growing number of students at Saint Jerome's College. Concurrently, seven Canadian-born seminarians were in formation at the Congregation's motherhouse in Rome.[10]

The introduction of the Resurrectionist Fathers into the United States was an extension of this mission work in Canada. Responding to a request for the services of a Polish-speaking priest in May 1865, Father Francis Breitkopf, C. R. traveled to Parisville, Michigan, a lumber town two-days travel from the Congregation's house in Berlin, Ontario. While rather short-lived, this first mission in the United States brought the Resurrectionists to the attention of bishops throughout the Great Lakes region.[11]

The opportunity to establish a permanent foothold in the United States came in Detroit. In 1871, two years after a successful mission in Chicago, the Superior General of the Congregation, Father Jerome Kajsiewicz, C.R., met with Bishop Gaspar Borgess of the Catholic Diocese of Detroit and agreed to provide priests for Saint Albertus Parish. Drawn into the often tense relations between the Polish laity and the local ordinary, the Resurrectionists' stay in Detroit was rather short, lasting until only June 1873.[12]

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[10] Iwicki/Wahl, C.R., *Resurrectionist Charism: Volume One*, pp. 165-166, 235 & 492. Like many of the previously discussed Communities of priests in the United States, the Congregation of the Resurrection in Canada exhibited early on ethnic tensions, focusing primarily on the language of instruction at Saint Jerome College. See: Iwicki/Wahl, *Resurrectionist Charism, Volume One*, p. 248.

[11] Ibid, pp. 274-275.

[12] Ibid, pp. 282, 285, 286-289. The Resurrectionists sent to Detroit, Father Simon Wieczorek, C.R., who clashed with Bishop Brogess in 1873, when he and a committee of parishioners began work on a parish school without the bishop's approval. The ordinary dismissed Father Wieczorek and placed the parish under interdict. See: Leslie Woodcock Tentler, *Seasons of Grace: A History of the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), pp. 29-30. Saint Albertus Parish, in the following decades, during the pastorate of Father Dominick Kolasiński, will be immediately involved in one of the early efforts to establish a Polish-speaking Catholic parish outside the control of the local bishop. See: Lawrence D. Orton, *Polish Detroit and the Kolasiński Affair*. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981), passim and Leslie Woodcock Tentler, "Who is the Church? Conflict in a Polish Immigrant Parish in Late Nineteenth-Century Detroit," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. XXV, no. 2 (April, 1983), passim.

The Resurrectionists' missions in the Great Lakes area remained rather small and short-lived; a more stable presence emerged, however, from their efforts among Polish immigrants in Texas. Within two years of the conclusion of the American Civil War, a band of seven Resurrectionists began serving in Galveston, Texas and mission stations in Panna Maria, San Antonio, Maulberry, and Bandera. By April 1867, Bishop Claude DuBuis elevated Father Adolph Bakanowski, C.R. to "vicar general of the Polish Mission in Texas with full authority over all the priests, people, and mission stations." It was from Texas that Resurrectionist mission bands traveled back to Chicago in the early 1870s and began serving the spiritual needs of the city's Polish Catholic community.[13]

In July 1871, over thirty years before the Polish confreres of the Congregation of the Mission arrived in the United States, the Superior General of the Resurrectionists, Father Jerome Kajsiewicz, C.R., signed a contract with Chicago's Bishop Thomas Foley that gave the Community a ninety-year monopoly over "the Polish mission in the diocese." It was from this base that Father Wincenty Barzyński would act as a quasi-bishop, overseeing the staffing of sixteen Polish parishes by the first years of the twentieth century. In addition to their parishes, the Resurrectionist Fathers of Chicago also established a college, Saint Stanislaus Kostka College, which opened in September 1890 and developed an American-style high school program, as well as a two-year commercial and an evening business program.[14]

The presence of the Resurrectionist in American Polonia continued to grow throughout the 1870s and 1880s. In September 1871, in Marion County, Kentucky, the

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[13] Ibid, pp. 292 & 296.
[14]Ibid, pp. 314 & 350; Joseph John Parot, *Polish Catholics in Chicago 1850-1920: A Religious History* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1981), pp. 77-78; John Iwicki, *Resurrectionist Charism: A History of the Congregation of the Resurrection, Volume Two: 1887-1932* (Rome: Congregation of the Resurrection, 1992), pp. 45 & 182-184.

Congregation established Saint Mary's College. By the 1880s, proposals were circulated for turning the Kentucky site into "the central house in North America and also a formation center with a novitiate and major seminary." While this plan, which was developed, in part, to help diversify the membership of the Community by bringing in Irish-American candidates, failed, Saint Mary's College left its mark on the American hierarchy. Bishop Peter Muldoon of Rockford, Illinois, Bishop John Morris of Little Rock, Arkansas, as well as the first Polish bishop in the United States, Paul Rhode were all alumni of Saint Mary's College. It was not until September 1918, however, that the Congregation of the Resurrection established a permanent North American major seminary, Saint John Cantius Seminary, on the campus of Saint Louis University.[15]

As a result of their early arrival in the United States, the resulting extensive network of parishes and missions as well as their educational and formational institutions, the Resurrectionist Fathers succeeded in imprinting a permanent stamp on North American Polonia. Having been granted by many American Bishops privileges beyond that of ordinary pastors, serving in the roles of de-facto vicars general and auxiliary bishops, the members of the Congregation of the Resurrection succeeded in carving out a social and political niche for themselves in the ever-diversifying Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

The Congregation of the Resurrection's accommodationist approach to relations with the American Catholic hierarchy that had led to the creation of such an institutional empire, however, was challenged by a smaller, but vocal group of clerics, who, while sharing the conservatives' concern over the maintenance of *polskość*, believed that both

[15] Iwicki/Wahl, *Resurrectionist Charism, Volume One*, pp. 318, 489 & 491; Iwicki, *Resurrectionist Charism, Volume Two*, pp. 194 & 254.

parish property and Polish immigrants' assimilation into the Catholic Church in the United States should be under more immediate ethnic control. While the roots of this Polish independentist movement emerged in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, it was only in 1890s that efforts were undertaken by the pastors of isolated parishes to consolidate their flocks into denominational networks.

On the opposite end of the political spectrum of Polish clerics in the United States were the adherents of independentism, a loosely organized movement that combined, in different proportions, the maintenance of Polish-accented Catholic practices transplanted from Europe with the individualism and democratic ideals of the United States. These ideas shaped the development of independent parishes in cities such as Detroit, Buffalo, Cleveland, and Scranton, Pennsylvania, and culminated in the establishment of the Polish National Catholic Church in 1904.

The independentism in Cleveland, Ohio emerged from a conflict between a strong-willed Polish pastor and the local Ordinary and was one of the earlier efforts to consolidate independent parishes throughout American Polonia. In 1891, eight years after he became the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish, Father Antoni Kołaszewski oversaw the completion of a massive red-brick gothic church of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr, the largest structure in the Cleveland Diocese. The resulting $150,000 debt soon brought the pastor and newly appointed Bishop Ignatius F. Horstmann to loggerheads. On June 8, 1892, with further charges of financial

mismanagement and a resulting fundraising campaign characterized as "extortion," Father Kołaszewski resigned his pastorate and left for Syracuse, New York.[16]

After a two-year absence, Father Kołaszewski returned to Cleveland and established an independent congregation, the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, which was blessed by the "controversial itinerant archbishop," J. Rene Vilatte, on August 19, 1894. Two days after the consecration of the church, Father Kołaszewski and Archbishop Vilatte presided over a convention of the American Catholic Church, a new denomination that was to be "composed of all nationalities, but united under the true catholic faith, and imbued with the true American spirit as well." Although initially composed of only independent Polish congregations, the American Catholic Church sought to unite dissenters of all ethnicities. While the American Catholic Church was short-lived, with no evidence of meetings or conventions after 1895, it strove to lay claim to a part of the American religious landscape free from the dominance of Irish- or German-Catholic charter groups as well as the conservative Polish clerics such as the Congregation of the Resurrection.[17]

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[16] Charles R. Kaczynski, "'What Mean Ye By These Stones?': Cleveland's Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish and the Construction of a Polish-Americanist Rhetoric" in *Polish American Studies*, vol. LV, no. 2 (Autumn, 1998), pp. 31-35.

[17] In his address, Bishop Vilatte captured the spirit of the new congregation when, in his sermon, he declared: "My dear Polish people, I am an American Catholic bishop and you are an American Catholic people. . . . Let us be ever faithful to the Catholic religion, pure and undefiled, being guilty of neither adding to its dogma nor subtracting therefrom as many who have expounded its faith have done in the past. Let us also be patriotic and true to our dear country. Let us further not be forgetful of the interests and needs of your beloved Poland." Kaczyński, "'What Mean Ye By These Stone?'", pp. 25-26, 38-39, & 51. Joseph W. Wieczerzak attributes the failure of the American Catholic Church to attract widespread popularity among dissenting Polish parishes in the United States to its promotion of American institutions. Drawing from the *Constitution and Regulations of the Polish Catholic Congregation Known as "The Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary,"* went beyond issues of lay control of parish property and promoted educational choice and the application of American models of education in parish schools. The *Constitution* reads in part, "As those who have formed the first Independent Polish Catholic Church of America . . . found what a curse to the enlightenment of their children the present parochial schools are; therefore, they resolve upon a complete change of the system of education. The members of the congregation are free to send their children to such schools as they think would be the best." See: Joseph W. Wieczerzak, "On Two Trails: The Polish Independent Parish of Freeland,

While the success of the Cleveland congregation was limited, efforts continued to bring together individual independent parishes in Polonias across the country. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, dissenters in Chicago, Buffalo, and Scranton began scrambling to fill this power vacuum. The effort to establish an independent denomination in Chicago has its roots in the restive reaction to the monopolistic hold the Resurrectionist Fathers had over the city's Polish parishes. As Father Wincenty Barzyński, C.R. continued to oversee the construction of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish, newly arrived Polish immigrants drastically increased the population density of the surrounding neighborhood. The contrast between the grandeur of the parish's buildings and the growing squalor that surrounded them began fanning the flames of anti-clerical sentiment among some of these new residents. Opponents of the Congregation of the Resurrection laid special blame for the local situation at the feet of Father Barzyński and his brother, Józef, a fellow Resurrectionist whose pastorate at the nearby Saint Jadwiga Parish led to the outbreak of independentism in Chicago Polonia.[18]

Pennsylvania: Father Paul Kamiński" *PNCC Studies* vol. XI, (1990), p. 28. For *Constitution*, see: Kaczyński, "'What Mean Ye By These Stone?'", p. 43. While the American Catholic Church failed around 1895, the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish remained independent of diocesan control until 1908, when a devastating fire, the retirement of Father Kołaszewski, and the death of Bishop Horstmann resulted in the integration of the community into the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cleveland.

[18] Kaczyński, "'What Mean Ye By These Stone?'", p. 51, Joseph W. Wieczerzak, "Religious Independentism Among Polish Catholics in Buffalo, New York," *PNCC Studies*, vol. 8 (1987), p. 78. While he refused the bishop's miter, Father Kołaszewski played an important role in the expansion of Polish independentism. His supporters and the priests later ordained under his tutelage also shaped the development of an alternative charter group of Polish dissenters. (See below.) Parot, *Polish Catholics*, p. 102. Like many other parish conflicts in American Polonia that led the establishment of independent parishes, the one at Saint Jadwiga Parish stems from tensions between the pastor and an assistant. One year after Father Wincenty Barzyński established the parish in 1887, he appointed his brother, Józef, pastor. Over the next six years, as the congregation continued to grow, Father J. Barzyński recognized the need for a younger priest to serve as his assistant. In 1894, Father Wincenty Barzyński found such a person in Father Antoni S. Kozłowski. Born into a noble family in January 1857, Father Kozłowski was drawn to religious studies while still a youth. Following a period of exploration in which he studied Orthodox Christianity and briefly became a Trappist monk, Father Kozłowski went to Italy, where he fell under the influence of theologians, Ignaz von Dollinger and Joseph Reinkins, who both opposed papal infallibility. Reinkins later became "first bishop of the Old Catholics," the tenets of which Father Kozłowski carried with him to Chicago. See: Parot, pp. 102-104.

Like previous disputes that led to the establishment of break-away parishes, the conflict at Saint Jadwiga Parish began as one between Father Józef Barzyński and his assistant pastor, Father Antoni S. Kozłowski. When a "mysterious petition" appeared in the neighborhood calling for the replacement of Father Barzyński by his assistant, Archbishop James Feehan removed Father Kozłowski. Early the following year, a committee of parishioners then pled their case before the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Francisco Satolli, who agreed to secure the dismissed priest's elevation to pastor when he traveled to Chicago that May. As these negotiations were proceeding, however, Archbishop Feehan independently decided to replace Father J. Barzyński with another Resurrectionist priest, Father Józef Gieburowski, C.R.[19]

After a pro-Kozłowski mob attacked the rectory in February 1895, Archbishop Feehan closed the parish and Archbishop Satolli abandoned his support of Father Kozłowski. On February 25, when Chancellor Peter Muldoon, an alumnus of the Congregation of the Resurrection's Saint Mary' College, reopened the church, he announced that another Resurrectionist, Father Eugene Sedlaczek, C.R., would be its new pastor, precipitating a walk-out of approximately one-thousand parishioners.[20]

In mid-August 1895, Father Kozłowski consecrated the Independent Parish of All Saints. Soon afterward, efforts were quickly begun to add another congregation, Saint Joseph Parish, which was administered by the Resurrectionist Fathers, to the Polish Independentist movement. Archbishop Feehan responded by excommunicating Father

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[19] Parot, *Polish Catholics*, pp. 110-111. Archbishop Satolli's decision to support Father Kozłowski's petition, Parot argues, may have been an effort to placate the dissenters of Saint Hedwig Parish and thereby blunt the advance of Independentism evident in the number of independent parishes established in 1894, one example of which was the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish established in Cleveland by Father Antoni F. Kołaszewski.

[20] Parot, *Polish Catholics*, pp. 113-117.

Kozłowski on September 27, 1895. With his ties to the Roman Catholic Church and the Resurrectionist-controlled Polish clergy of Chicago severed, Father Kozłowski turned his attention to the consolidation of individual independent Polish parishes—an effort that brought the independent pastor into competition with other independent clerics for the leadership of this nascent charter group.[21]

The Chicago faction's principal rival was the Independentist movement centered at the Holy Mother of the Rosary Parish in Buffalo, New York. Independentism emerged in Buffalo in 1884, when immigrants from the vicinity of Poznań "wished to affiliate in America under a pastor of their own," instead of Father John Pitass, the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish, who came from Silesia, a region that the Posnanians considered culturally inferior to their own. This tension, in turn, led to an effort to establish a new Polish parish—an enterprise opposed by the city's charter-group Poles. In the mid-1880s, after he appealed to Buffalo's Bishop Steven Vincent Ryan, a former Visitor of the American Province of the Vincentian Fathers, and to Rome, the "maverick and gadfly clergyman," Father Anthony Klawiter, established the Roman Catholic Parish of Saint Adalbert.[22]

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[21] Ibid, pp. 119 & 121.

[22] Stanley L. Cuba, "Rev. Anthony Klawiter: Polish Roman and National Catholic Builder-Priest," *Polish American Studies*, vol. XL no. 2 (Autumn 1983), pp. 60 & 69-70. Father Anthony Klawiter, "a prototype of the heretofore little-studied entrepreneurial Polish immigrant pastor," was born in the Prussian Partition of Poland in 1836, participated in the January Uprising of 1863, and came to the United States at the invitation of the Resurrectionist Father, Reverend Felix Zwiardowski, C.R., in 1871 to serve the Polish community in San Antonio, Texas. When Father Klawiter arrived a few years later, he did not go to Texas, but began serving the immigrants around Pittsburgh and Chicago. Before he died in late-September 1913 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Father Klawiter had served in parishes in Nowy Poznań, Texas, Saint Louis, Buffalo, Cleveland, Ohio, Newark, New Jersey, Hazelton, Pennsylvania, Meriden, Connecticut, Winona, Minnesota, Globeville, Colorado, Philadelphia, Bayonne, New Jersey, Fall River, Massachusetts, and Mikado, Saskatchewan. He served as a priest in the Roman Catholic Church, independent Polish parishes, and the Polish National Catholic Church. Father Klawiter had expansion plans of his own. In 1887, he purchased land in East Buffalo for the erection of the Asylum of the Polish Union, a campus that was to include a new Saint Adalbert Church, a parish school, "a nursery school, senior citizens center, hospital, immigrants' home, and a large recreational lake." When an 1889 fire destroyed the church and hall, a conflict arose between Father Klawiter and Bishop Ryan, both of whom held insurance policies on the

In 1889, a fire destroyed Saint Adalbert Church and parish hall. The resulting dispute over who could collect insurance on the property led to renewed tensions between the independent-minded Posnanians and Father Pitass and Bishop Ryan. Conditions worsened over the next few years and reached a boiling point in 1893, when, after the Bishop appointed Father Pitass "vicar for all of the Polish parishes in his diocese," he sought to secure his control over Saint Adalbert Parish by appointing a new pastor, a fellow Silesian, Father Thomas Flaczek. The news of the appointment resulted in "pitched battles between rebel parishioners . . . and police," and the establishment on August 14, 1895 of the independent Holy Mother of the Rosary Parish. On the following Sunday, the new congregation celebrated its first Mass with Cleveland's independent pastor, Father Antoni F. Kołaszewski as celebrant. Father Klawiter's tenure at the new parish was short-lived, however, and ended with a dispute over with which Independentist center, Cleveland or Chicago, the new parish would affiliate. Following their founding pastor's departure, the parishioners then selected Father Stefan Kamiński, an associate of Cleveland's Father Kołaszewski, who was serving in an independent parish in Freeland, Pennsylvania.[23]

As the independent parishes in Chicago and Buffalo grew, the need for a bishop to shepherd the independent Polish parishes in the United States became more acute, exacerbating the rivalry between the two centers of Polish Independentism. When the delegates convened in Buffalo to select an ordinary on September 24, 1896, the first

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property. While the pastor later handed his claim over the Bishop Ryan, he and his parishioners, after learning that Father Pitass sought to fold the 2,200 families of Saint Adalbert Parish back into his own, established an independent chapel. In January 1890, with the vigorous support of Father Pitass, Bishop Ryan "exiled" Father Klawiter. See: Cuba, "Rev. Anthony Klawiter," pp. 70-72.

[23] Joseph W. Wieczerzak, "Religious Independentism Among Polish Catholics in Buffalo, New York," *PNCC Studies*, vol. 8 (1987), pp. 75-76 & 78.

candidate proposed was Father Kołaszewski of Cleveland who begged off, preferring instead to remain the pastor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish. With his withdrawal, the field of candidates narrowed to Father Kamiński and Father Kozłowski of Chicago. By a vote of 50 to 30, the synod elected Father Kamiński bishop of what became the Polish Catholic Church.[24]

After the election, however, dissent continued to plague the Independentist movement. Although he was elected in early 1896, Father Kamiński was not consecrated bishop until 1898. The delay was caused, in part, by the Buffalo contingent's concern over the Bishop-elect's relationship with the "itinerant bishop," Bishop Rene J. Vilatte. While he had ordained Father Kamiński in Cleveland, the Buffalo priest and his supporters hesitated to align themselves too closely with such a renegade cleric. Even as the Buffalo independents recognized Bishop Vilatte as their "Metropolitan," they grew concerned that "such as arrangement . . . would stigmatize them as being under a foreign prelate just like their loyalist Roman Catholic compatriots whom they criticized." Finally, in March 1898, Bishop Vilatte elevated Father Kamiński to the rank of Bishop.[25]

The eighteen-month delay between the election of Father Kamiński and his consecration as Bishop of the Polish Catholic Church provided sufficient time for Father Kozłowski and his supporters to rally and organize a consecration campaign of their own. In early May 1897, Chicago independents met, established the "Polish Catholic Diocese of Chicago," and elected Father Kozłowski its bishop. On November 21, 1897, four months before his Buffalo rival, a panel of three Old Catholic bishops consecrated Bishop

[24] Ibid, p. 78; Laurence J. Orzell, "A Pragmatic Union: Bishop Kozłowski and the Old Catholics, 1896-1898," *Polish American Studies*, vol. XLIV, no. 1 (Spring 1987), p. 6.
[25] Wieczerzak, "Religious Independentism," p. 79; Orzell, "Pragmatic Union," p. 8. While the Polish Catholic Church officially recognized Bishop Vilatte as its "Metropolitan," "the attachment was never to become an accomplished fact."

Anthony Kozłowski. While these two centers of independentism battled each other as well as the American bishops and their Polish clerics, a third faction began to grow in prominence.[26]

This third and most resilient Independentist movement was headed by Father Franciszek Hodur of Scranton, Pennsylvania. Like other independent Polish denominations, the Polish National Catholic Church was shaped to a great extent by its founder. Father Hodur began his religious formation at the Vincentian-administered seminary in the Stradom section of Kraków. In 1891-1892, while merely "tonsured and the recipient of only the minor orders," Hodur participated in a strike led by some fourth-year students. When a visit by the local Ordinary failed to bring improved relations, some students, including Hodur, began to boycott the seminary kitchen and to take their meals in the town. A local satirical publication, *Djabeł Krakowski* (The Kraków Devil) found out about the boycott and published a cartoon depicting a group of seminarians smuggling food over a high wall into the seminary. As a result of their actions and the negative publicity generated by the cartoon, Cardinal Albin Dunajewski dismissed a number of seminarians.[27]

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[26] Orzell, "Pragmatic Union," pp. 7-8 & 18. One problem that plagued the clerical leaders of these independent parishes, as they began considering expanding beyond a single church, was that of apostolic succession. In order to solve this problem, priests, such as Father Kozłowski, turned to Bishops of the Old Catholic Church. The "Independent Polish Catholic Diocese of Chicago," attracted the attention of "A Close Observer" in an 1899 article in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*. The author recognized the fact that the Chicago independents "set forth the *Tridentinum*, with the primacy of the Holy See (*jure divino*), as the dogmatic basis of the secession, and thus it occupied apparently the same attitude as the original Jansenist schism—though with this notable difference, that the secessionist faction did not reject, either openly or secretly, the *Vaticanum*." The article continued: "[T]he Chicago secessionist movement was and is avowedly orthodox, though utterly contumacious" with it sole objective being "the realization of the false ideal of a true 'American-Polish-Catholic Diocese." See: "A Close Observer," "Recent Schismatical Movements Among Catholics of the United States," *American Ecclesiastical Review*, third series, vol. one XXI, no. 1, (July 1899), pp. 10-11.

[27] Joseph Wieczerzak, "Francis Hodur's First American Year: 1893" in *Bishop Francis Hodur: Biographical Essays* (Boulder: Eastern European Monographs, 1998), p. 67. Joseph Wieczerzak, "'Filling In': Observations, Biographical and Historical, on Bishop Hodur and His Church" in *Bishop Francis*

In December 1892, Hodur, along with three companions, left for the United States. While temporarily residing in New York City, Hodur came to the attention of Father Benvenuto Gramlewicz, the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr Parish in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, a town whose continued religious independentism would attract the attention of the Polish Vincentians two decades later. A vehement nationalist, veteran of the January Uprising, and "dean of the Polish-speaking priests in the Scranton Diocese," Father Gramlewicz persuaded Hodur to come with him to Nanticoke and, in April 1893, enrolled him as a third-year theology student at Saint Vincent's Seminary in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. On August 19, 1893 at Saint Peter's Cathedral, Francis Hodur was ordained a priest of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Scranton.[28]

After celebrating his first Mass in Nanticoke, Father Hodur reported to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Parish in Scranton, Pennsylvania, where he became the assistant to Father Richard Aust. Almost immediately, Father Aust and Father Hodur clashed over the new assistant's meager collections and his support for Polish nationalist

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Hodur: Biographical Essays (Boulder: Eastern European Monographs, 1998), pp. 35-37. In a footnote to the above essay, Wieczerzak describes a letter he received from Father Wacław Sojka, C.M., a member of the Polish Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission, who described a gathering of seminarians with an alumnus of the Vincentian seminary, Auxiliary Bishop Edward Komar from the Tarnów Diocese. Bishop Komar described the conditions at Stradom at the time of the strike as Spartan. "There was no heating, the seminarians had to wash in the morning in icy water. Sometimes melting the ice in the wash basin with their hands, and had to eat a breakfast consisting of one bread roll with milk or coffee." Wieczerzak claims that Father Sojka attributed these conditions to "a strong and strange influence of the French" and the fact that the "Congregation of the Mission was really deeply contaminated with Jansenism, a real heresy started in the early seventeenth century." See: Wieczerzak, "Filling In," p. 49.

[28] Wieczerzak, "First American Year," pp. 69, 71, 74 & 76. Seminarian Hodur's participation in the strike was minor, but it characterized his social activism, which reached full flower in his support of Father Stanisław Stojałowski, "a fiery charismatic priest who sometimes led thousands of peasants in protest processions from the countryside to Cracow, and who was in disfavor with the Austrian ruling authorities as well as the ultraconservative hierarchy." The "ultraconservatism" of the Kraków hierarchy was matched by that of the leadership of the Kraków Province of the Congregation of the Mission. For a in-depth discussion of the activism of Father Stojałowski and the Kraków hierarchy's reaction, see "Walka hierarchów Kościoła z rchem ludowym przed odzyskaniem niepodległości (W Galicji), in Arkadiusz Kołodziejczyk, *Ruch ludowy a Kościół rzymskokatolicki w latach II Rzeczypospolitej*, (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielna Wydawnicza Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego, 2002), pp. 50-67. Within a few years of their arrival in the United States, the Polish Vincentians were offered a parish in Nanticoke in the hope of them blunting the influence of the Polish National Catholic Church.

causes. In 1894, Father Hodur left Scranton and returned to Nanticoke, where he became the first pastor of Holy Trinity Parish. Father Hodur's personal charisma and home-country patriotism, however, was not forgotten by the parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish. When they clashed with Father Aust in 1896 over greater lay representation in the parish and funds for a cemetery, a majority of them left to establish Saint Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr Parish a mere half-a-block away. Soon afterwards, a delegation of parishioners offered the pastorate of the new parish to Father Hodur.[29]

In 1900, Father Hodur was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church. On December 16 of that year, the members of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr Parish formally broke with Rome. Within months of the Polish Vincentians' arrival in the United States in December 1903, Father Hodur "convened a synod which denounced papal infallibility" and "adopted a constitution for the organization . . . the 'Polish National Catholic Church.'" Three decades later, recalling the multiple challenges facing the Independentist movement and the need for "a uniform direction [that] had to be given to the reform," Father Hodur explained his motivation for convening the first P.N.C.C. synod: "Thus it was for this reason that I called the synod in 1904, so that those who had already felt the need for more radical changes not only in parish conditions but above all in the Polish soul would ponder over all these matters." When the first three Polish Vincentians arrived in United States and made their way to New Haven, Connecticut, they found themselves in this contested religious terrain.[30]

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[29] Wieczerzak, "First American Year," pp. 76, 78 & 80-81; Warren C. Platt, "The Polish National Catholic Church: An Inquiry into Its Origin," *Church History*, vol. 46, no. 4 (December 1977), pp. 477-478; "History," Polish National Catholic Church website, www.pncc.org/who_history.htm.

[30] Platt, "The Polish National Catholic Church," p. 478; Wieczerzak, "Filling In," p. 42; Laurence R. Orzell, "Variations on an Old Catholic Theme: The Polish National Catholic Church," in *Old Catholics and Anglicans, 1931-1981: To Commemorate the Fiftieth Anniversary of Intercommunion* edited by Gordon Huelin (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 46; Francis Hodur, "Thirty-Three Years Ago:

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Along with the obvious cultural divisions between them and the members of the American clergy and hierarchy, the Polish Vincentians who arrived in the first years of the twentieth century had to struggle to stake a claim for themselves in a religious landscape carved up by previously arrived Polish clerics. For a vast majority of this charter-group Polish clergy, continued success depended on their allegiance and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. In exchange for their defense of the Church's system of governance and property ownership, for example, the Congregation of the Resurrection (Resurrectionist Fathers) and individual priests, such as Father John Pitass of Buffalo, New York, received from the American hierarchy a monopoly-like power within the Polish Catholic sphere.

With one of its central apostolate being the conducting of missions among the peasantry, the confreres from Kraków would have seemed to be a natural ally in maintaining the Catholic orthodoxy of Polish immigrants. To secure their aid in this campaign, however, local Ordinaries had to provide the Polish Vincentians a foothold in

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Concerning the Episcopal Consecration Received by the Undersigned at the hands of Old Catholic Bishops in Utrecht, September 29th, in the year 1907," in *Bishop Francis Hodur: Biographical Essays* by Joseph Wieczerzak, edited by Theodore L. Zawistowski (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1998), p. 271. While Father Hodur gave greater prominence to Polish nationalism than the leaders of the other independent churches, he also recognized the need to make the new denomination comprehendible to a wider American audience and dissenting parish communities of other ethnic backgrounds. On the former point, Platt finds similarities between Father Hodur and Archbishop Ireland in promoting "an uncritical nationalism coupled with a utilitarian view of religion which emphasized its ability to buttress ethnic mores and values rather than to critically analyze them." Further similarities are found in the two clerics' attention to the "American religious and social thinking of the time: the dignity of man, the emphasis on progress and man's capacity of attaining his goals, the worthiness of right customs and the distaste for pessimistic views of man and their accompanying religious imagery of sin, depravity, judgment, and propitiatory sacrifice." See: Platt, "The Polish National Catholic Church," pp. 480, 484 & 487. Like Father Kołaszewski's failed American Catholic Church, the Polish National Catholic Church, starting with dissenting Lithuanian immigrants in 1897, engaged in a program of affiliation and coordination with recusant congregations of Czechs, Slovaks, Italians, Hungarians, Puerto-Ricans, and Croatians. (See: Joseph W. Wieczerzak, "The Multiethnic Activities of an Ethnic Church: Outreaches of the Polish National Catholic Church During the Hodur Era," *PNCC Studies*, vol. 2 (1981), passim.)

their diocese, a move that was frequently opposed by previously arrived charter-group Polish priests, who jealously defended their advantages. In responding to invitations to establish houses in Conshohocken, Philadelphia, and Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, the confreres from Kraków became embroiled in this imbroglio over the definition of *Polskość* in the United States as well as competing territorial claims.

The genesis of the Polish Vincentians' apostolate in Pennsylvania and the resulting geographic reorientation dates back to the period immediately after the arrival of the first three missionaries at the end of 1903. The Pennsylvania Polonia they entered, however, had been chartered decades before. The first Polish church established in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia was Saint Laurentius Parish. Erected by Archbishop J. F. Wood in late January 1882, the community grew dramatically over the next eight years. In 1890, a second Polish church opened—Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish. Two years later, the development of a Polish enclave in the northernmost part of the city resulted in the establishment of Saint John Kanty Parish. Under the direction of their Pastor, Father Maryan Kopytkiewicz, the Polish immigrants of the area soon built a new church-school-rectory complex.[31]

Regular expansion of paper, textile, and steel plants in the northern-most part of the city resulted in a constant inflow of Polish immigrants to the area. By the latter half of the 1890s, a sufficient number of Poles had settled in the Manayunk area requiring the hierarchy to respond to their spiritual needs. Soon afterwards, Archbishop Michael J. Ryan granted permission for the establishment of Saint Josaphat Parish. To supervise the erection of the new church, he selected Father Mieczysław Kopytkiewiwcz, the brother of

[31] Sister M. Theodosetta, C.S.F.N., "The Poles in Philadelphia to 1914." *Polish American Studies*, vol. VIII, nos. 1 & 2 (January-June 1951), pp. 17-18.

Saint John Kanty's Pastor, whose successor, Father Henryk Chajencki, served the parish until his untimely death on Christmas Day 1900. Father Chajencki was succeeded by the Reverend Doctor Tomasz Misicki, who served the Manayunk parish for only six weeks before being replaced by Father Benedikt Tomiak on January 20, 1901. It was by interacting and negotiating with these diocesan priests that the Polish Vincentians staked a claim in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.[32]

Father Tomiak was no stranger to the Polish Vincentians. In partitioned Poland, Father Tomiak was a lay brother in the Congregation of the Mission. His tenure with them came to an end, however, with the beginning of the Franco-Prussian War, when he was pressed into service as a nurse in the Prussian army. Following Prussia's victory and Bismarck's anti-Catholic programs, Father Tomiak fled the Prussian Partition and went to Rome where he completed his priestly formation. After being ordained at the age of fifty; Father Tomiak emigrated to the United States, was incardinated into the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and served in parishes in Shamokin and Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania before being named pastor of Saint Josaphat Parish in Manayunk.[33]

With the opening of Saint Josaphat Parish, Polish immigrants in the villages north of Philadelphia were spared the long journey to Saint Laurentius Parish, but still had to trek to Manayunk—a situation that soon resulted in a call for the erection of chapel in the hamlet of Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. Recognizing the needs of the area's growing Polish population, Father Tomiak contacted the newly arrived confreres from Kraków

[32] Theodosetta, "The Poles in Philadelphia," p. 18: *St. Josaphat Parish, Manayunk, Philadelphia, Pa., Diamond Jubilee, 1898-1973*, p. 26. Father Maryan Kopytkiewicz was one of a small group of secular Polish priests that helped "charter" Philadelphia's Catholic Polonia. Along with helping establish the parishes of Saint John Cantius and Saint Josaphat, he went on to erect Saint Jadwiga Parish in Chester, Pennsylvania. See: Rev. Joseph M. O'Hara, Ph.D., *Chester's Century of Catholicism: 1842-1942* (Philadelphia: The Peter Reilly Company, 1942), p. 204.

[33] Głogowski to Father Superior, 9 February 1904, A. C. M. K.; *St. Josaphat Parish*, pp. 26 & 28; Lou Baldwin, "St. Mary: Faithful to its Roots," *The Catholic Standard & Times*, November 3, 2005.

and offered them a house and garden in Conshohocken. The sizeable property seemed ideal for a large foundation and school. This opportunity, however, put the Polish confreres very close to the Eastern Province's Motherhouse in Germantown, Pennsylvania.[34]

In the fall of 1904, Father Franciszek Trawniczek, accompanied by Father Tomiak, visited the American Vincentians Motherhouse and their Saint Vincent de Paul Parish on Price Street. They were impressed. Dazzled by the Church's silver tiles and electric lights, Father Trawniczek reported that "you have not seen anything like it." He also was quite impressed by the intelligence and language skills of the American confreres. After assessing the possibilities among Philadelphia's Polish immigrants and concluding that "I believe everything will be fine," Father Głogowski dispatched Fathers Stanisław Konieczny, Franciszek Trawniczek, and Paweł Waszko to live at the rectory of Saint Josaphat Parish.[35]

From the Manayunk rectory, the confreres began to serve the Polish communities in nearby towns. For the priests assigned there, however, living conditions were far from ideal. In early July 1905, for example, Father Konieczny reported that conditions were quite poor and counseled that the Polish Vincentians should concentrate their efforts on Connecticut rather than Pennsylvania. The general consensus among the confreres, however, was that the future of the Polish Vincentians in the United States depended on a Foundation in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Father Tomiak, it seemed, advanced this plan by purchasing property in Conshohocken for a new church to serve Poles living in town, as well as in the surrounding hamlets of Norristown and Bridgeport. On May 1,

[34] Ibid.
[35] Trawniczek to Father Lewandowski, 24 October 1904, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Confrere, 8 November 1904, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Superior, 8 March 1905, A. C. M. K.

1905, he celebrated the first Mass of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish. In mid-February 1906, Father Tomiak placed the new congregation in the hands of another transplanted Vincentian from Connecticut, Father Maksymilian Sołtysek, C. M. With the remaining confreres "squeezed into the tight and cold rectory in Manayunk," Father Głogowski recognized that the area's Polish community was too small to support Father Tomiak's church construction project. He rejected Father Tomiak's proposal for the Vincentians to take over the Parish and shoulder the burden of the costs of construction, although he had already authorized a one-thousand-dollar contribution for the renovation of the house in Conshohocken. Against the suggestions to delay, however, Father Tomiak soon erected a small chapel on the property.[36]

The Polish Vincentians' presence in Conshohocken and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia soon drew fire from the local secular clergy and Archbishop Patrick John Ryan. Father Głogowski bristled at charges leveled against the Vincentians by some diocesan priests who claimed that the confreres "were hunting parishes" instead of "stay[ing] in their monasteries." Although the close living arrangements in Manayunk helped to cement the practice of communal living, Father Głogowski wrote the Visitor, Father Józef Kiedrowski, C.M., the Vincentians under his authority were becoming "disheartened and looked for every opportunity to get away from there." Making inroads into the Archdiocese of Philadelphia was proving more difficult than the Polish Vincentians had expected.[37]

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[36] Konieczny to Father Visitor published in Roczniki, Lipiec 1905, p. 167; Lou Baldwin, "St. Mary: Faithful to its roots." *The Catholic Standard and Times*, 3 November 2005; n.a., *Souvenir: Dedication: Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Swedesburg, Pa., May 1* , 1927, n.p.; Ed Dybicz, "Sacred Heart Parish, Swedesburg, PA.," typed manuscript, p. 3, Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia (A. R. C. A. P.); Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 November 1905, A. C. M. K.
[37] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 November 1905, A. C. M. K.

Archbishop Ryan, as well, proved to be a stumbling block. While characterized by Father Konieczny as "lov[ing] our Congregation," Archbishop Ryan argued that the Polish confreres could not open a house in Conshohocken and conduct missions in the Archdiocese without the permission of the Vatican. When the confreres brought it to his attention that the Congregation of the Mission had a presence in Philadelphia with a parish and college in Germantown, Pennsylvania, the Archbishop argued that the Polish confreres were of a "distincta provincia" with a different Visitor than the confreres in Germantown. Therefore, he claimed, specific permission was needed from Rome.[38]

An additional reason for the Vincentians' interest in Conshohocken and winning the approval of Archbishop Ryan was a nine-acre tract of land in West Conshohocken on which they hoped to build a college and novitiate. The Polish Vincentians were not alone in recognizing the need for such an institution. Father Tomasz Misicki, the President of an association of Polish priests in the Eastern United States, contacted the Polish Vincentians in 1905 and lent his support to the idea of a college. Father Misicki had wanted the association to establish such an institution itself, but was prevented from doing so by the lack of qualified instructors and the shortage of Polish priests. After a discussion with Father Głogowski, Father Misicki pledged his support for the Conshohocken college and promised the association's support in both fundraising and recruitment of students. In trying to convince Father Kiedrowski of the urgency of such an institution in the United States, Father Głogowski wrote, "The need for such an institution is great, because in all America there are only two Polish institutions and they are packed. Furthermore, they are not trustworthy, because they are too Americanized."

[38] Konieczny to Father Visitor, 1 July 1905, A. C. M. K.

If the Polish Vincentians could only secure the property, their defense of polskość and their future success in the United States would be secured.[39]

The property for the proposed college in West Conshohocken, Father Głogowski reported, was owned by an elderly woman, who because of health problems "wants to live in town." Initially offered to a women's religious order that was unable to raise the $16,000, the property, at the recommendation of Father Tomiak, was offered to the Vincentians. The Manayunk pastor's plan was for the confreres to buy the property and within five years he would pay them $10,000. This situation gained a greater sense of urgency when Father Tomiak informed the confreres that the property was to be sold and used for the construction of a sanitarium. Trying to keep the property from slipping through his fingers, Father Głogowski masterminded a bargain for the land. Because of the speed with which the decision had to be made and the expected income from student tuition and stole fees, the Superior of the Polish Vincentians in the United States felt he had to act without waiting for the approval of the Visitor in Kraków.[40]

Father Głogowski immediately began making plans for the school's opening in September 1906. Under the direction of Father Stanisław Konieczny, C.M., a former director of the Vincentians' School in Lwów, who he had appointed Rector of Saint John Kanty College, Father Głogowski stated, the faculty, composed mostly of Polish confreres, would guarantee that the School would be a "Polish-oriented institution, in which the English language will only be a 'malum necessarium' [necessary evil]." To insure the students received proper instruction, however, Father Głogowski planned to secure the services of an Eastern Province confrere to teach English. "And so we would

[39] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 November 1905, A. C. M. K.
[40] Ibid.

have a full compliment, Father Głogowski concluded. "Had you been here," he addressed Father Kiedrowski, "I am certain you would have done the same, because this is the future of the Congregation in America. I felt God's hand in this and that is why I did not hesitate."[41]

While Father Głogowski's appraisal of the potential of a Conshohocken foundation was positive, that of Father Konieczny was more restrained. In March 1906, he wrote to Father Czesław Lewandowski, C.M. in Kraków: "I am not going to build something without having a foundation. The purchased house costs $15,000 and the new institution that we have to build will cost many thousands of dollars. . . . I cannot go there because I do not believe in the future of this institution." In addition, he argued that the existing living space in Conshohocken was inadequate for a college and a new building would cost between $30,000 and $40,000. Instead of a college, Father Konieczny proposed using the facilities as a mission house.[42]

Further complicating the Vincentians' efforts to secure a foothold in Philadelphia was their chronic shortage of confreres and the resulting ill will and resistance to change by some of the confreres. Following his appointment as pastor of Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Conshohocken in mid-February 1906, Father Sołtysek began administering to the spiritual needs of Polish immigrants in Swedesburg, Pennsylvania, a village approximately five miles from Conshohocken. Almost immediately, he began collecting funds for the construction of a church in Swedesburg. Personally, however, Father Sołtysek chaffed under his pastoral duties. Originally sent by Father Głogowski on Christmas Eve 1905 to assist Father Józef Biela at Saint

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[41] Ibid.
[42] Konieczny to Lewandowski, 26 March 1906, A. C. M. K.

Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish, Father Sołtysek was under the impression that he would succeed Father Biela as pastor and was severely disappointed when he received word from Father Głogowski that he was to proceed to Conshohocken. Explaining his opposition to his reassignment, Father Sołtysek wrote the Father Słomiński in Kraków: "The truth is that when I came to America, I made God a promise that I would do anything and would work very hard, but the order for me to go to Conshohocken made me feel sad. It is not that I did not want to go, but I was afraid that I would not do the things successfully and that Father Tomiak will not like me."[43]

Father Sołtysek confided that his mistrust of the Manayunk pastor stemmed from Tomiak's relationship with Mr. B. Dembowski. The father of a young woman who had served Father Tomiak as his maid before his arrival in Manayunk, Dembowski relocated his family to Conshohocken at the priest's invitation. In Conshohocken, Father Tomiak lent Dembowski money that he used to build "a beautiful house for himself and six additional houses in the area." A little before the letter was written, Dembowski moved off the property. Father Tomiak, Father Sołtysek claimed, was still watching out for Dembowski as he planned to build Dembowski a saloon. With such concern over the ownership of the property, Father Sołtysek emphasized to Father Tomiak "that we either get our name on the papers or I will leave for New Haven." While the Vincentians did secure the title, tensions continued to exist between Father Sołtysek, Fathers Tomiak and Głogowski.[44]

On November 1, 1906, Father Głogowski replaced Father Sołtysek with Father Konieczny. Two weeks after his ouster from Conshohocken, Father Sołtysek vented his

[43] Ed Dybicz, "Sacred Heart Parish, Swedesburg, PA." (typed manuscript), p. 3, A. R. C. A. P.; Sołtysek to Father Visitor, 22 May 1906, A. C. M. K.; Sołtysek to Father Visitor, 22 May 1906, A. C. M. K.
[44] Ed Dybicz, "Sacred Heart Parish, Swedesburg, PA." (typed manuscript), p. 3, A. R. C. A. P.

frustration with the internal tensions among the Polish Vincentians in the United States in a letter to Kraków. He argued that while he had cleaned up matters in Conshohocken after Father Waszko and Konieczny "ran away," his efforts were unappreciated. In arguing his case, Father Sołtysek wrote Father Słomiński: "They [confreres] want to dismiss me like I was some kind of criminal." He initially planned to leave one Saturday without informing anyone but was found out. He expressed his personal pain in describing the unrest that took place when a band of supportive parishioners surrounded the rectory. "I was trying to explain that God wants it this way," Father Sołtysek recollected in a letter to Kraków, "and if they loved me they needed to accept a new pastor. Even though my heart was tearing apart when I saw these children with their parents, I went back to New Haven. Only God knows how much I suffered."[45]

While Father Sołtysek did obey his Superior's orders and left Conshohocken, he hoped to return. When Father Hugo Król, C. M. was instructed to return to Europe in the wake of the Czarist government's loosening of its religious restrictions in the wake of the 1905 Russian Revolution, Father Głogowski informed Father Słomiński that Father Sołtysek had packed his bags and was hoping to be reassigned to the Conshohocken house. Father Głogowski, however, sought an alternative destination for the troublesome confrere. In a previous letter, Father Głogowski predicted that the Polish confreres in the United States would not experience any peace until Father Sołtysek was "finally at sea."[46]

Finding conditions living among his former fellows intolerable, Father Sołtysek left the Community. By December 1907, he had secured a temporary assignment in Providence, Rhode Island. For Father Głogowski, the renegade priest's attitude and

[45] Ibid; Sołtysek to Father Superior, 14 November 1906, A. C. M. K.
[46] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 25 July 1907, A. C. M. K.

actions were almost preordained. In mid-December, he made his opinion known on both Father Sołtysek's flaws and the failure of the administration in Kraków to control him: "They [the administrators in Kraków] could not handle him so, of course,[they] sent him to America because this is a hospital for unhinged minds and warped characters. I blame no one, because they sent him here with the best of intentions unaware of what bad medicine this was. He was convinced that he was always an exemplary member of the Congregation, that the Superior was prejudiced against him, that his leaving the Congregation is not his fault, but that of his Superiors who squeezed what they could out of him and showed him no heart -- and then punished him for his good intentions and good works. Of course, someone so blinded by himself cannot be cured."[47]

If this was not enough, a strained relationship with Father Tomiak continued to bedevil the Polish Vincentians' efforts in Conshohocken. Like his fellow confreres, Father Konieczny was wary of Father Tomiak. In the late spring of 1906, he wrote to the Superior in Kraków that the conversion of the house in Conshohocken into a residence for a mission band would be an excessive financial burden. "Anyway, with Tomiak," Father Konieczny continued, "you cannot make a serious deal. He is stubborn. Saint Vincent predicted everything and forbade Brothers from entering the priesthood. It is a weird thing you may think that after a year we discovered who Tomiak really is. I met him earlier and during the first days I knew there will be nothing from this house."[48]

The plans for the Conshohocken House, however, remained undecided throughout the fall. Describing the status of the missions as "unstable" with ill-prepared confreres leading them, Father Konieczny vented his frustration on the future of the houses in

[47] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 8 August 1907, A. C. M. K. & Głogowski to Father Visitor, 12 December 1907, A. C. M. K.
[48] Konieczny to Father Superior, n.d., A. C. M. K.

Conshohocken. He wrote that if the proposed college was not erected, the Vincentians would be stuck with two houses in the area.[49]

By the end of December 1907, Father Konieczny reported that even with rampant unemployment and poor economic conditions, he was able to scrape together enough money to erect a modest church in Conshohocken for $7,000.00. The property in West Conshohocken proposed for the Vincentians' college, however, attracted no buyers. In desperation for any income, he wrote Father Słomiński: "So that I will have some kind of income, I will put geese and chickens there." Real estate problems continued to plague the Polish Vincentians throughout the following year. By September 1908, Father Głogowski reported that the dispute over the houses in Conshohocken had not been settled.[50]

In the late summer of 1908, a new pastor faced the daunting task of solving the problems in Conshohocken. In shouldering the pastoral burden, Father Jan Osadnik, C. M. was well aware of, not only the financial difficulties he faced, but also the potential dissent among the parishioners. "I am afraid that I can only destroy what Father Konieczny made beautiful," he wrote Father Słomiński. With pockets of parishioners lamenting the loss of Father Konieczny and others demanding greater control of the parish's financial records, Father Osadnik concluded: "I have to know with whom I am dealing, because making a mistake is very easy."[51]

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[49] Konieczny to Father Visitor, 20 October 1906, A. C. M. K.
[50] Konieczny to Father Visitor, 29 December 1907, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 September 1908, A. C. M. K.
[51] Osadnik to Father Visitor, 28 August 1908, A. C. M. K.

The ease with which a priest could make a mistake became quite evident to Father Osadnik a little over a year after taking over Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish. By the middle of September 1909, rumors began to circulate about Father Osadnik's personal behavior, particularly his interaction with Bronisława, a young woman who worked in the rectory. Father Osadnik claimed that the rumor came from within the ranks of the Polish Vincentians. In September 1909, he wrote Kraków, describing his fellow confrere, Father Marceli Słupiński. "He suddenly becomes a friend, just to condemn me. They are calling me a debauchee. Fathers Trawniczek and Mazurkiewicz and others ask where Bronisława is. I will not let them make a fool of me." If no action is taken, Father Osadnik threatens drastic action. "You should know about everything and protect me. If this is the way things are supposed to be, I do not want to be pastor anymore. I am ready to resign from everything because I am tired of these unpleasant situations."[52]

By the spring of the following year, tensions had escalated dramatically. In early June, Father Tomiak wrote Kraków, informing the provincial leadership that Father Osadnik had contacted one of the Archbishop's counselors, conveying to him that he no longer wished to be a Vincentian and was "conniving to acquire the possessions of the Missionaries." Lurking behind the growing scandal, Father Głogowski insisted, was Bronisława and her family. "That it is the work of the housekeeper and her family is almost certain. There will be no changes effected by diocesan officials until the first days of August, by then I will be in place and safeguarding our interests." The same day that

[52] Osadnik to Father Superior, 24 September 1909, A. C. M. K.

Father Głogowski wrote Father Słomiński, Father Osadnik penned a note asking for his release from the Congregation of the Mission.[53]

The Vincentians' fear of scandal and the tarnishing of their reputation in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia were exacerbated by news of the establishment of a Polish college by Father John Godrycz. A Polish seminarian who studied in Warszawa and Lublin, Father Godrycz emigrated to the United States, taught at Saints Cyril & Methodius Seminary in Detroit, Michigan, was ordained by Bishop J. S. Foley, and went on to Rome, where he earned doctorates in theology and civil and canon law. In 1902, Father Godrycz was incardinated into the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and assigned pastor of Saint Jadwiga Parish in Chester, Pennsylvania. As he continued to serve the Archdiocese's Polish Catholics, he was struck by the "lack of higher learning among the Polish youths of the anthracite [coal mining] region."[54]

By early May 1909, Father Godrycz had proposed the idea of a college to Archbishop Ryan, indicating that he was "willing to build it in Philadelphia and to pay for it," and began searching for a suitable site. He eventually decided the corner of Allegheny Avenue and Cedar Street where he supervised the erection of a three-story building that included an auditorium, astrological observatory, laboratories, chapel, faculty rooms, and staff living quarters. In the fall of 1910, Saint John's Polish College of Pennsylvania opened and began to attract students. By the start of the 1911-1912 academic year, the school boasted an enrollment of 138 students.[55]

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[53] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 6 July 1910, A. C. M. K.; Osadnik to Father Visitor, 6 July 1910, A. C. M. K.

[54] Sister M. Accursia Bern, O. S. F., "St. John's Polish College of Pennsylvania." *Polish American Studies* volume V, nos. 3-4 (July-December 1948), p. 84.

[55] "Meeting, May 4, 1909," *Consultors' Minute Books (April 1895 to May 1916)*, p. 87, A. R. C. A. P.; Accursia, "St. John's Polish College," pp. 84-85. Saint John's Polish College of Pennsylvania was short-lived. While it kept its tuition low ($60.00 per year), was willing to enroll "Americans, Poles, Bohemians,

As final preparations for the college were being completed in 1910, the situation in Conshohocken got significantly worse. Bowing to the various problems within their ranks, the Polish Vincentians surrendered control over Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish. The Archbishop then assigned Father Mieczysław Kopytkiewicz, the brother of Father Maryan Kopytkiewicz, the founding pastor of Saint John Kanty Parish, to the Conshohocken community. With Father Głogowski away in Chicago and fearing for the assets of the Congregation in Conshohocken, Father Waszko wrote Father Trawniczek, instructing him "to go there and secure our money." In the middle of August, Father Trawniczek reported on his experiences in Conshohocken: "When Father Osadnik was leaving I got a telegram from Father Głogowski from Chicago: 'Take the things.' I engaged trucks and people, but the priest succeeding Father Osadnik . . . begged me three times not to take anything, that he will pay for it." Father Trawniczek explained that Father Kopytkiewicz had gone to the Archbishop to intervene in the matter and "told him [the Archbishop] that we quoted an outrageous sum [for the furnishings]; to this the Archbishop said, 'yes, it is not nice that you should charge such an outrageous sum.'" Venting his frustration with the Archbishop, Father Trawniczek confided in Father Słomiński, "I honestly do not know what these eminences are thinking—they imagine themselves to be omnipotentes -- truly, there are no words to describe it."[56]

As Father Głogowski struggled to tabulate the total of the debt Father Osadnik left in Conshohocken, he also had to deal with the confrere's dismissal request. In an August

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Slovaks, Ruthenians, or Lithuanians," and accepted students expelled from other institutions, the school closed in 1916. Sister M. Accursia cites "lack of cooperation on the part of the Polish clergy and people," Father Godrycz's failure "to gain the goodwill, so vitally necessary for the success of any enterprise or the cooperation of the three largest Polish parishes in Philadelphia," and his various other responsibilities for the school's demise. See: Accursia, "St. John's Polish College," pp. 89-91.

[56] Waszko to Father Visitor, 28 July 1910, A. C. M. K.; Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 19 August 1910, A. C. M. K.

4th letter, Father Głogowski asked the Visitor to send him Father Osadnik's dismissal, hoping to use it to coax the wayward confrere to return some of the money and property he had taken. Four days later, Father Głogowski reported that following his return from Chicago, he went to Conshohocken and retrieved the financial books that eventually indicated that the Vincentians owed approximately $700.00. He also mentioned that he had granted permission for Father Osadnik to transfer to a parish in Bayonne, New Jersey.[57]

In the above letters to the Visitor and in another written to the Provincial Procurator, Father Głogowski exhibited mental fatigue and anguish over Father Osadnik's behavior, lamenting the potential damage his actions inflicted on the public reputation of the Polish confreres in the United States. His comments to the Provincial Procurator are especially telling. "Father Osadnik, as you certainly know, added to the ranks of the escapees," Father Głogowski wrote. "He cloaked himself in shame and brought no honor to the Congregation. Indeed, he left us with a mass of bills as well as a souvenir of perversity." Father Głogowski added that Father Osadnik's duplicity was also directed at Father Słomiński, himself. "He humbled himself before Father Visitor, but after his departure, he stated that he wanted to curry the Visitor's favor and so he played the idiot. A person who thus treats the gentleness and unheard of leniency of his Superior must be of filthy character and evil and perverse to the bottom of his heart. God will not send his blessings on the disgusting scarecrow."[58]

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[57] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 4 August 1910, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 8 August 1910, A. C. M. K.

[58] Głogowski to Father Procurator, 8 August 1910, A. C. M. K. In his letter to the Visitor of the same date, Father Głogowski vents his frustration with Father Słupiński, who he described as always providing indifferent answers of "I do not know" or "I do not care" to his questions. Like Father Osadnik, Father Słupiński is characterized as Janus-faced, "laughing at the Visitor's advice and [the suggestion] that the

In August 1910, tensions from the conflict in Conshohocken reached fevered pitch. The malpractice and malfeasance of Father Osadnik sent shock waves through the ranks of the confreres in the United States and Europe and resulted in the loss of yet another priest. If the news of the events at Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish would have spread throughout American Polonia, the reputation and future of the Polish Vincentians in the United States could have been severely compromised. The conflict over control of the property in Conshohocken and the disagreement over the right to sell it illustrate the clash between the Polish confreres and the hierarchy of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and its charter-group Polish clergy. No better example of this emerging "perfect storm" can be found than a meeting between Father Głogowski and Archbishop Ryan on August 12, 1910.

On that day, Father Głogowski, accompanied by Father Leo Wierzyński, met with the Archbishop to ask his permission for Bishop Paul Rhode to conduct the confirmation service for some of the Vincentians' parishioners. At the meeting Archbishop Ryan confronted Father Głogowski about the situation in Conshohocken and the Vincentians' ability to administer parishes in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. In a letter to Father Słomiński, Father Głogowski recalled: "He [Archbishop Ryan] took this opportunity to light into our Polish Missionaries for conducting improper business—that . . . we underhandedly deceived Father Tomiak to give us this house. We got it finally on the condition that we establish a Polish parish." Father Głogowski explained that the Archbishop charged that the Vincentians knowingly purchased land adjacent to the church in Conshohocken, and, when they grew tired of the parish, they proposed to sell

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Visitor wanted to put him [Słupiński] on the right path." See: Głogowski to Father Visitor, 8 August 1910, A. C. M. K.

the land. The Archbishop charged that the Vincentians would benefit twice at the Archdiocese expense—once already when the parishioners contributed funds for the erection of the church and again if the Archdiocese would buy it from the confreres. Archbishop Ryan lambasted the Vincentians, claiming as Father Głogowski described it, "The good of the Congregation is more important to us than working for the salvation of souls." Along with this malfeasance, the Archbishop charged that being missionaries, the Vincentians were constantly on the road and were ill-suited for parish work.[59]

As fate would have it, Father Głogowski had visited Manayunk that very day and arrived at the Archbishop's office with a notarized statement from Father Tomiak explaining his relationship with the Vincentians and his offer of the property in Conshohocken. In it, he stated: "1) The house, together with the entire garden surrounding it, . . . I bought with my own savings; 2) When, almost seven years ago, there came to North America the Missionary Fathers, Poles from Krakow, I proposed to them that they try to settle in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia; in order to assist them in this step I offered them the aforementioned house. As soon as the missionary fathers received permission from the proper authorities to settle in our diocese, I drew up a favorable transfer of ownership for them. 3) I gave them the house and entire garden exclusively; I sent a copy of this act to the Superior General of the Missionary Fathers in Paris and another to the Provincial Superior in Kraków. 4) I gave them the house and adjoining property without condition and with no provision that there be established a Polish parish or not. 5) I made this donation on my own initiative, asked by no one, least of all by the Missionary Fathers; I did this of my own free will and I judge that in

[59] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 21 August 1910, A. C. M. K.

accordance with local ordinances I am free to do as I please with my own personal property. 6) I did not have the least intention that if there should arise there a Polish parish, that that parish would have any claim to the property of the Missionary Fathers. 7) The imputation, therefore, that I gave them the house and garden on the condition that they establish a Polish parish there is unfounded. The idea to create a Polish parish arose much later and entirely separately from my transferring the property to the Missionary Fathers. The above declaration I am prepared to swear to at any time and before whoever has the right to ask it of me."[60]

Despite Father Tomiak's statement, Archbishop Ryan continued to challenge the Vincentians' control over the property in Conshohocken. At the meeting, Archbishop Ryan agreed that the land belonged to the Vincentians, but charged that they could not dispose of it without endangering their privilege of working in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. "The house was given to us," Father Głogowski explained, "so that we might live there as missionaries who conduct missions." He paraphrased Archbishop Ryan: "We did not pay for it, but it was a gift given for a very specific purpose, consequently we are to live there and not sell it, otherwise he would be forced to deny us facultates in his diocese."[61]

In addition, Father Głogowski reported that the Archbishop failed to understand the constitutional structure of the Congregation of the Mission. In his mind, according to the Superior of the Polish Vincentians, the only "true" Missionaries were those of the Eastern Province with their motherhouse in Germantown, Pennsylvania. So when Archbishop Ryan permitted the Polish confreres to work in Philadelphia, he did so on the

[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.

assumption that they "would fall under the jurisdiction of the local visitor." Father Głogowski countered that if this was the case, the Archbishop's demand that the Polish confreres secure authorization from the Vatican before ministering to the Poles in Conshohocken was unnecessary. As matters progressed, Father Głogowski anticipated that Archbishop Ryan would attempt to prevent the Vincentians from continuing to serve in Philadelphia.[62]

Of more immediate concern, however, was insuring the future viability of the Polish Vincentian mission in the United States. "Besides, if daggers were drawn," Father Głogowski wrote, "he [Archbishop Ryan] would lose [the fight to expel the Polish Vincentians] and as for Conshohocken, it would be for us a Pyrrhic victory because the matter would come to light and it would be difficult [for us]to do anything in America. The bishop could easily forbid pastors to invite us to conduct missions. We would then have to wait some time for the matter to be forgotten or for the old Archbishop to be summoned by God to eternal rest." Similar to the situation in Hartford, Connecticut, the success of the confreres in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia depended on maintaining the support, or at least the tolerance, of the local Ordinary and the local diocesan Polish priests—quite a challenge for the small band of Polish confreres in the United States.[63]

The ongoing tension between Archbishop Ryan and the Polish Vincentians was also the subject of correspondences between Father Trawniczek and Father Słomiński. In describing the Archbishop's claims against the authority of the Polish Vincentians, Father Trawniczek characterized his motivations: "And here we saw the native greed—whoever comes here must be subject to them [American bishops], otherwise they are not

[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

recognized. What ignorance of the law. What stupidity." In response to this statement, the Polish confreres went to consult Father Patrick McHale, C.M., the Visitor of the Eastern Province at Germantown. "They told him everything," Father Trawniczek reported, and Father McHale counseled the Polish Vincentians to "sit quietly and this will all be forgotten. He advises us, the same as you." Reflecting on recent events, Father Trawniczek concluded: "In general, here in America, they do not like Congregations and Orders."[64]

Furthermore, Father Trawniczek reported that Archbishop Ryan considered the confreres from Kraków to be manipulative regarding the control of the Conshohocken property. While summarizing Father Głogowski's meeting with the Archbishop, Father Trawniczek paraphrases his Superior's contemptuous remarks about the Ordinary of Philadelphia: "The Archbishop, who usually sleeps, was as awake as if he were playing cards." The Archbishop reportedly charged the Polish Vincentians with convincing Father Tomiak to deed the house over to the confreres expecting them to establish a parish on it. They abandoned the idea, however, a decision characterized by the Archbishop as "base." Father Głogowski responded: "[W]e did not entice Father Tomiak, because this is mean and he is not foolish." At this point, Father Trawniczek reported that Archbishop Ryan, "the reptile," conceded the point but sharply retorted that he would never allow the Polish Vincentians to return to Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish.[65]

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[64] Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 19 August 1910, A. C. M. K.

[65] Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 13 August 1910, A. C. M. K. In both the letter of 13 August 1910 and the one of 19 August 1910, Father Trawniczek is concerned about the potential damage that could be caused by the news he conveyed to the Visitor. In postscripts to the letters, he respectively cautions: "I ask that you burn this letter."/"Perhaps you should tear up this letter."

For the next year, the conflict over the disposal of the house in Conshohocken and its contents dominated relations between the Polish Vincentians and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Throughout this period, Archbishop Ryan continued to question the ability of the confreres to minister properly to the needs of the parishioners in Conshohocken. Being missionaries, the Archbishop charged the Vincentians were unfit for parish duties. The Polish Vincentians, at this point, found themselves in an odd limbo; they could not sell the property without endangering their right to minister in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, yet they still lack the personnel to renew their ministry there.[66]

The tense relations between the Polish Vincentians and Archbishop Ryan were not limited to the confreres in Philadelphia. Writing from Derby, Connecticut, Father Waszko wrote to the Visitor in Kraków about the above meeting: "At the same time he [Archbishop Ryan] noted that we are not Missionaries at all, as he knows only one type of Missionaries, i.e. the English, whose Visitor is Father McHale." According to Father Waszko, the Archbishop claimed that he was under the impression that the Polish Vincentians would fall under the control of the Visitor of the Eastern Province. "I replied that he was wrong," Father Głogowski countered, "that we have permission from Rome to settle here, and it explicitly states that we belong to the Polish Province. If we were subject to the local Province there would have been no need to obtain Rome's permission to settle [here]." When he mentioned that the Archbishop did not bring up the issue at a previous meeting with Father Słomiński during his inspection tour, the Archbishop countered "that this is the first time he is hearing of this and asked if I had confirmation from Rome." Frustrated by his forgetfulness or disdain for the truth, Father Głogowski,

[66] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 21 August 1910, A. C. M. K.

in an uncharacteristic breach of etiquette, described Archbishop Ryan as "an old codger who cannot remember what he said fifteen minutes ago" and a "muddler with whom it is not worth getting into an argument because after five minutes he cannot remember anything."[67]

By the middle of September 1910, the Vincentians turned for assistance with the Archbishop to his liaison with the Polish Catholic clergy, Father Peter Masson. After explaining the Archbishop's continued insistence that the Polish confreres either use Conshohocken as a mission house or "surrender it to the diocese," Father Głogowski showed Father Masson the statements from Fathers Sołtysek and Tomiak, describing the Vincentians' claim to the property. In response, Father Masson guaranteed that he would intervene on behalf of the Vincentians and explained to the Archbishop that the only solution would be for the Archdiocese to purchase the property from the confreres. While he continued to counsel patience, Father Masson approached the Archbishop with a request to permit him to take charge of arbitrating the conflict in Conshohocken, a request Archbishop Ryan denied. In the face of this continued resistance, Father Głogowski evinced less and less patience and demanded rent on the rectory from Father Kopytkiewicz. Receiving no response from the pastor, he charged that if the Archbishop took no action on the matter, he "would go before a higher forum."[68]

As he grew impatient with Archbishop Ryan, Father Głogowski began contemplating legal action, but did "not blame him [the Archbishop] for everything." Being "very fickle and easily pumped," Father Głogowski charged that Archbishop Ryan

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[67] Ibid; Waszko to Father Visitor, 23 August 1910, A. C. M. K. Father Głogowski's reference to "Rome" does not provide any additional information to indicate to what body he is referring.
[68] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 14 September 1910, A. C. M. K.; Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 12 September 1910, A. C. M. K.

was easily swayed. Father Głogowski recognized that the real source of opposition to the Vincentians' efforts in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia came from "other devils," such as Father Gabriel Kraus, the pastor of Saint Laurentius Parish, the Polish mother church of the Archdiocese, and Fathers Maryan and Mieczysław Kopytkiewicz. According to Fathers Głogowski and Trawniczek, these Polish diocesan priests gave no quarter in defending their turf against the Vincentians' inroads. Their success had been advanced by Father Osadnik, who, according to Father Trawniczek, characterized the Polish confreres as "thieves, sycophants, cheats, [and] money-grubbers."[69]

In addition, Father Osadnik's continued presence in the Archdiocese made the solution to the situation in Conshohocken even more difficult. In September 1910, Father Głogowski informed Father Słomiński that Father Masson had received a delegation of laymen from Conshohocken, who petitioned that Father Osadnik remain with them. The following month, Father Osadnik penned a letter to Father Słomiński that more fully illustrated the explosive nature of the situation. After reiterating his support among the Poles of Conshohocken, he described the ill treatment he had received at the hands of Father Głogowski and Father Tomiak. The latter priest's testimony, he claimed, should especially be discounted. Father Osadnik charged that Father Trawniczek had also slandered him in speaking openly about him to other Polish priests. "Later, I will write more," Father Osadnik continued, "about what you should know about America. Today is not a good time, because it could look like revenge. The bad news is spreading and the

[69] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 21 August 1910, A. C. M. K.; Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 12 September 1910, A. C. M. K. While relations between the Polish Vincentians and the Polish priests of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia tended to be strained, they did, on occasion, work for a common goal. In October 1908, a meeting of the Archdiocesan consultors discussed a proposal for the establishment of a Polish orphan asylum. The minutes of the meeting mention that Fathers Głogowski, Tomiak, Kraus, M. Kopytkiewicz and other members of the Polish clergy were petitioners. See: "Meeting, October 20, 1908," *Consultors' Minute Books (April 1895 to May 1916)*, p. 81,
A. R. C. A. P. & Głogowski to Father Visitor, 12 November 1908, A. C. M. K.

dogs believe it, just to appear innocent. I am being quiet for a while, but I will write to you whenever I can." If the defamation did not stop, he threatened, he would resort to drastic measures. "I will write to the General when this happens and then there will be a big change in America."[70]

Father Głogowski, while saddened by the loss of yet another confrere and worried about the continued shortage of personnel in the United States, was relieved to see the last of Father Osadnik, who, by the fall of 1910, had relocated to Minnesota. While penning a dismissal for the wayward Vincentian relieved him of one burden, it left him with another whose weight grew heavier by the day—debt. Father Głogowski's estimated that the debt for the Conshohocken houses reached $1,160.00, including the cost of a piano, sewing machine, towels, and assorted kitchen items taken. These expenses, along with those for alcoholic beverages, led Father Głogowski to complain to Father Słomiński, "that he [Father Osadnik] left a pile of bills, which he sent me, and notified his creditors that I would settle with them." Unfortunately, the Polish Superior's ability to pay off these debts was limited, circumscribed by the construction costs of Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania. (See below.) If he granted Father Osadnik's dismissal, Father Głogowski argued, he would have no leverage over the wayward priest to pay off these debts.[71]

Tensions over the situation in Conshohocken came to a head in February 1911. After overseeing the completion of a parochial school for Saint Jadwiga Parish in Philadelphia and contributing to the building fund for Saint John Kanty College, Father

[70] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 14 September 1910, A. C. M. K.; Osadnik to Father Visitor, 8 October 1910, A. C. M. K.
[71] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 21 October, 1910, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 25 October 1910, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Confrere, 10 February 1911, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 10 February 1911, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 19 April 1911, A. C. M. K.

Głogowski was in financial straits regarding the furnishing of a new convent in Philadelphia. One solution he proposed was the use of the furniture from the rectory in Conshohocken. He informed Father Kopytkiewicz of his intentions and suggested the pastor make arrangements to secure other furniture. Armed with the notarized statements of Fathers Tomiak and Sołtysek, he traveled to Conshohocken, where he was met by Father Kopytkiewicz, who informed him that he would not allow any of the furnishings to be taken. ”I would have called the police to throw him out,” Father Głogowski wrote Father Słomiński, “but I feared a scandal.” In time, Father Głogowski convinced Father Kopytkiewicz that the furniture belonged to the Vincentian Fathers. “[B]ut,” Father Kopytkiewicz argued, “diocesan authorities appointed him guardian of all our things and he answers to the diocese.” In order to resolve the situation, the two priests agreed to call on the Archbishop the following day.[72]

When they arrived at the chancery the next day, the Archbishop was sick and was unable to meet with them. Instead, they met with the Chancellor, Monsignor James P. Turner. Father Głogowski presented the Chancellor with Father Sołtysek’s sworn statement regarding his purchasing of furnishings for the Conshohocken rectory. Monsignor Turner agreed that they had been purchased with Vincentian funds, but said that Father Kopytkiewicz was justified in preventing Father Głogowski from taking anything. The Chancellor justified the decision by citing a number of ambiguities in the parish’s bookkeeping. ”Until this question is resolved,” Monsignor Turner informed Father Głogowski, “you have no right to remove anything.” Just as on previous

[72] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 10 February 1919, A. C. M. K.

occasions, the Polish Superior's first thoughts were for the future of the Vincentians in the United States. "This was a kick in the head to me, not because of the stupid furniture, but because the good name of the Congregation is at stake. If I had an inkling from Father Kopytkiewicz, I would have first demanded the ledgers and cancelled checks from him for comparison, but here I was taken by surprised, unprepared."[73]

At the suggestion of Monsignor Turner, Father Głogowski met with the Auxiliary Bishop Edmond Francis Prendergast, who ruled in favor of the Vincentians' claim to the furniture. The very next day, Father Głogowski took some of the furnishings. On the following Monday, he returned to claim the remainder, expecting no further problems. He was wrong. "In the meantime, there was a heavy snowfall," he recalled to Father Słomiński, "and the driver did not want to make the trip. I was preparing to return to Philadelphia when I received word that some parishioners wanted to see me. These were the saddest moments of this battle. They immediately started screaming that I had already taken one wagon load and I am not to take another thing as that is the parish's investment, that they will have me arrested, etc. I must have told them the same thing ten times -- that it is all ours -- but they kept repeating the same thing."[74]

Father Głogowski once again justified his actions by citing Father Sołtysek's notarized letter. The crowd, however, challenged the validity of the statement, claiming that the former pastor could have written anything he desired. In the end, Father Głogowski stared down the crowd, charging that if anyone continued to interfere "they could end up in the slammer." Over the next two weeks, Father Głogowski made two

[73] Ibid. The source of the confusion was the inability to account for a $4,000 surplus from the construction of the church in Conshohocken. It seems that Father Konieczny took out an $8,000 loan for the project and collected $4,000 from the parishioners. In addition, there was confusion over the cost of building a wall around the property.
[74] Ibid.

more trips to Conshohocken and carted away the remainder of the Vincentians' possessions. While a minor victory in the ongoing skirmish between the Vincentians and the secular Polish clergy, the reclaiming of the furniture still left unresolved the fate of the Conshohocken property. This conflict, however, soon became a moot point. At 4:10 pm on February 11, 1911 Archbishop Patrick John Ryan died. Considered an inflexible thinker who failed to understand the constitutional structure of the Congregation of the Mission, and a pawn easily manipulated by the Polish secular clergy of the Archdiocese, the Polish Vincentians considered Archbishop Ryan to be an unwitting accomplice of their antagonists. They hoped for more favorable treatment at the hands of his successor.[75]

The future of relations between the Polish confreres and the Archdiocese palpably improved when Auxiliary Bishop Prendergast expanded his duties as temporary administrator and later as the seventh Ordinary of Philadelphia. "He is a true father to the clerics," Father Głogowski wrote of the new Archbishop. "He is very just and decisive, and not, like his late predecessor, given to influence by others; rather he researches every issue and, once he has made a decision, does not retract it, as so often did his predecessor. He is well-disposed towards us and I do not think we will have any problem with him unless we create it ourselves." Considered independent of the meddling influence of the Polish secular clerics, the Vincentians believed they would receive a fair hearing under the new Archbishop.[76]

With the issue of the furniture in the Conshohocken rectory settled, tensions between the Polish Vincentians and Father Kopytkiewicz revolved around the payment of

[75] Ibid.
[76] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 9 November 1911, A. C. M. K.

rent. In April 1911, Father Głogowski contacted the pastor, demanding rent payments of fifty dollars per month for the period from August 1910 to January 1911. The Polish Superior later informed Father Słomiński that Father Kopytkiewicz balked at the amount, but settled on a figure of thirty dollars per month. He, however, made only one payment of fifty dollars to Father Głogowski. When the discussion turned to the rent after January 1911, the Conshohocken pastor made only one twenty-five-dollar payment, refusing to make any further remuneration on the grounds that "he wants to buy this property." Questioning Father Kopytkiewicz's authority to take such action, Father Głogowski sought legal counsel. The Vincentians' hopes of settling the conflict over the Conshohocken property was once again misplaced.[77]

As spring turned into summer and summer turned into fall, the status of the Conshohocken rectory as well as the property in West Conshohocken remained in limbo. With the Vincentians' lawyer preparing for legal proceedings against the Archdiocese, Father Tomiak came forward with a proposal for the land. As before, however, the Vincentians distrusted their former confrere. In a letter to the Visitor, Father Głogowski wrote: "Father Tomiak assumed the houses in West Conshohocken and wants to install the Sisters of Nazareth there on condition that they establish an orphanage and he will pay us off. Because as yet we have no guarantee that the sum owed us will really be paid, I signed nothing over to him, because a verbal promise is no guarantee: today he is alive, tomorrow he might be dead, and we would be stuck." By early November, the deal was concluded. True to his word, Father Tomiak signed over the West Conshohocken property to the Sisters of Nazareth for an orphanage. In exchange, he deeded over to the

[77] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 19 April 1911, A. C. M. K.

Vincentians three houses in Manayunk that were to be sold. Of the expected $5,000 profit to be made in the sale, the Vincentians would receive $4,000.[78]

The settling of the matter of the rectory and debt from Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in Conshohocken, however, proved more difficult to complete. "As for the rectory," Father Głogowski wrote Father Słomiński, "the lawyer has begun proceedings, but there is a lot of trouble there--the current pastor, as I mentioned earlier, is a man of ill will, constantly creating new problems." In July 1911, Father Głogowski reported that Father Kopytkiewicz, claiming that the parish was free of debt, was willing to pay the Vincentians $2,000 for the property. "I wanted to tell him to boldly proceed on this road of 'discovery' until he 'discovers' that he has straw in his head for brains, but I refrained because . . . I do not know when all this will come to an end; before I go to Chicago I will see the lawyer to know how the case is proceeding." In the letter, Father Głogowski concluded that if he used Father Kopytkiewicz's flawed logic, he could charge the Archdiocese for the interest they paid on the loan, being that the Archbishop was listed as the owner of the property on the loan agreement.[79]

The Conshohocken debt, however, proved much more difficult to handle than Father Kopytkiewicz thought. On October 31, 1911, Father Głogowski, accompanied by his lawyer, met with Archbishop Prendergast and the pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Monsignor Joseph McCort, who later became an auxiliary bishop in Philadelphia. Father Głogowski came prepared to prove that the entire $8,000 loan Father Konieczny had taken out had been used for the construction of the church, refuting the financial

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[78] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 1 July 1911, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 9 November 1911, A. C. M. K.

[79] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 1 July 1911, A. C. M. K. "Scripta manent" translates "having been written things remain."

mismanagement claimed by Father Kopytkiewicz. At the meeting, the Vincentians' lawyer rebutted the charges. Monsignor McCort, in Father Głogowski's words, then attempted "to paint us as greedy swindlers."[80]

Closure on the disputed Conshohocken property remained elusive. With the attention of the Polish Vincentians in the United States turning more and more toward the completion of Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania and the possibility of establishing a second school in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania (see below), mention of the Conshohocken settlement soon faded from the correspondence with Kraków.

In early October 1912, Father Głogowski mentioned in a letter to Kraków that his lawyer was continuing to correspond with the Archbishop regarding the $10,000 settlement of the Conshohocken dispute. Claiming financial difficulties, Archbishop Prendergast proposed that the Vincentians sign over the title to him in exchange for an initial payment of merely $500. Father Głogowski replied that he wanted to continue to hold the title for an additional year. The following April, he reported that he had received a cash payment of $2,016 from the Archdiocese and a five-percent mortgage for the remaining $8,000. For almost a decade, the Archdiocese remained delinquent on its payments to the Polish Vincentians. As late as the fall of 1920, two Polish Vincentians, Fathers Antoni Mazurkiewicz and Paweł Waszko, wrote to Kraków, complaining about the ongoing failure of the Archdiocese to pay the balance on the Conshohocken property.[81]

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[80] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 9 November 1911, A. C. M. K.

[81] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 3 October 1912, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 6 April 1913, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 5 September 1920, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 18 October 1920, A. C. M. K. N.B. The only mention of the situation at Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish in the *Consultors' Minutes Books* on the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is the one for the meeting held on November 28, 1910. It states: "The question of ownership of the pastoral residence of St.

The early trials in Conshohocken evince the difficulty the Polish Vincentians had in securing a foothold in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The principal obstacle deterring them was a complex of claims by competing charter groups—one more complicated than the one the confreres faced in Connecticut. Unlike the Hartford Diocese, with its secular "Irish" clergy with whom the Polish Vincentians had to interact, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia was characterized by a well-established and entrenched Polish immigrant clergy quite jealous of its particular turf. While Father Benedikt Tomiak had invited the Vincentians to Conshohocken soon after their arrival in the United States, he was but one of many Polish secular priests competing for position and power in the Philadelphia Archdiocese. Priests such as Fathers Gabriel Kraus, Mieczysław Kopytkiewicz, his brother, Maryan, and John Godrycz were well-established ethnic leaders and long-time liaisons between the Philadelphia Polonia and the Chancery. With the Polish Vincentians settled in Manayunk, this band of diocesan priests expressed opposition to them, characterizing them as "hunting parishes" instead of "stay[ing] in their monasteries." Once the Vincentians were settled in Manayunk and Conshohocken, the Archdiocesan Polish clergy used their preexisting relationships with Archbishop Ryan to throw additional impediments in front of the confreres. With such opposition from fellow Polish clerics, the Vincentian Fathers had a much more difficult time forging a solid a presence than they had in the less-contested terrain of the Hartford Diocese.

In addition to the resistance emanating from the Polish clergy of the Philadelphia Archdiocese, the Polish Vincentians had to interact with another clerical charter group. With a presence in Philadelphia since 1840, the members of the Eastern Province of the

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Mary's (Polish) Church [illegible] Conshohocken was . . ." The sentence was not finished. See: "Meeting, November 28, 1910," *Consultors' Minute Books (April 1895 to May 1916)*, p. 110, A. R. C. A. P.

Congregation of the Mission had long established themselves as the "true" Vincentians in the Archdiocese, a claim justified, in part, by its motherhouse and Saint Vincent de Paul Parish in Germantown, Pennsylvania. While the Polish Vincentians interacted often with the confreres of the Eastern Province, they did so from an inferior position, having constantly to legitimize their actions—a task made more difficult by the questionable behavior of their own clerics.

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Although the Polish Vincentians' effort to anchor "the future of the Congregation in America" in Conshohocken failed, their early work there and in the Parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in nearby Swedesburg, Pennsylvania, began a process of geographic reorientation and personnel dispersion that would complicate their American apostolate and later autonomy efforts. A change of fortune, however, soon came with the establishment of Saint Jadwiga Parish in the Callow Hill neighborhood of Philadelphia.

Similar to their situation in Conshohocken, the Polish Vincentians faced strong opposition from the Polish clergy when word got out of the Archbishop's offer of a new parish within the city of Philadelphia. In February 1907, Father Głogowski reported to Father Słomiński that Archbishop Ryan's proposal had to be acted upon quickly, for members of the secular Polish clergy had already expressed interest in the new parish. With sufficient space to conduct clerical retreats, the Polish Vincentians planned to make Saint Jadwiga Parish the "main house" in the United States. In addition, the parish was to be erected in a location in Philadelphia where numerous Polish immigrants lived, guaranteeing, once fully established, a "noteworthy" source of income for the Vincentian Fathers. With important responsibilities such as interacting with the Archbishop and the

secular clergy, Father Głogowski argued that the superior of the new parish had to have a mastery of the English language.[82]

Finding the ideal confrere to serve as Pastor at the Callow Hill Parish was complicated by ongoing personnel problems among the Polish Vincentians in the United States. One priest who expected to be appointed pastor of the new parish was Father Maksymilian Sołtysek. Forced earlier to recall Father Sołtysek to Connecticut, Father Głogowski feared "that we will have the same comedy like the one in Conshohocken" if he gave in to Father Sołtysek's demand. Father Głogowski hoped to solve the problem permanently by sending the troublesome confrere not to Philadelphia but back to Poland and requesting that Father Słomiński send an older confrere in his stead.[83]

In the end, it was Father Głogowski, himself, who packed his belongings and traveled south from New Haven to Philadelphia. On Palm Sunday, March 24, 1907, Father Głogowski celebrated his first Mass as the pastor of Saint Jadwiga Parish in a public hall at the corner of Twenty-First and Carlton Streets. Soon after, the fledging parish relocated its Eucharistic celebrations to the chapel of Saints Peter & Paul Cathedral.[84]

While the site for the parish's Eucharistic celebrations, the cathedral chapel continued to be controlled by the cathedral staff—a situation that exacerbated tensions between the Polish Vincentians and members of the secular clergy of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. In early April 1908, Father Głogowski described the situation to Father Słomiński. Commenting on the difficulties of conducting Lenten services, with the

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[82] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 February 1907, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 25 July 1907, A. C. M. K.
[83] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 22 February 1907, A. C. M. K.
[84] n.a., *Złoty Jubileusz Parafii Św. Jadwigi, Philadelphia, Pa., 1907-1957*, p. 16; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 25 July 1907, A. C. M. K.

"Irish" clergy commandeering the chapel, he wrote, "This so irritated me that I preferred to move into the unfinished church to freely conduct services and confessions rather than depend on someone's charity."[85]

With permission to use the Cathedral chapel for only one year, Father Głogowski faced a number of challenges, the first of which was the purchasing of property and the erection of a permanent church. By mid-December 1907, Father Głogowski had purchased lots at the corner of Twenty-third and Wood Streets for approximately $17,500. But parish revenue soon dwindled as economic conditions worsened during the second half of the year. As a result, Father Głogowski found it difficult to secure the requisite loans for construction and pared back the plans for the new church.[86]

While the original plans included accommodations for four priests and two brothers, the Vincentians finally decided on a basement church, the cornerstone of which was blessed by Auxiliary Bishop Prendergast on December 22, 1907. In mid-January 1908, the Archbishop granted permission for the Vincentians to borrow $20,000 to complete the construction on a basement chapel and the rectory. That October, Father Głogowski submitted a request for an additional $5,000. As his vision of an imposing Romanesque church with "two grand towers" began to fade, Father Głogowski may have recalled his comment to Father Słomiński the previous December: "When the upper church will be built," Father Głogowski wrote, "God only knows."[87]

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[85] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 2 April 1908, A. C. M. K.
[86] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 12 December 1907, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 30 December 1907, A. C. M. K.
[87] *Złoty Jubileusz Parafii Św. Jadwigi, Philadelphia, Pa., 1907-1957*, p. 16. "Meeting, January 17, 1908," *Consultors' Minute Books (April 1895 to May 1916)*, p. 71, A. R. C. A. P.; "Meeting, October 27, 1908," *Consultors' Minute Books (April 1895 to May 1916)*, p. 82, A. R. C. A. P. .The description of the church comes from: Głogowski to Father Visitor, 2 April 1908, A. C. M. K.

The ongoing unemployment among the area's Polish immigrants, however, not only hampered construction of Saint Jadwiga Church, forcing the Vincentians to depend on the charity of the cathedral staff, but also hindered their ability to complete the tasks assigned to them by Archbishop Ryan, the most imperative of which was the annual clerical retreat. If the Polish Vincentians at Saint Jadwiga Parish were to "reform certain units [within the Polish secular clergy]" and act "as a wedge between the Polish parishes," the completion of construction was imperative. Only with the erection of their own church would the Polish Vincentians be free from charges by the Polish priests of the Archdiocese that they were "taking away their parishes" and be considered legitimate members of the Polish clerical community in Philadelphia. Sharing similarities to those confreres assigned to the house in Derby, Connecticut, the Polish Vincentians assigned to Saint Jadwiga Parish were to serve as gatekeepers, reforming the Polish diocesan clergy and defending the Polish Catholic community in Philadelphia against the seeds of independentist dissent.[88]

In order to fulfill this mission, the Vincentian Fathers had to win the confidence of some members of the secular Polish clergy, who, Father Głogowski claimed, saw the confreres as clerical carpetbaggers and archdiocesan spies. "Pray to Jesus that this [the completion of Saint Jadwiga Church] becomes a reality, because then the secular priests cannot accuse us of taking away their parishes. It is not true; it just appears so." While relations at the time were good, he remained cautious about the image of the Congregation of the Mission among the Polish clergy. "For the time being, we are content to live in harmony; we help them if they need help and ask for it. And that means

[88] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 2 April 1908, A. C. M. K.

a lot that they ask." Father Głogowski was optimistic that the year-long campaign to win over the secular Polish clergy had succeeded. "[T]he leaders of the anti-Missionary movement," he wrote Kraków, "[are] on our side and I do not think they suspect us of any hostile intentions against them." Even with these setbacks, Father Głogowski's assessment of the future of the Callow Hill parish remained bright.[89]

As he tamped down dissent from one quarter, however, Father Głogowski confronted conflict within the ranks of the Polish Vincentians. The catalyst for the new conflict was the election of delegates to the upcoming Provincial Assembly in Kraków. It started with an argument over the number of delegates to send. Father Głogowski recommended one confrere, while the confreres voted for two. The candidates nominated were Fathers Głogowski, Konieczny, and Waszko. When the ballots were counted, Father Głogowski received six votes and Fathers Konieczny and Waszko received four votes each. In the run-off election between the latter two confreres, Father Konieczny won. Responding to the outcome, Father Waszko announced that no matter the results, "he is going to the Assembly" and Father Głogowski had "no right to stop him." The Derby pastor characterized the election as a "puppet show." While Father Głogowski contemplated stepping down as a delegate, he grew concerned that his Superiors in Kraków would think him incapable of squelching dissent in the ranks.[90]

In addition, he characterized the conflict as a sign of growing bifurcation among the Polish Vincentians in the United States. "It is sad," Father Głogowski wrote Father Słomiński, "that a new division is arising—the confreres in Connecticut are plotting a sort of separate Province—and claim that one from Pennsylvania and one from

[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid.

Connecticut should go to the assembly." While he believed no one would have opposed the idea, "it should have first been proposed before the election, and spare Father Konieczny pain, as he was legally elected and spare us unnecessary expense."[91]

Despite these problems, Saint Jadwiga Parish grew under the direction of the Vincentian Fathers. On March 25, 1908, Archbishop Ryan blessed its newly completed church. Approximately seventeen months later, Father Głogowski secured the teaching services of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth and purchased the former Olivet Presbyterian Church for $19,000, converting it into a five-classroom school. By April 1911, the school had grown, in large part, as a result of the personal effort of Father Głogowski. "Our school is growing nicely," he wrote the Visitor. "[W]e have more than 140 children and every day new ones come because I announced that the parents would not receive absolution if they sent the children to public, nonsectarian schools--and that was effective." While he could shepherd its growth, Father Głogowski could not marshal the requisite capital to pay for the school's construction, especially as many of his parishioners went out on strike at a nearby locomotive factory in 1911.[92]

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By the following year, however, the attention of Father Głogowski and the Polish Vincentians in Philadelphia were pulled away from their fiscal troubles. In early September 1912, the Polish Vincentians in the United States were on the brink of a new era, one marked by the opening of Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania. Succeeding where their efforts in Conshohocken failed, the school in Erie was meant to fulfill the educational component of the Vincentian apostolate, serve as a base for a

[91] Ibid.
[92] *Złoty Jubileusz Parafii Św. Jadwigi, Philadelphia, Pa., 1907-1957*, p. 16; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 19 April 1911, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 1 July 1911, A. C. M. K.

mission team, and as a source of potential vocations. With such a prominent role in the Congregation's work in the United States, the selection of a school rector was especially important. This decision, however, would determine not only the future of the College but also would affect the Polish Vincentians' work in the parishes they served.

On September 8, 1912, Father Głogowski informed Father Słomiński of the vocal opposition he faced when he announced that both Father Trawniczek and he would be leaving Saint Jadwiga Parish for Erie. He petitioned his Superior for his input and assistance. "Please save this situation," he wrote, "because it does not bode well here as there is a rebellion fomenting in this parish because of our leaving. They can finally accept that I am going, but in no measure will they let two [priests] leave at once. Therefore let Father Trawniczek stay here and Father Waszko in Derby--otherwise it will be bad." The parishioners had collected approximately six-hundred signatures on a petition opposing the two priests' departure and threatened that if the Visitor did not decide in their favor they would go to the Archbishop for the redress of their grievance. "For the good of the parish," Father Głogowski conceded, "we will have to make this concession to them." In the end, it was decided that Father Trawniczek would remain at Saint Jadwiga Parish. The ranks of the Polish Vincentians in the United States would be stretched even thinner.[93]

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[93] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 8 September 1912, A. C. M. K. N.B. Ongoing financial difficulties and the continuing manpower shortage plagued Father Trawniczek at Saint Jadwiga. In March, he wrote the Visitor: "[A]ll the time there are problems, at one time problems with the school regarding the children, and then other problems since one has to be everything for everybody. Only when one retires to bed can one get a moment's rest and even then you can get a telephone call and you have to go and visit a sick person since people here are getting sick all the time. . . . With people it is like with people, it takes a lot of tact and even then you can run into problems; you have to be really careful on account [of the fact that] they are ambitious beyond measure, a thirst for recognition and yet on the other hand just big kids. I always run into trouble with them. One has to be ready: big troubles, small troubles." See: Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 12 March 1913, A. C. M. K. & *Złoty Jubileusz Parafii Św. Jadwigi, Philadelphia, Pa., 1907-1957*, p. 17.

From their aborted effort to establish themselves at Saint Josaphat Parish in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to their beachhead in New Haven and Derby, Connecticut, to their struggles in Conshohocken and Philadelphia, the Polish confreres had spent nearly a decade seeking the right terrain on which to lay a permanent foundation in the United States. To create a permanent institutional presence that would insure their continued presence in the United States with potential for future growth, the confreres needed to find a diocese with a Polish Catholic population large enough to sustain them yet small enough for them to escape the domination by a previously arrived Polish religious Order or a "charter society" of secular Polish priests. Furthermore, the confreres needed to solve their vexing manpower shortage. It was with these objectives in mind that the Polish Vincentians turned their attention to the Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania.

The catalyst for the establishment of the College in Erie, Pennsylvania was a 1906 mission requested by the city's pioneer Polish prelate. Father Andzej Ignasiak, an unflagging Polish patriot and defender against the "Germanization" of the Polish Catholics of Erie, requested that the Polish Vincentians conduct a mission at Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish. Born in November 1862 in Obornik, Objezierski Parish, Poznań, Father Ignasiak was recruited in Poland while still a seminarian by Erie's Bishop Tobias A. Mullen in 1884. Ordained in Erie two years later, he took on his pastoral duties on 22 August 1886. It was from this base that he began actively to organize the city's growing Polish community.[94]

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[94] Edward Gicewicz, C. M., *Kanty 1909-1959: First Fifty Years of St. John Kanty College and Preparatory School at Erie, Pennsylvania*. (Erie: St. John Kanty Press, 1959), p. 32; Konieczny to Father Redaktor, 8 February 1906,
A. C. M. K.

Arriving in Erie in early February 1906, Fathers Stanisław Konieczny, Franciszek Trawniczek, and Paweł Waszko conducted a two-week mission, hearing "one thousand confessions" at the nearby Our Lady of Częstochowa Parish. It was while conducting the mission, that Father Ignasiak approached the confreres with a proposal to establish a college in Erie.[95]

Met initially with confusion and doubt, a condition that caused Father Głogowski to request clarification from Father Ignasiak, the proposal consisted of a five-story school building. With the money collected from the sale of over one hundred plots of land from a failed real estate venture, Father Ignasiak would erect the school, while the administration and staff would be provided by the Polish confreres. If the sale failed to provide sufficient capital for the project, Father Ignasiak guaranteed that he and the committee would "try to get a loan at the lowest possible rate." Overseeing the implementation of this plan would be a "committee composed of Poles and Americans, whose additional duty is to collect donations for the enlargement of the building fund." While fundraising for the project continued, Father Ignasiak wanted a Polish Vincentian to reside in Erie, where he would assist at his parish. Sensitive to charges of meddling, Father Głogowski wrote that Father Ignasiak promised that "he had no intention of interfering with the work of the committee."[96]

As a further enticement, Father Głogowski received two additional assurances. The first was Father Ignasiak's promise of an almost endless supply of students, some of whom, God willing, would join the meager ranks of the Polish Vincentians in the United States. Along with the fifteen to twenty students he could guarantee from Erie, Father

[95] Konieczny to Father Redaktor, 8 February 1906, A. C. M. K.
[96] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 13 February 1906, A. C. M. K.

Ignasiak mentioned that students who presently were traveling from Pittsburgh and Buffalo to schools in Chicago, Detroit, and Milwaukee could easily be persuaded to transfer to the proposed school in Erie. In addition, Father Głogowski reported to Father Słomiński that Bishop John Edmund Fitzmaurice "would happily see us in his diocese and heading the institute." He hastened to add that the Bishop warned that "it is not every day that we could expect an offer like this." Convinced by these statements and the counsel of the confreres who had been to Erie, Father Głogowski concluded: "When I looked at the whole proposal, I was convinced that any obstacles, if they exist, would be on our part."[97]

With the few confreres in the United States already serving in parishes in New Haven and Derby, Connecticut, as well as Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, the principal obstacle for the Polish Vincentians was finding sufficient number of qualified confreres. "As for the teaching staff," Father Głogowski wrote Kraków, "it is true we do not have them at present, but we would not open the institute for another two years." Anticipating a small student body for the first year, Father Głogowski thought only four priests would initially be required. Recognizing the difficulty of receiving additional qualified personnel from Poland, a task made more challenging by conditions in the confreres' partitioned homeland, he proposed, "As a last resort, we could close one of our parishes here if it became necessary and take over the institute." This short-term sacrifice, he believed, would "increase our strength," a possible reference to the potential candidates the Vincentians would gain from the student body.[98]

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[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.

While the potential benefits of a school in Erie were obvious, Father Głogowski's and his fellow confreres' attention remained concentrated on Conshohocken and Philadelphia for the next three years. During this time, however, Father Ignasiak continued to pursue the Polish Vincentians. In November 1908, the Erie Pastor wrote Father Głogowski to reiterate the potential benefits that would come if the confreres took charge of the new College. Father Ignasiak promised to petition Father Słomiński and win his support for the project. Seemingly won over, Father Głogowski wrote to his Superior in Poland: "Would it be prudent to weigh this matter? The conditions are beneficial and even the largest parish would not give the same prestige as this institution." Always aware of the potential for conflict with the charter-society clergy, either Polish or American, Father Głogowski cautioned that the Erie college "would 'sting the eyes' of the secular priests."[99]

By the early summer of 1909, plans for the college began to take shape. On June 29, Father Ignasiak met with "four additional prominent Erie citizens," James R. Burns, the assistant principal of Erie High School, Isidor Maserek, a local pharmacist, Francis T. Nagórski, an attorney, and Frank D. Schultz, an area merchant. Together these men formed the Saint John Kanty College Association. Taking their inspiration from Father Ignasiak and attorney Nagórski, the committee saw the school as an affordable way for Polonia to combat ethnic discrimination and to create an educational institution that would allow it "to place its own people on a par with those of other national or racial groups." Saint John Kanty College, it was argued, would allow the sons of Polish

[99] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 12 November 1908, A. C. M. K.

immigrants the opportunity to reap the benefits of the United States without having to surrender their ethnic identity.[100]

Throughout the late summer and early fall, Father Ignasiak and the members of the Association evaluated three possible sites for the college, deciding on October 20, 1909 on a fifty-eight-acre parcel of land situated on the border of Harborcreek and East Millcreek Townships. To pay for the property, the Association decided to sell the property donated by Father Ignasiak and his sister. Construction plans were soon developed in expectation of Saint John Kanty College opening its doors in September 1911.[101]

On June 7, 1910, the Saint John Kanty College Association handed over the college property to the Polish Vincentian Fathers and authorized the issuing of $100,000 worth of bonds. Thirteen days later, Father Józef Janowski, C. M. wrote Father Słomiński from Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in Erie, Pennsylvania. Foreshadowing the difficult path he was about to travel, he reported that his arrival had been delayed when the train on which he was traveling was struck by a freight train and derailed. With Father Głogowski occupied by the situation of Father Osadnik in Conshohocken, Father Janowski began speaking at Polish parishes in hopes of raising desperately needed funds. With little money to show from the plots donated by Father Ignasiak and his sister and the meager $3,500 collected, the project remained severely underfinanced.[102]

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[100] Gicewicz, *Kanty*, p. 40.
[101] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 13 February 1909, A. C. M.K;, Ignasiak to Głogowski, 20 August 1909, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 11 September 1909, A. C. M. K.; Ignasiak to Father & Benefactor, 1 October, 1909, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 3 November 1909, A. C. M. K.; Gicewicz, *Kanty*, pp. 11, 14-15.
[102] "Resolved, that the Saint John Kanty College Association of the City of Erie, Pennsylvania . . .," Francis T. Nagórski, 7 June, 1910, A. C. M. K.; Gicewicz, *Kanty*, p. 16; Janowski to Father Visitor, 20 June 1910,

As work began on the college, the project sank deeper in debt. Like the quicksand that forced the relocation of the school's building, the failure of the Vincentians' fundraising required renewed efforts on the part of all involved. Under the supervision of Frank Schultz and Francis Nagórski, the Association sold a strip of land in the area of Downing and Twelfth Streets to the Pennsylvania Railroad for the construction of a railroad line. On October 19, 1910, the Vincentian Fathers drew on the savings of their other houses and lent the Association "in perpetuity" $3,000. This decision impeded the confreres' efforts to pay down the debts run up by Father Osadnik in Conshohocken and caused Father Głogowski to conclude, "until the time we get free ownership, our coffers will always be empty because as soon as something comes in, it goes out for construction."[103]

It was Father Janowski, however, who took on much of the day-to-day burden of the further fundraising and promoting of the Kanty project. By late-October 1910, Father Janowski had collected approximately $3200 from Polish parishes in Erie and Cleveland, Ohio. In most cases, Polish pastors welcomed the Vincentian and endorsed his efforts. On occasion, however, Father Janowski's efforts clashed with the personal ambition and goals of local Polish pastors. This defense of charter-group claims was best evinced in an early-1911 visit to Buffalo, New York. In a letter to Father Słomiński, Father Ignasiak reported that Buffalo Polish newspapers announced that while Poles could contribute to the Kanty building fund, they should keep in mind that "we here in Buffalo are also

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A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 6 July 1910, A. C. M. K.; Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 17 August 1910, A. C. M. K.

[103] Gicewicz, *Kanty*, p. 18; Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 27 August 1910, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 14 September 1910, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 25 October 1910, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Confrere, 10 February 1911, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 19 April 1911, A. C. M. K.

building a high school." Even with such occasional resistance, Father Janowski collected approximately $14,000 by the end of 1911. Although the financial situation seemed to improve, Father Głogowski reported to the Visitor in mid-April 1911, that the opening of the college had to be postponed until the fall of 1912.[104]

The reticence of Buffalo's Polish clergy was not an isolated occurrence. This was evident in the blessing of the school's cornerstone on May 30, 1911. While attended by Bishop Fitzmaurice, Father Edward J. Walsh, the rector of the Eastern Province's Niagara University, Father Francis Auth, the rector of Saint Mary's College in nearby North East, Pennsylvania, and a host of other diocesan clergy, both Polish and native-born, the event failed to draw Polish clerics from outside the immediate area. In addition, Father Ignasiak reported to Father Słomiński, local Polish newspapers seemed to have "ignored us altogether." In an effort Father Ignasiak likened to sabotage, the ethnic press falsely charged that Father Głogowski and he were at odds over the college. The articles, in turn, called for Father Ignasiak's resignation at pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish.[105]

Opposition to Father Ignasiak and his support of the College continued throughout the summer. By mid-September 1911, as the Erie pastor celebrated his silver jubilee, members of the local Polish clergy and area Polish-language newspapers renewed the campaign against the school. Of prime importance to the successful defense of the project, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote from New Haven, was the selection of a qualified

[104] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 25 October 1910, A. C. M. K.; Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 19 February 1911, A. C. M. K.; Gicewicz, *Kanty*, p. 17; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 19 April 1911, A. C. M. K.
[105] Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 5 June 1911, A. C. M. K.; Gicewicz, *Kanty*, p. 21.

director, who would be "good, smart, and wise" with a mastery of the English language.[106]

As workers rushed to complete the roof of the school building before the snows of winter, Father Konieczny emerged as the favorite candidate for the director's position. Knowledgeable of conditions in the United States, fond of young people, well-read, and, equally important, knowing how to deal with Father Ignasiak's "fiery personality," Father Głogowski believed Father Konieczny was a better choice than the other candidate, Father Janowski. Described as "passionate," while Father Konieczny was "easy-going," Father Janowski, his Superior believed, would be more qualified for the office of college procurator. In justifying his decision, Father Głogowski identified Father Janowski's plan to house a mission team at the college. With the school being "somewhat out of the way" and with "just enough rooms for the professors," Father Głogowski judged Father Janowski's plan to be implausible.[107]

The debate over the size of the faculty and assignment of the individual confreres was further complicated by two events in the waning weeks of 1911. The first was the arrival of a letter from Bishop Michael J. Hoban of the Diocese of Scranton, Pennsylvania. The subject of the correspondence was the growing unrest among the parishioners of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, a community organized in 1872 and mother church of Polish parishes throughout Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties. Having excommunicated the founder of the Polish National Catholic Church, Father Franciszek Hodur, in 1898, Bishop Hoban sought assistance in

[106] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 12 September 1911, A. C. M. K.
[107] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 9 November 1911, A. C. M. K.

reining in the any further dissent among Polish Catholics at Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish following the June 1910 death of its pastor, Father W. Gramlewicz.[108]

Unfamiliar with the governance of the Congregation of the Mission, Bishop Hoban sent a letter to the Superior of the Eastern Province's Niagara University, who, in turn, forwarded it to Father Głogowski. Before the letter reached their Superior, Fathers Waszko and Trawniczek, while conducting a mission in Wilkes-Barre met with Bishop Hoban, who made them a lucrative offer. In exchange for squelching the dissent in Nanticoke, the Polish Vincentians would be given control of a parish of approximately 1,200 families with a large church, a twenty-nine-room rectory, a convent, and a beautiful garden. While the parish lacked a free-standing school, it was debt-free, had bank assets of approximately $6,000 and the potential of an annual income of upwards of $5,000. With such assets and a Polish population of 20,000 living within a ten-mile radius of the parish, Father Głogowski wrote Father Słomiński that Bishop Hoban "would like us to establish a good school from which there might arise a much-needed high school." While he recognized the additional strain the Nanticoke proposal would place on the confreres in the United States, Father Głogowski described the opportunity as "a golden apple."[109]

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[108] Ibid; Sister M. Accursia Bern, O.S.F., "Polish Miners in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania," *Polish American Studies*, volume III, no. 1 & 2 (January-June 1946), pp. 7-8.

[109] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 9 November 1911, A. C. M. K. In a letter to the Visitor, Father Waszko described the meeting he and Father Trawniczek and with Bishop Hoban: "You must know that with Father Trawniczek we went to the very center of the sheep disgruntled with the clergy and the bishop—that is the Diocese of Scranton, famous in all of America. The bishop is old, the original one. He says what is in his heart. The first time we saw him was at the end of the mission. At the beginning, we barely put on our vestments when he announced to the secular priests that he is offering the Missionary Fathers the parish in Nanticoke about which Father Głogowski surely wrote you. At the table, he told everyone what a benefit it would be to the Diocese, but that he had not yet spoken to Father Głogowski, only with the Superior in Niagara Falls. Later, when he saw we were not soliciting, he wrote a formal offer. The sensible priests are not against the Missionaries taking it [the parish]; on the contrary, they express happiness as the secular priests there cannot manage any longer." See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 21 December 1911, A. C. M. K.

The second event that complicated the Polish Vincentians' efforts in Erie, Pennsylvania, took place in early December 1911. In Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, a mere twenty-five miles south of the unfinished Saint John Kanty College, the Polish National Alliance purchased a "large hotel" as the site of their own college. With its "anti-religious bent" and "public war against Bishop Rhode and the entire Polish clergy," Father Głogowski characterized the Polish National Alliance's establishment of Alliance College as an effort to "try to paralyze our activity." [110]

While the Polish Vincentians could only watch as the Polish National Alliance completed preparations for Alliance College, they actively began planning to establish a presence in Nanticoke. With Bishop Hoban hoping the Vincentians could take over Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish by the end of November, Father Głogowski considered yet another reshuffling of his confreres. Bishop Hoban, Father Głogowski reported, had been visited by a number of committees of parishioners who asked for a priest, "anyone, as long as he is not a so-called 'American boy,' i.e. one who was raised here—they want a good priest, one from the old country." The candidate for Superior, therefore, had to have pristine nationalist credentials. Conversely, the ideal candidate had also to be fluent in English, so he could work closely with the Diocesan authority. For these two reasons, as well as for his prowess in financial matters, Father Głogowski recommended the pastor of Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish in Derby, Connecticut, Father Paweł Waszko.[111]

The selection of a suitable superior for Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish soon proved to be a moot point. At a meeting of the Kraków Provincial Council, Father

[110] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 12 December 1911, A. C. M. K.
[111] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 9 November 1911, A. C. M. K.

Kasper Słomiński rejected the proposed take-over of the Nanticoke parish. While the Council agreed with the confreres in the United States that a foundation in an area with such a high concentration of Polish immigrants would be "fertile ground" for the Vincentian Fathers, Father Słomiński concentrated on the practical issues that ham-strung the confreres' efforts in American Polonia. He countered that instead of trying to stretch the meager number of confreres further, efforts should be made to upgrade the qualities of the missions. Admitting that he had previously sent ill-prepared and immature priests to the United States, Father Słomiński argued that any available confreres who could be sent should be assigned to existing houses so as to guarantee a communal lifestyle. This need, he stressed, was becoming more pressing as preparations continued for Saint John Kanty's scheduled opening in September 1912. Castigating the Polish Vincentians in America, Father Słomiński charged that they had become blinded by mundane achievements and material goods.[112]

Throughout the months of November and December 1912, as the Nanticoke foundation was being debated, work proceeded on fundraising for Saint John Kanty College. Looking for someone with well-established connections in American Polonia, the Vincentians sought assistance from Father Tomasz Misicki, the priest who preceded Father Benedikt Tomiak as pastor of Saint Josaphat Parish in Manayunk, Pennsylvania. Now assigned to Saint John Kanty Parish in East New York in Brooklyn, Father Misicki was tapped to solicit funds from the "Croesuses" living in the New York City area.[113]

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[112] Słomiński to Father Fiat (Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission), 9 January 1912, Congregation of the Mission, Curia Archives, Rome (C. A. R.).

[113] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 19 November 1911, A. C. M. K. Croesuses was the last king of Lydia (560-546 B.C.E.), whose wealthy kingdom fell to the Persian Empire. The word could also be used to describe a wealthy individual.

The lion's share of the fundraising burden, however, continued to be shouldered by Father Janowski. Characterized as being blind to "anything beyond the college," the confrere continued to make "the rounds of the parishes, squeezing the people, or rather, their pocketbooks." "He gives sermons about almsgiving . . . ," Father Mazurkiewicz commented from New Haven, Connecticut, "with such feeling that everyone wipes his eyes and pulls out money that he [Janowski] quickly hides before the beneficent donor could change his mind." Even with such impassioned efforts, the debts for the college's construction continued to mount.[114]

One factor that further complicated the school's financial condition was the occasionally contentious relationship between the Polish Vincentians and Father Ignasiak. In an effort to cover expenses, the Saint John Kanty College Association had applied for a loan with the Polish Roman Catholic Union (P. R. C. U.) in 1911, but was rejected. The principal reason cited was a condition in the lease between Father Ignasiak and his sister and the Saint John Kanty College Association. It stated that if the confreres failed to build on the property within a previously agreed upon period, Father Ignasiak and his sister could turn over the Erie property to the Sisters of Charity for the construction of an orphanage or home for the aged and infirmed.[115]

In February 1912, Father Głogowski asked Father Ignasiak to visit him in Philadelphia to discuss the progress of the school's construction and issues that inhibited its timely completion. After the meeting, Father Głogowski reported that Father Ignasiak was willing to revise the lease in exchange for the right to select annually five students for full-scholarships to the college. The Vincentian Superior informed Father Ignasiak

[114] Ibid.
[115] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 15 February 1912, A. C. M. K.

that the admission of five students would cost the confreres approximately $25,000 over the time the students would be attending the school. In addition, he stated that any tuition waivers were not in his authority to grant; this power lay with Father Słomiński.[116]

Throughout the remainder of February Father Ignasiak, Father Głogowski, and Father Słomiński struggled to negotiate a solution to the funding and scholarship problems plaguing the Kanty Project. Father Ignasiak later offered to drop his demand for tuition waivers and to relinquish control over the project, remaining a mere "nominal president" of the Saint John Kanty College Association. Writing to Father Słomiński on February 21, Father Ignasiak expressed regret over the failure to reach a compromise with the Vincentian Fathers.[117]

In addition, Father Ignasiak alluded to the possibility of the Polish Vincentians selling bonds to finance the project. Głogowski, writing on February 23, 1912, countered that the confreres were "prevented by Rome" from issuing bonds. The fracas over the tuition waivers and bonds, he continued, had "the potential to cause a public scandal," and escalate the "childish" behavior exhibited by some of the local secular clergy toward the College. In a letter to Father Słomiński, Father Ignasiak also recognized the importance of improved relations with the Polish secular clergy and mentioned the growing need for the clashing cadres of clerics to smoke a "peace pipe."[118]

With relations remaining tense over the next two months, progress slowed on the Kanty Project. Conditions deteriorated with the lack of Vincentian leadership in Erie. Unable to leave Philadelphia, Father Głogowski could not provide such direction. Father

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[116] Ibid.
[117] Ignasiak to Głogowski, 15 February 1912, A. C. M. K.; Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 21 February 1912, A. C. M. K.
[118] Głogowski to Ignasiak, 21 February 1912, A. C. M. K.; Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 24 February 1912, A. C. M. K.

Janowski, concentrating on further fundraising, could not be transferred from such an essential duty. Once again, Father Głogowski asked for suggestions from Father Słomiński.[119]

Throughout the spring and summer of 1912, the Polish Vincentians on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean contemplated plans for the staffing of Saint John Kanty College. By the end of April Father Głogowski had decided that the school's role in the Polish Vincentians' mission in the United States required that he once again change his residence and become the school's first rector. Father Głogowski was to be aided in the area of academics by his assistant at Saint Jadwiga Parish, Father Franciszek Trawniczek, C. M. Along with being an accomplished painter and preacher, Father Trawniczek was an amateur scientist, who donated a collection of his specimens to the Vincentian Fathers' natural history collection in Kraków. When news of the two confreres' departure was announced, however, it was met by deep-seated resistance by the parishioners in Philadelphia—opposition Father Głogowski feared that would damage the Vincentians' standing among the city's Polish community. "They [the parishioners] can, in the end, accept that I am going," he wrote Father Słomiński, "but in no measure will they let two leave at once. . . . Such a lament as I heard today in church when I announced the change, I have not heard in a long time." With such a reaction, the Polish Superior reconsidered his transfer of Father Trawniczek. "I beg you to reverse your decision and leave Father Trawniczek here because I swear before God that I am convinced that that will be better for the parish. I never suspected that they would become so attached to us." In the end, the Visitor accepted Father Głogowski's

[119] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 1 March 1912, A. C. M. K.

suggestion and elevated Father Trawniczek to Superior and Pastor of Saint Hedwig Parish after Father Głogowski's departure for Erie.[120]

The selection of other confreres to fill the ranks of the Polish Vincentians in the United States proved to have its own controversies. After receiving word from Kraków of the assignment of Fathers Stanisław Włodarczyk and Jan Ściskalski to the Erie house, Father Głogowski wrote the Visitor expressing concern about how little he and the other confreres in the United States knew of the two priests. After the numerous problems he had experienced with former priests assigned to him, Father Głogowski's concern was well placed. On May 10, 1912, Father Kasper Słomiński announced his decision to send five priests, including Fathers Włodarczyk and Ściskalski and two brothers to the United States. This decision was accompanied by the appointment of Father Stanisław Konieczny as superior of the Erie house.[121]

While the leadership of the Kanty house seemed to be settled, tensions within the Polish community in Erie continued to grow as the builders made the finishing touches to the college. With the previous dispute over the title of the property having been settled by late April 1912, the Polish Vincentians finally secured a loan of $25,000 from the Polish Roman Catholic Union. Unfortunately it fell far short of covering the $68,000 debt still outstanding. This deficit, in turn, was covered by a bank loan. The financial burden,

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[120] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 8 September 1912, A. C. M. K.; Rev. Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M., EdD., *Growth of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, 1904-2004.* (Manchester, Conn.: Vincentian Fathers, New England Province, 2004), p. 59.

[121] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 30 April 1912, A. C. M. K.; Kasper Słomiński to Priests & Brothers, 10 May 1912, A. C. M. K. Father Słomiński's decision to send Father Włodarczyk was based on the latter confrere's teaching experience at the Vincentians' minor seminary in Nowa Wieś, Kraków, where he taught Polish from 1900 to 1906 and again from 1909 to 1911. See: Gicewicz, Kanty, p. 137. Father Głogowski's concern about Father Włodarczyk reemerged after the opening of the College. In early October 1912, he wrote the Visitor that the new confrere ate only American dishes. While the letter lacks details, Father Głogowski asked that the Visitor replace the confrere with a priest who could teach and had better administrative skills. See: Głogowski to Father Visitor, 3 October 1912, A. C. M. K.

Father Głogowski reported to Kraków, would have been less, but ongoing editorials in local Polish newspapers continued to taint readers against the project. In response to these media attacks Father Głogowski felt it necessary to counter publicly the charges of his opponents. (See opening section of this chapter.) Guaranteeing the Polish character of the school, he defended the decision to invite non-Poles to be members of the Saint John Kanty College Association. Father Głogowski also stressed that the Association was only a temporary body and that control over the institution and its property would eventually be given to the Polish Vincentians. In addition, he fended off charges that the College "would be conducted in a Catholic, but not a Polish, spirit." "It is enough to reiterate, and with emphasis," he countered, "that the college will be administered by Polish Missionaries who no one has yet accused of a lack of Polish patriotism and soul." This home-country patriotism, however, according to Father Głogowski, was not enough to secure the advancement of American Polonia. The youth who would enroll in the school must also be adequately prepared for the competition that awaited them in the American economy. "The purpose of this college will be to give Polish youth higher education, so that they will be able to assume positions on an even keel with American youth who attend English [American] schools."[122]

Despite all these obstacles, Saint John Kanty College was finally dedicated on September 2, 1912. Seeming to capture the tensions and the tenuous financial straits the project had endured, the day's weather was stormy, with a "heavy downpour of rain accompanied by terrifying flashes of lightning and peals of thunder." Along with "local and visiting clergy," the ranks of the religious in attendance included Father Słomiński,

[122] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 30 April 1912, A. C. M. K.; Father Jerzy Głogowski, C.M., "A Few Words of Clarification in the Matter of the Polish School of Higher Education in the Name of Saint John Kanty in Erie, Pa." A. C. M. K.

Erie's Bishop, the Most Reverend John E. Fitzmaurice, and the Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Chicago, the Most Reverend Paul P. Rhode, who celebrated a "solemn pontifical High Mass" in the school's chapel. Ten days later, Father Głogowski embarked for Erie to become the first rector of Saint John Kanty College. A few months short of the ninth anniversary of their arrival, the confreres of the Kraków Province of the Congregation of the Mission finally launched an educational apostolate in the United States.[123]

Even after the doors of Saint John Kanty College opened, the Polish Vincentians assigned to the Erie house, especially its Superior, Father Głogowski, continued to shoulder the dual burdens of covering the construction costs and the school's daily expense and finding a sufficient number of qualified confreres to staff the school and its mission team assigned there. A unique opportunity to earn added income for the school while combating the threat of secularism within American Polonia came at the end of the fall 1912 semester. In the waning days of December, Father Słomiński received letters from Father Trawniczek in Philadelphia and Father Ignasiak in Erie informing him of an opening for a chaplain at the Polish National Alliance's college in Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania. With none of the Erie Diocese's Polish priests interested in the position, Bishop Fitzmaurice approached the Polish Vincentians. Recognizing the sensitive nature of the appointment, the Bishop emphasized that the chaplain would live in separate facilities from the college with its own utilities. In addition, the chaplain would have as his only responsibilities the teaching of religion, the celebration of Mass, and the hearing of confessions. Father Ignasiak added that by taking on the chaplaincy at Alliance

[123] Gicewicz, *Kanty*, pp. 26-27; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 226.

College, the Vincentians would be preserving the religious component of *polskość* while eliminating a bully pulpit from which other Polish clerics could criticize the confreres.[124]

For Father Głogowski, however, the acceptance of the Alliance College chaplaincy would dangerously over extend the confreres. In addition, he feared that with the recent negative press over the lease on the Kanty property, any future conflict between a Vincentian chaplain and the Polish National Alliance would further damage the Polish confreres' standing in Erie's Polish community. In his letter to the Visitor, Father Głogowski concluded that far and away the best strategy was for the Polish Vincentians to decline any offer from Alliance College.[125]

Looking for an alternative source of funding, Father Głogowski turned to the treasuries of the parishes under the direction of the Polish Vincentians, especially Saint Jadwiga Parish in Philadelphia. Recognizing his duty to the Community and the importance of the College to the future of the Polish Vincentians in the United States, Father Trawniczek transferred money to the School, but not without concern over the financial health of his parish. While he reported to Kraków at the end of December 1912 that, after the payment of the parish's bills and interest on its bank loan, Saint Jadwiga Parish's treasury still boasted a balance of approximately $1,000, his enthusiasm, however, was dampened by the fact that he expected this money to go to Erie. By mid-March of the following year, financial conditions in Philadelphia worsened. In a letter to Father Słomiński, Father Trawniczek apologized for his limited contributions to the Provincial coffers, citing the fact that he had recently sent $1,000 to Father Głogowski. The Philadelphia Superior, however, recognized the burden his Superior shouldered

[124] Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 28 December 1912, A. C. M. K.; Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 31 December 1912, A. C. M. K.
[125] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 15 January 1913, A. C. M. K.

in Erie. "But what can be done," he wrote to the Visitor, "I think they do not have it easy; they work, travel on missions, and all their gains are sunk there because the building is huge, the interest is quite a lot, and many things, absolute necessities, are missing." The following month, he again wrote Kraków, explaining that the parish treasury was in the black, at least temporarily. "In my house treasury, I have enough, but again, the College is likely to hold out its hand for help because a water pump is out of repair and it is of insufficient capacity and needs to be replaced and allegedly there is no money."[126]

A new source of potential funds soon appeared with a letter from Bishop Michael Hoban of Scranton, Pennsylvania, renewing his request for a Polish Vincentian presence in his diocese. Expressing his continued concern over the corrupting influence of the Polish National Catholic Church on his Polish priests, Bishop Hoban promised "good parishes" in exchange for the Vincentians' firm hand in conducting clerical retreats. "Would you take this once again into consideration," Father Głogowski wrote to the Visitor, "if it would not be beneficial to the Congregation to spread out and become established while the Bishop, himself, wants to help us in this?" As a further justification for accepting Bishop Hoban's offer, Father Głogowski added, "In Galicia, sooner or later, there will be some kind of catastrophe and we will have by that time [if the Bishop's offer is accepted] more houses to shelter us. . . . I know you once refused the offer, but it would be wise to rethink the matter in light of what could happen in Poland." Father

[126] Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 28 December 1912, A. C. M. K.; Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 12 March 1913, A. C. M. K.; Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 17 April 1913, A. C. M. K.

Głogowski's request, it seems, fell on deaf ears; there was no response by Father Słomiński.[127]

With the rejection of the Alliance College chaplaincy as well as Bishop Hoban's renewed offer of a parish in the Scranton Diocese, the Polish Vincentians continued to rely on internal solutions to their financial problems. Food expenditures were minimized as the College had attached to it a farm, which provided fruits, vegetables, and meat. Even with this food, however, increasing the cash flow into the coffers of the school remained imperative. The one viable source of regular revenue was the conducting of missions.

Mission work, however, continued to be a double-edged sword. While the primary apostolate of the Congregation of the Mission since its inception by Saint Vincent de Paul in the seventeenth century, missions shifted the confreres' attention away from the educational mission of the College. It also often drew money out of the Erie house's coffers without a guarantee of any financial return. In mid-January 1913, for example, Fathers Janowski and Konrad Tyżyński traveled to Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada to conduct a mission among the 15,000 Polish immigrants scattered throughout the expansive diocese. With the trip costing the Polish Vincentians approximately $180.00, Father Głogowski, while recognizing its overarching spiritual importance, worried that donations would not cover expenses.[128]

While the Saskatchewan mission was quite expensive for the Polish Vincentians, more immediate requests also taxed the stamina of the Erie confreres. As a result, Father Głogowski continued to barrage Father Słomiński with requests for additional personnel.

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[127] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 6 April 1913, A. C. M. K.
[128] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 15 January 1913, A. C. M. K.

"There are so many places around here, where the Poles are scattered," Father Głogowski wrote the Visitor in early April 1913, "that every week we have to go somewhere because the priests designated for the missions are away from the house. . . . Even if there were ten of us, there would be enough work for everyone. We sometimes have to refuse a plea for help, which makes for dissatisfaction, because they are replying to Father Konieczny's announcement that we are ready to help on demand." Father Głogowski reported that the Polish Vincentians already had five missions scheduled for the fall, including two large ones in Chicago and Pittsburgh that would require a mission team of three confreres. Although burdensome for the priests, Father Głogowski stressed that the missions, if they continued at their current rate, would allow the Vincentians to retire the College's debt in ten years.[129]

The principal problems in securing such missions, however, remained the shortage of qualified confreres, the pressures under which the priests in the United States worked, and the resulting tensions among them. This pressure was quite evident in Father Głogowski's situation at the College. Within a few weeks of its opening, Father Głogowski complained to Kraków of the dual burden under which he struggled. While expected to teach, his administrative duties continued to interfere, a situation upon which some students had commented. As in many of his previous letters from Erie, Father Głogowski requested Father Słomiński to send another priest, this time listing three reasons for his request. The first was to lighten his work load at the College. The second was to provide another priest for the growing number of missions in the last three months of 1912. The third reason was a concern about the corrupting effect of life in the United

[129] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 6 April 1913, A. C. M. K.

States. "I tried to bring order to this house with which I had some unpleasantness," he wrote, "because some of our priests have become too Americanized and do not like to wear the proper dress. There was some crabbiness for a few days, but eventually they had to adapt to our customs." The detrimental effect of exposure to the excesses of American freedom was especially evident in the actions and attitudes of three confreres[130]

By the spring of 1913, difficulties with two confreres who seemingly had fallen victim to the personal freedoms of the United States warranted specific comment by Father Głogowski in a letter to the Visitor. While he expressed reservations about Father Stanisław Włodarczyk the previous October, by early-April 1913, Father Głogowski had grown more disillusioned with the confrere and his ability to administer the requisite discipline to the students. "He hardly checks on the boys," Father Głogowski wrote the Visitor, "because he feels he is too old for such a task and from this arises quite a mess. He is never with them at recreation time, so the boys take the opportunity to break tables and chairs and windows, and even the crucifix is not spared when they throw balls against the wall." While Father Włodarczyk had begun to teach the boys "patriotic songs," his enthusiasm for this activity had also waned. "I am now more convinced that he is immature, or perhaps, too lazy for this task, but I cannot assign anyone else because those who are assigned to missions have even less enthusiasm for working with young people." Father Włodarczyk's inability to supervise the students continued throughout the 1912-1913 school year and into the next. Finally, in October 1913, Father Głogowski

[130] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 3 October 1912, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 26 October 1912, A. C. M. K.

relieved him of this duty and assigned him to saying Mass, a decision that added yet another duty to the rector's growing list of responsibilities—that of disciplinarian.[131]

Tensions of another kind developed between Father Głogowski and a recently arrived confreres, Father Jan Ściskalski. Unlike Father Włodarczyk, who was characterized as cooling to the mission of the Polish Vincentians in the United States, Father Ściskalski intense enthusiasm made his Superior quite leery. Described by Father Głogowski as "constantly dream[ing] of widespread work for the Congregation and publicizing himself," Father Ściskalski exhibited an independent streak that clashed with the Superior's vision of Community life. This characteristic, while curbed when the confrere was within the walls of Saint John Kanty College, was especially detrimental to the public image of the Polish Vincentians. While out on missions, he was found to be "making all sorts of social contracts and [he] sends letters by the dozens." Required by rule and tradition to submit all personal correspondences unopened to his immediate Superior, such uncontrolled communication, was seen by Father Głogowski as a challenge to his authority and potentially damaging to the reputation and security of the Polish Vincentians' mission in the United States.[132]

The third confrere posed a different challenge for the severely overworked Superior. Assigned to the farm attached to Saint John Kanty College, Brother Marcin did not possess much of a public presence. Within the Kanty community, however, his actions affected both the diet and the disposition of both the students and the confreres. In mid-January 1913, Father Głogowski reported to Father Słomiński that some of the farm's hogs had died of pneumonia, a significant loss to the Community and a lesson for

[131] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 6 April 1913, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 21 October 1913, A. C. M. K.
[132] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 6 April 1913, A. C. M. K

Brother Marcin. While chastised by his Superior, this lesson seemed to leave little lasting impression on Brother Marcin. In early April, his behavior grew much more worrisome. "I had and still have a lot of trouble with Brother Marcin," Father Głogowski wrote Kraków, "[T]wice already he tried to drop out [of the Vincentians] and since Holy Saturday, he lives with such anger and resentment that he even got angry with God and since Thursday has not been to confession or communion." Any criticism by Father Głogowski resulted in Brother Marcin flying into a rage, in which he "curses like a pagan." Wanting to send him back to Poland, Father Głogowski concluded: "This is a tortured soul. With Brother Józef he is constantly waging a war, throwing up to him wrongs from years gone by, because he forgets nothing and forgives nothing if someone as much as wags a finger at him." These tirades not only affected the financial stability of the College, stopping work on the farm, but also the morale of the confreres in Erie.[133]

Brother Marcin's behavior also endangered another important aspect of life at the College and the mission of the Polish Vincentians to the United States—vocations. In June 1913, Father Głogowski again wrote to Father Słomiński requesting a reassignment for the troublesome brother. With Brother Marcin still "angry as a chained dog," Father Głogowski wrote to Kraków: "So I beg you to recall him to Poland because he will not listen to me. . . . We had a good candidate who left only because there is no empathy and love between the two brothers [Brothers Marcin and Józef]. Two others have applied but as long as Brother Marcin is here, I cannot receive anyone who could be scandalized."

[133] Ibid; Trawniczek to Father Visitor, 17 April 1913, A. C. M. K.

By endangering the mission of the school and the recruitment of desperately needed candidates, Brother Marcin's departure became a prime objective of Father Głogowski.[134]

While they continued to serve the educational and spiritual needs of their students, the above personnel problems took their toll on the *esprit de corps* among the confreres. Insight into the relations among the Vincentians assigned to Saint John Kanty College may be found in a letter written by Father Janowski to Father Słomiński. Characterizing the Erie house as being in a state of "great demoralization," Father Janowski identified the clashing personalities of the confreres as the root of the problems plaguing the school. At the conclusion of his letter, Father Janowski noted that the general malaise that hung over the Erie house was leading some confreres to consider joining another, unnamed Province of the Congregation of the Mission.[135]

Not only did this discontent undercut the sense of community among the Vincentians, it also affected the confreres' relationships with individuals outside the Community such as Father Andrzej Ignasiak. Apologizing for having to bother the Visitor as he struggled with the "horrible times" of the First World War, the Erie pastor, in December 1915, felt it necessary to bring the conditions at the college to Father Słomiński's attention. Remaining cognizant of his previous pledge not to interfere with the internal affairs of the school, Father Ignasiak felt obligated to voice his concern over the financial management of the school. Exhibiting a failed faith in the leadership of

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[134] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 14 June 1913, A. C. M. K. While Brother Marcin's outbursts temporarily subsided during his recuperation from injuries he sustained in a minor accident involving a train at the railroad crossing near the college, they returned and remained troubling to Father Głogowski. In a moment of compassion at the end of January 1914, however, he mentioned that, while it would be best for everyone involved if Brother Marcin left the Congregation of the Mission, such an outcome would be cruel. Citing his "twenty-plus years of service," Father Głogowski asked: "Could he not be put to work elsewhere—he likes to nurse the sick." He concluded, however that "he cannot be here because, as I wrote you earlier, the advisory board several times insisted I have him removed and accused me of retaining a troublemaker in the house." See: Głogowski to Father Visitor, 31 January 1914, A. C. M. K.

[135] Janowski to Father Visitor, 2 July 1915, A. C. M. K.

the school, he recommended that the Visitor transfer Father Anton Mazurkiewicz, the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven, to Saint John Kanty College and appoint him Procurator in charge of finances.[136]

The personalities and individual workloads of the confreres assigned to Saint John Kanty did, however, lead Father Głogowski to reassign some members of the house. As early as the end of January 1914, citing the fact that the house was "not in accord with the decrees of the Congregation," Father Głogowski decided to remove Father Janowski as his assistant and replace him with Father Włodarczyk. In turn, Father Głogowski appointed Father Janowski as Father Włodarczyk's replacement as Procurator. This shift, in addition to playing to the personal strengths of the two confreres, would also allow Father Janowski more opportunities to conduct missions, a duty he had enjoyed while raising funds for the College's construction.[137]

In the same letter he wrote requesting the above reassignments, Father Głogowski characterized the difficulties he faced. "I, myself," he wrote to Kraków, "cannot teach because of my many obligations and the telephone. Last year, when I was teaching, it even happened that I was called away twice from a single class to the telephone to do business. There is no one to answer the telephone while I am in class, which makes for much unpleasantness." It was becoming obvious to Father Głogowski that he must redouble his request for additional personnel. The question remained, however, from whence would these new confreres come.[138]

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[136] Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 27 December 1915, A. C. M. K.
[137] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 31 January 1914, A. C. M. K.
[138] Ibid.

The suitability of confreres from Poland continued to be a problem. While grateful for the news of receiving one new instructor, Father Głogowski expressed concern over the priest's stuttering and how the Americanized students would react. "Our boys are so different from those in the old country," he wrote to Father Słomiński, "that it is dangerous to have someone teaching with a speech defect. We will try, in any case, but I fear that he will become disheartened by the petty chicanery that is sometimes unavoidable."[139]

The solution to the Polish Vincentians' chronic shortage of qualified confreres, Father Głogowski believed, was the recruitment of young men, from either Poland or the United States, and their formation in the United States. As early as April 1913, Father Głogowski tried to convince Father Słomiński to send two or three candidates to America. After their arrival, the men would complete their formation by studying theology and learning English at the Eastern Province's Niagara University. "They know the basics," Father Głogowski wrote, "and within a year among the English [speakers] would learn so well that they would be able to replace the lay teachers who we have to retain for the English subjects. It would not cost us anything to keep them . . . it would be a great savings for the future." By bringing young men over before their ordination, Father Głogowski sought to solve the dual problems that had plagued the College from before its inception: the high cost of operating the school and the personnel shortage that hamstrung the cultural and religious education of the College's students. If fully developed, Father Głogowski's plan would have resulted in a bi-cultural formation of new Polish Vincentians in the United States, merging elements of Polish- and American-

[139] Ibid.

accented Catholicism. In addition, it would have brought the confreres of the Kraków Province and the Eastern Province of the United States into more direct and immediate contact with each other.[140]

Relations between the Polish Vincentians and their fellow confreres in the United States and Poland, even without the implementation of the above bi-cultural formation, did change beginning in the late summer of 1914. On June 28, 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated by a Serbian nationalist in the city of Sarajevo. Less than two months later, on August 4, Germany invaded Belgium in the opening round of a war that would convulse Europe, shattering long-established empires and, in the end, reestablish Poland on the drawn map of Europe. The First World War would force the Polish Vincentians in the United States to endure isolation from their fellows in Europe—a separation that further tested their own leadership and individual mettle.

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By the outbreak of the First World War, the Polish confreres of the Congregation of the Mission had been navigating the treacherous shoals of the American Catholic terrain for a decade. Throughout this period, they had become acutely aware of the competing forces that pushed and pulled at their efforts. One of these forces was the mounting defense erected against the growing specter of Independentism by the members of the American Catholic hierarchy and conservative leaders of the Polish clergy, such as Father Vincent Barzyński of Chicago and Father Jan Pitass of Buffalo. With its mission apostolate and theological orthodoxy, these recognized religious leaders used the Polish

[140] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 6 April 1913, A. C. M. K. Two months after this initial request, Father Głogowski again wrote to the Visitor: "As for the young priests, there is no problem with their finishing their studies, because they can complete their outstanding courses either in Niagara or in Germantown." See: Głogowski to Father Visitor, 14 June 1913, A. C. M. K.

Vincentians like shock troops, conducting missions and defending the threatened Polish faithful against the corrupting influence of renegade Polish clerics in Connecticut and Pennsylvania.

The second force shaping the Polish Vincentians' early history in the United States was the specter of the Americanization of Polish immigrants, especially the youth. With the Congregation's long history in Poland and the confreres' recent arrival, the Polish Vincentians were seen as defenders, not merely of a Polish-accented Catholicism, but also of *polskość* deeply rooted in Roman Catholicism. This ethnic defense made Vincentian schools an attractive vehicle for upward economic mobility for the young men of American Polonia without risking their ethnic identity and loyalty.

In Pennsylvania, these two forces brought the Polish Vincentians a number of opportunities. Between 1904 and 1914, they served in parishes in Manayunk, Conshohocken, Swedesburg, and Philadelphia (Callow Hill). While a planned school for West Conshohocken fell victim to misunderstandings and financial mismanagement, the confreres did open a college in Erie, Pennsylvania in 1912. The reputation of the Polish confreres spread further throughout the eastern half of the United States, with the Vincentians receiving offers from a number of Polish parishes to conduct missions. In late 1911, their missionary zeal resulted in an offer of a financially stable parish and the promise of a second school in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, in the very heartland of Bishop Franciszek Hodur's Polish National Catholic Church.

While their establishment in the United States was respectable, with parishes in New Haven and Derby, Connecticut, as well as ones in Philadelphia and a College in Erie, Pennsylvania, the Polish Vincentians, however, lost out on a number of

opportunities. Marred by scandal and conflicts with area Polish clerics, the confreres left parishes in Conshohocken and Swedesburg. These problems and others in Connecticut led Father Słomiński to veto the enthusiastic plea of the confreres to accept the offer of the parish in Nanticoke. The record of the Polish Vincentians' first ten years in America is a mixed one. Why?

Three factors worked against the Polish confreres in their work in the United States. First, the Kraków Province of the Congregation of the Mission lacked the sufficient manpower to select qualified candidates and prepare them properly for mission work in the United States. In the case of Conshohocken, the personal actions and financial mismanagement of Fathers Jan Osadnik and Maksymilian Sołtysek severely undercut the ability of the Polish Vincentians to put down roots and develop their mission. At Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania, tensions between the confreres strained the sense of community and disturbed the work of the school and its farm.

Second, with this shortage of priests, having houses located in Connecticut and eastern and western Pennsylvania, severely tested the Polish Vincentians' sense of community. In 1908, recalling the tension that arose from the selection of delegates to go to a Provincial Assembly in Kraków, Father Głogowski lamented the fact that the confreres in Connecticut were coming to see themselves as separate from their fellows in Pennsylvania. This distance between houses not only damaged the sense of community, it also prevented the gathering of a critical mass of confreres in one place. Unlike the Resurrectionist Fathers whose early arrival in the United States granted them charter-

group powers in Texas, Kentucky, and Illinois, the Polish Vincentians served in parishes in comparative isolation.

These two factors, working in tandem, amplified the influence of the third factor—the power of previously arrived Polish secular priests, who severely defended their turf against the threat of Vincentian inroads. In settling the matter of the parish in Conshohocken, as well as negotiating with Archbishop Ryan in Philadelphia, the Vincentians struggled against the entrenched power of long-established Polish clerics.

Although the record of their first decade in the United States is mixed, the Polish Vincentians' efforts in parishes in Connecticut and Pennsylvania, Saint John Kanty College, and the numerous missions conducted throughout the United States and Canada are a tribute to the strength of body, spirit, and character of a small band of brothers working in relative isolation. The challenges the confreres had faced, however, would pale in comparison to the claims that would be made on their stamina and strength with the outbreak of World War One and the restrictive immigration laws passed by the United States Congress in the first half of the 1920s. While their first ten years in the United States had witnessed the Polish Vincentians establish a small, but firm, foundation in the United States, the following decades would bring dramatic changes to the ethnic terrain on which the confreres had built.

Chapter Four: Syncretic Discord:
The Formative Years of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, 1914-1939.

> It is of the utmost importance to our American nation that the nationalities gathered in the United States should gradually amalgamate and fuse into one homogeneous people and, without losing the best traits of their race, become imbued with the one harmonious national thought, sentiment, and spirit, which is to be the very soul of the nation. This is the idea of Americanization. . . . It will be a real disaster for the Catholic Church in the United States if it were ever to become known that the Polish Catholics are determined to preserve their Polish nationality and that there is among their clergy and leaders a pronounced movement of Polonization.
>
> Archbishop Sebastian Messmer, 1920.

For the Polish Vincentian Fathers in the United States, the end of the "long nineteenth century," brought changes in Europe, the United States, and the locales in which they worked—a series of seismic shifts that rocked the fragile foundation they had laid in their first decades in the United States. While they had experienced setbacks, the Polish confreres had established a parish apostolate that, by the beginning of the First World War, included congregations in New Haven and Derby, Connecticut and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Along with this parish ministry, the members of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States attended to the educational needs of the young men of American Polonia enrolled at Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania and the spiritual needs of Polish Catholics by their missions and forty-hour devotions in parishes throughout the eastern half of the country. The cultural ground upon which these works stood, however, was becoming increasingly unstable. Forces beyond the immediate control of the Polish confreres had begun to alter the political and cultural terrain in which they had become increasingly comfortable. The two sources of these tremors were located in the United States and in the newly reestablished Poland.

In the United States, the anti-immigrant sentiment that was a regular feature of political discourse in the nineteenth century finally broke its constraints and found its way into the American legislative process. The two principal catalysts for this legislative explosion were the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution. After the election of Warren G. Harding in the fall of 1920, the House Committee on Immigration began debate on staunching the flow of immigrants into the United States on what became known as the Emergency Quota Act of 1921, in order to "give the lawmakers time to recast the immigration laws." With a drastically changing economy and a fear of tidal waves of inassimilable immigrants, many of whom were Roman Catholics from Eastern and Southern Europe, many representatives in Congress believed that the golden door needed to be slammed shut. For how long, was a question still to be decided.[1]

The Quota Act of 1921, which limited future annual immigration to three percent of the particular nationality group in the United States in 1910, was successful as a stopgap effort to block certain immigrant groups from entering the United States. By 1923, the legislation had decreased Eastern and Southern European immigration to 31.1% from its high in 1914 of 75.6% of all newcomers. The success of the 1921 law led to a larger campaign to block the undesirables, a legislative process that culminated in the Immigration Act of 1924. Along with greater reduction in the number of immigrants allowed into the country, the new legislation required immigrants to present an

[1] Roger Daniels. *Guarding the Golden Door: American Immigration Policy and Immigrants since 1882* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2004), p. 48.

application with a photograph in order to receive a visa from a consulate in their home country before sailing for the United States.[2]

Among the institutions and organizations that were affected by the Immigration Act of 1924 was the Roman Catholic Church. Still considered by many Americans to be a foreign transplant, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States faced quite a dilemma in reacting to the legislation. How to respond to their critics and the growing nativism that spurred the Act's passage was a delicate matter. While some clerics and Ordinaries stood by their ethnically defined communities, others strongly supported full Americanization of their immigrant parishes. One of the leading advocates of assimilation of foreign-born Catholics into American society was Archbishop Sebastian Messmer of Milwaukee, who characterized Polish Catholic immigrants as especially stubborn in their opposition to joining the American community.

Just as Congress was beginning to consider placing a quota on future immigration, another leader of the Catholic Church in the United States, Archbishop George Mundelein of Chicago, confronted the kind of resistance that played directly into the hands of nativist elements. After years of sparing with the Archdiocese over policies Polish immigrants thought "would undermine the strength and vitality of the Polish Catholic community in Chicago," a group of Polish priests directly communicated with the Vatican about the oppressive nature of the Americanization campaign. To combat these efforts, the petitioners called "for more Polish bishops, a curriculum of Polish studies in the seminary, and the continued establishment of separate Polish parishes."

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[2] Lucy E. Salyer, *Laws Harsh as Tigers: Chinese Immigrants and the Shaping of Modern Immigration Law* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995), p. 134; Daniels, *Guarding the Golden Door*, p. 53.

The clerics, in return, received support for their plan from the Polish Embassy at the Vatican.[3]

Soon after the reception of the Polish clerics' petition and its endorsement by the Polish Legation, the Vatican's Secretary of State, Pietro Cardinal Gasparri contacted James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore, who, in turn, created a committee composed of Dennis Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia, Archbishop Sebastian Messmer of Milwaukee, and Archbishop George Mundelein to respond to the charges of the Poles. On November 18, 1920, Cardinal Gibbons forwarded the committee's report, a section of which was written by Archbishop Messmer. A one-time opponent of an Americanization plan proposed by Archbishop John Ireland of Saint Paul, Minnesota, Archbishop Messmer now wrote about the pressing need to assimilate Catholic immigrants into the American style of Catholicism. One factor that contributed to his shift in position had to do with the rambunctious Polish immigrants in Milwaukee.[4]

The Polish government that so staunchly supported the Polish clerics' petition was newly reestablished and found itself fighting a number of battles on both foreign and domestic fronts. When the "guns of August" roared into life, Poland was a state of mind rather than a political entity on the map of Europe. With their homeland divided in the late-eighteenth century by the partitioning powers of Austria-Hungary, Prussia, and Russia, Poles found themselves fighting on both sides during the First World War. Almost from the beginning, the belligerent powers sought to curry favor among their Polish subjects by granting certain concessions. Soon after the War's outbreak, the

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[3] Jay P. Dolan. *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), p. 300.
[4] Gerald P. Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy from 1870 to 1965* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1982), pp. 211-213.

German Kaiser Wilhelm II appointed Bishop Edward Likowski to the long-empty office of Ordinary of the Posen-Gnesen Archdiocese. On August 9, 1914, Likowski proclaimed his loyalty to the German government. Concurrently, the Czarist government of Russia looked to reinforce the loyalty of its Polish population by similar means. The intended outcomes of the two efforts, however, were quite different. In November 1916, while the governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary announced plans for the establishment of a "self-governing Polish Kingdom" to be carved out of territory conquered from Russia, the Czarist government "opposed granting real freedom to Poland." A secret accord with France, reached in March 1917, gave Russia the right "to subordinate Poland's future to the wishes of Petrograd." These plans, however, came to naught. With members of the Polish diaspora petitioning President Woodrow Wilson to support an independent Poland and the overthrow of the Czar, the outcome of the War and the future of Poland proved to be quite different.[5]

By the time Józef Piłsudski took power at the War's end, the Polish people and Polish territories had undergone severe hardships and had faced numerous daunting problems. By 1916, 1.9 million Poles had been in uniform, fighting for one of the three partitioning powers. By the War's end, Polish casualties numbered over one million, with 450,000 killed. Along with the human suffering and loss of life, the reestablished Polish government struggled to fuse together a national political and economic system as well as a functioning infrastructure. With the procedures and institutions of its three former occupiers to reconcile, six currencies, four languages used by its military, three legal codes, two railway gauges, eighteen political parties, and hyperinflation that

[5] Piotr S. Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland, 1795-1918* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974), pp. 335, 351-352.

depreciated the Polish currency from 1.009 Polish marks to the American dollar in November 1918 to 15,000,000 Polish marks to the American dollar in January 1923, it was just "short of miraculous" that Poland avoided a freefall into revolution and anarchy.[6]

Like their partitioned homeland, the Polish confreres of the Congregation of the Mission underwent extreme trials during the war. Vincentian houses throughout the former territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were commandeered by the military for use as barracks or hospitals, or were plundered of their furnishings. Confreres throughout the War served as soldiers, military hospital chaplains, and members of military medical squads. By the War's end ten confreres had lost their lives in the fighting and three sustained severe injuries. Even with such destruction, the War and the final collapse of the three partitioning powers breathed new life into the Congregation of the Mission in the Poland.[7]

In the half-a-decade following the War's conclusion, the Vincentian Fathers reclaimed a number of houses lost to them since the end of the eighteenth century and were given opportunities to establish new foundations. As early as 1916, the Visitor of the Polish Vincentians, Father Kasper Słomiński, C.M., began meeting with Archbishop Aleksander Krakowski of Warszawa to discuss the Vincentians' return to Holy Cross Parish, a foundation first given to them in 1655. By 1920, the Polish Province of the Congregation of the Mission was administering not only Holy Cross Parish in Warszawa, but also the Warszawa Theological College. Within a few short years, the Vincentian

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[6] Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland, volume II 1795 to the Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), pp. 382, 401-402 & 415; Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland*, p. 368.

[7] Stanisław Rospond, C.M., editor. *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce (1651-2001) I Dzieje* (Kraków: Instytut Wydawniczy Księży Misjonarzy, „Nasza Przeszłość," 2001), pp. 274-276.

Fathers took control of numerous other posts: Resurrection of the Savior Parish, Lwów (1920), Resurrection of Our Savior Parish, Wilno (1920), Kraków Theological Institute (1922), Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Kraków (1923), Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, Bydgoszcz (1924), and a minor seminary in Wilno (1924). In addition to their domestic responsibilities, the Polish Vincentian Fathers expanded their foreign mission work, establishing a Vice-Province in Romania (1918) Brazil (1920) and the United States (1920). Two years later, the Congregation took over responsibility for the Polish Catholic mission in France.[8]

During this time of reconstruction in the homeland, the Polish confreres assigned to the United States devoted much of their time and effort to reconciling the demands of their two increasingly different worlds. No matter how long their tenure in the United States, the expectation was that the American-based confreres would obey the Visitor in Poland and his delegate, the Vice-Visitor on the other side of the Atlantic. This primary duty was complicated when the needs of the Motherhouse clashed with those of the Houses in America. Financial obligations, construction projects, personnel issues and myriad other points that were played out in the changing zeitgeist in the United States and Poland between the end of the First World War and the start of the Second World War, led to tensions between the confreres in the United States and those in Poland and among the priests assigned to the various Houses in the United States. The challenges faced by the confreres of the Polish Vincentians in the United States between 1914 and

[8] Ibid, pp. 277, 282, 285-286, 298. With both the Code of Canon Law of 1917 and the Rules and Constitutions of the Congregation of the Mission silent on the regulations pertaining to Vice-Provinces—such guidelines first appearing in the 1954 Constitutions of the Congregation of the Mission—the confreres of the Polish Province in the 1920s were "flying by the hems of their cassocks" in establishing the Vice-Provinces in Romania, Brazil, and the United States. A Province could have declared a certain area a Vice-Province "for administrative purposes" with minimum documentation. A letter might have been sufficient for such a purpose. Correspondence with Father John W. Carven, C.M., 17 December 2008.

1939 were primarily a result of having to minister to an ever assimilating American Polonia while fulfilling their obligations to the recently revitalized Polish Province.

This chapter concentrates on the obligations of the Polish confreres in the United States as well as their duties and obedience to their Polish and American superiors at a time when a revitalized Polish Province and assimilated Polish immigrants and their American-born children began making competing claims on them. It will concentrate on three aspects of the Vincentians' apostolate in the United States: their educational mission at Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania, the mission work of their confreres based at the College and at the Saint Vincent de Paul Mission House in Whitestone, Queens, New York, and their parish work at Saint Stanislaus Kostka in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, New York. By analyzing each of these aspects of the Polish Vincentians' work in the United States, one may appreciate the progress made by the Vincentians in the four decades after their arrival in the United States as well as the costs associated with it.

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The one event that heralded the changes the Polish Vincentian Fathers would undergo in the post World-War-One period better than any other was the death of their first Superior, Father Jerzy Głogowski. Often stern, and on occasion hypercritical, Father Głogowski, from the confreres arrival in the United States in December 1903, had struggled to establish a foothold in the United States, concurrently currying favor and ruffling the feathers of bishops, diocesan priests, and members of the laity. For much of the prewar period, he had been the public face of the Polish Vincentians in America.

Father Głogowski's demise came between September 1919 and February 1920. On September 4, 1919, at the end of a long and scathing letter that criticized a number of the confreres under his command, Father Głogowski reports that, while on vacation he caught "a chill during a swim and got an inflammation of the cochlea." He entered a hospital and anticipated surgery, but, in his words, "somehow the danger passed, thanks to the prayers of the good people." With his release, however, he visited his doctor "every other day" to have his ear drained, but with little result. "I suffered a lot; the pain almost drove me to insanity and for five nights I did not close an eye. It was a good lesson to me that I am no longer young and cannot allow myself youthful activities."[9]

Within three weeks of writing the Visitor, while in Chicago for a mission, Father Głogowski checked himself into a hospital. Originally he expected to undergo surgery on September 25th, but complications from Father Głogowski's diabetes forced a delay. Following the surgery, he wrote: "It was high time for the operation because the bone was beginning to decay. . . . It would not have taken much for the infection to reach the brain and then it would have been all over for me." On October 15, Father Głogowski again wrote to the Visitor reporting that while he had "an open cavity, which they pack[ed] with iodic gauze," he anticipated returning to Saint John Kanty College sometime in the next ten days."[10]

It would be over a month, however, before he returned to Erie. No longer able to tolerate the "forced idleness" of the hospital and against the recommendations of his physician, Father Głogowski finally checked out of the hospital and made his way back to the College, arriving on November 19th, "the 16th anniversary of my departure from

[9] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 4 September 1919, Archives of the Congregation of the Mission Kraków (A.C.M.K.)
[10] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 15 October 1919, A. C. M. K.

Kraków for America." Still wearing a bandage on the wound just behind his ear, he sought to return to his duties while continuing to wrestle with his diabetes and Bright's Disease, a condition he hoped proper diet would eliminate. In rather short order, however, his health and hopes would fail him.[11]

On February 14, 1919, Father Głogowski reported to the Visitor: "There is still nothing certain as to my leg, but it looks like lifelong lameness awaits me as the diabetes caused gangrene and they will have to amputate." Fifteen days later, he was dead. In a letter to Kraków, Father Stefan Król, C.M., who took temporary charge of the College, wrote the Visitor that Father Głogowski died a little before 11:00 am on February 29th as a result of gangrene that had started in his right leg and had reached his heart and brain.[12]

As preparations for the funeral began, the Polish confreres turned to mourn their loss and to assess the uncertain future. The funeral Mass on March 3rd was conducted by Father Andrzej Ignasiak, the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish, who had invited the first Polish Vincentians to Erie. Bishop John Mark Gannon preached the sermon and led the funeral procession, accompanied by fifty members of the clergy, to Holy Trinity Cemetery. With their Superior laid to rest, the band of Polish confreres disbursed between the Houses in Pennsylvania and Connecticut and waited. In his letter to Kraków describing Father Głogowski's funeral, Father Paweł Waszko characterized the departed confrere as having been overly optimistic about the future of Saint John Kanty College. To emphasize the former Superior's naiveté, Father Waszko pointed out that Father Głogowski was not financially oriented. As proof he explained that in one of

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[11] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 8 December 1919, A. C. M. K. Bright's Disease is characterized by chronic inflammation of the blood vessels in the kidneys, also known as acute or chronic nephritis.
[12] Król to Father Visitor, 6 March 1920, A. C. M. K. & Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 9 March 1920, A. C. M. K.

his last letters, Father Głogowski had mentioned that the College had a debt of $90,000. In closing, Father Waszko stated that he awaited instructions from his Visitor, an ocean away in Poland.[13]

These calls from the Polish confreres in the United States for direct intervention by Kraków in the running of Saint John Kanty College came at the end of years of conflict over the financial viability of the school and the appointment of an appropriate leader. This debate regularly pitted Father Głogowski against Fathers Waszko and Mazurkiewicz. In July 1913, for example, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote to the Visitor asking for financial assistance for the school until its enrollment increased. Two months later, he apologized to the Visitor for the small amount he, in turn, was remitting to the Province, citing the fact that money that he would usually have sent back to Poland now had to be used to support the College. More direct in his criticism, Father Waszko complained about Father Głogowski's irresponsible optimism and the fact that the Superior's estimation of ten years to pay off the school's debt should be expanded to five times that amount of time. The tenuous financial condition of the College was made worse when, in early 1915, a Buffalo Polish priest demanded that the confreres return an endowment of $5,500 or face a court battle. Hoping to avoid a public scandal, Mazurkiewicz reported that all the houses in the United States contributed to cover the amount.[14]

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[13] Waszko to Father Visitor, 8 March 1920, A. C. M. K.

[14] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 17 July 1913, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 3 September 1913, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 8 August 1913, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 15 February 1915, A. C. M. K. While less vitriolic than Father Waszko, Father Mazurkiewicz also clashed with Father Głogowski over the proper vision for the future of the Polish Vincentians in the United States. While Father Głogowski had shifted his attention from Philadelphia to Erie, Father Mazurkiewicz maintained that Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven, Connecticut was the proper center for the Vincentians' work, and so should have the best of the confreres assigned there. See: Głogowski to Father Visitor, 20 May 1914,

In addition to these two founding members of the Polish Vincentians' mission, Father Głogowski received severe criticism from two other clerics instrumental in the establishment of the College: Father Józef Janowski, C.M. and Father Andrzej Ignasiak. The former priest, who had spearheaded the parish-based preaching tours to fund the school, charged Father Głogowski with mismanaging the school. Describing the Erie house as undergoing "great demoralization," Father Janowski charged that Głogowski's efforts had resulted not only in discontent among the confreres assigned to the College, but also animosity towards the Vincentians among outside clergy. With the school still reliant on money collected during missions, Father Janowski argued that priests assigned to Kanty should not be forced to balance both teaching and preaching responsibilities. If things did not change, he predicted, the Erie house would end up bankrupt and some of the confreres would begin considering transferring to another Vincentian province.[15]

Foremost among the outside clergy exasperated with the Polish Vincentians was Father Ignasiak. Even as final preparations were underway for the opening of Kanty, Father Ignasiak clashed with Father Głogowski over the right to enroll students free of charge. By October 1913, relations between the two priests seem to have improved slightly. In a letter to the Visitor dated October 21st, Father Głogowski mentioned that Father Ignasiak was willing to assist in small ways and was well motivated by personal compliments. His judgment of the Erie pastor, like his assessment of Kanty's financial condition, unfortunately was overly optimistic. In late December 1915, Father Ignasiak

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A. C. M. K.

[15] Janowski to Father Visitor, 2 July 1915, A. C. M. K.

wrote the Visitor in Kraków, stating that he tried to keep his distance from the school, which was being financially mismanaged.[16]

While many of the letters written during the First World War addressed problems that had plagued the Polish Vincentians' mission from its inception, the complications of wartime communication with Kraków and the confreres' sense of isolation added new stress to the situation. In October of 1914, this tension was evident in letters written by Fathers Mazurkiewicz and Waszko. The former confrere wrote that while rosaries were being said and collections were being taken up, he feared for the future of those back in Poland. Especially stinging was the United States Post Office's $100.00 limit on money transfers. "It is unknown if this letter will reach your hands, Most Reverend Father Visitor," Father Waszko stated, "but one can try." When the United States entered the war in 1917, this communication embargo became more intense. In July 1917, writing to "Sister Katarzyna" living in France, Father Głogowski complained: "Nor can we write to them [the confreres in Poland] because the postal authorities will absolutely not take any mail for Germany or Austria. We tried various ways without results; the letters are returned with a censor's notation that correspondence to these countries cannot be delivered."[17]

In the letters that finally made their way to Kraków, however, Fathers Głogowski and Mazurkiewicz weighed the fate of Poland at the hands of the belligerent powers and considered the impact the War would have on the confreres' work in the United States. Exhibiting an affiliation to the partitioning power that controlled Kraków,

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[16] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 21 October 1913, A. C. M. K.; Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 27 December 1915, A. C. M. K.

[17] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 12 October 1914, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 13 October 1914, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Sister Katarzyna, 24 July 1917, A. C. M. K.

Father Głogowski wrote the Visitor in mid-October 1914: "Maybe the situation will change; in the last few days the Austrians have begun to fight better and we will not have to resort to drastic measures. But that Austria will lose the campaign is almost certain because too many foes have descended on her. Let us pray for the Congregation and for poor Galicia; may God grant an end to this unfortunate war." Along with the fate of their fellows in Poland, Father Głogowski also expressed concern about the future of the Polish Vincentians' mission in the United States and the maintenance of its unique Polish character. "What can be done?" he questioned. "Can the Province survive as such in America? If so, can we take any measures? We will have to look for some property, a house. We cannot allow, in the worst case, to be incorporated into an Irish province [Eastern Province of the United States]."[18]

Father Głogowski's sense of isolation increased as the American press and American Polonia responded to the news of the belligerents' activities in Europe. In February 1915, he reported that American newspapers concentrated on the tragic fate of Belgium and the hands of Germany and ignored the conditions under which Poles lived. More immediately, he expressed concern about the war's impact on the Polish immigrants and Polish Americans he had been sent to serve. In 1917, as the United States revved up its preparation for war, the Superior wrote that while a Polish army was

[18] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 21 October 1914, A. C. M. K. In contrast to his Superior's support for Austria-Hungary at the beginning of the War, Father Mazurkiewicz exhibited more Polish nationalist sentiment in April 1919: "Thanks be to God that this terrible war is over and Poland is again unified, free and independent. God had mercy on us that the German hydra on earth has been overthrown. . . .Throughout the entire war we were uncertain about the fate of the Congregation and the lives of the beloved confreres." But like his Superior's, Father Mazurkiewicz's priorities remained firmly with his homeland. "We worked for Poland in America; we gathered gifts for the hungry; we recruited soldiers for the Polish Army. Thanks be to God that the work did not go unrewarded for we again have a Poland." See: Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 29 April 1919, A. C. M. K.

being organized in France, those men volunteering for service in it "are mostly born here [in the United States], who speak better English than Polish." Once the troops had been prepared for combat, Father Głogowski claimed "it is still not certain whether the Polish recruits will be separated from the American army and allowed to fight under their own banner; those are our hopes and dreams." For the Superior of the Polish Vincentians in the United States, while the war held out opportunities for an independent Poland, it also brought with it the risk of the loss of an assimilated American Polonia. [19]

Father Głogowski placed much of the blame for the potential loss of the youth of American Polonia going off to war on the American government's wartime leadership. First among his complaints was the limitations placed by the government on Polish priests being chaplains in the United States military. In January 1918, he reported that "a large number of Polish priests have volunteered for the Polish Army in America," yet the government restricted the number of chaplains to one "for every 1,200 people." In addition, he criticizes the government's decision to place the Knights of Columbus in charge of the selection of non-English-speaking chaplains. He went on to claim that American democracy, with its "fatal change of the party machine every four years," lacked the consistency to fight a proper war. "In times, such as these," he concluded, "the best government is a monarchy or a benevolent dictatorship."[20]

The flaws of the American political system continued to be a central theme of the Father Głogowski's correspondence with the Visitor in the immediate postwar period. Especially prominent was the restrictions placed by the United States government on travel and mail to Poland. "You are surprised that no one from here writes," Father

[19] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 16 February 1915, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Sister Katarzyna, 24 July 1917, A. C. M. K.
[20] Głogowski to Sister Katarzyna, 11 January 1918, A. C. M. K.

Głogowski complained in a July 1919 letter, "but how could we when the post office does not accept any letters to Poland. We tried all different ways but in vain. This letter I am sending into the hands of Sister Katarzyna in Paris, perhaps she will be able to send it to Krakow." A little over a week after Father Głogowski penned his letter, Father Waszko wrote Poland, expressing his hope that the letters he had sent through Holland had made it into the Visitor's hands. Any future shipments, he contemplated, might make it to their destination if sent through the American Relief Commission.[21]

More significant for the confreres in the United States was the renewal of vital administrative links between them and the motherhouse in Kraków. This was immediately evident in the preparation for the confreres' attendance at the 1919 Provincial Assembly. "No one from here can attend the Provincial Assembly," Father Głogowski wrote, "because they will not give us passports. The government gives absolutely no passports except to its employees and to business representatives." In addition, he reported that the Polish government also threw up barriers. "The Polish Consul General, Mr. Buszczyński, in replying to the question of how can one go to Poland for several months said that there is no chance, as anyone who goes there without the intention of settling commits a crime for he goes there to take bread away from the starving residents." Father Głogowski's comments about the postwar travel restrictions to Poland became more biting in mid-July when he wrote to Sister Katarzyna: "They established our beloved Poland but wrapped it in swaddling clothes so who knows when it will wriggle out of them. . . . The guardianship of the Allies is necessary for economic

[21] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 1 July 1919, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 11 July 1919, A. C. M. K.

reasons, but the military restrictions they imposed will benefit only our enemies. God willing, these chaotic conditions will soon end."[22]

Along with impinging on their relations with the Motherhouse in Poland, the policies of the United States also directly affected the confreres' efforts to serve the spiritual needs of American Polonia. In the first years of the War, Father Mazurkiewicz expressed his concern over the growing threats to the faith of the Poles and Polish Americans in their care. As the belligerents fought into the Fall of 1914, Father Mazurkiewicz identified a dual threat to the future of the Poles in Connecticut. In an October letter, he informed the Visitor that Independent Polish parishes had been established in the Hartford Diocese. He mentions that this development made any future attempt by the Bishop "to hold our folks in the Irish churches in order to Americanize them: and to provide money for the "Irish priests" more dangerous. Six months later, Father Mazurkiewicz cautioned that if the two Polish parishes in the diocese were given American pastors, additional Independent parishes would quickly be established in the immediate area. He feared the Bishop would then blame both the Polish immigrants and priests. Father Mazurkiewicz charged the Bishop with a certain apathy when it came to serving Polish Catholic immigrants. "For thirty ajryszów [Irish]," he claimed, "it [the Hartford Diocese] sacrifices 1000 Poles . . ."[23]

To defend against further assaults on their Polish-accented Catholicism and home-country nationalism, the Vincentians needed to staff their American Houses with cnfreres well prepared to minister to an assimilating, yet religiously faithful, Polonia. The most

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[22] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 1 July 1919, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Sister Katarzyna, 15 July 1919, A. C. M. K.

[23] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 12 October 1914, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 22 April 1915, A. C. M. K.

immediate way to address this need was to identify and recruit qualified priests and brothers from the Houses in Poland. This approach, however, had proved problematic as early as the first few years of the Polish Vincentians' work in the United States. With the commencement of belligerence, however, the sending of any additional personnel became extremely difficult. In December 1916, Father Waszko, writing from Derby, Connecticut, cautioned the Visitor that, having been in the United States for twelve years, he had observed how the confreres being sent from Europe had become more focused on fiscal matters at the cost of their spiritual duties. A little over two-and-a-half years later, with postwar nativism on the rise, Father Mazurkiewicz expressed a similar sentiment. "American jingoists," he wrote Kraków in July 1919, including members of the Catholic hierarchy vehemently opposed the use of foreign languages in parochial schools. He went on to mention that a visit from the Visitor would be desirable in order to settle a number of issues among the confreres in the United States. If the Congregation could not dispatch suitable priests, he suggested, it might be better to consider closing down the Polish Vincentian mission in the United States and recalling the men to Poland.[24]

The fatigue of serving an often rambunctious American Polonia was exacerbated by the promise of personal advancement in newly reestablished Poland. "We do not know what the future will bring for our parishes," Father Mazurkiewicz wrote in August 1919. "The situation [in Connecticut], due to the rising cost of living, is reaching an alarming height." On a moment's notice, he emphasized, the confreres would be willing to pack their belongings and sail for Poland. A little over two months later, Father

[24] Waszko to Father Visitor, 23 December 1916, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 10 July 1919, A. C. M. K.

Waszko also wrote to the Visitor, expressing a strong desire to leave the United States. Six weeks after this letter, Father Głogowski reported that both Father Franciszek Trawniczek and Father Stefan Król were demanding that he allow them to return to Poland, the former priest citing the fact that priests younger than him were becoming Superiors of houses, while, stuck in America, he remained a "little vicar."[25]

Even while he wrestled to keep experienced confreres in the United States, Father Głogowski confronted a second problem, how to get American-born candidates to a Vincentian seminary in Poland for a "proper" foundation. Throughout the First World War, the Polish Vincentians in the United States relied on the hospitality of Father Patrick McHale, the Visitor of the Eastern Province of the United States, and the facilities at the Eastern Province seminary in Germantown, Pennsylvania for the formation of their candidates. In a report to the Visitor in September 1919, Father Głogowski, after boasting of the number of Kanty graduates who were pursuing a university degree, reported: "And we have done well by the Congregation" in the fact that two alumni were pursuing philosophy and theology studies at the Eastern Province's Niagara University. He continued, "the esteemed Father McHale, knowing our difficult situation, agreed to accept every candidate into the Congregation up to the time of ordination." The problem of vocations and the maintenance of the ranks of the confreres, however, bothered Father Głogowski even while he was incapacitated in Chicago. Writing from his hospital bed about a 27-year-old man who had completed only two years of high school, he jotted a brief thought that would be a regular consideration for the future of Saint John Kanty

[25] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 13 August 1919, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 29 October 1919, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 8 December 1919, A. C. M. K.

College: "We will have to think about a minor seminary at the College as it may encourage vocations."[26]

Although the end of the First World War eliminated a number of barriers that previously blocked American-born young men from travelling to Europe, new legal restrictions proved to be equally treacherous. In early September 1920, Father Waszko informed the Visitor that three candidates, two of whom were American citizens, had had their application for a visa to travel and study in Poland rejected by the American government. To circumvent the restriction, the two American candidates requested visas for France. They received them and, with $300.00 provided by the confreres in the United States, travelled from France to Poland.[27]

Throughout the years of isolation during and immediately after the War, the importance of promoting American-born vocations and the pivotal role Saint John Kanty College was to play in this process became greater. Any threat to the continued existence of the college, therefore, brought very anxious reactions from the confreres, especially, Father Głogowski. In late September 1919, for example, he wrote the Visitor about a confrere's comment regarding the future viability of the school. "Two months ago, Father Włodarczyk announced that we are selling the College and going back to Poland. . . . From his stupid talk I had unpleasant responses from some pastors who accused us of duplicity, in advertising the College while a member of the Congregation, a faculty member, was saying that we were closing up shop."[28]

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[26] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 4 September 1919, A. C. M. K.; Głogowski to Father Visitor, 27 October 1919,
A. C. M. K. The Eastern Province's Our Lady of the Angels was part of Niagara University.
[27] Waszko to Father Visitor, 5 September 1920, A. C. M. K.
[28] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 24 September 1919, A. C. M. K.

Less than a month later, in a letter written from the hospital in Chicago, Father Głogowski elaborated on the recent success of the school and the importance of maintaining the school's solid reputation in a letter to the Visitor. The College's enrollment stood at 95 students, the highest number in its brief history. "Apparently God wanted to stifle the doubters," he announced, "and those who foretold our failure. There is no cause for worry about the future." Father Głogowski also boasted that "an awakening patriotism" among the "so-called intelligentsia" had led to a new class of students attending the school. "We have the son of a lawyer and a second boy, of a city councilman from Cleveland. This 'cream of the crop' usually sent their sons to English schools, as is the fashion. I predict that this is only the beginning and that there will be more such in the future."[29]

Such optimistic words, however, died with their author. Within a month of Father Głogowski's death, a more defeatist tone began to appear in the letters arriving in Kraków from the United States. On March 28, 1920, Father Mazurkiewicz reported on conditions at the school. While Father Król had done an admirable job shouldering his new duties at Kanty, the fiscal condition of the school remained problematic. In addition, Father Mazurkiewicz also feared for the future on the college due to the "more stinging Americanization laws." That fall, Father Waszko reported that the continuing financial problems at the school and a course of studies ill-suited to the changing social conditions in the United States were undermining the reputation among members of American Polonia.[30]

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[29] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 15 October 1919, A. C. M. K.
[30] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 28 March 1920, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 5 November 1920, A. C. M. K.

Central to the maintenance of the financial viability of Saint John Kanty College and the reputation of the Polish confreres in the United States was the mission band attached to the Erie house. While mission work lay at the heart of the apostolate of the Congregation of the Mission, the confreres assigned to this work in the United States faced the contradictory tasks of buttressing immigrants' and their American-born children's affiliation to a Polish-style of Catholicism while having to learn both the English language and the Polish-American culture of the youth sitting before them. Reconciling these two duties often added to the difficulty of the work the Polish Vincentians faced.

Approximately two months before his death, Father Głogowski wrote to the Visitor to complain about two members of the Kanty mission band: Father Marcel Słupiński, C.M., and Father Konrad Tyżyński, C.M. While conducting a mission in Buffalo, the two confreres challenged Father Głogowski's authority. Unlike previous rebellious priests, the two confreres did not demand separation from the Congregation of the Mission, but closer affiliation with their fellow confreres in Poland. Fathers Tyżyński and Słupiński informed Father Głogowski that they no longer considered themselves members of the Erie House and that while they would continue to conduct missions in the United States, the proceeds from them would be sent directly to Poland. Frustrated at these confreres' audacity, Father Głogowski could only look to the Visitor in Kraków for a solution. "If they will be allowed to control the funds of this house, as I mentioned in my last letter," he cautioned, "we will face bankruptcy, we will have to liquidate everything, and in shame and disgrace leave here. And without a clear mandate from you, they will not give in, because Fathers Słupiński and Tyżyński are stubborn,

especially Słupiński. I am convinced that they consider this an act of heroism and, if they do not get their way, they will think themselves martyrs because they think they can conquer the poverty in Poland but I stand in the way of their grandiose intentions." Further complicating the situation in the United States was the lag time between writing the Visitor and receiving a response, a condition which, Father Głogowski charged, prevented him from dealing with "the rebels" in a timely fashion.[31]

From the reestablishment of communications with Poland to his death in February 1920, Father Głogowski, worn down by his years of struggle against such dissent, wrote with an increasingly poison pen against some of confreres. The tone of his letters regularly wavered between psychological exhaustion and paranoia. On September 4, 1919, for example, he composed a lengthy diatribe against the majority of confreres assigned to Saint John Kanty College. The rant characterized Father Stefan Król, who would succeed Father Głogowski at Kanty, as "a little pig in many ways," who, while exhibiting signs of alcoholism, still "works diligently." Father Głogowski described Father Stanisław Włodarczyk as "a flag on top of the roof that blows every which way" and Father Eugeniusz Kołodziej as "a complete hypocrite and scheming troublemaker," who failed to respond to Father Głogowski's criticism. Father Marcel Słupiński, according the Father Głogowski, was a very effective missionary, who "is liked by the priests and people and works with beneficial results." When the confrere returns to Kanty, however, "he follows no rules." When reprimanded, the Superior continues,

[31] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 9 January 1920, A. C. M. K. Almost three weeks later, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote that the Polish-language newspaper, *Dziennik Chicagoski*, had reported that the two dissident confreres had conducted a mission concurrent with another one, a situation described by Father Mazurkiewicz as a "ready scandal." He associated this dissent with the reestablishment of an independent homeland, an event which would result in the confreres' efforts in the United States becoming "secondary" to those in Poland. In closing, he predicted that "we are wandering like sheep without a shepherd." See: Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 29 January 1920, A. C. M. K.

Father Słupiński "complained to the confreres that I [Father Głogowski] treated him like a dog." More patronizing than acerbic, Father Głogowski described Father Konrad Tyżyński as "a harmless lunatic, but a good worker," who "collected various bizarre objects" while out on missions, with which he "entertains" the confreres upon his return to the College. While celebrating the Eucharist, Father Głogowski continued, Father Tyżyński "transposes the melodies in the missal to his liking, so that instead of the Preface we hear some Ukrainian tune instead of a serious hymn." These idiosyncrasies, while annoying, Father Głogowski commented, are an improvement on his previous dissent, which was influenced by "Father [Józef] Janowski and our own Machiavelli." Father Augustine Binna, who initially oversaw the College's print shop was, Father Głogowski charged, "a megalomaniac," who enjoyed travelling and who presently had requested a transfer to the mission band, even though his speech impediment, which, on previous occasions when Father Głogowski had to send on missions, resulted in "silence [that] lasts five minutes until he finds the right words." Lastly, Father Głogowski turned his sights on Father Jan Ściskalski, who he described as vain and too popular with young ladies while conducting missions. Of all the confreres mentioned in the letter, only Father Michał Sadowski received a favorable assessment, being characterized as "stately, hard-working, and serene." With characterizations such as these from his Superior, it is no wonder that Father Król wrote the Visitor on December 31, 1919, describing conditions at the College as "unbearable," and the school's future as questionable.[32]

This internal strife was exacerbated by yet another conflict—one between Father Głogowski and the original sponsor of the College, Father Andrzej Ignasiak. Developing

[32] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 4 September 1919, A. C. M. K.; Król to Father Visitor, 31 December 1919, A. C. M. K.

out of disagreements on fiscal matters and the proper management of the school, the clash between the two priests grew during the War into a battle for the leadership of Erie's Polish community. In December 1915, coming on the heels of an argument with Father Głogowski over the right to grant scholarships to students selected, Father Ignasiak wrote the Visitor in Kraków. He emphasized that while he remained dissatisfied with many things at the College, he had learned not to interfere in the Vincentians' internal matters. He did not hesitate, however, to mention that he felt Father Mazurkiewicz was a master in financial matters and that the confrere should be appointed rector of the College, a backhanded attack on Father Głogowski.[33]

With the War's end, it was Father Głogowski's turn to take the offensive. Not mincing his words, he wrote, "I did not mention [previously] that our relations with Father Ignasiak are broken." The sources of this break, he wrote, were two. The first took place in 1917, when the Polish Vincentians failed to conduct a scheduled mission at Father Ignasiak's parish. "Our missionaries took to their tasks in other parishes," Father Głogowski wrote the Visitor, "and either forgot or chose to ignore him [Father Ignasiak], so they came into conflict." While temporarily volatile, relations between the pastor and Father Głogowski soon seemed to return to normal. A second incident, however, created a rift that proved fatal to the bonds between the two priests.[34]

In his December 8, 1919 letter to the Visitor, Father Głogowski described the second event which took place "a few years ago" and involved the construction of a home on land belonging to the College's farm. Following a misunderstanding, which resulted in Father Ignasiak's removal of the Felician Sisters, he asked for and received a

[33] Ignasiak to Father Visitor, 27 December 1915, A. C. M. K.
[34] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 8 December 1919,A. C. M. K.

group of Sisters of Nazareth. On thirteen acres of land, Father Ignasiak initially planned to build a "vacation house" for the sisters, a design soon modified to "a permanent house that would be the beginning of great things." According to Father Głogowski, the Erie pastor failed to inform the sisters of the $27,000 construction cost they would be assigned. Father Ignasiak then asked Father Głogowski if the sisters could work at the College cooking and doing laundry. He approved of the idea and wrote to the Mother Provincial of the Sisters of Nazareth, who disapproved of her sisters working in the kitchen. Father Głogowski then informed the Mother Provincial that the sisters would not be able to cover their living expenses and the debt burden from the construction on the revenue they would receive from only the laundry. "I said the same to Father Ignasiak," Father Głogowski wrote Kraków, "that for his attachment to his grand scheme, the gift of 13 acres, he was forcing the sisters to either erect an orphanage or old-age home on that land, and later a novitiate for the sisters." As a result of the Polish Superior's information, the Mother Provincial then turned down Father Ignasiak's offer. In the meantime, the Erie pastor, "after registering it with the Planning Bureau," sent the deed to the property to the Mother General of the Sisters of Nazareth, who unaware of the details had sent a group of sisters to live in the house. After becoming aware of the situation and after the territorial reorganization of the Sisters of Nazareth, the small group "abandoned the house and . . . moved to Pittsburgh."[35]

The organization that had financed the project continued to hound the Sisters of Nazareth, asking for payment of the mortgage. After two years, the house was put up for sale and "Father Ignasiak, without the knowledge of the bishop, took it for the parish."

[35] Głogowski to Father Visitor, 8 December 1919, A. C. M. K.

Father Ignasiak then, according to Father Głogowski, lashed out at him: "But he directed his anger at us, rather at me, asserting that I had no right to enlighten the sisters as to the true state of affairs. I had had no intention of hurting him, but on the other hand, it would have been criminal of me to remain silent, knowing that he had laid a trap for the sisters." Father Głogowski went on to describe how Father Ignasiak then turned on the Vincentians, publicly announcing that his parishioners "should not send their sons to our College, where the education is lacking, but should instead send them to a true Polish institution in Orchard Lake, [Michigan]."[36]

When this campaign failed, Father Głogowski charged, Father Ignasiak "sent his vicars to their homes to work on them [parishioners]." With relief clearly evident, he continued: "In spite of this, the students came and their parents are astonished at this sudden antagonism toward the College. The people jeered at him [Father Ignasiak] and immediately came to us to tell us of his conspiracy." Father Głogowski went on to boast that the Vincentians were now also immune to the pastor's efforts to turn Erie's Bishop John Edmund Fitzmaurice against them. The response he received was partly due to the work of the confreres, but also due to Father Ignasiak's botched effort to prevent a rival Polish priest from establishing a new parish by accidentally supporting the establishment of an Independent Polish parish in the diocese. "From that moment, Ignasiak lost the respect of the Bishop and, although he is still a diocesan consultor, his opinion means nothing." Father Głogowski concluded that, in the battle for diocesan opinion, Vincentians had finally bested Father Ignasiak.[37]

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[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid. An interesting supplement to Father Głogowski's comments is evident in a letter written by Father Waszko less than a year later. Along with rumors that the school was in poor financial shape, the confrere reported that questions began to emerge about the quality and suitability of the education at Kanty. "It

This conflict, as well as many others discussed above, however, were to outlive Father Głogowski and continue to burden the Polish confreres in the United States into the 1920s. But it was in the 1910s that the paradigm of the next three decades of Polish Vincentian history in the United States was set. The pattern that emerged from the confreres' experiences during the First World War and their response to the reconstitution of Poland was one of tension within the band of brothers trying to preserve and protect their previous work in the United States while they attempted to integrate themselves into a revitalized Polish Province.

Along with the physical distance that made communication with their Motherhouse in Kraków difficult, there emerged at this time a clash of priorities and loyalties among the Polish Vincentians that continued to define their history through the outbreak of the Second World War. The cause of the clash was a disagreement over the distribution of funds collected in the United States. In the first half of the 1920s, as the Polish Province began to expand, projects vital to the mission of the Polish confreres in the United States, in particular, Saint John Kanty College, had to compete for funds with ones in Poland, such as the construction of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish in Bydgoszcz.

Concurrent with this dilemma was the start of significant changes in American Polonia. Beginning in the immediate postwar period, the Polish immigrant communities served by the Vincentian Fathers evolved from enclaves defined by immigration from a partitioned Poland to ones better characterized as increasingly Polish-American, a population that, according to Lizabeth Cohen, had their sense of *polskość* defined by the

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seems that in Erie," Father Waszko wrote, "Kanty is thought of as Ignasiak's high school." While his reason for including this statement is unclear, his comments point to the tenuous position of the College at the beginning of a new decade and the ongoing fight for control of Erie's Polish Catholic community. See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 5 November 1920, A. C. M. K.

parish its members attended. "As the church faced a second and even third generation that had never known Poland," Cohen writes, "the parochial school took on even greater importance as the guardian of the Polish parish's, and hence community's, future." With their ranks dominated by Polish-born confreres and a leadership nervous about the tenuous state of affairs at Saint John Kanty College, the Polish Vincentians in the United States struggled to balance cultural preservation and social relevance.[38]

While religious and cultural stewardship had defined the mission of the Polish Vincentians in the United States from the arrival of the first confreres in December 1903, a task made difficult by tremors of nativism before the outbreak of the First World War, the missionaries' apostolate was more severely shaken by the seismic shifts that took place during the "tribal twenties." As they coped with the death of their first Superior, the Polish Vincentians also had to respond to the "final convulsive phase" of American nativism. "Swept into the postwar era by an unspent longing for national unity," John Higham writes, "Americanization cast off some of the restraints imposed by wartime conditions and responded aggressively to the social schisms which opened as those restraints dissolved." For the Polish Vincentians, the fault line between the cultural tectonic plates ran directly below their College in Erie, Pennsylvania and a Polish parish they would acquire in the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn, New York. It was in these two places that the confreres struggled to preach the word of God in a patois of Polish and English in the 1920s.[39]

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[38] Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 85.
[39] John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism 1860-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1985), pp. 254-255.

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The necessity of navigating between American and Polish cultures at a time when anti-immigrant sentiment was growing in the United States and when Poland was reestablishing itself on the map of Europe required the Polish Vincentians to be cautious in selecting a replacement of Father Głogowski. The candidate had to be knowledgeable of the confreres' previous work in the United States and capable of directing them as they learned to adapt to the changing social and political conditions in the United States. In the summer of 1920, the Polish Visitor, Father Kasper Słomiński traveled to the United States and Brazil to inspect the various Vincentian houses there. On July 7, 1920, Father Słomiński selected Father Paweł Waszko to replace Father Głogowski. Along with being one of the original confreres to travel to the United States in 1903, Father Waszko, previous to being sent across the Atlantic Ocean, had served in a parish in Kaczyka, Romania, where he ministered to his parishioners in five languages besides Polish and Romanian.[40]

At the same time as he appointed Father Waszko to replace Father Głogowski, Father Słomiński established the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. Like its sister Vice-Province in Brazil, the Polish Vice-Province in the United States was an extension of the Mother Province in Poland, serving the needs of the Polish Catholic population within the territory of a second Province, in the case of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission. Over their years of Mission work in the United States, the Polish confreres had struggled to cultivate relations with their fellows in the Eastern Province as well as members of the

[40] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 107 & 225; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, p. 286.

diocesan clergy. The creation of the Polish Vice-Province in 1920, resulted in a more formal presence in Connecticut and Pennsylvania for the priests from Kraków. It was in New York City, in the Polish community of Greenpoint, Brooklyn, however, that relations between the new Vice-Province and the Eastern Province was first tested.[41]

On October 15, 1923, the Bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, the Right Reverend Thomas E. Molloy signed an agreement, entrusting the Parish of Saint Stanislaus Kostka to the Polish Vincentian Fathers. It was an ordinary document, a formality that outlined the rights and responsibilities of the confreres. It stated that Bishop Molloy entrusted the "administration of St. Stanislaus Kostka parish" to Polish Vincentians "in Perpetuity" and declared that in exchange for the priests "tak[ing] proper care of the parish conforming themselves in all things to the Diocesan Statutes and to the directions given by the Bishop," they would receive "the same revenues as the secular priests of the Diocese." It went on to describe the appointment of the rector of the parish and his assistants, the confreres' need to conduct mission work, and the fact that '[t]he present contract shall not be revoked unless by mutual consent of contracting parties." It was an ordinary document that ended an extraordinary struggle and began a new period of the history of the Polish Vincentian Fathers in the United States.[42]

The origin of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish has its roots in another Brooklyn Polish church, Saint Kazimierz Parish. In response to tensions between Polish and Lithuanian members of Saint George Parish in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, the Polish Parish of Saint Kazimierz was moved in 1892 and received a new pastor, Father Leon Wysiecki,

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[41] Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, p. 286.
[42] Right Reverend Thomas E. Molloy, "Agreement between Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn and The Polish Vincentian Congregation in re. Parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka," 15 October 1923, Archives of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission (A. N. E. P.).

a twenty-five-year-old German-Polish priest, who had been ordained only seven months before. Popular perception soon turned against Father Wysiecki, because it was thought by many that the new pastor was delaying the ordination of a "local favorite," a Galician Pole, Bolesław Puchalski. In the face of such opposition, Father Wysiecki quickly succeeded in replacing the "troublemakers" on the parish committee and began to cut the parish debt in half. Having brought a new stability to the community, Father Wysiecki sailed for Europe for a three-month hiatus in Poland, leaving the now Father Puchalski and Father Wojciech Nawrocki in charge of the parish.[43]

By the mid-1890s, the expansion of Polish Catholics throughout the Eastern District of Brooklyn necessitated the division of Saint Kazimierz's territory into three sections and the establishment of two new parishes, one in South Brooklyn, the other in Greenpoint. In the end, even though he opposed the idea of dividing the territory, Father Wysiecki devised a plan in which Father Puchalski would establish a Polish church in South Brooklyn, Our Lady of Częstochowa Parish, Father Nawrocki would remain at Saint Kazimierz Parish, and Father Wysiecki would move north and establish a new parish, Saint Stanislaus Kostka in Greenpoint. In October 1894, Father Wysiecki, speaking German and wearing a business suit, finalized the purchase of property that he said would become the site for a shoe factory. In March 1896, *The Brooklyn Eagle*

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[43] John J. Bukowczyk, "Steeples & Smokestacks: Class, Religion, and Ideology in the Polish Immigrant Settlements in Greenpoint and Williamsburg, Brooklyn, 1880-1929" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1980), pp. 199-200. Born in 1866, Father Wysiecki completed elementary school and seven years at a German gymnasium before sailing for the United States. He earned the equivalent on an American high-school diploma at a Jesuit school in Detroit and then enrolled in the Polish seminary in 1887. Brooklyn's Bishop John Loughlin accepted him into his diocese and enrolled Wysiecki at Saint Vincent Seminary in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. On November 28, 1891, six months before he finished his studies, Father Wysiecki was ordained. Upon completion of his studies, he was appointed vicar at Saint Kazimierz Parish, becoming the community's pastor at the end of 1892. See: Bolesław Kumor, S. T. D., *Toward Brooklyn's St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Centennial*, translated by Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M. (Brooklyn: Saint Stainslaus Kostka Parish, 1992), p. 16.

reported that Bishop Charles Edward McDonnell, through a broker, had purchased property at the corner of Driggs Avenue and Humboldt Street for "a handsome church edifice and parochial school, and which will be under the management of the Rev. Father Leo Wysiecki." By July 1896, Father Wysiecki announced that he would "entertain bids for the erection of a new Roman Catholic church and school." Even with the added responsibilities of overseeing the construction of the Greenpoint church, he maintained that he would remain pastor of all three Polish parishes in Brooklyn.[44]

In 1903, Father Wysiecki announced plans for the erection of a new church, a project with an initial price tag of $107,000. Having just recently retired a substantive parish debt, many parishioners balked at their pastor's plan and a rumor began circulating about a possible division of the parish. Jealous of his position in the Polish community in Brooklyn and wary of upstart clerics, Father Wysiecki interpreted the rumors as a disguised assault on his authority by other Polish priests.[45]

The strained relations between Father Wysiecki and the other Polish clergy in Brooklyn were further evident at the dedication of the new Saint Stanislaus Kostka Church on November 13, 1904. Reports of the ceremony note the absence of Polish priests and the fact that Monsignor Patrick F. O'Hare, the pastor of nearby Saint Anthony Parish, who, Bukowczyk described as "the decided enemy of the Poles," was in attendance. The growing animosity between Father Wysiecki and the other member of the Polish clergy in Brooklyn was evident even in the souvenir booklet distributed at the

[44] Bukowczyk, "Steeples & Smokestacks," pp. 200-201, 204 & 206; "For A New Polish Church," *The Brooklyn Eagle*, 21 March 1896; "Polish Catholic Church," *The Brooklyn Eagle*, 22 July 1896; Kumor, *Toward Brooklyn's St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Centennial*, p. 17.

[45] Bukowczyk, "Steeples & Smokestacks," pp. 204, 206, 209, 215-216 & 218-219. Father Wysiecki's appointment as president of the Polish Savings & Loan Association is indicative of the rapid growth of the Greenpoint area at the turn-of-the-century. By 1900, Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish was the largest Polish parish in the Brooklyn Diocese with approximately 8,000 members. See: Kumor, *Toward Brooklyn's St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Centennial*, p. 19.

dedication. Allegedly written by the pastor, himself, Bukowczyk states that the pamphlet identified the "jealous priest who coveted" Saint Kazimierz Parish as Father Wysiecki's enemy and not the people.[46]

A closer examination of the later correspondence written by Father Wysiecki, however, tells a slightly different story in which the parishioners in Greenpoint voiced their opposition to conditions in the parish. In 1905, Bukowczyk mentions, conflict had arisen between Father Wysiecki and his two assistants over celebrating Mass in the building's basement chapel and the assistants' right to keep certain donations to the parish. Four years later, the letters coming from the parish took on a more frantic and conspiratorial tone. On April 30, 1909, Father Wysiecki wrote the bishop: "Something terrible is going on here. I don't know who convert [sic] the people in Greenpoint against Rt. Rev. Bishop and me. They don't want three priests, they want the money back. The committee is wild want mass-meeting and with all the parish they want to be Independent. For God [sic] sake, take the second assistant away and send me the paper that we the parish is entitled to 4439 39/100 [$4,439.39] or let me go away as I am not sure of my live [sic] here. . . . They say I am a boy taking only allways [sic] the Bishop's part etc. etc." Less than a week after writing this letter, Father Wysiecki penned another, claiming that without any support from the chancellery, he was "forced to go higher" to receive satisfaction. If the bishop refused to take action, Father Wysiecki threatened, he would be forced to engage a lawyer and go to the apostolic delegate in Washington, D. C.[47]

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[46] Ibid, pp. 219-222.
[47] Wysiecki to the Rt. Rev. Bishop, 30 April 1909, Archives of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn (A. R. C. D. B.); Wysiecki to the Rt. Rev. Bishop, 4 May 1909, A. R. C. D. B.

Throughout the remainder of 1909, the situation at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish continued to deteriorate. While he continued to fight off growing opposition among his parishioners, Father Wysiecki struggled to scrape together the necessary funds to pay the various craftsmen who continued to do work on the church, all the while complaining that he received little support or even communication from Bishop McDonnell. In mid-August 1909, Father Wysiecki reported that bills from the painter and plasterer, as well as the coal company were coming due. Repairs on the school, however, still needed to be done. If these problems were not enough, almost as an aside, Father Wysiecki adds, "Saturday in the night, two man [sic] came to the house to kill me but were rejected. They openly say they must kill me if I don't give them 5000.00" Having had no communication from Bishop McDonnell, four weeks later, he penned a veiled threat: "About the money which I need absolutely still if those contractors go to the court will not be my fault [sic]. I am to [sic] sick to fight and told theym [sic] to go to you Rt. Rev. Bishop or to the Court as I have no money and was forced to do it." At this point, Father Wysiecki made a more direct threat: "I try to settle it with the Rt. Rev. Bishop but if all prayers will fail I will send the papers to Washington."[48]

The financial health of the parish continued to deteriorate throughout the remainder of 1909. In October, Father Wysiecki reported that individuals from Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, who had lent him money to build the Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish's school, were demanding their money back. Approximately two months later, he informed Bishop McDonnell that he had been served with a summons for failing to pay an outstanding bill of $1,500.00. In March 1910, the toll of the above crises

[48] Wysiecki to the Right Reverend Bishop, 15 August 1909, A. R. C. D. B..; Wysiecki to the Right Reverend Bishop, 16 September 1909, A. R. C. D. B.

reached such a point that Father Wysiecki reported: "I could not answer your Lordship [sic] letter sooner as I was unable to stand on my feet, and as the doctor stated I will not be able to walk good before two weeks. I don't kneel down and have terrible pains in my shoulder and also a fever. I intend to go to Europe on May 24th."[49]

Father Wysiecki returned from Europe in the middle of October, renewed in spirit, but still claiming that there were too many assistants, unnecessarily drawing down its treasury. The correspondence he sent to the Bishop that fall, however, exhibited an even more strained relationship between the pastor and his assistants. Father Wysiecki implored the Bishop in almost every letter for him to remove one of the assistants, whom he felt were plotting against him. "Hopping [sic] that the Rt. Rev. Bishop as the supreme head of this diocese will do me this favor and will get another place for this priest as I have no money to pay the sallery [sic] for three priests as also will say that I will get me this time satisfaction as it hearth [sic] me terrible to live under such suspition [sic]." Not receiving a response from the Bishop, Father Wysiecki wrote on October 21, 1910: "If Rt. Rev, Bishop is not satisfied with my work or actions, please tell me, that I may correct myself or if not to find some other diocese. Rt. Rev. Bishop I admit that I spoke sometimes to [sic] much but I was nervous to the highest degree and suffered terrible [sic] as I did not received [sic] the slightest satisfaction."[50]

Relations between Father Wysiecki and Bishop McDonnell continued to deteriorate during the remainder of 1910. By the year's end, however, Father Wysiecki

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[49] Wysiecki to the Right Reverend Bishop, 8 October 1909, A. R. C. D. B..; Wysiecki to the Right Reverend Bishop, 1 December 1909, A. R. C. D. B.; Wysiecki to the Right Reverend Bishop, 29 March 1910, A. R. C. D. B.

[50] Wysiecki to Right Reverend Bishop, 13 October 1910, A. R. C. D. B.; Wysiecki to Right Reverend Bishop, 17 October 1910, A. R. C. D. B.; Wysiecki to the Right Reverend Bishop, 21 October 1910, A. R. C. D. B.

tried to reconcile with the Bishop. On December 1, 1910, Father Wysiecki penned a lengthy apology for past actions. "On the altar at St. Stanislaus Kostka in Rome I swear to our patron to be now good and obedient," he promised, "and I sought to beg pardon Your Grace just when I came [to see you], but Rt. Rev. Bishop had no wishe [sic] to speak to me." Father Wysiecki goes on to deny writing "a letter against the seminarian Regulski when he entre [sic] into the seminary." He concludes the letter by again asking forgiveness of the Bishop and claiming he was "innocent for this bad letter you received from the Committee."[51]

While expressing his remorse for previous actions and his willingness to submit to the authority of his Bishop, Father Wysiecki remained combative with the assistants and parishioners at Saint Stanislaus Kostka. Over roughly the next decade, his actions continued to undercut the unity of the parish—a shift that would eventually bring the Vincentian Fathers to Greenpoint. Within a year of his apology to Bishop McDonnell, Father Wysiecki's authority was severely damaged by the closure of the Polish Cooperative Savings and Loan, of which he was the president. In 1916, a group of disillusioned middle-class Greenpoint residents successfully petitioned the Brooklyn Diocese to establish a second Polish parish in the neighborhood. Saint Cyril and Methodius Parish celebrated its first Mass on October 21, 1917.[52]

Further exacerbating tensions at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish was a 1921 fire, which severely damaged the church's interior. Father Wysiecki estimated that the December 15th fire caused approximately $75,000 damage to the church and began to secure a $40,000 loan for the repairs. The damage, it turned out, totaled only $15,000.

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[51] Wysiecki to Right Reverend Bishop, 1 December 1910, A. R. C. D. B.
[52] Bukowczyk, "Steeples & Smokestacks," pp. 251-252.

Father Wysiecki's handling of the repairs was met with "consternation" on the part of the parishioners. In an effort to "diffuse the growing bitterness and opposition," Father Wysiecki scheduled a retreat for the summer of 1922. On August 27th, Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz, C.M. came to Greenpoint to conduct a mission that Father Wysiecki hoped would bring serenity back to the parish. The plan and its accompanying "sale of religious objects, special collections, and fund-raising appeals" that usually accompanied such a mission only added fuel to the fires of discontent in the parish. Father Wysiecki's plan "apparently only aggravated parishioner discontent."[53]

The dissent at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish took on an additional dimension in the middle of August 1922. At a meeting held at the Polish National Hall on August 13th, dissenting members of the parish charged Father Wysiecki with bilking them for over $400.00 by padding utility bills. They claimed that when confronted by a group of parishioners, the pastor stated that the receipts showing the amounts paid were now at the diocesan chancery. Additional charges made against Father Wysiecki were that he had destroyed other receipts and had threatened to refuse administering sacraments to individuals in an attempt to force them to sign a petition for him to remain at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish. Those individuals assembled decided that the most effective means of removing Father Wysiecki were to withhold their Sunday contributions to the parish and to commence legal action against him.[54]

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[53] Ibid, pp. 303-304; Kumor, *Towards Brooklyn's St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Centennial*, pp. 24-25 & 102. Bukowczyk and Kumor disagree of which religious congregation Father Wysiecki contacted to conduct the mission. According to Bukowczyk, Wysiecki "hoped that the presence of the visiting Jesuit missionary priests in the parish for several days of devotion and special prayers would diffuse the growing bitterness and opposition." See: Bukowczyk, "Steeples & Smokestacks," pp. 303-304

[54] Bukowczyk, "Steeples & Smokestacks," pp. 310 & 312.

Less than two weeks after the meeting at the Polish National Hall, a more radical alternative emerged—the establishment of a Polish National Catholic Church (P.N.C.C.) parish in Greenpoint. On September 19, 1922, a second meeting of dissenters was held at the Polish National Hall. The audience that evening listened to "a fiery speech" by the founder of the P.N.C.C., Bishop Franciszek Hodur, who railed against the various abuses Polish immigrants had to endure at the hands of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. At the end of the evening, a vote was taken and those assembled decided in favor of establishing the Church of the Resurrection. Polish Greenpoint now had three Polish churches.[55]

With tensions continuing to escalate between Father Wysiecki and his assistants and parishioners, the newly installed Brooklyn Bishop, the Right Reverend Thomas E. Molloy ordered Father Wysiecki on an "extended religious retreat" and began an investigation of the events in Greenpoint. Father Wysiecki, however, announced at Mass on September 24, 1922, that he was leaving for Poland. His planned destination, however, was actually Detroit, Michigan. While he had planned a quiet departure from Greenpoint, the dissenting members of the parish intercepted him and did not allow him to leave unmolested, throwing stones as he tried to leave the rectory. The police had to be called in to escort Father Wysiecki from the building.[56]

With the contentious pastor gone, the question on the mind of both parishioners and leaders of the Brooklyn Diocese, alike, was how to restore order at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish. Bishop Molloy temporarily assigned Father Thomas Nummey, the pastor

[55] Ibid, pp. 318, 325-327. While explosive in its rhetoric, the actual impact of the establishment of the Church of the Resurrection on the membership at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish was limited. According to Bukowczyk, "only 103 families officially joined the parish." See: Bukowczyk, "Steeples & Smokestacks," p. 334.
[56] Ibid, p. 366; Kumor, *Toward Brooklyn's St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Centennial*, pp. 24-25.

of the Holy Child of Jesus Parish in Richmond Hills, Queens, a priest who spoke no Polish, to oversee the administration of the parish and to investigate complaints against Father Wysiecki. Ministering to the spiritual needs of the members of the parish, however, was a much more sensitive and difficult assignment that required Father Wysiecki's successor to cultivate both a respect for the authority of the office of the pastor and a balancing of Polish and Catholic identities. The burden of this responsibility fell to the Polish Vincentian Fathers.[57]

The arrival of Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz, C. M. and Father Wacław Jęczmionka, C. M. in Greenpoint in December 1922 coincided well with the preexisting desire of the Polish Vincentians to establish a presence in the New York City area. As a first step, Father Waszko assigned Father Mazurkiewicz the task of "find[ing] a location for a mission house in New York City." While in Brooklyn, he received assistance from Father John O'Bryne, C.M. a member of the Eastern Province assigned to Saint John's University in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood and a "confidant of the local bishop, Thomas Molloy." When the Brooklyn Bishop offered Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish to the Polish Visitor, Father Słomiński balked at the idea, insisting that "he needed the priests elsewhere." In order to win over Father Słomiński, Bishop Molloy announced that if the Polish Vincentians would accept responsibility for Saint Stanislaus Kostka

[57] Ibid, p. 366; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 105; Kumor, *Toward Brooklyn's St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Centennial*, p. 25. In addition to taking over the spiritual and administrative duties at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish, the Vincentians were also directly involved in the diocesan commission that investigated Father Wysiecki's management of the parish's finances. Father Mazurkiewicz served as a translator on the commission that included Father Nummey, a lawyer, and a detective.

Parish, he would grant them permission to establish a mission house in the Brooklyn Diocese.[58]

When the first Polish Vincentian Missionaries arrived in Greenpoint, Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish was still severely divided. Evidence of the strains that had characterized the last years of Father Wysiecki's pastorate was clearly evident. In November 1922, Father Waszko, newly appointed Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, wrote Kraków that, while the parish seemed to offer the confreres a good source of income, its parishioners had become too Americanized and needed to be taught respect for clerical authority. Along with instituting a proper schedule for conducting baptisms and wedding ceremonies, he informed the Visitor that he had told Father Nummey, who was preparing to travel to Detroit to accept Father Wysiecki's resignation, that "[t]he use of English will also end . . . for this is a Polish Church." He justified this decision by stating that without it, the confreres would be unable to hear confessions.[59]

A more critical assessment of the situation at the Greenpoint parish came from the pen of Father Jęczmionka, who wrote the Visitor that he was going to Brooklyn to pacify the unruly members of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish. He went on to explain that some progress had been made when Father Nummey announced that Father Mazurkiewicz would become the parish's "new ecclesiastical father." The situation, however, was not without its setbacks. Along with rumors that Father Wysiecki was somewhere nearby,

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[58] Douglas J. Slawson, C.M., "'To Bring Glad Tidings to the Poor'; Vincentian Parish Missions in the United States" in *The American Vincentians: A Popular History of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, 1815-1987* edited by John E. Rybolt, C.M. (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1988), p. 207; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 105.

[59] Waszko to Father Visitor, 10 November 1922, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 5 December 1922, A. C. M. K.

Father Jęczmionka also reported that a group of Polish diocesan priests opposed the Polish Vincentians' taking over the parish and planned to complain to Bishop Molloy.[60]

Over the next year, as work progressed on the transfer of control of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish to the Polish Vincentians, Father Mazurkiewicz and Father Jęczmionka chronicled conditions in Greenpoint and their opinions on the confreres' future there. At the beginning of May 1923, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote a letter to the Visitor in Poland in hopes of giving his Superior a fuller picture of the conditions that now faced the confreres. While the parishioners seemed to be satisfied with the services the Polish Vincentians, the members of the diocesan clergy remained vexed by the confreres' presence in Greenpoint. "[T]he secular fathers sow unrest and spread gossip," he informed the Visitor, "for example, that we are only here for a brief visit, that we are just preparing the people and getting the parish in shape, and that the bishop will return it to the secular clergy in the future." Father Mazurkiewicz informed the Visitor that it was common knowledge that a group of diocesan priests "promised to boycott us and avoid visiting us and our church." Some members of the Brooklyn clergy, it seemed, were more confrontational. After receiving orders from Bishop Molloy to minister to some Saint Stanislaus parishioners who lived within the territorial boundaries of the neighboring Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish, the pastor of the community, Monsignor Emil Streński called the Polish Vincentians "pigs, out loud and in front of children and passersby."[61]

This was not the only confrontation between the Polish Vincentians and the Polish priests of the Brooklyn Diocese. In January 1924, Father Waszko relayed the story of a

[60] Jęczmionka to Father Visitor, 19 December 1922, A. C. M. K.
[61] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 2 May 1923, A. C. M. K.

Jesuit Father who came to the defense of the confreres in Floral Park, Queens, New York. The Jesuit, in rather colorful language compared the Polish diocesan clergy to "[a] dog that bites the stone that hits him, rather than biting the hand that threw it." While they refused to recognize their own role in their current condition, Brooklyn's Polish priests still had the power to hurt the Polish Vincentians' efforts in the United States by persuading young men against attending Saint John Kanty College or by undercutting the confreres' mission efforts.[62]

Tensions between the Polish Vincentians and the Polish clergy of the Brooklyn Diocese also surfaced in February 1924 at a conference held in Philadelphia. At the meeting, Father Konieczny spoke and was praised in public by Bishop Paul Peter Rhode of the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin. The Polish clergy of the Brooklyn Diocese, however, remained aloof. "Our Brooklyn (Brothers) kept to themselves," Father Waszko wrote, "but they did not offend me. Some still hope that St. Stanislaus [Parish] will be theirs."[63]

Father Nummey, the temporary administrator of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish, however, received much more favorable treatment at the hands of the confreres. Father Mazurkiewicz reported that he tried to maintain the spirit of the confreres by claiming that Bishop Molloy hoped "to punish them [diocesan priests] "for conspiring against [Father] Wysiecki." Father Nummey placed special emphasis on their entrapment of Father Wysiecki's former assistant Father Józef Tecza, who, like his fellow Brooklyn priests, fell far below the standards of Father Mazurkiewicz. "Indeed, they [members of the diocesan clergy] tempted the vicar, Father Tecza," he wrote to Kraków, "to get rid of

[62] Waszko to Father Visitor, 22 January 1924, A. C. M. K.
[63] Waszko to Father Visitor, 28 February 1924, A. C. M. K.

[Father] Wysiecki and incite a mutiny among the people. Since he is a handsome and well-spoken rascal, this task was not very difficult."[64]

In addition, Father Mazurkiewcz complained that Bishop Molloy failed in making a final decision on the fate of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish. The Ordinary, he wrote to the Visitor, "gives the secular clergy ambiguous answers and procrastinates over whether to relinquish the parish to the Congregation or not." Not only did the Bishop's indecision exacerbate tensions between the Polish Vincentians and the diocesan clergy, it also took its toll on the "health of the fathers, who are needed for the missions." Equally detrimental was Bishop Molloy's Americanization efforts. Echoing calls he had heard in other dioceses with large immigrant populations, Father Mazurkiewicz reported that Bishop Molloy "sent us a letter ordering us to stop teaching in Polish during regular hours; he ordered us to remove Polish inscriptions from notice boards, produce announcements and certificates in English and advised us to teach the catechism in English or at least in both languages." Furthermore, Father Mazurkiewicz added, the Bishop ordered that the American flag "should fly in front of the school every day."[65]

In a lengthy letter dated June 29, 1923, Father Jęczmionka wrote that the parish was not such a "golden apple," citing the fact that, for the year, it had seen an income of only $4,000, one thousand dollars less that the amount collected by the Polish Vincentians' mission band. Wary of a schism among the confreres in the United States, a situation he compared to a recent one among the Franciscans, and the rapid assimilation

[64] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 2 May 1923, A. C. M. K.
[65] Ibid.

of American Polonia, Father Jęczmionka questioned if Saint Vincent de Paul would have shouldered the burden of supervising a Polish parish in the United States.[66]

Tensions increased at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish into the fall of 1923. Ten days after Bishop Molloy and the Polish Visitor, Father Kasper Słomiński, signed the agreement turning the parish over to the confreres, Father Mazurkiewicz reported that close on the heels of the Visitor's departure a "brawl" broke out at the parish. Father Mazurkiewicz had to retreat to the safety of the Vincentians' recently opened mission house in Whitestone, Queens. In addition, a group of dissident parishioners sent Father Waszko a telegram, hoping to convince him to recall Father Mazurkiewicz. While the outburst in Greenpoint led to Father Waszko questioning the decision to accept the parish, memory of the negative outcome of the Franciscans' retreat from a parish conflict in Bridgeport, Connecticut stiffened the Vice-Visitor's resolve and he ordered Father Mazurkiewicz to continue his efforts at the parish. Father Mazurkiewicz concluded his letter by stating that he would remain at his post until he received instructions reversing those of Father Waszko.[67]

Within less than a month, however, conditions improved enough at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish for Father Mazurkiewicz to report to the Visitor that, not only had Father Waszko accepted the idea of working in Greenpoint, but also that the parishioners had calmed down and were growing fond of Father Waszko. As proof of the community's improved relations with the confreres, Father Mazurkiewicz mentioned that when plans were announced to transfer Father Piotr Olszówka, C.M. from the parish to the Whitestone mission band, the parishioners protested and Father Waszko decided to

[66] Jęczmionka to Father Visitor, 29 June 1923, A. C. M. K.
[67] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 25 October 1923, A. C. M. K.

keep the priest in Greenpoint. While the Polish Vincentians were still plagued by personnel shortages, they now were optimistic about the future of their new houses in Brooklyn and Queens.[68]

Over the next four years, tensions at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish waned, but did not entirely disappear. With the parish in need of a new school and a new convent, Father Waszko reported to the Visitor in mid-March 1927 that he had engaged an architect to prepare plans for the new buildings. The estimate for the project came to $300,000. Facing such a tremendous fundraising campaign, Father Waszko cautioned: "We need to pick a confrere who would undertake the construction and in all of his energy and wit for the collection of funds. . . . I do not feel strong enough for such an unnerving task." When he approached the Brooklyn Diocese for permission to erect the two buildings, Father Waszko was instructed to curb his ambitious project. The Bishop suggested that Father Waszko cut his planned expenditures in half by using plans developed for another Brooklyn parish. In concluding his remarks, Father Waszko wrote: "I am not sure as of yet what to do."[69]

The task of collecting the requisite funds for the construction project was complicated by the fear of aggravating the latent resistance to the Polish Vincentians that continued to simmer in Greenpoint almost four years after their takeover of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish., as well as tensions among the confreres. In the same letter in which he described Bishop Molloy's modification of the Saint Stanislaus Kostka construction plans, Father Waszko described a potentially explosive personnel problem at the parish. Without the arrival of new confreres, he wrote the Visitor, he would be forced

[68] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 13 November 1923, A. C. M. K.
[69] Waszko to Father Visitor, 16 March 1927, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 3 August 1927, A. C. M. K.

to reassign some of the confreres assigned to the Brooklyn house, an action that "would shock the parishioners." When he asked the counsel of the priests assigned to Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish, they cautioned their Pastor and Vice-Visitor that relations among the confreres were growing worse. Hoping to resolve the issue as soon as possible, Father Waszko mentioned that he telegraphed the Visitor "so as to avoid more trouble." These squabbles could not be allowed to derail the Polish Vincentians' progress in the United States. New opportunities were on the horizon.[70]

Even as negotiations were proceeding between Bishop Molloy and Father Waszko on the transfer of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish, the Vice-Visitor, responding to the requests of Polish Catholics in Ansonia, began discussions with Hartford's Bishop John Joseph Nilan on the possibility of establishing a third Vincentian parish in Connecticut. After Father Waszko relocated to Greenpoint, Brooklyn, Father Józef Studziński, C.M. supervised a census of the Poles of Ansonia and purchased a house on Jewett Street. On July 12, 1925, the newly established Saint Joseph Parish celebrated its first Mass at the Figlii d'Italia Hall; its first pastor was Father Aloysius Zieleżnik, C.M.[71]

By the middle of the 1920s, the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States were serving the spiritual needs of four parishes: Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr (New Haven, Connecticut), Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish (Derby, Connecticut), Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish (Brooklyn, New York), and Saint Joseph Parish (Ansonia, Connecticut). In August 1922, the Polish Vincentians had surrendered control of Saint Jadwiga Parish in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where they had served since 1908. Along with their parish work, the confreres had a mission house in Queens,

[70] Waszko to Father Visitor, 3 August 1927, A. C. M. K.
[71] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 170.

New York and Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania, which also served as a base for a second mission band. In a little over the two decades since their arrival in the United States, the Polish Vincentians had cultivated a parochial, educational, and mission apostolate—quite an accomplishment. In the second half of the 1920s, however, this maintaining this foothold in American Polonia became more taxing in terms of both personnel and funding.

This tension was especially evident in the Polish Vincentians' mission bands. Following the establishment of the Saint Vincent Mission House in Whitestone, Queens, New York, the Polish Vincentians had two bands of confreres conducting missions and forty-hour devotions in Polish parishes throughout the eastern half of the United States. In addition to the spiritual aspect of the priests' work, the members of the band were also relied upon to bring in much-needed income used for the upkeep of the College's building in Erie, Pennsylvania. In November 1920, for example, Father Waszko reported to the Visitor that two confreres, Father Ignacy Dudziak, C.M., and Father Michał Gryglak, had arrived and were assigned to work on the mission band based at the College. He emphasized the fact that their services were much needed for the income they would generate for the repair of the school's plumbing.[72]

Six months later, Father Waszko wrote again to Kraków to ask the Visitor's assistance in dealing with one of the confreres with whom the two newly arrived priests worked. "I see that Father [Konrad] Tyżyński sent a letter," the Polish Vice-Visitor stated, "probably regarding a significant matter, to the Father Visitor. We have a problem with him here, which will end with his expulsion from the Congregation—the

[72] Waszko to Father Visitor, 26 November 1920, A. C. M. K.

sooner the better." Charging Father Tyżyński with being "impulsive" and lacking the proper respect for authority, Father Waszko described how the confrere considered himself an "independent missionary," who sent money collected during missions directly to Poland, instead of submitting it to the Vice-Province. Not only did such actions fly in the face of proper clerical discipline, it also deprived the Vice-Province of much-needed revenue.[73]

Throughout the first half of the 1920s, the allocation of funds collected during missions had remained a point of contention between the confreres in the United States and those in Poland. In June of 1923, Father Aloysius Zieleżnik wrote to the Visitor from the Whitestone Mission House to complain about the difficulty he and the other members of the mission band had had recently collecting money while visiting Polish parishes. He argued that because of the personnel shortage in the United States, the Polish Vincentians failed to conduct missions on a timely basis; some parishes had to wait two or three years for the confreres to be available. The situation, if not addressed, would result in not only a failure to minister to the spiritual needs of these parishioners but also a loss of revenue for the Congregation.[74]

Within days of Father Zieleżnik's letter, Father Jęczmionka penned a more scathing critique of the leadership in the United States and conditions in the Vice-Province. After countering charges made in person by Father Waszko that he lacked the proper respect for authority and stating that the Superiors of the Congregation were merely "firsts among equals," Father Jęczmionka charged that he found that the group of

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[73] Waszko to Father Visitor, 20 June 1921, A. C. M. K. Along with his lack of respect of authority, Father Waszko charged that Father Tyżyński struggled with alcoholism. "He makes a lot of fuss when he drinks—he verbally attacks anyone, no matter who the person is."
[74] Zieleżnik to Father Visitor, 27 June 1923, A. C. M. K.

confreres in the United States "does not have the heart for the Polish Province and that they want to tear away from it." When Father Waszko asked the confrere if he was aware that the Vice-Province had just sent a check for $9,000 to Kraków, Father Jęczmionka countered: "You have a duty to send money to Poland, because it is not yours." With the wealth that was evident among Poles in the United States, their contributions to the Polish Province should be great. He further charged that the confreres' failure to procure essential funds was caused by the fact that the best preachers in the Vice-Province (Fathers Gryglak, Janowski, and Mazurkiewicz) were all assigned to duties at one of the Polish Vincentians' parishes instead of working on a mission band.[75]

Two days after Father Jęczmionka wrote his letter, Father Mazurkiewicz claimed that the confrere was collaborating with Father Ignacy Dudziak to undermine his authority as Superior of the Whitestone House. He charged the confrere with being a "secret politician," who collected funds from parish priests and "poor girls" while conducting missions, and depositing the funds in his own bank account rather than forwarding it to the Vice-Provincial treasury. For his part, Father Dudziak coached Father Jęczmionka on how to collect and keep funds from the missions. Furthermore, Father Dudziak and Father Tyżyński, Father Mazurkiewicz charged, were spreading rumors that he had positioned himself to become the Superior of the Whitestone house. Father Mazurkiewicz concluded his letter by stating that, if this unbridled flaunting of authority was allowed to continue, the members of the Vice-Province "will lose influence and trust" among the members of America's Polonia.[76]

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[75] Jęczmionka to Father Visitor, 29 June 1923, A. C. M. K.
[76] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 1 July 1923, A. C. M. K.

In May 1924, in a letter from Brooklyn, Father Waszko reported that Father Mazurkiewicz was experiencing additional problems with the members of the Whitestone mission band. The Vice-Visitor reported: "It is hard to reach consensus. It seems that each side is to blame, even though everybody has good intentions. Here all I can do is repeat—different time, different spirit." While he does not provide a full picture of the situation among the confreres in Whitestone, Father Waszko's last comment alludes to a difference of outlook among the Polish Vincentians on the proper goals and objectives of their mission work in the United States.[77]

One month after writing the above lines, Father Waszko returned to problems among the confreres of the two mission bands. On June 5th, he wrote to the Visitor: "Please Father Visitor, talk to Father Mazurkiewicz. The missionaries did not support the treasury—I do not know why—confreres should not behave this way." Father Waszko then addressed his fears about the discord among the confreres and the growing public perception of division within the Polish Vincentians' ranks. With the relative autonomy among members of the mission band, moving from parish to parish, these differences threatened the funding of the Polish Vincentians' foundation in the United States. Having established houses in America, including Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania, the senior members of the Vice-Province had a greater stake in the continued existence of these foundations. The more recently arrived confreres, however, saw the work in the United States as more of a source of funding for projects in Poland, especially the basilica church being built in Bydgoszcz.[78]

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[77] Waszko to Father Visitor, 8 May 1924, A. C. M. K.

[78] Waszko to Father Visitor, 5 June 1924, A. C. M. K. Tension between Father Mazurkiewicz and Father Dudziak is also mentioned by Father Waszko in a letter in which the Vice-Visitor commented on the selection of a pastor for the Vincentians' parish in Bydgoszcz. Unlike Father Mazurkiewicz, who "does not

Further tension between the demands of the Polish Vincentian houses in the United States and those in Poland are evident in Father Mazurkiewicz's later activities. Having arrived in the United States in 1908, he had held the offices of Pastor and Superior at Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven, Connecticut (1908-1921), administrator at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn (1922-1923), and Superior at the mission house in Whitestone, Queens (1924-1925). In 1925, after seventeen years in the United States, he returned to Poland to take on pastoral duties at the newly established Saint Vincent de Paul Parish in Bydgoszcz. On November 23, 1925, Father Waszko wrote to the Visitor complaining that Father Mazurkiewicz was planning to return to the United States to collect funds for the parish. In closing his letter, Father Waszko wrote, "Father Mazurkiewicz knows very well that people today are tired of collectors from the Old Country. I am just putting forward the case. Anyhow, others in the country [Poland] are building and are not looking back to America." After returning to Poland, Father Mazurkiewicz considered the personal relationships he had developed in Connecticut and New York reliable sources of funds for projects in Poland. While American Polonia still had strong ties to Poland, its members began to limit its charity to its own backyard.[79]

When Father Mazurkiewicz did return to the United States in 1927 to collect funds for the Bydgoszcz parish, his efforts met with resistance. In his March 16th description of Father Mazurkiewicz's efforts, Father Waszko charged that the confrere was "overly sensitive and he sees only Bydgoszcz in front of him. When Father Waszko

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like Father Dudziak," Father Waszko believed that the confrere would be a good candidate for the position. See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 23 January 1925, A. C. M. K.

[79] Waszko to Father Visitor, 23 November 1925, A. C. M. K.

stated that Vice-Provincial funds were needed to the maintenance of the priests in the United States, Father Mazurkiewcz charged that the Polish confreres were being detrimentally affected by American culture and were leaning toward separation from the Polish Province.[80]

While these conflicts continued to percolate, the members of the Polish Vincentian mission bands continued to work a grueling schedule of two-week missions at Polish parishes throughout the eastern half of the United States. Between September 1926 and February 1928, confreres visited parishes in Connecticut (Ansonia, New Haven), Massachusetts (Easthampton and Tauton), Michigan (Detroit, Jackson, and Manistee), New York (Buffalo, Brooklyn, Paterson, Schenectady, and Yonkers), and Pennsylvania (Freeland, Kingston, Olyphant, and Philadelphia). As conditions within the Vice-Province and American Polonia changed in the wake of the First World War, the Polish Vincentians continued to promote the education of an increasingly assimilated laity.[81]

One of the most significant changes in American Polonia to affect the apostolates of the Polish Vincentians in the United States was the maturation of the American-born children of the immigrant generation. This shift and the resulting challenges faced by the confreres were most clearly evident at Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania. Two articles in the 1920 edition of *Meteor w Ameryce*, a Polish-language periodical published by the confreres, seem to define the parameters of this evolution. In an article entitled "Potrzeba Wyższego Wykształcenia u Polaków w Ameryce" ("The Necessity of

[80] Waszko to Father Visitor, 16 March 1927, A. C. M. K.
[81] Franciszek Hładki, C. M., "Misje w Stanach Zjednoczonych Ameryki Północnej," *Roczniki*, XXIX, numbers 2 & 3, 1927, pp. 100-112; Franciszek Hładki, C. M., "Z Misji w Stanach Zjednoczonych Ameryki Póln.," *Roczniki*, XXX, number 1, 1928, pp. 10-29; Franciszek Hładki, C. M., "Z Misyj polskich w Stanach Zjednoczonych w Ameryce Północnej," *Roczniki*, XXIII, number 1-4, 1929, pp. 204-214.

Higher Education of the Poles in America"), an unnamed author described the responsibility of the Polish community in the United States to raise its children in a Christian manner and to provide them with the necessary education for upward occupational mobility. While the immigrant generation, the author argues, had secured unskilled positions in America's factories and successfully accumulated savings from its meager wages, it had to resist the short-sighted temptation to terminate its children's education after eighth grade. Not only would such a decision limit the second generation's occupational mobility, but through exposure to corrupting influences in the factories, it would also bring about a separation between their sons and the Catholic Church. It was only through the pursuit of higher education, hopefully at Saint John Kanty College, the author concluded, that the Polish community in the United States would rise to equal status with other ethnic groups in America.[82]

Five years later, Harry Front (Kanty, 1923) reported on the ninth annual commencement exercise at the College, summarizing the day's two addresses. The fist speaker was the Bishop of the Erie Diocese, the Right Reverend John M. Gannon, who identified the "glaring need of real red blooded leaders among the Poles in America." Front quoted Bishop Gannon as he charged the graduates with the task of becoming "[l]eaders not only of Americans, not only of Polish Americans, but leaders of Americans-to-be, and above all, leaders of thousands of American Catholics." For Bishop Gannon, the college was an essential element in the proper assimilation of members of Polonia into American culture. This was reinforced by Attorney James J. Rossiter, a former assistant United States prosecutor, who emphasized the "dual roll all

[82] „Potrzeba Wyższego Wykształcenia u Polaków w Ameryce" in *Meteor w Ameryce* (1920), pp. 22-23.

educated Americans of Polish descent" were expected to play throughout the country. The greatest need of the day, Mr. Rossiter charged, was for "more citizens who have the right conception of Americanism, more citizens with ideals." The graduating class that day was represented by John Sobolewski and John Guła, who addressed the individuals gathered in English and Polish respectively. As the graduates left Kanty for the last time that spring, they walked out into a country divided over issues of ethnicity, naturalization, and citizenship. Equally divided were opinions on the objectives and future of the College.[83]

Throughout the first half of the 1920s, the confreres assigned to Saint John Kanty College struggled with finding consensus on the academic needs of young men venturing out beyond the limits of initial immigrant neighborhoods and the desire to maintain a strong sense of *polskość* among the American-born generation. In addition, as the field of education continued to become more regulated by state agencies in the 1920s, the Polish Vincentians realized that to compete with other secondary and post-secondary institutions, they had to staff the College with confreres holding university degrees. In June 1921, Father Waszko wrote the Visitor that "Everybody who has at least a high-school diploma from Poland must complete a course at a local university that will grant him a certificate." Unlike other religious Orders, such as the Redemptorists, the Salesians, and the Society of the Divine Word, the Polish Vincentians had not sent a holder of a doctorate to the United States. Father Waszko concluded by petitioning that the Visitor "[p]lease think about this seriously."[84]

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[83] E. Front, "Commencement Exercises at Kanty," *Meteor* (Fall 1925), pp. 3-4.
[84] Waszko to Father Visitor, 20 June 1921, A. C. M. K.

Two years later, Father Jęczmionka made a plea for a different kind of relevance. In March 1923, he wrote Kraków that the College was a failure as a "nationalist institution," with most students preferring to speak English. In addition, he argued that the school also fell short of its mission to buttress the faith of its students. Like Father Waszko, Father Jęczmionka cited the quality of the instructors at the school. Three months later, he returned to this theme when he wrote that, with the serious student's ability to travel to Poland to study, an educational institution like the College was redundant and inferior to any Polish school. For those individuals unwilling to travel to Europe to study, Father Jęczmionka claimed, there were Polish schools in the United States, such as Alliance College in Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, that boasted larger enrollments and better curricula. He concludes his criticism by stating that, in order for a student to complete a bachelor's degree, he had to transfer to another school.[85]

Father Jęczmionka's criticism of the school and its faculty, however, paled in comparison to the scathing attack by the priest who brought the Polish confreres to Erie, Pennsylvania, the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish, Father Andrzej Ignasiak. On November 15, 1924, Father Ignasiak began writing an extensive letter, which opened: "Our life is short and perhaps *brevi finietur*. . . . It would be apropos, then, to write something under these circumstances on this topic. How it was, so as not to allow what the English historian Macauley wrote that History is a great conspiracy against truth. After death, it, obviously, would be too late." The target of his venom was the Congregation of the Mission and their management of Saint John Kanty College. "Congregations have this laudable habit of hiding letters," the Erie pastor continued,

[85] Jęczmionka to Father Visitor, 30 March 1923, A. C. M. K.; Jęczmionka to Father Visitor, 29 June 1923, A. C. M. K.

"particularly such [as] the one below. So if one snoops through the archives of the Missionary Fathers, so as to find out how it was between Rev. Ignasiak and the Congregation of the Mission, one will not just rub his eyes and see, or, at least, have the opportunity to see things as I saw them."[86]

The catalyst for the letter was the Vincentians' response to Father Ignasiak's effort to cover the cost of construction of the house on the College's campus, which he intended for the Sisters of Nazareth. From the time of construction, Father Ignasiak charged, Father Stanisław Włodarczyk, C.M. began "twisting everything" about his intentions. Failing to see any effort by Father Głogowski to reprimand the confrere, the Erie pastor inquired if the agreement on the funding of the project was still acceptable. Father Głogowski confirmed that he welcomed the construction of the building and the sisters' assistance at the College.[87]

After the completion of the building, however, Father Ignasiak "began to have trouble with the Sisters." He charged that Father Włodarczyk had continued to incite opposition among the Sisters. "When they arrived," he wrote the Visitor, "they stayed only two or three months and left. I nevertheless had the opportunity to find out that they left at the instigation of the Missionary Fathers and, in particular, Father Głogowski, who told them that I would bamboozle them, as I had bamboozled [the Vincentians] or some such thing." He concluded this initial volley by explaining that while he put up the initial funds for the project, it was ludicrous for anyone to assume that he would continue to

[86] Father Andrzej Ignasiak, "A Remembrance of What Transpired between Rev. Ignasiak and the Missionary Fathers," 15 November 1924, A. C. M. K.

[87] Ibid. In May 1924, Father Waszko wrote the Visitor, explaining that Father Ignasiak had written him regarding the Vincentians buying the empty house. He replied that the Congregation was unable to do so because of its inability to take on any additional debt. In previous letters, Father Ignasiak had made "it clear that he would give it [the house] away for a small price." Father Waszko then mentions that the Erie pastor had recently "borrowed money to rebuild the burned parish gathering room, so that's that." See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 8 May 1924, A. C. M. K.

carry the debt of the project. Having unburdened himself of this frustration with this disagreement, Father Ignasiak then went on a vitriolic rampage attacking almost every quarter of the Polish Vincentians' efforts at Saint John Kanty College.[88]

Prominent in Father Ignasiak's criticism of the confreres was their haughty and disdainful attitude toward the priests of the Catholic Diocese of Erie. Recalling a time when confreres from the College visited his parish on a daily basis, Father Ignasiak described how Fathers Słupiński and Tyżyński "passed judgment on all the diocesan priests not only on their abilities, but also their morals, naming the qualifications of each one by name, and this was in the presence of my vicars." Very quickly, he added, the comments of the two Vincentians became public knowledge. Turning to the confreres' sacramental duties, Father Ignasiak characterized the vainglorious performance at the altar as the "height of human pride and an affront to God, Himself . . . and to those who know Church customs and understand the decrees." To criticize the diocesan clergy while making the altar one's personal stage, Father Ignasiak charged, was the height of hypocrisy.[89]

The arrogance displayed by the Polish Vincentians, according to the pastor, was exacerbated by their failure to acculturate into American society. Displaying a degree of nativism one would not expect from a member of the Polish clergy, Father Ignasiak wrote: "New immigrants from Europe, not excepting priests, have a lot to say about what they do not like here—as though we care—and instantly try to win us over to their European way of thinking." While conducting missions in Polish parishes, "they will criticize women's fashions [and] force their missionary customs on the pastors." At the

[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.

College, the confreres "discourage the youth from playing American games, sneer at our patriotism, and praise Poland under threat of damnation, etc." Unable to restrain his anger, the Erie pastor further blustered: "Such gentlemen we deport in hordes back to whence they came. And good riddance to them. We are not children here and we do not want their impertinence here." Furthermore, Father Ignasiak continued, having had a presence in the Erie Diocese for over a decade, he was taken aback by the fact that the current rector of the College "cannot speak the language of our country." Life at the College, according to Father Ignasiak, was "total anarchy."[90]

This anarchy was the direct result, according to Father Ignasiak, of the incompetence of the Vincentian Fathers, especially the school's leadership. "Such great undertakings," he wrote the Visitor, "need great people such as almost all the institutions of higher learning have here in America. . . . Small people are lost, as are the ones who follow them. History is a witness. Americans will gladly support all good deeds, but they have to see a competent leader." This ideal of proper institutional leadership in the United States contrasts sharply with Father Ignasiak's depiction of the confreres' management of Saint John Kanty College. He described members of the faculty and the mission band as inarticulate in both Polish and English and lacking in humility and proper judgment. He further criticized the late Father Głogowski for giving first-year students cigars and permitting card-playing at the school. This lack of leadership, in turn, tarnished the Polish Vincentians' reputation among the secular clergy. When retreats were held at the school, the assembled priests had to put up with "[f]lies in the dining room in such numbers that anyone could grab a handful." In conclusion, Father Ignasiak

[90] Ibid.

charged that the attitude and incompetence of the confreres were inexcusable and a black mark against him and his "good name as the founder of Saint John Kanty in Erie in the eyes of the conscientious historian."[91]

Less than two years later, a second letter reached Kraków that brought the College and its leadership even more adverse publicity. On January 13, 1926 two letters crossed in the mail; the first sent by Father Thomas F. Levan, C.M., the president of DePaul University in Chicago to Father Stanisław Konieczny, the Rector of Saint John Kanty College. The second letter was sent by Bishop John Mark Gannon to Cardinal George William Mundelein, the Ordinary of the Archdiocese of Chicago. The two correspondences served as the opening exchange in a two-week scandal that threatened to characterize further the Polish Vincentians as dangerous opponents to assimilation into American Catholic culture.

In the first letter, with a cordial yet firm voice, Father Levan wrote: "The Chancery Office here called my attention to-day to an article in your monthly magazine, December number, page 664, very offensive to His Eminence Cardinal Mundelein." The president of DePaul University continued by informing Father Konieczny that a second letter had been dispatched by Cardinal Mundelein to Bishop Gannon, who, Father Levan assured, "will take the matter up with you." In the interim, he continued, he expected the Polish Vincentian to provide a full explanation of the circumstances surrounding the publication of the article. Emphasizing the gravity of the situation, Father Levan closed: "The Community [the Congregation of the Mission] and its works in Chicago are

[91] Ibid.

jeopardized and the confreres embarrassed by reason of this most unfortunate occurrence."[92]

In his letter to Cardinal Mundelein, Bishop Gannon condemned the actions of the Polish Vincentians and emphasized his innocence in the matter. "I shall deal with the Polish Fathers of St. John Kanty College substantially as you propose to deal with them in your Diocese. I shall also summon the local Superior of the Order and exact from him the apology you demand with the indignation equal to that which you manifest." Bishop Gannon then emphasized that the Vincentians' publication, *Skarb Rodziny* (*The Family Treasure*), was not published in the Erie Diocese, but was "published and printed by the Missionary Fathers of St. Vincent de Paul with offices and printing plant in New York City." He continued by stating that the Vincentians' "use of my name for approbation on the front page of this publication is a downright forgery in the whole cloth." He concludes the letter by assuring Cardinal Mundelein that he would fully investigate the situation at the College and bring to justice those individuals, who had the audacity to slander "one who splendidly and courageously exemplifies the American Catholic Cardinalate." Coming so quickly on the heels of Father Ignasiak's criticism of the confreres and with the objective of targeting such a prominent advocate of Americanization, the notice, posted in the December 1925 issue of *Skarb Rodziny*, further eroded confidence in the Polish Vincentians' educational apostolate in Erie, Pennsylvania.[93]

Five days after the writing of the above letters, Father Waszko wrote Kraków to explain the situation. In a column of the magazine entitled "From the Chronicler's

[92] Father Levan to Father Konieczny, 13 January 1926, A. N. E. P.
[93] Bishop John Mark Gannon to Cardinal George William Mundelein, 13 January 1926, Archives of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania (A.R.C.D.E.).

World," a layman made a claim that Cardinal Mundelein "of German origin, a Pole-hater, received an honorary decoration from the Italian government in recognition for his work with humanity." By labeling the Cardinal a "Pole-hater" and alluding to connections with the Italian Fascist government, the statement was meant to rally opposition against the Chicago Ordinary. Cardinal Mundelein had learned about the charge from Poles living in Chicago, who subscribed to the Polish Vincentians' periodical. When word reached the Chicago chancery, Cardinal Mundelein wrote the Vincentians at DePaul University, who, in turn, contacted the Vincentian Superior General in Paris. It was Father François Verdier, C.M., who informed Bishop Gannon of the situation at Saint John Kanty College.[94]

In his explanation to the Visitor, Father Waszko stated that the bed-ridden Father Konieczny, "who is usually very thorough, did not look through the corrections, expecting rightfully that as always, everything was well written in the story. But the devil never sleeps and now we have this fracas." Looking to prevent any permanent damage to the relationship between the Cardinal and the confreres in the Chicago Archdiocese, as well as members of the Polish Vincentian mission band, Father Waszko agreed to write a public apology, but cautioned that if Cardinal Mundelein was too stringent in his demands, "the rectification may sound even worse for him when the Polish newspapers pick it up." In closing, Father Waszko attempted to put the best spin possible on the situation, stating that he had dispatched Father Sadowski to Chicago to apologize in person and that God had brought on the situation "so that we can learn to better obey the precepts of the Rule treating the Bishops."[95]

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[94] Waszko to Father Visitor, 18 January 1926, A. C. M. K.
[95] Waszko to Father Visitor, 18 January 1926, A. C. M. K.; Sadowski to Bishop Gannon, 21 January 1926,

With Cardinal Mundelein absent, the confrere spoke to his assistant, Bishop Edward Francis Hoban and "assured him of our willingness to do all considered necessary as reparation in this case." In addition, Father Sadowski, in the name of the Polish Vincentians, humbly asked for Bishop Gannon's forgiveness. As restitution for the error, both Cardinal Mundelein and Bishop Gannon required that the Vincentians publish a formal statement explaining the oversight and their apology in a prominent place in the next issue of *Skarb Rodziny*. On January 26th, the Vicar-General of the Chicago Archdiocese wrote to Father Sadowski. "I regret that this incident occurred and can understand from your explanation how easily the mistake crept into your paper. We appreciate your desire to correct it to the fullest extent."[96]

On the same day that Bishop Hoban sent his letter to Father Sadowski, Father Waszko dispatched a letter in which he criticized the Chicago Ordinary. "I wrote in detail about the case we had here with Father Cardinal Mundelein. His chancellory acted foolishly and without tact," Father Waszko criticized, "by appealing first to Paris, to Father Bishop in Erie, [and] to our English confreres in Chicago—everywhere except where they ought to have, which is to the College." Father Waszko explained further that in the Polish-language press in the United States, Cardinal Mundelein's actions were

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A. R. C. D. E.

[96] Vicar-General Hoban to Bishop Gannon, 16 January 1926, A. R.C. D. E.; Sadowski to Bishop Gannon, 21 January 1926, A. R. C. D. E.; Vicar-General Hoban to Sadowski, 26 January 1926, A. R. C. D. E. The text of the formal apology reads: "*Skarb Rodziny* wishes to make a humble abject and complete apology to His Eminence George Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago, for an insulting reference made in the December number. We deplore this offence to His Eminence, a prince of the Church and member of the Sacred College, and declare that so far from wishing to say anything derogatory to the Cardinal Archbishop of Chicago, we admire greatly the tireless activity and great zeal of his Eminence for the spread of the Kingdom of God on earth. The Vincentian Fathers of St. John Kanty, acknowledging their responsibility for *Skarb Rodziny* deeply regret that owing to the illness of Father Konieczny, the Superior, and the consequent lack of censorship, this totally uncalled for insult slipped into the magazine. We trust our readers as well as Cardinal Mundelein will forgive us." See: Copy of apology to Cardinal Mundelein, n.d., A. C. M. K.

interpreted as being "hostile to Poles." While the apologies published in *Skarb Rodziny* were tactical necessities, they fell short of being fully heart-felt responses to the December 1925 oversight. Among the confreres themselves, the degree to which one should assimilate into American Catholic culture remained unresolved.[97]

In the summer of 1927, a debate over the proper method of educating the American-born students at Saint John Kanty College led to a clash between two cohorts of Polish Vincentians and exposed the Congregation to further charges of mismanagement. The dissenters consisted of two recently arrived confreres: Father Franciszek Matelski, who came to the United States in 1921, taught at Saint John Kanty College and went on to become its director of students, and Father Sylwester Graczyk, who also came to the United States in 1921, and served on the Whitestone and Erie mission bands. On October 16, 1925, Father Waszko informed the Visitor that the rector of the College, Father Stanisław Konieczny was forced to resign from his post because of medical problems as well as the "difficulties" he was having with the director of students, Father Matelski. In an ensuing discussion about a proper replacement for Father Konieczny, Father Waszko claimed that the appointment of a qualified successor depended on continued financial support for the Polish Province. He mentioned that he had recently sent two checks to Poland. Anything that threatened the flow of cash across the Atlantic Ocean endangered the Polish Vincentians' work in the United States.[98]

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[97] Waszko to Father Visitor, 26 January 1926, A. C. M. K. In March 1926, Father Waszko wrote again to the Visitor of the Mundelein situation, explaining that the apology had been published. He reiterated that the Cardinal had blown things out of proportion. "Many readers," he reported, "did not even notice it [the statement] and it would be better if we do not touch this issue again." While he charged that it "was not wise for the Cardinal" to push the situation like he did, [t]here will be no further negative consequences for the Congregation." See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 5 March 1926,A. C. M. K.

[98] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 237 & 245; Waszko to Father Visitor, 16 October 1925, A. C. M. K.

In the spring of 1927, less than a year after Father Michał Sadowski succeeded Father Konieczny as rector and plans were unveiled for a new wing for the school building, Father Matelski and Graczyk soon disturbed the comparative peace in Erie. In the middle of March, Father Waszko reported that in the middle of the recent semester exams, Fathers Matelski and Graczyk had "unexpectedly arrived in Brooklyn." They came to complain about a confrere and layperson teaching at the school, asking for their removal. Charging the two confreres with "a lack of discipline," Father Waszko traveled to the College with the two priests. Unable to resolve the matter, he stated that the two priests would be reassigned. In closing, Father Waszko stated that he believed his decision at least would result in "a certain amount of peace until vacation."[99]

The resulting peace, however, lasted barely three months. When he wrote the Visitor on June 16, 1927, Father Waszko expressed his concern about a "crucial issue." He reported that the day before he had ordered that Father Graczyk and Matelski return to Poland. While Father Waszko assured the Visitor that he had taken his suggestion of "mercy" into consideration, he decided against it because it would "cost a lot of money, disgrace, and embarrassment because the issue is about $16,500 and bad publicity in America." Father Graczyk, it was charged, had borrowed money from a former Polish Vincentian, Father Maksymilian Sołtysek, totaling $11,500. In addition, two confreres in Derby, Connecticut authorized Miss Lucja Chmiel to sew cassocks for them, leaving an unpaid balance of $3,000. Quick action on this matter, Father Waszko counseled, was critical. Father Graczyk had to "leave immediately since Father Sołtysek, motivated by greed, wants to bring legal actions against Graczyk." In addition, the Vice-Visitor

[99] Waszko to Father Visitor, 16 March 1927, A. C. M. K.

continued, "returning this money, which is crucial to avoid scandal, is admitting that we have an obligation to repay the rest of the creditors since Father Graczyk, as an agent, is a member of our Congregation."[100]

In the same letter, Father Waszko also explained the divisiveness sown by Father Matelski at the College. Describing a letter written by Father Matelski in support of Father Graczyk, Father Waszko characterized the author's comments as "unconfrere-like in spirit," and evident of the "hideous and impetuous character of the author." Father Waszko was so shocked by the letter that he charged that Father Matelski "must have been drunk or mad when he wrote it." The Vice-Visitor concluded his description of the situation by stating that he was not alone in his opposition to the two priests. At the College, "everybody, confreres and lay professors, demanded and expected change—it is better to sacrifice those two than have a constant war. As director of students at Saint John Kanty College, Father Matelski's attitude and actions had the potential of severely damaging relations between the Polish Vincentians and the students and their parents.[101]

Less than two weeks later, Father Waszko penned a second letter. In it, along with mentioning that Father Graczyk had agreed to repay the money, he stated that the renegade confrere had contacted current students and alumni of the College, pressing them to demand the retention of Father Matelski or risk the loss of their collective support and their sons' enrollment. Turning his attention to Father Matelski, Father

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[100] Waszko to Father Visitor, 16 June 1927, A. C. M. K. The significance of this unauthorized debt becomes evident in the light of two letters written to the Visitor in the winter of 1926-1927. On December 17, 1926, Father Waszko wrote to Kraków that the mission band's collecting efforts were "not going very well." The Polish Vincentians needed $83,000 to pay off the existing mortgage before they could contemplate construction of a new school wing. In mid-January 1927, Father Waszko informed the Visitor that he has aided Father Sadowski in securing money for the project, but believed that the construction of and furnishings for the building would cost at least $140,000. See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 17 December 1926, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 13 January 1927, A. C. M. K.

[101] Ibid.

Waszko wrote that the confrere "showed himself as very small in his perceived greatness, because he demoralized the youth at the Congregation School." Father Graczyk's campaign, Father Waszko estimated, would cost the College between forty and fifty students.[102]

With the above conflict's potential impact on student enrollment, it is helpful to take a closer look to the boys who studied at Saint John Kanty College and their efforts to balance their Polish and American identities. In 1926, the alumni of the school published a booklet on the occasion of their third annual convention. Published in it were two articles that provide an interesting insight into the students' perception of the school. The first one, entitled "The Associations [sic] Duty," opens with a reference to all that the graduates of the school owe their alma mater. The foremost duty expressed by the gathered alumni was uniquely American. "We should not adjourn," the author proclaimed, "we should not call it the end of our reunion, until we have adopted a progressive athletic policy." The article goes on to argue that Saint John Kanty College needed to develop a modern athletic program that would "enable our teams to meet teams of their class on equal footing." With the school being the "pride of the Polish Americans," with teams that had received the moniker "the Polish Tornado," it was

[102] Waszko to Father Visitor, 28 June 1927, A. C. M. K. It is not easy, however, to gauge the students' response to Father Graczyk's campaign. In mid-December 1926, Father Waszko reported that 163 boys attended Saint John Kanty College. The school started the academic year with 162 students and finished with 155—the highest enrollment in its history. While it cannot be directly linked to the dismissal of Father Matelski, the enrollment at Saint John Kanty College fell to 137 in September 1927. At the end of the school year, enrollment stood at 134 students. See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 17 December 1926, A. C. M. K.; *25-lecie Kolegium Św. Jana Kantego Erie, Pa., 1912*-193, (Erie, Pa.: Księży Misjonarzy Św. Wincentego a Paulo, Kolegium Św. Jana Kantego, 1937), p. 52. There does remain one extant letter written by a student, who wrote in the name of his fellows from Meridan, Connecticut, in support of Father Matelski. Described as a "faithful friend" of the students, Father Matelski had "won the favor of all the students." Falling short of Father Graczyk's hoped-for boycott, the letter bowed to the Vice-Visitor's decision and wished the confrere well in the future. The letter was signed "A student under Father Matelski's care." See: Felix E. Skladzien to Father Waszko, 30 June 1927, A. N. E. P. On July 8, 1927, Father Sadowski wrote the Visitor that Father Matelski had also let it be known that he was being removed from the position of director of students. See: Sadowski to Father Visitor, 8 July 1927, A. C. M. K.

imperative for Saint John Kanty College to address the athletic needs of its student body.[103]

In a second article from the booklet, a more traditional duty was promoted. While the school, the author argued, had been quite successful in preparing its graduates for further studies in American colleges and universities, this accomplishment endangered the future of Polish-American culture. "Our student, although he graduated from a Polish college," the author wrote, "slowly loses the language because the lectures he listens to and the examinations he takes are in English." In addition, the institutions Kanty alumni attended had so few Polish students that "it is difficult to create a Polish Circle." The article concludes with a call for Kanty alumni, as "the first representatives of Polonia in universities," to preserve "the linguistic knowledge and the affairs and literature of the Fatherland" and to promote both Polish language and literature to a "wider American audience."[104]

When examined together, these two articles present an interesting view of an ethnic culture in transition. With placing such strong emphasis on the development of a successful sports program, the alumni gathered in Erie in June 1926 echoed the growing interest in collegiate sports in the 1920s as well as the muscular Christianity that had been developing among Protestant and Catholic America from the 1890s. The call for an athletic program that would have teams sufficiently trained "to meet teams of their class on an equal footing," and the claim that the College was the "pride of the Polish

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[103] "The Associations Duty," in *Pamiętnik z okazyi Trzeciego Zjazdu Alumnów Kolegium Św. Jana Kantego w Erie, Pa. W dniach 22-go, 23-go, 24-go czerwca 1926 roku*, A. N. E. P.

[104] „Dlaczego nie wolno nam zapominać mowy naszej ojczystej," in *Pamiętnik z okazyi Trzeciego Zjazdu Alumnów Kolegium Św. Jana Kantego w Erie, Pa. W dniach 22-go, 23-go, 24-go czerwca 1926 roku*, A. N. E. P.

Americans," indicates that the alumni, while cognizant of their Polish identity, they were weighing success using an American scale.[105]

The second article, however, recognized the potential danger of using this assimilationist gauge of success to measure the achievements of the sons of American Polonia. While being accepted to and graduating from American colleges or universities was a significant step up, it did, however, expose the young men to a culture that did not necessarily reinforce a personal connection to *polskość*. With a ring of nervous defensiveness, the author of the second essay called on his fellows to recognize the fact that they were representatives of American Polonia, and, as such, had to maintain the culture in order to promote it to a "wider American audience."

One such fellow was John Srokosz, who graduated in 1928 and went on to complete the School's one-year collegiate program the following year. Born to two Polish immigrants in Auburn, New York, Srkosz grew up in a working-class, primarily Polish-speaking family. "You've heard of 'poor as a church mouse,' well, we were poorer," he recalled in a 2004 interview. Srokosz's father, a carpenter by trade, built the family house on a few acres of land in the Polish section of Auburn, where his mother raised some animals and often sold milk to neighbors and relatives to make money. Along with the family's house, Srokosz's father took an active role in the building of Saint Hyacinth Church. When it came time to go to elementary school, Srokosz and his siblings attended the parish school.[106]

When he was growing up, Srokosz recalled, the children of Polish immigrants were tracked into technical programs, from which local companies often recruited new

[105] Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1890-1920*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), passim.
[106] John Srokosz, interview by author, tape recording, Auburn, New York, 19 August 2004.

workers. It was not uncommon at the time for sixteen years-old to abandon their studies when local firms were hiring. Upon graduation from Saint Hyacinth School, Srokosz, however, looked for more freedom and opportunity and enrolled in Auburn's Central High School. His tenure there was short, however, lasting only one semester. His mother had other plans for him.[107]

With hopes that Srokosz would become a priest, his mother, whose relatives had sons attending Saint John Kanty College, decided to send her younger son to Erie, Pennsylvania. With the financial aid of his older brother and a new suit, Srokosz was deposited with Father Stanislaus Szupa, the pastor of Saint Hyacinth Parish, who shepherded him and a group of other Auburn boys to the College in Erie in January 1925. This was Srokosz's first time living away from his family and Auburn, New York.[108]

In a 2004 interview, Mr. Srokosz recalled that as the train traveled west he was joined by other Kanty students returning from Christmas break. Their arrival at the College was announced by a conductor shouting "Kanty." When he exited the train, Srokosz stepped off on to a small platform "as small as a bus stop." No lights were visible, only a small shoveled path leading into the darkness. Immediately upon entering the building, Srkosz and the other students were ushered into a line and registered, a process done in Polish and English. Dinner that evening, he recalled, consisted of a large meatball, red beets and milk. Afterward, the students were escorted to a dormitory, "like a big ward," where they were assigned a bed. Srokosz recalled sitting on his bed that evening and looking out the window into the distance, thinking, "This is not for me."[109]

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[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.

Regimentation is the word that best describes student life at Saint John Kanty College in the mid-1920s. During the week, students were awakened by the ringing of a hand bell rung by a priest repeating a prayer in Latin, to which the students had to respond. It was "[j]ust like in the army," with a Vincentian Father always present to direct the students. In an operation with qualities of a close-formation drill, the students marched into the bathroom and showered, after which they went to Mass and then to breakfast. After a short "recreation period," the students proceeded to classes. Each grade had its own classroom between which the individual professors shuttled. The students ate lunch around 11:30 am and, after a second brief recreation period, returned to classes for a few more hours. The schedule for the remainder of the day included an afternoon recreation break, study hall, supper, and an evening recreation period. Students were in bed by 10:00 pm. Weekend activities included additional study halls, but did allow for some freedom. Students were permitted to go into Wesleyville, a nearby town, to walk down to the creek that ran behind the school, and to engage in intramural sports or clubs. In addition, the College had a varsity basketball team that played other teams from towns throughout northwestern Pennsylvania.[110]

Srokosz remembered that the faculty consisted of both Polish priests and American-born lay professors, the latter given the responsibility of teaching classes in the sciences and English. Between the schools' opening in 1912 and 1928, the College had a course of study that included classes in Christian doctrine, English, Latin, Greek, German, French, Spanish, Esperanto, and Polish, World, Church, Polish, and American history, civics, mathematics, plane geometry, solid geometry, trigonometry, biology,

[110] Ibid.

physics, and organic chemistry, physical education, and music. In 1928, the year in which Srokosz graduated from the high school, the Polish Vincentians reorganized the school's educational program and established a fifth-year college division.[111]

At a time when the boys easily navigated between American and Polish cultures, their Vincentian professors were debating how to adapt the school's course of studies to the social and occupational realities facing its graduates as well as balancing their students' *polskość* and Roman Catholicism. Srokosz recalled that the confreres did not explicitly promote Polish identity and culture. The common assumption at the School was that if a boy enrolled there, he spoke Polish and came from a family that spoke Polish. The confreres' efforts to maintain a sense of *polskość*, were limited to the teaching of Polish history, culture, and language."[112]

A common hope of many parents who sent their sons to the Polish Vincentians' school in Erie was that, in such an isolated area with such direct contact with the confreres, their sons would receive the calling to become a priest. Srokosz stated, however, that there was no active recruitment on the part of the Polish Vincentians. Instead, it was the expectation of many parents that, by mere osmosis, their son would be drawn to Holy Orders. While some graduates of Saint John Kanty College did continue their studies at American and Polish seminaries, Srokosz claimed, many did so because of guilt and not a genuine calling. As a result, many of these young men eventually returned to secular life. By the time Srokosz graduated from the College in 1929, the

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[111] Ibid; Edward P. Gicewicz, *Kanty 1909-1959: First Fifty Years of St. John Kanty College and Preparatory School at Erie, Pennsylvania*, (Erie: St. John Kanty Press, 1959), pp. 130-131. In 1934, the college division was expanded beyond its original liberal-arts focus to include a "pre-medical course."
[112] John Srokosz, interview by author, tape recording, Auburn, New York, 19 August 2004.

need for new vocations was becoming more acute among the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States.[113]

Many of the alumni of Saint John Kanty College who pursued Holy Orders, however, frequently did not join the Polish Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission. A brief survey of an alumni list of the College indicates that, while the school sent a significant number of its alumni to study at seminaries, most graduates was not ordained a Vincentian. Of the eighty-two students who graduated in or before 1929 and went on to pursue seminary studies, only eleven joined the Polish Vice-Province, those being Joseph Czapla (1919), Bernard Janczewski (1917), John Janowski (1929), Casimir Kiczuk (1929), Augustine Leja (1927), Joseph Piorkowski (1929), Henry Sawicki (1929), Lucian Soćiński (1924), John Starzec (1928), Charles Szymański (1927), and Joseph Zając (1924). In addition, one alumnus, Francis Andrzejewski (1929), went on to become a lay Brother at the College. For most alumni who took Holy Orders, however, religious life consisted of serving in parishes in dioceses with large Polish populations in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania.[114]

While attracted to religious life, these alumni, like their fellows seeking to make their way in the secular world, looked for opportunities, not only to serve God and humanity, but to do so with an eye towards rising above their working-class origins and joining, in the words of John Bukowczyk, "the quintessential white-collar occupation."

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[113] Ibid. After graduating from Saint John Kanty College, John Srokosz completed a second year of post-secondary education at Syracuse University. He then transferred to the university in Buffalo, where he completed its pre-dental program. Because of a change of the academic calendar, which would have prevented him from working and a question of money, he left school and took a job with a plastics firm, where he managed a department that worked in thermo settings and thermo plastics. During the Second World War, Mr. Srokosz worked on parts that went into the radio system for the Manhattan Project. He died in the fall of 2008.

[114] Gicewicz, *Kanty 1909-1959*, pp. 323-352. Casimir Kiczuk did not attend the high-school division of Saint John Kanty College, spending two years in the school's college division.

John Srokosz, in his interview, alluded to this fact when he said that many young men entered the seminary because of guilt and not a genuine calling. In addition, as argued by the late Stanislaus A. Blejwas, a second-generation students, like those who graduated from Saint John Kanty College and continued on to seminary studies, possessed "linguistic skill" that allowed them "to be among the first to work, and very successfully, in an environment not exclusively Polish." By casting his lot with an American diocese instead of the Polish confreres of the Congregation of the Mission, a second-generation Polish American seminarian based his decision, in part, on a greater number of opportunities to rise in the ranks of the American secular clergy.[115]

As the decade of the 1920s came to a close, the issues of diocesan faculties and the seemingly self-imposed separation of the Polish Vincentians from the rest of the Erie Catholic community were raised by an angry Father Andrzej Ignasiak. In September 1929, the pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish wrote to Bishop Gannon, informing him of activities that had taken place at the College, providing evidence of his charges in the form of three newspaper clippings. In the first article, a correspondent from the *Polski Kuryer* of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, claimed that at a confirmation ceremony in Erie, Bishop Gannon seemed to be utilizing internal conflicts within the Polish community to keep control of it. The correspondent cited as a source the Rector of Saint John Kanty College, Father Michał Sadowski, C.M. The second article announced the wedding of Josephine Ryś to Adam Szczesny, an event that took place in the school's

[115] John J. Bukowczyk, "Factionalism and the Composition of the Polish Immigrant Clergy," in *Pastor of the Poles: Polish American Essays Presented to Right Reverend Monsignor John P. Wodarski in Honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary of His Ordination*, edited by Stanislaus A. Blejwas & Mieczysław B. Biskupski (New Britain, Connecticut: Polish Studies Program, Central Connecticut State College, 1982), p. 43; Stanislaus A. Blejwas, "Pastor of the Poles: The Second Generation," in *Pastor of the Poles: Polish American Essays Presented to Right Reverend Monsignor John P. Wodarski in Honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary of His Ordination*, edited by Stanislaus A. Blejwas & Mieczysław B. Biskupski (New Britain, Connecticut: Polish Studies Program, Central Connecticut State College, 1982), p. 18.

chapel. In response, Father Ignasiak wrote: "Have they [the Polish Vincentians] acquired Parochial rights? But none of us was ever advised of the fact that at St. John Kanty College, an institution of learning, people may get married, buried, baptized, etc. etc. without undergoing any duties towards the Universal Church, the Diocese, and the local Parishes." The third event that drew Father Ignasiak's ire was the blessing of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Anuszkiewicz on the silver anniversary of their wedding. The perceived flaunting of Diocesan authority and protocol found in these events led Father Ignasiak to conclude that the Polish Vincentians at Saint John Kanty College were not fully integrated into an American Catholic culture.[116]

Change, however, was soon forced upon the Polish Vincentians, for just as Father Ignasiak was penning his criticism of them, the last of the founding confreres died. Worn down by two-and-a-half decades of service to American Polonia and seven years as the Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, Father Waszko wrote to his Superior in Poland on August 1st, "I am not able to stand up. I am still very weak. . . . Provided for thrice—well, farewell until we see each other in this world or in eternity." Eight days later, in a letter that accompanied three candidates on their way to study at the Vincentians' seminary in Kraków, Father Waszko reported: "I am still in bed; my legs cannot support me. I await God's mercy and that is why I am scribbling poorly." He died on August 22, 1929. Just a little over two months later, the confreres, the United

[116] Father Ignasiak to Bishop Gannon, 12 September 1929, A. R. C. D. E. The anniversary and wedding cited by Father Ignasiak were not ceremonies unique to the School. Disputes similar to the one between Father Ignasiak and the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province took place at the Eastern Province's Niagara University and other seminaries in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Buffalo, New York. Written correspondence with Father John W. Carven, C.M., 8 December 2008. With Father Ignasiak serving as an unofficial spokesperson and liaison between the Polish Catholics of Erie and Bishop Gannon, his opposition held the potential to block any future expansion of the Polish Vice-Province's presence in the Diocese.

States, and the world faced an even more uncertain future in the wake of the Wall Street Crash of 1929.[117]

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The Great Depression severely tested the members of American Polonia, both immigrants and their American-born children. In ethnic enclaves throughout the United States, institutions that had served as intermediaries between the enclave and the wider American culture soon were overwhelmed by the scale of the economic crisis. The financial maelstrom quickly engulfed both secular and religious institutions. Like the neighborhood banks in which they often deposited their funds, ethnic Catholic parishes floundered under a rising tide of requests for assistance from members who lost their jobs at local factories and plants. Unable to aid their own, many ethnic parishes turned, often for the first time, to diocesan agencies for assistance. By reaching beyond the confines of the parish boundaries, ethnic Catholics further exposed themselves to Americanizing influences that were already becoming evident in the 1920s.[118]

For large numbers of second-generation Polish Americans, the fusion of American mass culture and Polish ethnicity, so evident in the industrial unionism and New Deal programs of the 1930s, also came to define their experience with the Roman Catholic Church. According to Jay P. Dolan, "Though their identity as Polish did not disappear, they were becoming more American." This transformation, however, was still a disputed one, requiring a syncretism "of two cultural traditions." Like their pre-Crash fellows who pursued a religious vocation, however, the members of American Polonia who came to maturity in the 1930s took advantage of their biculturalism to advance into

[117] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 255; Waszko to Father Visitor, 1 August 1929, A. C. M. K.; Waszko to Father Visitor, 9 August 1929, A. C. M. K.
[118] Cohen, *Making a New Deal*, 219-221.

the ranks of "the small business, professional, and political elites." Any perceived attempt to limit this opportunity was met with immediate resistance.[119]

The negotiation of identity, which had first surfaced among the Polish Vincentians and their students and parishioners immediately after the First World War, grew more intense during the Great Depression. A principal contributor to this crash was the confreres' continued financial responsibility to their fellows in Poland. This aid to the Motherhouse in Kraków often competed with the duty of the confreres to maintain their foundation in the United States, especially Saint John Kanty College.

Even more immediate was the debate over the formation and selection of priests to serve in the United States. Without a seminary of their own, the confreres based in the United States had to send candidates to Poland for their formation. The Polish-born Vincentians now coming to the United States were required to attend American colleges, such as the Eastern Province's Niagara University, to acquire the requisite language training and educational credentials to work with the younger generation of American Polonia. The responsibility for navigating through these difficult matters fell to two men: Father Stanisław Konieczny, C.M. and Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz, C.M.

The confrere who succeeded Father Waszko as Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vincentians in the United States, Father Stanisław Konieczny, received his secondary and seminary education under the direction of the Congregation of the Mission in Kraków, Poland. After his 1899 ordination, Father Konieczny served as the prefect of the diocesan seminary in the city of Lwów. A member of the second wave of Polish Vincentians, which came to the United States in 1905, Father Konieczny served as Pastor

[119] Jay P. Dolan, *In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 145-146; Blejwas, "Pastor of the Poles: The Second Generation," p. 18.

of Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish in Derby, Connecticut, and vicar at Saint Mary Parish in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, where he labored to establish a college. In 1907, he returned to Europe and served as the director of an apostolic school in Nowa Wieś section of Kraków. From the time of his return to the United States in 1912 until his appointment as the second Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, Father Konieczny was a vicar at Saint Jadwiga Parish in Philadelphia, Editor of *Skarb Rodziny*, Rector of Saint John Kanty College, member of the mission band in Whitestone, Queens, New York, and Pastor of Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish in Derby, Connecticut, a lengthy and impressive resume. His tenure as Vice-Visitor, however, lasted only a little over two years.[120]

Evidence of the rocky start to Father Konieczny's Visitorship can be seen in a February 1930 letter written by Father Mazurkiewicz, who, just the previous year, had returned from his assignment in Bydgoszcz. In Father Mazurkiewicz's opinion, Father Konieczny was "easily daunted by difficulties" and, therefore, ill-suited for the office of Vice-Visitor. This weakness was recently evident when, failing to secure the needed relief for the Erie mission band, the new Vice-Visitor submitted his resignation. Afterward, however, Father Konieczny rallied his strength and fortitude, sending a committee to Brooklyn, inspecting Saint John Kanty College, and sending confreres out on missions. Later in his letter to the Visitor, Father Mazurkiewicz gave Father Konieczny a tepid compliment. "All things considered, he is the oldest amongst us, well educated, and he represents us well. I am not in the least afflicted that the Reverend

[120] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 59-61.

Father Visitor appointed him. After all, I proposed this in my letters and I feel relieved that this encumbrance has been lifted off my shoulders."[121]

This relief came with the realization that Father Mazurkiewicz would be able to turn his attention to where his heart was. Seemingly exhausted by years of service to an increasingly Americanized Polish laity and the necessary cultural shifting required to serve such a population, he looked to return to his roots. In the conclusion of his letter to the Visitor, Father Mazurkiewicz clearly exhibited his primary loyalty: "I am not attached to America. I live for Poland and if it was not for it, I would feel sorrowful in this foreign land." If it was the "will of God," he concluded, he would "return home."[122]

Such attention to Poland at the expense of the Polish Vincentians' work in the United States was further evident within the ranks of the Kanty-based mission band. On January 1, 1930, Father Jan Wiśliński, C.M. informed the Visitor that Father Józef Swałtek, C.M., a former Polish Army chaplain, who held the rank of colonel, had just finished two missions, after which he continued on to Alliance College in Cambridge Springs, Pennsylvania, where he conducted a retreat for the students. Exhibiting signs of the strain under which the missionaries worked, Father Swałtek later announced "on the spur of the moment that he was returning to Poland." Unable to find a suitable substitute, Father Wiśliński petitioned Father Konieczny to order Father Swałtek back to the mission band. The best the Vice-Visitor could do, however, was to get the confrere to delay his departure.[123]

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[121] Mazurkiewich to Father Visitor 19 February 1930, A. C. M. K.
[122] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 19 February 1930, A. C. M. K.
[123] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 253; Wiśliński to Father Visitor, 1 January 1930, A. C. M. K.

A more politically sensitive problem, however, was appearing on the horizon for Father Konieczny and the Polish Vincentians in the United States. In the same letter in which he complained about Father Swałtek's desire to return to Poland, Father Wiśliński informed the Visitor that with growing efforts to deport illegal immigrants from the United States, his continued presence in the country could prove detrimental to the Congregation. He wrote that, while he recognized the fact that there was little that could be done for his situation while he resided in the United States, the need for him on the mission band had prevented him from previously going back to Poland to resolve his situation. In the end, Father Wiśliński asked the Visitor to replace him with a confrere with a valid visa.[124]

Four months later, the issue remained unresolved. On April 25th, Father Wiśliński wrote the Visitor that, while other confreres had taken out citizenship papers, he had overstayed his visa by over four years. He mentions that, in an effort to shield him, Father Hładki had informed the authorities that he had left the country for Brazil. Recognizing how his fellow confrere's statement could potentially damage any future possibility of legalizing his status in the United States, Father Wiśliński volunteered for reassignment to Brazil. His request, however, did not receive an immediate response by the Visitor. In late August 1930, he wrote again to Kraków, mentioning the fact that he had heard that two confreres had rejected requests to work in Brazil. Having given the idea proper consideration, and being younger than his fellow Vincentians, Father Wiśliński again offered his services. He later wrote that his immigration status had the potential to prevent future Polish confreres from serving in the United States.[125]

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[124] Wiśliński to Father Visitor, 1 January 1930, A. C. M. K.
[125] Wiśliński to Father Visitor, 25 April 1930, A. C. M. K.; Wiśliński to Father Visitor, 23 August 1930,

Father Wiśliński was not the only Polish Vincentian who lived and worked in the United States illegally. Less than two weeks after Father Wiśliński's April 25th letter, Father Piotr Olszówka, C.M. informed the Visitor: "The immigration laws relating to foreigners in the United States are more stinging than ever. Everyday they deport those individuals who are living illegally in America. Those individuals are deported and are not free to return to America and I am living illegally in America because I have only a tourist visa for six months." Unlike Father Wiśliński, who wished to permanently leave the United States and go to Brazil, Father Olszówka sought to solve his problem by going to Canada to receive the proper documentation. Reconsidering his situation, he later asked permission of the Visitor to return to Poland at the end of May 1930, where he hoped to secure a new visa. He would then return to his work in the United States.[126]

The concern over legalizing the immigration status of Fathers Wiśliński and Olszówka was one example of how ongoing nativist sentiments in the United States complicated the lives and the mission of the Polish Vincentians during the Vice-Visitorship of Father Konieczny. A second was the incorporation of the Polish Vice-

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A. C. M. K.; Wiśliński to Father Visitor, 18 December 1930, A. C. M. K. While he does not list where Father Wiśliński was reassigned, Father Gicewicz indicates that the confrere left his position as director of the Kanty mission band in 1931. A gap of fourteen years, however, is left unaccounted for in Father Gicewicz's history of the New England Province. It mentions the fact that he died there on January 29, 1961. See: Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England* Province, p. 256. According the Congregation of the Mission's *Catalogue of Personnel*,Father Wiśliński served in Brazil from1932 to 1961 and was a Superior of a House there beginning in 1947. Father Wiśliński's situation was not the first time the Polish Vincentians had to deal with Federal mandates on immigration restriction. In December 1926, Father Waszko wrote the Visitor: "I presume that I will have a bit of trouble with them [future confreres] because the draconian immigration laws are hard to circumvent. I shall try to save them from deportation in six months and I have asked friendly people, those who are familiar with the law, for advice. They say everything will be okay if in their passports and visa applications, they write that they are professors for Saint John Kanty College." See: Waszko to Father Visitor, 17 December 1926, A. C. M. K.

[126] Olszówka to Father Visitor, 6 May 1930, A. C. M. K. There is no record of how Father Olszówka legalized his status, only the fact that he never worked outside of the United States after his arrival in 1923. He died in 1975 and is buried at Saint Michael Cemetery in Derby, Connecticut. See: Gicewicz: *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 247.

Province in the State of New York as a nonprofit organization. In an affidavit dated July 30, 1930, Fathers Józef Janowski, Stanisław Konieczny, and Antoni Mazurkiewicz, along with their lawyer, Edward J. McGuire, after swearing that they were American citizens, incorporated the "Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul" for the purpose of instructing "poor and neglected persons" by conducting missions and "taking care temporarily of small congregations not able to support a clergyman and for benevolent and charitable purposes generally and in connection with these objects [sic], especially the government and direction according to the rules of such Order of the members of the Religious Order of the Roman Catholic Church known as the Congregation of the Mission who are engaged in the performance of such work." For their "principal office" the confreres listed the mission house in Whitestone, Queens.[127]

One of the principal reasons for the incorporation of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States was, in a legal sense, to make it an American entity. This can be seen in a draft letter written by Father Mazurkiewicz soon after he replaced Father Konieczny as Vice-Visitor. Written to the American Consul General in Warszawa, the template asks that a visa be granted to the bearer of the document. After informing the Consul General that the Vincentian Fathers belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, but were not subject to a particular Ordinary, the letters states: "Our Order is incorporated in the State of New York under the name 'Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul', [sic] pursuant to the Membership Corporation Law." The letter closes by informing the Consul General that the Polish Vice-Province lacked a "Seminary of our own in the United States at present," and that its members had to rely on Poland to renew

[127] *Certificate of Incorporation of the Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul*, 1 August 1930, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul, Minutes of First Meeting of the Board of Directors*, 8 August 1930, A. N. E. P.

their ranks. It asked the Consul General to grant the bearer a "Permanent Visa." While an American entity, the Polish Vice-Province in the United States was still, however, to a great extent, a Polish Community.[128]

This bifurcated identity intensified during the Vice-Visitorship of Father Mazurkiewicz. In mid-February 1930, not long after returning to the United States after serving for approximately four years as pastor of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish in Bydgoszcz, Poland, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote to Kraków on the morale of the Community: "We are dedicated to the Congregation and always ready to serve the most Reverend Father Visitor with all means necessary. . . . I am not attached to America; I live for Poland and if it was not for it, I would feel sorrowful in this foreign land." Fourteen months later, he made a similar claim: "On this occasion, we express our affection for the Mother Province and the willingness to work for it all the days of our lives." These words were not merely rhetoric, but an oath of loyalty at a time of emerging tension between the Polish- and American-born confreres of the Vice-Province.[129]

The significance of this tension emerges with a close reading of a document dated April 7, 1931. In "Resolution of the Vice-Province of North America for the Assembly of the Polish Province," dissenting confreres brought to the attention of the Visitor and their fellow Vincentians back in Poland the growing differences in identity between them. In the resolution, the confreres called for a Vice-Provincial seminary, the Vice-Visitor to reside at Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania, a rational system of selecting confreres to go to the United States and Polish seminarians to finish their

[128] Template of a letter, Mazurkiewicz to the American Consul General, n.d., A. C. M. K.
[129] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 19 February 1930, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 16 December 1931, A. C. M. K.

studies in the United States, where they would acquire a mastery of the English language. The resolution, at its conclusion, took a radical but logical step beyond identifying the growing culture gap between the two cohorts of Vincentians: "The unanimous and resolute demand for the creation of a separate Province in America [would be] dedicated to the need of relations in remote and nearby countries and the good of the Congregation. The new Province will remain, as before, in the most sincere relations with the Mother Province." While it would take over four decades before this cultural divide would result in the Polish Vice-Province becoming autonomous, the seed had been planted.[130]

The growing conflict between the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States and the Visitor of the Polish Province over control of funds collected in America and the selection and placement of confreres that further complicated the collection of such money came to a head in early 1932 and led to the resignation of Father Konieczny as Vice-Visitor. Writing in the wake of the Provincial Council, Father Mazurkiewicz chronicled events that preceded the Council and their impact on relations between the American-based confreres and their Visitor. Describing how the confreres in Poland misunderstood circumstances in the United States, Father Mazurkiewicz explained how he "witnessed in Kraków as the Most Reverend Father Visitor assured Father Konieczny that the Most Reverend Father General had already approved our Province. The future of the Vice-Province and its separation from the Motherhouse in Poland, he continued, would be "regulated by the flow of time," yet the Polish Vincentians' "love of the fatherland will always impel us to extend a helping hand." It

[130] "Resolution of the Vice-Province of North America for the Convention of the Polish Province," 7 April 1931, A. N. E. P.

would be evolution, not revolution that would create a new identity among the Polish Vincentians in the United States.[131]

A catalyst for the confrontation in Kraków was the mission work of Father Ignacy Dudziak, C.M. among Polish immigrants in Cuba. A former Polish army chaplain during the First World War, Father Dudziak was born in Poznań in 1885 and ordained in 1909. Assigned to the Whitestone mission house, where he served as Superior, Father Dudziak went to Cuba to administer to the spiritual needs of the Polish immigrants who had traveled there in search of work. With the best wishes of the Polish government, he traveled to Havana, where he conducted a mission from January 10 to February 22, 1931. Upon his return to the United States, Father Dudziak "started collecting money to help the unemployed compatriots in Cuba." With his mind set on this mission, he first refused and then postponed his reassignment from Whitestone, Queens to Erie, Pennsylvania. He rationalized this insubordination to Father Konieczny's order by arguing that he was doing important work "tak[ing] care of [the Poles in Cuba] while on location." He went so far as to begin exploring the possibilities of relocating the immigrants to Poland, France, and even Nicaragua. Described by Father Mazurkiewicz as a matter for the Polish government rather than the Polish Vincentians, the situation escalated when Father Dudziak had the Polish Consul send a telegram to Father Konieczny, requesting that the Vice-Visitor rescind the order for the confrere to relocate to Erie, Pennsylvania. When Father Konieczny refused the request, Father Dudziak asked that the Polish Consulate go over his Superior's head and contact the Visitor of the Polish Province in Kraków.[132]

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[131] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 28 January 1932, A. C. M. K.

[132] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 162 & 235; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 28 January 1932, A. C. M. K. For more information on Polish immigrants in Cuba, please see: Marcin Kula,

The Visitor, in turn, voided Father Konieczny's command, a move described by Father Mazurkiewicz as a "bad decision" that "encroached on his [Father Konieczny's] area of responsibility and created a precedent which will be used by other imitators of Father Dudziak." The Visitor's decision also flew in the face of his statement at the recent Provincial Assembly, where he described Father Konieczny as "as independent Visitor." By intervening in what was perceived as an internal matter of the Polish Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, the Polish Visitor opened a channel that allowed dissatisfied confreres to challenge their Superior's authority, as well as introduced a new irritant to the negotiations between the Polish- and American-born members of the Vice-Province.[133]

In the wake of Father Dudziak's challenging of his authority, Father Konieczny resigned as Vice-Visitor, a decision that Father Mazurkiewicz described as a "mistake." Instead of stepping down, Father Mazurkiewicz believed that Father Konieczny should have used the Rules of the Congregation to challenge the decision. Father Mazurkiewicz went on to question how the Polish Visitor could accept Father Konieczny's resignation and "annul our Council" and warned that such kowtowing to the demands of a confrere would lead to "turmoil in our cordial collaborations with the Country [Poland]. This event would set a bad precedent for future dissenters.[134]

In concluding his remarks on the Dudziak situation and the resignation of Father Konieczny, Father Mazurkiewicz identified the principal issues that would help define his own Vice-Visitorship—the growing interest in autonomy. "As far as our Province

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"Those who Failed to Reach the United States: Polish Proletarians in Cuba During the Interwar Period," *Polish American Studies*, volume XLVI (Spring 1989), pp. 19 – 41.
[133] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 28 January 1932, A. C. M. K.
[134] Ibid.

becoming independent," he wrote to the Visitor, "I would like to add that Provinces of that sort already exist within the Congregation. One example is Cuba, which has an independent Visitor, and yet still sends money to Spain, from which it receives priests. They are an example of a most beautiful concord. We are still suffering from the misconception that granted independence, we will stop sending dollars. If that was our train of thought, we could have done it a long time ago in a candid way, yet we have not done so and shall not do so." The debate over creating an autonomous Vice-Province or maintaining a filial Vice-Province that began during Father Mazurkiewicz's Vice-Visitorship would gestate during the next few decades and finally explode in the early 1960s.[135]

With the Polish Vice-Province in such a degree of turmoil, Father Mazurkiewicz was rather reluctant to take on the mantle of Vice-Visitor. On March 9, 1932, he wrote to the Visitor in Poland to persuade him to rescind the appointment. Along with his twenty-five years of service to the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, (Father Mazurkiewicz came to the United States in 1908 and became the Pastor and Superior of the Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish.), he cited the fact that, with the lingering nativist sentiments in the country and the worldwide economic crisis, the Vice-Province needed an American-born Superior, who could win the confidence of the secular authorities; a foreign-born Vice-Visitor would be perceived as an alien and would "bring on difficulties in many other affairs." Eight days after this letter, he again wrote Kraków, but this time he, "in the spirit of obedience," pledged to comply with the Visitor's command to serve as the third Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United

[135] Ibid.

States and to perform his duties with "every discernment and patience." While reluctant to shoulder the responsibility, Father Mazurkiewicz hastened to add that he was happy that the rumor that the Visitor was sending a confrere from Poland to fill the position was false. This alternative, he stated, would have been strongly opposed by the confreres in the United States. In an effort to reassure his Superior in Poland of the ongoing loyalty of the American-based confreres, Father Mazurkiewicz added: "None of us thought of breaking away from Kraków. We understand that while there are two separate countries, at this time we still need mutual assistance."[136]

Although he appreciated the importance of adapting to the changing culture of American Polonia, Father Mazurkiewicz maintained the Polish centrism that had drawn him to Bydgoszcz in 1925. From his residence at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, where he had been assigned since returning to the United States in 1929, Father Mazurkiewicz sought to maintain the fidelity he believed the American-based confreres owed the Polish Province. In early November 1932, for example, he wrote Kraków to convince the Visitor of the need to maintain a firm command over the Province. With such authority, "[t]here will be no procrastination in terms of the execution of orders because this priest or that one does not agree with the control of power." This emphasis on order was especially necessary among the American-born members of the Polish Vice-Province, who needed to understand that, even though they were Americans, they were more importantly members of a Polish Province with missionary duties in Europe and the Americas. "It would also be a good thing," Father Mazurkiewicz added, "to inculcate in our American boys that *work not only in America*,

[136] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 11 & 245; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 9 March 1932, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 17 March 1932, A. C. M. K.

but anywhere, without exceptions, is a possibility" (emphasis added). In a letter written a little over a month later, Father Mazurkiewicz again addressed the heavy burden the confreres in the United States placed on the Polish Visitor. "It is impossible to please everyone," he explained, "hence the grievances and lamentations. Often, America too proved to be a source of worry for him [Father Mazurkiewicz]; however everything was happening from zeal for the glory of God as well as the prosperity of our work." After reassuring the Visitor of the confreres' love for him, the Father Mazurkiewicz hastened to add: "If we were angels, the Most Reverend Father Visitor would not encounter any problems on our behalf, however, we are mere mortals striving for perfection." For Father Mazurkiewicz, the Polish- and American-born confreres of the Polish Vice-Province, with or without political autonomy, required the Visitor's firm patriarchal hand.[137]

A confrere who continued to vex Father Mazurkiewicz and wore down the patience of the Polish Visitor was Father Dudziak. After his return from Cuba in 1931, Father Dudziak became a crusader for the cause of his Polish compatriots stuck on the Caribbean island. In mid-April 1932, however, Father Mazurkiewicz informed Kraków that the confrere had pledged "to devote his strength and health for the benefit of the Congregation." As a result the Vice-Visitor then assigned him to work on the Kanty mission band. When Poles in Havana later petitioned Father Dudziak to return, Father Mazurkiewicz sent Father Michał Sadowski in Father Dudziak's stead. Determined to serve the needs of Cuban Polonia, Father Dudziak contacted the Polish Consulate for "authorization [permitting him] to make promises of a return to Poland to those stranded

[137] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 4 November 1932, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 13 December 1932, A. C. M. K.

in Cuba." Warszawa turned down the request, a decision that Father Mazurkiewicz hoped would "put an end to Father Dudziak's new attempt to create strife between us."[138]

Father Mazurkiewicz's hope, however, was illusory. In mid-November 1933, he informed the Visitor that Father Dudziak planned to sail for Europe on November 17th. "Hence, he shall be in Kraków soon and will promptly begin to pay visits to the heads of state and Church and thus represent the entire Congregation and immigrant population in America." The Vice-Visitor went on to describe Father Dudziak as being obsessed and paranoid. "He shall speak about our work here from his own perspective," Father Mazurkiewicz warned, "about the tension that does not exist outside of his own heart. His words must be considered with caution and one must not be led awry by him." Father Mazurkiewicz went on to describe the regular flow of letters Father Dudziak received from Cuba and the confrere's efforts to win a reassignment in Poland. While he asked the Visitor to give Father Dudziak any available post in Poland, Father Mazurkiewicz warned: "It shall not harm anyone to be on guard around him."[139]

Three months later, in a sarcastically written letter, Father Mazurkiewicz informed the Visitor of Father Dudziak's continuing political campaign. "*The Kraków Kuryer* writes that the prominent American civic leader, Father Ignacy Dudziak, visited President Mościcki. What I predicted some time ago has come true. Please be very watchful, Father Visitor, so that this prominent personality does not entangle us is any unnecessary trouble or expenses. I would again express the opinion of my consultors,

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[138] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 15 April 1932, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 20 January 1933, A. C. M. K.
[139] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 15 November 1933, A. C. M. K.

namely that for this prominent leader's own good and to maintain peace in our work, he should remain in Poland. I can send along his valise at any time."[140]

By the end of June, Father Dudziak's future was still undecided. In a letter to the Visitor in Kraków, Father Mazurkiewicz described how his groups of consultors had rejected the idea of the confrere's return to the United States. They cited as evidence Father Dudziak's brash announcement to a group of diocesan priests that "he would be back by June." The Council hoped that an extended stay in Poland would "teach him more about order and subordination." Father Mazurkiewicz concluded his discussion of the matter by stating, "When the time comes, I shall summon him back." Until then the priest would just have to wait.[141]

Father Dudziak's exile, however, was short-lived. Like many other decisions, his recall to the United States was a result of the Polish Vice-Province's ongoing personnel problems. On August 7, 1934, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote that Father Kazimierz Kwiatkowski, C.M., who had served as a vicar at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn since 1931, was losing weight, the result of "a sunken stomach and possibly other complications." Wishing to comply with the confrere's physician's orders and recognizing his "inability to speak in the English language," Father Mazurkiewicz informed the Visitor that he was sending, at the Vice-Province's expense, Father Kwiatkowski to Poland for treatment. After shuffling some of the confreres' assignments, Father Mazurkiewicz still needed a priest to serve on the mission band based in Whitestone, Queens. "Hence," he informed the Visitor, "Father Dudziak should come back." By December, the Vice-Visitor wrote to Poland that he was "introducing

[140] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 9 February 1934, A. C. M. K.
[141] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 26 June 1934, A. C. M. K.

Father Dudziak to parish work here." Once again, Father Mazurkiewicz had to balance the savings of souls in American Polonia against the maintaining discipline among the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States.[142]

A second example of a Polish-born confrere whose actions challenged Father Mazurkiewicz's authority was that of Father Michał Pająk, C.M. Born in Wisła Wielka, Poland in 1897, he was ordained a priest in 1924 and came to the United States six years later to join the mission band at Saint John Kanty College. Described by Father Mazurkiewicz in the fall of 1936 as a "very good priest, who is liked by many of the parish priests, unlike other confreres, who the parish priests ask not to visit their parishes." After six years away from Poland, Father Pająk exhibited signs of fatigue and isolation. In September, he asked permission to travel to Poland to attend his parents' sixtieth wedding anniversary. Along with asking Father Mazurkiewicz's permission, the confrere stated that he planned to remain in Poland and would return to the Polish Vice-Province only "after a two-year rest under the Polish sun." Father Pająk then sought permission from the Polish Visitor in Kraków. In his letter, Father Mazurkiewicz counseled caution. If such permission was granted, he believed, it would open the door to other confreres circumventing his authority. At the end of October 1936, he reiterated his concern: "If other confreres begin to imitate him we will be in a state of chaos and I will not be responsible for later consequences." Again, Father Mazurkiewicz requested the Visitor's assistance in squelching future dissent.[143]

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[142] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 7 August 1934, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 4 December 1934, A. C. M. K. Father Dudziak served at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn from 1934 to 1935, at which time he was transferred to the mission house in Whitestone, Queens. He served on the mission band there until his death in 1952. See Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 235.

[143] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 248; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 9 September 1936,

Such issues of discipline and divisiveness, however, were not limited to Polish-born confreres. In 1932 and 1933, Father Mazurkiewicz had to reprimand an American-born confrere at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish—a situation that, in time, had tragic consequences. Father Joseph Zając was born in the United States in 1892 and, after his formation in Poland, ordained as a priest of the Congregation of the Mission in 1928. For a brief time immediately after his ordination, he served as an instructor at Saint John Kanty College. Afterward, he was assigned as a vicar at Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven, Connecticut. In 1931, he received orders to report to Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. On November 23, 1932, Father Mazurkiewicz informed Kraków that, while Father Zając "does all he can in order to make his abilities useful," he would have "to replace him [Father Zając] because we are receiving complaints from the parishioners that he treats them in a rude manner in the office." A few weeks later in two separate letters, Father Mazurkiewicz added that Father Zając was "also a mediocre preacher, who tortures himself and the people during his sermons." In addition to these shortcomings, Father Mazurkiewicz charged the confrere with an even more fatal flaw—a weak "attachment to the motherland." In a letter written on December 15th, Father Mazurkiewicz informed his Superior that "Today, he even proclaimed that he is not Polish. I suspect that sooner or later, this will lead to his resignation from the Congregation. He will not return to the motherland." These qualities, along with his obesity and poor personal hygiene, made Father Zając an

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A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 27 October 1936, A. C. M. K.

excessive burden for the Polish Vincentians as they wrestled with maintaining good relations with the Americanized members of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish.[144]

On March 23, 1933, Father Mazurkiewicz reported to the Visitor that he had ordered Father Zając to report to Saint John Kanty College, but rescinded the transfer when the confrere promised to amend his ways. Father Mazurkiewicz then reported: "I consulted my aides and they all advised one thing; to send him to the motherland, where he would learn more reason and grace." Six days after the above letter, Father Mazurkiewicz again wrote Kraków, this time to inform the Visitor of Father Zając's hiding "in the church attic with a breviary in hand," as the other priests collected the Easter dues. At this point, Father Mazurkiewicz suspended Father Zając for three days and ordered him to undertake a personal retreat in Erie. Again, Father Mazurkiewicz suggested that time in Poland would teach a confrere "reason, orderliness, and our spirit." The situation grew so bad, however, that Father Mazurkiewicz consulted the Eastern Province's Visitor, Father William Slattery, C.M., who concurred with his decision. On May 11, 1933, Father Mazurkiewicz finally reported that Father Zając had accepted the fact that he would be transferred to Poland. On June 17, 1933, he sailed on the ship, "Polonia," for Poland, where he resided until his death under Nazi occupation in May 1941.[145]

Along with each case of individual dissent causing problems for his Superior and Father Mazurkiewicz, they led to an increasing number of objections by the Polish-born

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[144] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 257; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 23 November 1932, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 13 December 1932, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 15 December 1932, A. C. M. K.

[145] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 23March 1933, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 29 March 1933, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 2 May 1933, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 11 May 1933, A. C. M. K.; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 257.

confreres against being sent to the Vice-Province. In a letter written in November 1932, Father Mazurkiewicz expressed his sadness at the death of a young confrere who was to visit the Polish Vincentians in America. "If it was God's will that he was to die so young," he wrote the Visitor, "it was a good thing that he passed away in Poland. If he were to come here with his illness and consequently die here, the confreres in Poland would once again raise an uproar that the confreres in America are overworked, get sick, and eventually get sent back to the mother country, where they have no money for treatment and nobody takes care of them." In an effort to avoid receiving a visa to travel to the United States, Father Mazurkiewicz reported, priests would give "absurd answers" when being interviewed at the American Consulate in Warszawa. "There was even one [confrere]," Father Mazurkiewicz described, "who sent a delegation of women to the consulate in order to diminish his chances of going to America."[146]

In an effort to alleviate this shirking of responsibility and to preserve good relations with the American Consulate, Father Mazurkiewicz recommended that a Polish Vincentian be assigned as a liaison with the responsibility "to get familiar with the entire procedure at the consulate." The priest would "acquaint himself with the officials and obtain all the necessary documents." In addition, the confrere would instruct those priests assigned to work in the United States on how they should answer questions during the interview, and, more importantly, "not retreat from a previously made decision as this makes a detrimental impression upon the consulate."[147]

Failure to address this problem, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote, would spell the demise of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. "If the consulate turns against

[146] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 23 November 1932, A. C. M. K.
[147] Ibid.

us and refuses to issue visas to us, and if the confreres, themselves, mar the reputation [of the Congregation], *then the only Missionaries working in America will be Americans*" (emphasis added). Father Mazurkiewicz then directly addresses the clash of culture evident within the Polish Vice-Province. "Therefore, you, yourself, are expediting the overtaking of the work here by them, and, as a result, the country [Poland] itself should bid farewell to all subvention. I am fighting against this, but you have to assist me in the battle for the well-being of the mother country." In holding the office of Vice-Visitor, Father Mazurkiewicz continued to see it as subordinate to Kraków, while rumblings for the establishment of an autonomous Province continued to echo among the confreres under his command.[148]

This contest for the identity of the Polish Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States also circumscribed the confreres' opportunity to expand beyond the borders of the United States. Like the Congregation of the Resurrection (Resurrectionist Fathers), which arrived in Canada in the mid-nineteenth century, the Polish Vincentians in the second half of the 1930s were offered work in Canada, in the Province of Manitoba. The Polonia of Manitoba had developed in the twenty years between the 1890s to the 1910s, an influx that resulted in a population of 12,321 in 1911. While including a small number of skilled artisans, the majority of this immigrant waves consisted of unskilled laborers, who found employment with the province's various railroads, and farmers, who settled on homesteads "on marginal land where conditions

[148] Ibid. Father Mazurkiewicz reiterated this concern in a letter written in the early spring of 1935, in which he informed the Visitor that two confreres were returning to Poland. "If this trend continues," he wrote, "our work would be taken over by America's confreres. They are waiting eagerly for this to come; they are counting in advance in how many houses they would constitute a majority over the national priests [Polish priests]—in this case the local treasury [provincial treasury] should not expect any financial help." See: Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 25 March 1935, A. C. M. K.

were extremely hard." With the exception of the immigrants who settled in Winnipeg, most Poles congregated in small, isolated communities that lacked regular ecclesial service, a condition addressed first by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who first arrived in Canada in 1841. While the Oblates of Mary Immaculate struggled to fill the demands of Catholic Polonia in Manitoba, the shortage of priests opened up opportunities for the Polish National Catholic Church. The shortage of clerics continued into the 1930s and was the principal reason the Archbishop Arthur Alfred Sinnott of Winnipeg, Manitoba contacted the Polish Vincentians.[149]

On January 1, 1938, Father Mazurkiewicz informed the Visitor that Archbishop Sinnott, through the Polish Consulate in Winnipeg, had contacted him about working in his Archdiocese. A priest from Winnipeg was to arrive on January 10th to discuss the matter further. In his letter, Archbishop Sinnott stated that he needed a priest who could speak both Polish and German. Father Mazurkiewicz mentioned that two confreres spoke German and that the opportunity to go to Canada might end one of the priests' demands to be reassigned to Poland or China.[150]

Two months later, Father Mazurkiewicz updated the Visitor on the progress of the proposal. He reported that Father Józef Swałtek and he had traveled to Winnipeg to meet

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[149] William Boleslaus Makowski, *History and Integration of Poles in Canada*, (Niagara Peninsula: The Canadian Polish Congress, 1967), pp. 136-141.

[150] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 1 January 1938, A. C. M. K. This was not the first time that the Polish Vincentians had been approached by a Canadian bishop about taking charge of an ethnic Polish parish. In late June 1934, Father Mazurkiewicz informed the Visitor that he had rejected an offer, citing poor economic conditions. "We can undertake the matter again," he concluded, "when the prospects are better." Approximately seven months later, he wrote to Kraków, explaining that, without consulting a bishop, the Polish Consul in Ottawa, Canada suggested that Father Mazurkiewicz accept an offer to become vicar at a Polish parish where the pastor was ill. When the pastor would die, the Consul mentioned, Father Mazurkiewicz could then "take over the parish." While unorthodox, he stated that the plan was "worth consideration." He concluded his remarks by stating that once he was free from pastoral duties at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn he would "be able to focus on extending the scope of our work in America and Canada." See: Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 26 June 1934, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 19 January 1935, A. C. M. K.

with Archbishop Sinnott, who offered the Polish Vincentians a "little missionary parish in Petersfield." Returning to the United States, Father Mazurkiewicz called a meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council, which voted to accept the Archbishop's offer. Soon after the meeting an offer of a second parish in Restituta, Manitoba was made and Father Swałtek was dispatched to serve the town that was "populated by 50 German families, 15 Polish families, and 35 Irish families." Father Mazurkiewicz mentioned that his haste in accepting the offers was a result of the fact that "in these times, we cannot expect to get a better house," as well as the fact that Archbishop Sinnott had mentioned the possibility of giving the Polish Vincentians a third parish in Winnipeg.[151]

While he was aware of the fact that the Polish Vincentians would have to commit scarce funds to the parish in Petersfield, Father Mazurkiewicz saw great potential for the Polish Vincentians in Canada. "God will bless us, in time," he enthusiastically wrote, "and give us many other houses in Canada." In addition, he saw Archbishop Sinnott, with his relations with other Canadian bishops, as well as American ordinaries, such as the Archbishop of Saint Paul, Minnesota, as a conduit for securing further parishes in the middle of the North American continent. Following in the footsteps of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, with their "beautiful parishes with magnificent churches and buildings," Father Mazurkiewicz saw the future of the Polish Vice-Province far away from the densely populated Polonian communities of Pennsylvania and Connecticut.[152]

Of utmost importance to the Vice-Visitor was the selection of "confreres suitable to such an assignment." With the proffered parishes being of mixed ethnicity, Father Mazurkiewicz had to select a polyglot priest. His first choice, Father Olszówek declined

[151] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 6 March 1938, A. C. M. K.
[152] Ibid.

the offer, choosing, instead, to stay on the farm at Kanty. In his stead, Father Bernard Niesłony, C.M., a vicar at Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish in Derby, Connecticut and former director of students at Saint John Kanty College, applied for the assignment. With English-, German-, and Polish-speakers in Petersfield and the lack of a Polish priest forcing the Poles to attend services at a nearby Ukrainian Orthodox church, Father Mazurkiewicz informed the Visitor that he was dispatching Father Niesłony to Canada at the earliest opportunity. In April 1938, Archbishop Sinnott expressed his enthusiasm over the Polish Vincentians' acceptance of his offer and his hope "that with their arrival, a new era for the Poles will begin in his diocese." On May 5, 1938, Father Mazurkiewicz informed the Visitor that Father Niesłony's upcoming departure on May 15th for Petersfield led him to consider how hard he should push for additional assignments in Canada.[153]

While ripe with possibilities, work on the Canadian prairie was fraught with difficulties. Within a few months of arriving at Saint Anne Parish in Petersfield, Manitoba on May 22, 1938, Archbishop Sinnott assigned Father Niesłony to two mission churches, one in Winnipeg Beach and the other in Matlock, Manitoba. As he had promised, the Archbishop soon after offered the Polish Vincentians a second parish, a church located in Plumas, Manitoba. Accepting the offer in July 1938, Father Mazurkiewicz dispatched Father Casimir Kiczuk, C.M. to fill the position of pastor of the Plumas community. These would be the only two confreres, however, sent north to Canada. Citing the difficult living conditions and low income generated in Petersfield, Father Niesłony returned to the United States in November 1938. Father Mazurkiewicz,

[153] Ibid; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 4 April 1938, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 5 May 1938, A. C. M. K.; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 247.

in turn, recalled Father Kiczuk three months later. Recently arrived in the United States, Father Stefan Król, C.M., the new rector of Saint John Kanty College, commented on the Canadian situation. "The Canadian case has failed; the Archbishop does not keep promises; he exploits the Missionaries. And therefore it will be liquidated." The short-lived effort of the Polish Vincentians to expand into Canada was dead.[154]

Father Mazurkiewicz's willingness to accept parishes in Manitoba and his emphasis on the limited funds collected in Petersfield serve as examples of the fundamental problems facing the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, particularly Saint John Kanty College, during the second half of the 1930s. Like individuals and institutions throughout the United States, the bank failures and economic collapse that followed the Stock Market Crash of 1929 adversely affected the Polish Vincentians, Saint John Kanty College, and the families of its students. In February 1930, while mentioning that the College was doing well, Father Mazurkiewicz reported that the confreres decided to lower the tuition from $350.00 to $300.00 in hopes "that this move shall draw more students to the institution." By December 1931, conditions had deteriorated to such an extent that Father Mazurkiewicz reported that "[b]ecause of unemployment, our income has fallen off considerably. Everywhere there are standstills; banks are bankrupt."[155]

Father Niesłony's request to be assigned to the Petersfield parish, however, was a result of more fundamental issues: the mission of the College and the cultural clash between Polish- and American-born members of the Polish Vice-Province, issues clearly evident in Father Mazurkiewicz's report on his visit to the College in 1933. Of primary

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[154] Email correspondence with Ms. Jane Coyne, Tribunal Coordinator of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Winnipeg, Manitoba, 18 November 2008; Król to Father Visitor, 21 November 1938, A. C. M. K.
[155] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 19 February 1930, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 14 December 1931, A. C. M. K.

importance to the Vice-Visitor was the confreres' adherence to the rules of the Congregation and the Erie house. Along with "the regular reading of the rules of the Congregation," Father Mazurkiewicz emphasized more mundane activities, such as "walking at the proper time . . . as well as being properly attired to do so." In addition, he stated that it is well within the rights and responsibilities of the Superior of the house to open and read outgoing mail written by the confreres.[156]

Of more immediate concern was the growing criticism of the Superiors in the United States. Citing the fourth commandment, Father Mazurkiewicz stated that confreres should avoid publicly attacking their superior. While he recognized the right of the confreres to appeal to higher authorities within the Congregation of the Mission, he emphasized that any such action should be done with the appropriate respect and humility. In addition, attention needed to be given to eliminating criticism of fellow confreres and serving as role models for secular priests, especially when it came to the celebration of the Mass. Throughout the remainder of the 1930s, Saint John Kanty College was rift with clashes that made the College a battleground between the competing cohorts of confreres. As the Polish confreres debated important questions about their identity as Vincentians, issues independent of their ethnic identity, they faced the new challenges of serving a student body more Americanized than the ones they taught in the 1920s.[157]

One barometer of the changes taking place among the young men enrolled at Saint John Kanty College are the minutes of the Sigma Iota Kappa fraternity, which was established in the fall of 1932. Like other such organizations in colleges and universities

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[156] Antoni Mazurkiewicz, "The Vice-Visitor's Report on the Erie House for 1933," A. N. E. P.
[157] Ibid.

throughout the United States, the meeting minutes of Sigma Iota Kappa record a wide variety of topics. When looked at more closely, however, one sees an effort by the fraternity's membership to reconcile the ethnic culture in which they were raised and educated with the opportunities available in assimilating into the wider American culture.

Written mostly in English, the minutes cover a period from October 1932 to March 1936. While the record includes mundane and parochial topics, such as whether or not to establish a fraternity basketball team and efforts to win approval for a dance to be held in Buffalo, New York, the minutes also indicate the College students' broader interest in foreign and domestic affairs. At the March 5, 1933 meeting, Edward P. Gicewicz, the chairman of the entertainment committee, read an article entitled "Smalltown America." That fall discussion centered on whether or not to support Roosevelt's National Recovery Act as well as a debate over the political situation in Cuba.[158]

Along side such topics, the minutes include evidence of a symbolic sense of Polish ethnicity. In the fall of 1933, reports of the fraternity's activities published in *Skarb Rodziny* (*The Family Treasure*), a periodical published at the College, were read into the record. That December, it was reported: "On the eve of our departure for the Christmas holidays, the Fraternity choir, under the leadership of Reverend Father Łukaszczyk, sang several Polish Christmas carols on stage." In addition, those persons in attendance partook in the breaking of the *opłatek*, a traditional Polish custom in which best wishes for the upcoming new year are exchanged. For the young men of the

[158] Sigma Iota Kappa Fraternity Meeting Minutes, p. 3, 15, 35, 43, 69 & 71, A. N. E. P.

Fraternity, the *Polskość* of their parents was becoming syncretized with the teen culture of the 1930s.[159]

A second example of the challenge of reconciling their Polish and American identities is evident in the fraternity's discussion of plays that were to be performed for members of Buffalo's Polish community and the students in Erie. In February 1934, performing the play, "Tajemnica Spowiedzi," ("The Seal of Confession.") was discussed. While the final decision was left up to the dramatic committee, it was agreed that, "despite its length," the play should be translated into English. The following month, the fraternity, exhibiting more of a cosmopolitan bent, discussing the possibility of staging a production of Moliere's "A Physician in Spite of Himself." While the minutes do not indicate if the play was performed, a later entry indicates the members' perception of the artistic sophistication of American Polonia. While considering the possibility of performing a Shakespearean play for the Polish community in Erie, in fraternal tones, "Bro[ther] Rafalowski reminded Bro[ther] Gosk and the members that the Shakespearean age has not yet dawned upon the Polish people of Erie." While they sprang from American Polonia, the members of Sigma Iota Kappa were now becoming more independent of it.[160]

For the students of Sigma Iota Kappa fraternity, their points of reference were increasingly found in American society. The fact that the members formed a Greek-letter society is an indication of how connected they were to the collegiate culture of the United States. A residual sense of ethnic pride, however, is evident in the minutes. In June 1934, for example, Father Charles Szymański, C.M., a confrere born in Brooklyn, New

[159] Ibid, pp. 45-47, 49-50 & 59.
[160] Ibid, pp. 64, 68 & 138.

York and then serving as an instructor at the College, spoke to the assembled members. He told them that "judging from the conversation that he had with the Prof[essor] of education at Niagara University, our frat [sic] does not conform to the no-good ideals of other frats [sic]. Others seek egoistic ideals and never include such ideals as we have." One such ideal was the sense of solidarity the active members had with the fraternity's alumni studying in foreign seminaries, including four brothers, including the aforementioned Edward P. Gicewicz, collectively referred to as the "Cracow Quartet."[161]

Edward P. Gicewicz's membership in the fraternity has a special import in the balancing act being undertaken by the students at Saint John Kanty College during the early 1930s, not merely because he graduated and went on to study at Vincentian houses of formation in Wilno and Kraków, but also because he went on to become the rector of the College as well as the first American-born confrere to lead the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. Born in Vermont, Gicewicz enrolled after graduating from high school as a student in the collegiate division of Saint John Kanty. In an October 2004 interview, he mentioned that he studied in Poland with a number of American-born men, who returned to work in the United States. While in Poland, Father Gicewicz recalled, the American-born seminarians freely interacted with their Polish-born fellows. Their identity, however, he recalled, remained firmly American. "We were dead-set Americans. We were diehard." While they joined the Polish seminarians in funeral services of such Polish luminaries as Józef Piłsudski and Karoł Szymanowski, the American seminarians also made special effort to celebrate American Thanksgiving and cheered Herbert Hoover when he visited Kraków. Although emphasis was not placed on

[161] Ibid, pp. 76, 81-82 & 134; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 254.

Americans returning to serve in the Polish Vice-Province—special attention, instead, being placed on finding confreres for missionary work in China—Father Gicewicz, following his ordination at the Vincentians' Church of the Conversion of Saint Paul in Kraków, returned to Kanty in 1938.[162]

The battle for the future of the Saint John Kanty College and, by extension the Polish Vice-Province, evident in the records of the Sigma Iota Kappa fraternity and the formation of Father Gicewicz, reached a crescendo in the stormy second term of Father Michał Sadowski, C.M. as rector of the College, (1934-1937). Born in Bukownica, Poland in 1881, Father Sadowski received his education in Gniezno and Kraków, where he was ordained in September 1909. His first assignment was as an instructor at the Vincentians' minor seminary in the Nowa Wieś neighborhood in Kraków. Four years later, Father Sadowski left for the United States, where he joined the teaching staff of the College, then in its second year of existence. In 1926, after teaching classes in Latin, French, German, and botany, Father Sadowski succeeded Father Konieczny as Rector of the school. He served as Rector from August 1926 to February 1929, when he was succeeded by Father Józef Studziński.[163]

Shouldering the dual burdens of the financial crisis of the Great Depression and an increasingly Americanized student body, Father Studziński's tenure as Rector was a difficult one. As early as March 1931, citing his long absence from the classroom and the increased necessity of a doctorate degree, he believed himself unqualified for the position and requested that he be allowed to resign. No replacement was identified and Father Studziński accepted a second term as head of the College. When it came time again to

[162] Edward P. Gicewicz, interview by author, written transcript, Enfield, Connecticut, 1 October 2004.
[163] Gicewicz, *Kanty, 1909-1959*, pp. 66-67 & 70.

appoint a Rector in the fall of 1933, Father Studziński again cited his lack of training. This time an extensive search for a qualified replacement ensued.[164]

In early 1933, Father Mazurkiewicz in searching for a successor, turned to a confrere then assigned to a house in Poland. Father Ludwik Moska, C.M. had succeeded Father Mazurkiewicz at Saint Vincent de Paul Parish in Bydgoszcz, Poland, when the latter priest was reassigned to the United States in 1929, and had previously served as Student Director of the minor seminary in Nowa Wieś and as Superior of the Polish Vincentians' house in Wilno. In March, Father Mazurkiewicz reported to the Visitor that Father Moska had declined his offer to become Rector of Saint John Kanty College. "He states," the Vice-Visitor wrote his Superior, "that he cannot leave Bydgoszcz in haste and that he does not like the personnel at the College. He just wants to be an ordinary priest." Father Mazurkiewicz, seeming to change his opinion of the confrere, warned, that if Father Moska would have taken the Rector position, it might have incited "demand for change" among the confreres assigned there.[165]

Things soon changed. By the fall of 1933, Father Mazurkiewicz reported that as a result of "changes that occurred in Bydgoszcz, Father Moska was no longer drawn to it," and was now willing to work in Erie, Pennsylvania. Father Mazurkiewicz mentioned further that "[h]e works wonderfully here," and that the confreres "like him as an ordinary confrere." Evidence of the tensions that led to Father Moska's change of heart soon came to light. Any effort to elevate him to the rank of Rector, however, Father Mazurkiewicz warned, would result in the confreres' "discontent and recollect the manner in which he treated them [the confreres] in Wilno and Bydgoszcz." On June 26,

[164] Studziński to Father Visitor, 3 March 1931, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 30 November 1933, A. C. M. K.
[165] Gicewicz, *Kanty, 1909*-1959, pp. 74-75; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 23 March 1933, A. C. M. K.

1934, Father Mazurkiewicz announced to the Visitor that Father Moska was to depart for a temporary visit to Bydgoszcz and that Father Sadowski would accept a second tenure as rector of Saint John Kanty College.[166]

Along with the rector's office, Father Sadowski also held the position of Superior of the Saint John Kanty House of the Polish Vincentians, a situation that resulted in his questioning of his responsibilities, and clashing with Father Mazurkiewicz. Father Sadowski's criticism of the administering of the College was not new. It was, in fact, an issue first raised over a decade before. In March 1922, after resigning from the position of Procurator at the College, Father Sadowski composed a letter to the Visitor. In it he described the conflict that existed between the Procurator and the Superior, a tension, Father Sadowski identified, that went as far back as Father Głogowski and the establishment of the College. "I don't want to dwell on trivial matters," Father Sadowski began, "the fact is that we do not know who gives orders, we do not know to whom to listen, we do not know each other's responsibilities; one is involved in the affairs of another; to put it briefly there is confusion and disorder." He went on to cite a specific example of the condition, the debate over who had the authority over the house treasury. He went on to imply that, in order to silence him, Father Waszko, as Vice-Visitor, decided to assign him, without his foreknowledge, to the College's mission band. Refusing to serve on the band, Father Sadowski, in his words, was "without any professional activity." Without his previous teaching duties, he felt his fellow confreres

[166] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 30 November 1933, A. C. M. K.; Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 26 June 1934, A. C. M. K.

"consider me as a guest at the College." He closed his letter by asking the Visitor to recall him to Poland.[167]

This was not the last time that Father Sadowski asked to be relieved of a particular duty. In October 1926, in a letter to the Visitor, in which he mentioned that "there is no reasonable basis for the College's existence," Father Sadowski described his ongoing clashes with Father Matelski, the director of students. At the time, Father Sadowski was in charge of the maintenance of the school's physical plant and farm, a position for which he considered himself ill-suited.[168]

The need for confreres to hold more than one position at Saint John Kanty College and the vaguely defined responsibilities of these offices continued to vex Father Sadowski during the mid-1930s. By the early spring of 1935, relations had deteriorated to such an extent that Father Sadowski wrote the Visitor in Kraków tendering his resignation as Superior of the Erie house. In late March, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote Father Sadowski a letter that captures the confusion of command within the Polish Vice-Province in the United States as well as its confreres' ability to supersede the Vice-Visitor's authority. "The notification that you had filed your resignation from the post of Superior in Erie with the Most Reverend Father Visitor Kryska," Father Mazurkiewicz wrote, "surprised me greatly, especially since the Beloved Father Superior had filled this post for just under a year." Citing his ignorance regarding Father Sadowski's reason for resigning, Father Mazurkiewicz stated that he did not know "how to respond to the Most Reverend Father Visitor, who will send the whole case to me and leave it up to my decision." In closing, Father Mazurkiewicz asked Father Sadowski to consider how his

[167] Sadowski to Father Visitor, 4 March 1922, A. C. M. K.
[168] Sadowski to Father Visitor, 27 October 1926, A. C. M. K.

actions would "influence the souls of the younger confreres," as well as the opinions of the clergy and laity of the Diocese of Erie.[169]

In May, Father Sadowski countered his Vice-Visitor's letter with one of his own. Written to the Visitor in Poland, he stated that "it will be beneficial for the Congregation if you accept my resignation." In explaining his reasons for stepping down, he placed the blame at the feet of Father Mazurkiewicz. "I am saying this aloud, why cannot the Father Vice-Visitor settle in Erie to manage running of our institution [Polish Vice-Province] . . . or is he going to do that from his post in Brooklyn?" Father Sadowski's statement clearly illustrates not only the difficulties he faced at the College, but also his perception that it was the flagship foundation of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States.[170]

Father Sadowski was not the only confrere communicating his discontent with the situation at the College and its effect on the educational apostolate of the Polish Vincentians in the United States. In mid-November 1936, Father Niesłony, the director of students wrote to Kraków, describing the state of affairs in Erie. The problems there were not merely a result of the drastic downturn in the economy in the mid-1930s, but also "the dropping Polish character of the Poles here." In addition to the enrollment dropping, the caliber of the students also seemed to be falling. Father Niesłony described how the situation had led some members of the Erie house to verbally attack him as Director of Students, a condition made worse by the fact that the slanders were done "in the presence of younger priests who recently came from Poland." Because of "the rotten atmosphere among the local Congregation," and the years of service in the United States, Father Niesłony concluded his remarks by requesting a transfer to the Polish Vice-

[169] Mazurkiewicz to Beloved Father Superior, 25 March 1935, A. C. M. K.
[170] Sadowski to Father Visitor, 28 May 1935, A. C. M. K.

Province in Brazil. He renewed this request in January 1937, at which time he compared the situation at the College to an ostrich burying its head in the sand. With increased awareness of the school's reputation among local parish priests, the laity, and the students, Father Niesłony suggested that the Visitor come to the United States to judge matters for himself.[171]

In the spring of 1937, Father Mazurkiewicz began contemplating the changes he believed were needed at the College. Foremost in his mind was the selection of Father Sadowski's replacement as rector. On April 8, 1937, he wrote the Visitor, stating that, with the youth and inexperience of the confreres coming from Poland, qualities that made these priests vulnerable to Americanization, an American-born confrere should be selected as Rector. While Father Niesłony and a second confrere had the requisite academic degrees and English-language skills, they lacked, nevertheless, the dignity necessary for the office.[172]

The situation at the College remained in a state of flux throughout the summer of 1937, when the Polish Vincentians, joined by the Polish Provincial, Father Józef Kryska, C.M., celebrated the silver anniversary of the founding of the School. Father Kryska had less pleasant motives for coming to the United States. He sought to settle many of the personnel and administrative problems that had characterized the educational apostolate of the Polish Vincentians in the United States. The Council that was held to settle these matters soon became an arena in which the postwar frustrations and divisions within the Polish Vice-Province in the United States were exposed.[173]

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[171] Niesłony to Father Visitor, 15 November 1936, A. C. M. K.; Niesłony to Father Visitor, 10 January 1937, A. C. M. K.
[172] Mazurkiewicz to Father Visitor, 8 April 1937, A. C. M. K.
[173] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p.66.

In a letter written to the confreres in the United States after his return to Poland, Father Kryska spoke in generalities, advising them to maintain the spirit of Saint Vincent de Paul by upholding the Rules of the Congregation, especially those regarding common prayer and meditation. More telling of the conditions at the houses in the United States were his call for mutual love among the confreres and respect for the person of the Vice-Visitor. Honoring the office and person of the Vice-Visitor, Father Kryska concluded, was essential to the common good and development of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. The import of the Visitor's words becomes clearer when contrasted with comments made one month later by Father Sadowski in a lengthy denouncement of the state of affairs among the Polish Vincentians in the United States.[174]

Written in order to explain the causes of the situation in the Polish Vice-Province, his treatment at the hand of his Superiors, and his opinion of Father Mazurkiewicz and Father Kryska, the lengthy document opens with a description of the Polish Visitor's arrival in the United States for the twenty-fifth anniversary of Saint John Kanty College. Expecting Father Kryska would alleviate the misunderstandings that characterized relations among the confreres and would bring a sense of harmony to the Polish Vice-Province, Father Sadowski was disappointed by the Visitor's tepid treatment of the situation. As if drawing a clear distinction between his authority over the Polish Province and that of Father Mazurkiewicz within the Vice-Province in the United States, Father Kryska was quoted by Father Sadowski to say: "I came to you as a guest; this is not an official visit. I only want to see your manner of life." He restated this position upon his

[174] Father Kryska to the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province, 4 August 1937, A. C. M. K.

arrival at each of the Polish Vincentians' houses, leading to some misunderstanding among the confreres about the purpose of his visit.[175]

Along with this criticism, Father Sadowski charged that Father Kryska failed to investigate properly the situation at Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven, Connecticut and to take into consideration the sentiments of the parishioners when the Visitor reassigned their pastor, Father Franciszek Hładki, C.M. to the College in Erie, Pennsylvania. Father Sadowski further charged that the Polish Visitor was being too polite during his visit and turned a blind eye when Father Mazurkiewicz rejected criticism and made decisions without properly consulting the confreres. Claiming that he wanted to make Father Kryska's visit to America pleasant, Father Sadowski charged that Father Mazurkiewicz was impractical in his plans for the American houses and that he forwarded only positive reports to Poland.[176]

This failure in leadership, in both Poland and the United States, Father Sadowski claimed, took its toll on Saint John Kanty College. Suffering from a drop in enrollment and the failure of Father Kryska and Father Mazurkiewicz to address problems with the school's faculty and staff, Father Sadowski characterized the College as an "ill patient laying on an operating table," from which "the ulcers [were] cut but the wounds were left open."[177]

Later in his report, Father Sadowski asked: "Why does the number of students at the College decrease?" He cited three reasons: the economic problems resulting from the Great Depression, "the institution, itself," and the recent wave of Polish immigrants in the United States. He states that the first reason has the least influence on the decision of

[175] Sadowski, "During the annual retreat from August 29th to September 4th, 1937," A. C. M. K.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.

students; more significant was the failure to develop an efficient recruitment process. Initially, the Vincentians recruited students based on the recommendation of Polish pastors. In order to develop greater control over enrollment, and thereby maintain the mission of the College, Father Sadowski suggested that an office of recruitment be established at Kanty. He also identified the role that the alumni should play in the process of attracting students. He further claimed that, with the numerous responsibilities of a rector, a second confrere was needed to carry out the duties of recruiting students.[178]

Father Sadowski further emphasized that the higher authorities in the Vincentians had failed to recognize the needs of the college, such as state certification and the fact that the confreres coming to Erie brought with them too much of a "European tradition" to be effective with the students. Father Sadowski charged that each change of personnel cost the school students and that a school with too few students was starting down the road toward closure.[179]

These internal problems, Father Sadowski claimed, were exacerbated by external factors such as the Polish immigrants' failure to value Polish educational institutions and the fact that Polish organizations in the Unites States, with the exception of the Polish National Alliance, had failed to support them. The middle class of American Polonia added to the demise of Polish education in the United States when it decided to send their sons to public schools. "Without agitation and efforts," Father Sadowski claimed, "the American Polish colony will not send its sons, by its own preference, to Polish institutions." Furthermore, the students, themselves, did not appreciate the importance of

[178] Ibid
[179] Ibid.

studying Polish. Students who initially promise to study the language, he cited, soon gave up after finding the language too difficult.[180]

Along with the assimilation of the American Polonia, Sadowski cited the fact that the nature of education in the United States had changed since the establishment of Saint John Kanty College. Even if a student stayed at Kanty for six years, Father Sadowski argued, he would only receive a high school diploma. To pursue studies in the professions, the student and his family would have to incur even greater costs. Complaints were often heard that a boy should find work in factory instead of pursuing an education.[181]

In addition, the course offerings of Saint John Kanty College were quite limited. Father Sadowski cited that one reason Alliance College had been successful was the fact that it offered both an academic and polytechnic track for its students. Even the nature of the formation of the clergy had evolved. With the growth of the number of diocesan minor seminaries, Father Sadowski mentioned, it was increasingly difficult for a student who has finished studies at a Polish institution to find a place in a diocesan seminary. All of the above reasons were cited in explaining why students prefer to attend American colleges. Other religious Orders, unlike the Polish Vincentians, had an easier time recruiting students for they promised students a position in the Community upon completion of their studies, while a Polish-American's assignment was controlled by the Visitor in Poland, who could assign a confrere to houses outside the United States.[182]

When the subject of his resignation as rector of the College arose, Father Sadowski said nothing, allowing the matter to be settled by those in authority. Although

[180] Ibid
[181] Ibid
[182] Ibid.

he privately asked Father Sadowski to stay on in the position, Father Kryska failed to refute Father Mazurkiewicz's claim that the rector lacked the requisite qualities of an effective rector and abandoned any effort to defend the confrere. Following Father Sadowski's refusal to speak in his own defense, Fathers Kryska and Mazurkiewicz discussed potential candidates for the position, with the Polish Visitor going so far as to promise that he would send a confrere from Poland to fill the position.[183]

The controversy over his resignation, according to Father Sadowski, was but the most recent example of Father Mazurkiewicz's mismanagement of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. Starting with his initial assignment to Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven, Connecticut, Father Sadowski outlined the numerous problems he had witnessed since coming to the United States, many of which he laid at the feet of Father Mazurkiewicz. When Father Kryska asked for comments on the postponement of the twenty-fifth celebration of Saint John Kanty College, Father Sadowski responded that he had to shoulder this responsibility because the Vice-Visitor was too obsessed with preparations for the arrival of Monsignor Ignacy Krauze, C.M., the Apostolic Prefect of Shuntehfu, China. Father Sadowski continued, stating that these recent problems at the College were preceded by others, including those at the time of Father Konieczny's resignation as rector. At that time, he explained, there were a number of disturbances in front of the students and laity, which undermined the authority of the Vincentians, as well as incidents in which confreres disobeyed orders regarding spending time in the evenings with members of the laity.[184]

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[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.

Father Sadowski also addressed the growing cultural divide within the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. Sadowski claims that much of the blame for the failed Americanization efforts came from Krakow, in that the confreres that were being sent to the United States were not expecting to stay in America long and had no desire to acculturate to conditions. "They will ruin everything," Father Sadowski wrote, "that the predecessors built." He further claimed that the American-born confreres, who were thinking about establishing a new Province, were not thinking of joining the Eastern Province. This idea of a new autonomous Province had been, however, rejected by the confreres in the Eastern Province of the United States, the Polish Province, and Paris.[185]

In concluding his report, Father Sadowski recognized both the internal and external factors that led to the problems plaguing the Polish Vice-Province in the second half of the 1930s. First and foremost, Father Sadowski claimed that Father Mazurkiewicz was too long in the parishes and too long in his current position as Vice-Visitor, both of which retarded the common life of the community and paralyzed the Vice-Province's work. In addition, Father Sadowski stated that the position of Vice-Visitor was unnecessary, for in situations where individual confreres disagreed with Father Mazurkiewicz's decisions, they merely appealed to Father Kryska in Poland. He concluded that authority depended on the individual, contrasting the differing degrees of dignity exhibited by Father Konieczny and Father Mazurkiewicz. Exacerbating this failure of leadership was the fact that, in the United States, any organization with a headquarters in another country was suspect.[186]

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[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.

The problems cited by Father Sadowski in his report continued to plague his successors in the years before the start of the Second World War. His immediate successor, Father Ludwik Moska, C.M., whom Father Mazurkiewicz had described in 1933 as out-of-touch with the confreres, faced an even greater cultural clash in 1937. Described by Father Gicewicz, in his 2004 history of the New England Province, as "exuberant and energetic," Father Moska remained "a man taken out of context and rarely understood." At a critical time in the history of the College, "his methods and timing were not for the American temperament." He resigned the position of Rector of Saint John Kanty College on October 1, 1938, less than a year after taking office, and returned to Poland. His successor, Father Stefan Król, who had served as the temporary head of the College following the death of Father Głogowski in 1920, returned to Erie, Pennsylvania in 1938, after serving eighteen years as the Procurator of the Polish Province. As he arrived in the United States, Europe teetered on the brink of a war that would further test the bonds between the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States and those in Europe.[187]

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For the confreres of the Congregation of the Mission's Polish Vice-Province in the United States, the two decades between the end of the First World War and the beginning of the Second World War were years fraught with conflicts—conflicts between them and members of the diocesan clergy, conflicts between them and American government, and conflicts between them and the increasingly assimilated members of American Polonia. Along with these clashes, the Polish Vincentians in the United States

[187] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 71-73 & 242.

faced a new set of dilemmas that came with the reestablishment of Poland and the renewed efforts of the Polish Province of the Congregation of the Mission to rebuild their foundations in postwar Europe. While confronting these two external seismic shifts was difficult enough, the situation within the Polish Vice-Province was made even more trying by the fact that these cultural alterations were not merely outside forces, but also internal changes within the ranks of the confreres. The interwar history of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States was a history of clashing identities.

When the Polish Vincentians first arrived in the United States, they came from a partitioned Poland and a partitioned Polish Vincentian Community. With the end of the First World War and the reestablishment of Poland and the reconstitution of the Polish Province of the Congregation of the Mission, a new identity was not the only things to emerge. New and attractive opportunities became available in the homeland of the Polish confreres. New houses, such as Saint Vincent de Paul Parish in Bydgoszcz, Poland, and reconstituted houses, such as Holy Cross Parish in Warsaw, beckoned. For many of the confreres who had worked in the wilds of American Polonia, the prestige of an assignment at such Vincentian Houses was viewed as a just reward for their toil in Connecticut and Pennsylvania. For those who stayed in the United States, the funding of such houses within the Polish Province drew scarce resources away from American-based projects, especially Saint John Kanty College.

Money was not the only thing over which the Polish Vice-Province and Polish Province grappled. For those confreres long assigned to the United States, the very survival of some American Houses and the expansion into new ones were threatened by the increasing attention given to the Houses in reestablished Poland. From Saint John

Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania to Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn to the parishes in Manitoba, Canada, opportunities to serve the needs of the Polish diaspora were circumscribed by the growing emphasis given to the Polish Vincentians' works in Europe. Further threatening the work of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States was the news that confreres, younger than those in the United States, were being elevated to pastoral positions. For many confreres, the United States meant staying in, what they perceived to be, a Vincentian backwater.

Exacerbating these tensions was the entrance of the first generation of American-born members of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. While comfortable in both Polish and American culture, these young men had as their personal points of reference the ethnic parishes of Polonian communities throughout the eastern part of the United States. Raised in the shadows of the towering steeples of Polish parishes in immigrant enclaves in Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania, this second generation of Polish Vincentians often possessed only a symbolic ethnic connection to the Polish homeland of their fellow confreres. With the reestablishment of travel and communication with the Vincentian houses of formation in Poland, those sons of American Polonia who sought to pursue a vocation in the Congregation of the Mission, did so in an atmosphere and culture increasingly different from the one in which they were raised and in which they hoped to serve. Furthermore, the widening opportunity gap between joining the Polish Vice-Province and joining an American Province of a religious Order or incardinating in an American diocese was perceived to be increasing. For many American-born confreres who received their formation in Poland, the words of Father Edward P. Gicewicz rang true: "We were dead-set Americans."

In addition, American culture and society in which the Polish Vincentians worked in the interwar period was drastically different from the one in which the first confreres arrived in the first years of the twentieth century. Throughout the 1920s, nativism and 100% Americanism, in both the society in general, but more particularly in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, further complicated the work of the Polish Vincentians in the United States. This was especially evident in the cases of Saint John Kanty College and the Polish Vincentians' relations with Archbishop Mundelein and Father Ignasiak. The physical and cultural isolation of the school from the American mainstream led to questioning by parents and students as well as some members of the Polish Vice-Province of the relevance of the education received there. This debate was made more heated by the fact that the school experienced difficulty finding adequately trained confreres to teach and administer.

These problems of competing identities among the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, conflicts brought on, in part, by a reestablished Poland and evolution of American Polonia, remained unresolved in the late summer of 1939. In September, the partition of their homeland by the armies of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, led to yet another period of isolation for the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States. Like the one during the First World War, the isolation during the Second World War was characterized by a lack of communication with the Polish Visitor in Kraków and the inability to receive new personnel. Anxiety over the fate of their fellow confreres under German and Soviet occupation echoed the sentiments expressed during the First World War. The Polish Vice-Province in the United States that weathered the Second World War, however, was

not the band of Polish Vincentian Missionaries who weathered the First World War. As the United States inched toward war, the American-born confreres and American-born candidates of the Polish Vice-Province began to demonstrate an increasing ease among their fellow American clergy and an increasing cultural detachment from the Polish-born confreres. The isolation from Poland that came with the Second World War and the Cold War would exacerbate this difference and bring about a new identity among the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province, an identity that would result in the establishment of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, an American, yet Polish, Community.

Chapter Five: Reimagining a Community:
Becoming the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, 1939-1975.

> The experience of the risen Christ goes far beyond all previous spiritual experience. Everything is changed; everything is new; everything becomes possible. Insoluble problems belong to the past. From now on, there is always a door, which opens to the Spirit. There is not even any other choice but to accept the essential newness of this existence. The truth becomes manifest through a profound change of outlook. The Spirit watches over each one and prays invisibly to deliver us from all darkness and to give us joyous freedom in Christ Jesus.
>
> James W. Richardson, C.M., 1970.

On December 15, 1969, Father James W. Richardson, C.M., the newly elected Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, wrote a letter to all the members of the "Little Company," informing them of the work of the recently concluded Extraordinary General Assembly. Taking its inspiration from the work of the Second Vatican Council, the Assembly set the Congregation on a new path. Central to this reimagining of the Congregation of the Mission was the right and responsibility of individual Provinces to adapt "to the conditions of the Local Church." In an effort to "live our vocations authentically," Father Richardson wrote, "the General Assembly has invited the Provinces to develop their own physiognomy, uniting the richness and the originality of the local Church to the unique Vincentian inspiration." Emphasizing the innovative aspects of the General Assembly's decision, Father Richardson recognized the need to balance this new sense of decentralization, or "subsidiarity," with "the principle of unity."[1]

[1]Richardson to "Dear Confreres," 15 December 1969, Brother Bertrand Ducournau Archives of the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission (Ducournau Archives).

Finding equilibrium in the Community would require the confreres to be keenly aware of the need for "corresonsibility." "All the members of a house, all the houses of a Province, all the Provinces of the Congregation are responsible in the Church, in the Congregation's own proper mission, in its way of apostolic-communitarian life, and in the welfare of formation of its members. It is a question, then, of finding in each house, in each Province the means most suitable for the best response to the purposes of our vocation, according to our spirit." This reorientation of the Congregation of the Mission would require a "mutual exchange of information" between the various Provincial Assemblies and the General Assembly. Even more importantly, Father Richardson stated, was the need for openness. "It is this spirit of openness and of that attention to the needs and the traits of the local Church and also to the good of the entire Congregation that I wish for the labors of the Provincial Assemblies."[2]

For the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, these words held special import; they indicated that the leadership of the Congregation of the Mission would be more sympathetic to their decades-long struggle for autonomy than they had been in the past. With its emphasis on "subsidiarity," a concept made more powerful by the Second Vatican Council's attention to *aggiornamento*, the new Constitutions of the Congregation of the Mission could be used as a justification for actions that previously had been interpreted as dissident. Using the rhetoric given them by the Second Vatican Council and the Extraordinary General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission, the Polish Vice-Province would reimagine itself into an American Province.

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[2] Ibid.

Before it was able to do so, however, the Polish Vice-Province in the United States underwent decades of drastic change. From the isolation from its Mother Province in Poland during the Second World War and the first decades of the Cold War, to the generational shift within its ranks, to the altered devotional practices of Polish-American Catholics, the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province struggled to maintain their relevance in an increasingly changing world. The decades between the end of the Second World War and the Second Vatican Council were filled with questions: How "Polish" was the Polish Vice-Province in the United States? How did its isolation from the Houses of Formation in Poland and its reliance on those of the Eastern Province affect the Polish Vice-Province? How did the emergence of a new generation of Polish-Americans affect the various apostolates of the Polish Vice-Province? These were the questions with which the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province grappled between 1945 and 1975. The answers they came up with, as well as those given to them by outside bodies, is a story of adaptation and acculturation to changes in the Catholic Church and the Congregation of the Mission as well as the postwar World and the United States' role in it.

Two principal catalysts for this reimagining of the Polish Vice-Province was the devastation experienced by Polish Province of the Congregation of the Mission at the hands of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia during the Second World War and the rise of the communist government in the War's wake. In September 1939, the Polish Province consisted of 18 houses manned by 132 priests and 62 brothers. Along with their work in thirteen parishes, the Polish Vincentians conducted retreats and missions, taught at a

variety of seminaries, published religious literature, and served as hospital chaplains and spiritual directors of the Daughters of Charity.[3]

In the wake of the Nazi invasion, the territory in which the Houses in Bydgoszcz and Pabianice, as well as the Chaplaincies in Chełmno and Poznań, were located was made part of the Third Reich. Following the confiscation of property and the execution and arrest of some confreres, the Polish Vincentians ceased all overt ministries in mid-May 1941. The Houses in and around Warszawa and Kraków became part of the General Government administered by Hans Frank. While all formation work ceased at the seminary at Stradom, the confreres attached to the House continued to conduct a secret educational campaign throughout the war. When the Nazis confiscated the Stradom grounds in 1943, the Vincentian secretly relocated the Seminary's library. In Warszawa, during the siege of the city, the Vincentians converted the lower church of Holy Cross Parish into a hospital. The church itself was attacked by the Germans, resulting in the deaths of three people and damage to the main altar. The Vincentians at Holy Cross Parish aided in both the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943, providing false baptismal certificates to Jews, which resulted in the arrest of one confrere, and in the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, in which confreres took an active role in the resistance. In their crushing of the Warsaw Uprising, the Germans devastated the Church, pulling down the figure of Jesus carrying His cross that stood at the main entrance to the ground, thereby creating one of the emblematic images of the failed rebellion. By the end of the War, 29

[3] Stanisław Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce (1651-2001), I Dzieje* (Kraków: Instytut Wydawniczy Księży Misjonarzy "Nasza Przełość," 2001), p. 321.

Vincentians (21 priests, 7 brothers, and 1 seminarian) had died. Fifty-six members of the Polish Province had been arrested.[4]

The decade that followed the end of the war brought new challenges for the Catholic Church in Poland and the Polish Vincentians. In an effort to undercut the power of the Catholic Church, Bolesław Piasecki, a one-time fascist who promoted joint Polish-German action against the Soviet Union, established the Polish Progressive Catholic Movement in 1945. Commonly known as PAX, the Polish Progressive Catholic Movement had as its goals "(1) to provide the impression that Catholics in Poland supported the regime; and (2) to undermine the position of the Church which refused to cooperate with the communists." PAX concentrated its attention initially on "publishing books, newspapers and periodicals." Along with its publishing activity, it also was granted by the government "a monopoly on the sale of holy pictures and other objects used in devotion." A second group sanctioned by the government in its campaign against the Catholic Church were the Patriotic Priests, a group of clerics "who adhered to the Church but who supported the regime on all social and political matters."[5]

In the 1950s, the Stalinist Polish government passed a number of laws that further eroded the position of the Catholic Church. Approved by the Council of Ministers, the Statute of March 20, 1950 "provided for the seizure of all Church property exceeding 50 hectares, with the exception of allowances of 100 hectares in Poznan, Pomerania, and Silesia." That same year, the government confiscated church buildings in the former German territories given to Poland by the Soviet Union after the end of the Second World

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[4] Rospond, pp. 323-335 & 344.
[5] Ronald C. Monticone, *The Catholic Church in Communist Poland 1945-1985: Forty Years of Church-State Relations* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1986), pp. 15-16.

War. Government agencies in the "Western and Northern Territories," as the area was called, were "to collect rent" on the properties instead of "levying taxes on them." In February 1953, the State Council passed a law "giving to the Government control over all appointments to church posts." Any cleric who refused to swear an oath of loyalty to the Polish People's Republic would be replaced by a member of the Patriotic Priests. In the fall of that year, Bishop Czesław Kaczmarek of Kielce was arrested and sentenced to a twelve-year prison term for "spying for the American Ambassador to Poland, for the Vatican, and for the National Committee for a Free Europe." Failing to condemn Bishop Kaczmarek, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate of Poland, was arrested in October of 1953. The following August, the Government closed the theological facilities at the universities in Kraków and Warszawa, replacing them with the Catholic Theological Academy, directed by the pro-regime Father Jan Czuj. While these restrictions severely restricted the activities of the Catholic Church in Poland, they did not break the spirit of the faithful. Up through the end of the Stalinist period, "the Church proved true to its tradition and again became the rallying point for all who opposed the Soviet-dominated Polish regime."[6]

The confreres of the Polish Province did not escape the various dragnets of the communist authorities. Along with the various charges and numerous arrests, confreres were forced from positions at the Silesian Ecclesiastical Seminary and the G. Narutowicz Hospital in Kraków. In 1955, the Bishop of Sandomierz, the Most Reverend Jan Kanty Lorek, C.M. was removed from office and charged with calling for the placement of two PAX publications on the Church's Index of Prohibited Books. The Vincentians had their

[6] Monticone, pp. 17, 19, 22-23 & 25.

own periodicals censored by the government during the Stalinist period. While production at the printing presses at the Kleparz House was permitted to resume publication immediately after the war, government censorship forced the confreres to cease operations in 1953. The government's tax of Church property was also burdensome for the Vincentian Fathers. Even more so was its required oath of loyalty for all members of the clergy. In 1956, for example, the Visitor of the Polish Province, Father Józef Kryska, C.M., faced the dilemma of having thirty-two newly ordained priests, who, because of their refusal to swear loyalty to the state, were prohibited from receiving a clerical assignment.[7]

While dramatically less destructive, the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province faced an uprising of sorts of their own. The second-generation of American Polonia reached a critical point in its evolution by the beginning of the Second World War, struggling to find a balance between its American and Polish identities. This dialectic exercise is quite evident in the pages of the *Patron*, a weekly publication of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Bilingual from its inception, the *Patron* was edited by Father Bolesław J. Bielski, C.M., who, with the assistance of the "Alumni" of the parish, sought to publish a periodical that "elevates the soul towards God." Established by Father Francis Hamerski, C.M. in 1939, the "Alumni" was a group of "13 young adults with the objective of developing the parish's youth 'both socially and educationally.'"[8]

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[7] Rospond, pp. 362-364 & 369.
[8] Józef Studziński, C.M., "A Word from the Father Pastor," *Patron*, Styczeń-Luty 1941, p. 1; "Dlaczego Alumni?," *Patron*, Styczeń-Luty 1941, p. 7; "Our Club-The Alumni," *Patron*, Styczeń-Luty 1941, p. 8.

From its first issue published in January 1941 through its December 1941 issue, the *Patron* reflected the interests and concerns of the parish's first- and second-generation members. Regularly featured in these issues were calls for the preservation of *Polskość*, especially regarding the Polish language. In the March-April edition, for example, following a piece entitled, "Miłe Wspomnienia o Polsce" ("Fond Memories of Poland"), readers found an article, "Polska Mowa i Dzieci" ("The Polish Language and the Children"), in which the author lambasts the parish's parents for criticizing the parochial school while not speaking Polish with their children at home. In the October issue, the *Patron* promoted the parish school's recent acquisition of "the newest released Polish books" for use in its classes. It argued that parents must send their children to a "Polish Catholic school" in order "to cultivate a love of the Polish language and culture." The essential role of a Polish-Catholic education was emphasized again in "Polskość na Stanisławowie" ("Polishness in the Saint Stanislaus Community"), which claims that the Saint Stanislaus parochial school, while meeting the "requirements of instruction in English," also instilled in its students Polish patriotism.[9]

With a number of the parish's "Alumni" working on the *Patron*, the magazine not only contained warnings about language retention and longing for Poland but also reflected the concerns and attitudes of the new generation of Polish Americans. During the late spring and summer of 1941, for example, the magazine ran a series of articles that captured an emerging sense of American masculine spirituality. In May 1941, in a piece entitled "On Looking Back," the author described the achievement of salvation as a task

[9] "Miłe Wspomnienia o Polsce," *Patron*, Marzec-Kwietnia 1941, p. 29; "Polska Mowa i Dzieci," *Patron*, Marzec-Kwietnia 1941, p. 30; "Język," *Patron*, October 1941, p. 157; "Polskość na Stanisławowie," *Patron*, Grudnia 1941, p. 207.

that requires one to "[l]ine up, marshal your brawn, plan your strategy, get in and fight to bring the ball over for a touchdown." Like a football game, life is "a man's game, to be enjoyed, to be sacrificed, to cost, to have its small triumphs, to be tasted with the exuberance of zest and the salt of wounds, but above all to be gone through with manliness." The following month, an untitled piece painted a similarly masculine portrait of ideal American priests and God: "Somewhere in the neighborhood there's a church. The curate may be out enjoying himself in his shirt-sleeves, bat but no glove on an outing with the altar boys, and the good-natured pastor may be home to answer occasional calls, dividing his time between naps with a book or a beer, but within the church itself an infinitely more good-natured pastor waits our calls."[10]

Equally evident in the prewar pages of the *Patron* was a sense of the proper way the parish should engage the outside world. Warnings were regularly sounded in the magazine against the invasive threat of Communism. Alongside the "On Looking Back" article in the May 1941 was one entitled "On May," which compared "[o]ur left wing brethren [who] stream down various streets and avenues to amalgamate in Union Square . . . hoarse throats letting forth their Marsillaise, *The International*" with "a regiment of young Catholic boys group together to say a few manly prayers, listen to a short discourse from one of their number and then blend all their voices heavenward." While lacking the militant and masculine tone of "On May," the September 1941 edition of the *Patron* warned the parishioners against "a sly Red [who] knocks at your door armed with a college degree from one of the city's free institutions maintained by your taxes," while cautioning them not to judge too severely. To protect "against various atheistic threats

[10] "On Looking Back," *Patron*, Maj 1941, p. 49; untitled article, *Patron*, Czerwiec, 1941, p. 67.

and guaranteeing the future of the Church," there was no better insurance than participation in one of the parish's youth organizations.[11]

While not fraught with the corrosive danger of Communism, tolerance and ethnic pride received much attention in the last half of 1941. In an August article entitled "Pole and Celtic," the author, drawing on the shared heritage of the Catholic faith and their American nativity, argued for tolerance and mutual respect between the Polish and Irish youth in northern Brooklyn. The piece concludes: "Before you hastily judge a 'mick' remember that you are injuring a brother in Christ. If you are judged as a 'ski' explain the injury to your impetuous brothers." Two months later, the tone became more strident in an essay entitled "Not Polak—But Pole." Citing a recent story published in *Collier's Weekly*, which, "either through ignorance or through intolerance," referred to one of the characters as a "Polack," the author called for a more rigorous promotion of positive ethnicity among the readers of the *Patron*.[12]

By the time of the United States' entry into the Second World War, the *Patron* served as an index of how far the Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish had Americanized. While *Polskość*, especially the Polish language, continued to be valued, its preservation was advocated in a more defensive manner. Parents who fail to promote the language in their children were criticized as irresponsible and less than patriotic. The parish school was the bulwark against further ethnic deterioration in the United States. This campaign of linguistic preservation, however, shared pages with the theme of accommodation to life in multi-ethnic Brooklyn. When the magazine called on its readers to correct

[11] "On May," *Patron*, Maj 1941, p.49; "False Profits," *Patron*, Wrzesień 1941, p. 125; "Don't Judge Harshly," *Patron*, Wrzesień 1941, p. 125.
[12] "Pole and Celtic," *Patron*, Sierpień 1941, p. 98; "Not Polak—But Pole," *Patron*, Październik 1941, p. 151.

individuals who mistakenly call them "Polacks," and when it promoted tolerance of the parish's Irish-American neighbors, as well as when it called on the parishioners to be wary of Communists promoting their cause in Greenpoint, the *Patron* indicated the extent to which the members of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish, especially its youth, had transitioned from Poles to Polish-Americans.

With the United States' entry into the Second World War, the dual messages of the magazine continued. Throughout 1942 and 1943, as the *Patron* became a weekly publication, the plight of Poland and the suffering of its inhabitants became a regular feature. In the July 26, 1942 edition, for example, the article, "VERBOTEN! Poles in Poland Are Strictly Forbidden," lists the various restrictions placed on Poles by their Nazi occupiers. A little over a year later, the magazine published a piece entitled "Poor Poles, . . . Your Hearts Are Bleeding," a reprint of an article written by Harvey Woodstock, which described the tragic nature of Polish political history. However, even here, the orientation of the author and reader shifted, for at the end of the essay, Woodstock injects a ray of hope: "But lose not all hope, my dear Polish Brother! Look towards the shiny star, one of your own, among the eternal stars and stripes! Trust the Old Glory in which flows a stripe of Polish heroic blood. With Washington, Kosciuszko, and Pulaski [sic], we took a bold stand, armed with right against might, and victory was ours." While the pain of their family and friends was quite real, those individuals who would come to the aid of Poland would do so as Americans of Polish descent.[13]

This alliance of an American ethnic community and its ancestral homeland was also evident in more propagandistic pieces such as "Obok Sztandaru Amerykanskiego

[13] "VERBOTEN! Poles in Poland Are Strictly Forbidden," *Patron*, 26 July 1942, p. 11; Harvey Woodstock, "Poor Poles, . . . Your Hearts Are Bleeding," *Patron*, 29 August 1943, p. 8.

Niech Powiewa Sztandar Polski" ("Beside the American Banner may the Polish Flag Wave") and "Gwiaździsty Sztandar," ("Starry Banner"). More subtle and charming in its approach was the comic strip, "Wanda," drawn by Laura Wasiewicz. First introduced in December 1941, "Wanda" told the story of a Polish orphan, comparable in character and manner to "Lil Orphan Annie," brought by Santa Claus from the "Polish War Refugees" office in London to Greenpoint. Over the next year, Wanda engages in a variety of funny yet frivolous pranks and activities in Brooklyn. Starting with the July 4, 1943 edition of the *Patron*, however, Wanda, like her more famous American counterpart, became actively involved in the war effort. When her dog, "Sandy," runs on board a Nazi cargo ship docked on the Brooklyn waterfront, Wanda follows, only to be locked in and, without the crew being aware of her presence, taken to occupied Poland. While in Poland, Wanda outsmarts the Nazis at every turn, finally returning to Brooklyn with Teddy, an orphan, whose parents were killed in a German attack.[14]

When the Second World War finally ended, the destruction of the war and Poland's fate behind the Iron Curtain as well as the wartime changes among Polish-Americans, drastically changed the political and psychological terrain in which the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States worked. Although both international and domestic conditions affected the Polish Vincentians' work in America as early as the 1920s, the severity of the change brought on by the ravages of war in Europe exacerbated the changes in American Polonia. The wartime isolation experienced

[14] "Obok Sztandaru Amerykańskiego Niech Powiewa Sztandar Polski," *Patron*, 24 May 1942, p. 9; "Gwiaździsty Sztandar," *Patron*, 14 June 1942, p. 8; Laura Wasiewicz, "Wanda," *Patron*, 4 July 1943 to 29 August 1943, p. 16.

by the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province laid a firm foundation for the confreres' campaign for autonomy two decades later.

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On June 8, 1945, Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz, C.M., the Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, wrote to the Vicar-General of the Congregation of the Mission, Father Edouard Robert, C.M. Having been appointed to the office of Vice-Visitor in 1932 and having weathered numerous crises, both internal and external, and complaining of his "age, lack of health and increasing deafness," he requested that his "humble petition" to resign his office be accepted. As his successor, he recommended Father Constantine Witaszek, C.M., who currently resided at Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania. Always aware of his subordinate position to his Visitor, Father Józef Kryska, C.M., he qualified his recommendation of Father Witaszek. "[H]e is qualified for this charge at least for the meantime until we will be able to contact the Very Rev. Joseph Kryska, Visitor of Poland," a task that, he stated, might take quite some time, "as Poland is ruled now by a foreign power."[15]

In a second letter to Father Robert, written on September 26, 1945, Father Mazurkiewicz more fully described the sense of isolation experienced by the Polish Vice-Province and its confreres as well as how they coped over the wartime years. Without a way to communicate with the Curia in Paris, Father Mazurkiewicz, "in the spirit of Father St. Vincent de Paul," appointed Superiors to the various houses of the Polish Vice-Province and, in general, "tried to rule over our Vice-Province." A responsibility forced upon him was the formation of candidates for the priesthood. Blocked from sending

[15] Mazurkiewicz to Very Rev. Edward [sic] Robert, C.M., 8 June 1945, Congregation of the Mission, Curia Archives, Rome (C.A.R.).

young men to the Houses of Formation of the Polish Province, such as the one in Stradom in Kraków, Poland, the confreres in the United States had to rely on the Eastern Province for the education of its seminarians. With the outbreak of the war, eight men returned from Poland and, with the generous consent of Father William M. Slattery, C.M., the Visitor of the Eastern Province, continued their studies at the Mary Immaculate Seminary in Northampton, Pennsylvania. The seven men who were ordained, John Stuczyński, Vincent Możdzier, Ceslaus (Henry) Czekała, John Kuczyński, Edmund Kowalski, Sigismund Gosk, and Adam Minkiel, played significant roles in the various houses of the Vice-Province, especially Saint John Kanty Prep in the 1950s and 1960s and in the autonomy movement of the mid-1960s.[16]

While the confreres in the United States were cut off from both the Mother Province in Poland and the Curia in France, some of their fellows found themselves stranded oceans away from the Vice-Province. One American seminarian studying in Poland before the outbreak of the war, Francis Bogacz, was given permission by the Visitor in Poland at the end of 1940 to travel to Shuntehfu, China with members of the Polish Province, where he was to be ordained. He got as far as Manila in the Philippines, where the United States government refused to issue him a visa to continue his travels. With no other options available to him, Bogacz was taken in by the Spanish Vincentians and taught English in the seminary of the Archdiocese of Manila. When the Philippines fell to the Japanese, Bogacz was placed in a concentration camp in Los Banos. Following his liberation by American military forces, he returned to the United States,

[16] Mazurkiewicz to Very Reverend Edward [sic] Robert, C.M., 26 September 1945, C.A.R.

where Bishop Henry Joseph O'Brien of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut ordained him on September 21, 1945.[17]

Bogacz was not the only member of the Polish Vice-Province stranded in the Pacific Theater during the Second World War. Two American-born confreres, Father Joseph Paciorek, C.M. (born in Adams, Massachusetts) and Father Henry Sawicki, C.M. (born in Brooklyn, New York), served in Wenchow, China under the direction of Father Paweł Kurtyka, C.M. With the advance of the Japanese, Fathers Paciorek and Sawicki escaped with a group of Eastern Province confreres and returned to the United States.[18]

Along with the American-born members escaping the turmoil in Asia, the Polish Vice-Province also became a haven for confreres from the Polish Province. In the immediate postwar period, as the communist forces in China secured control of province after province, they announced that all foreign priests had to leave the country. This order resulted in an exodus of Polish confreres to Australia, Brazil, and the United States. For the members of the Polish Vice-Province, their expulsion held both opportunities and challenges.

On March 8, 1947, Father Mazurkiewicz wrote to Father Marshall F. Winne, C.M., the Visitor of the Western Province of the United States. Citing the Polish Vice-Province's prewar mission work in Polish parishes in Chicago and Milwaukee, the money and time expended in sending confreres from Erie, and Whitestone, Queens, and the fact that additional space was needed to house temporarily the confreres displaced

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid, Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M., *Growth of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, 1904-2004* (Manchester: Vincentian Fathers, New England Province, 2004), p. 242; The Editorial Staff, "A Survey of American Vincentian History: 1815-1987," in *The American Vincentians: A Popular History of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, 1815-1987*, edited by John E. Rybolt, C.M. (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1988), p. 77.

from China, Father Mazurkiewicz requested Father Winne's assistance in securing the Cardinal Samuel A. Stritch's permission to establish a house in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The Polish Vice-Province hoped "to buy a larger house . . . preferably in the outskirts of Chicago with an easy access to the city by trolley, bus, or railroad" so that it could relieve the congestion of its houses, "overfilled with refugees."[19]

Four days after writing Father Winne, Father Mazurkiewicz dispatched a letter to Father Robert in Paris, describing the Chicago proposal and the fact that both the Vice-Province's and the Polish Province's Councils had approved of the idea. The promise of the assistance of Father Michael O'Connell, the superior of the Western Province's house at DePaul University, in identifying "realty firms or banks that will have listings of property that may be suitable" for the Vice-Province's needs, brought the proposed house one step closer to becoming a reality. Father Mazurkiewicz, however, reported that a potential problem had emerged over control of the proposed house. Father Wacław Czapla, C.M., who was one of the pioneer Polish Vincentians of the Shuntehfu mission, "a zealous priest, but without great experience," according to Father Mazurkiewicz, "imagined that this house will be exclusively occupied by the Shuntehfu Confreres and by him as Superior and that all the incomes whatsoever will go to the Shuntehfu Fund."[20]

The 1947 proposal was rejected because of its "impracticability." Father Mazurkiewicz then approached Bishop John M. Gannon of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania, who, in turn, granted permission for the refugee confreres to reside at Saint John Kanty Prep and work in the Diocese's parishes. While the decision against

[19] Mazurkiewicz to Winne, 8 March 1947, De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives, DePaul University Library, Special Collections & Archives (De Andreis-Rosati Archives).
[20] Winne to Mazurkiewicz, 11 March 1947, De Andreis-Rosati Archives; 12 March 1947, Mazurkiewicz to Father Robert, 12 March 1947, C.A.R.; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 31.

the confreres from the Shintehfu mission settling in Chicago was welcomed by Father Mazurkiewicz, its endangerment of the Polish Vice-Province's western expansion plans was not. On April 22, 1949, he again wrote to Father Winne, informing him of the continued requests of Polish pastors for the services of the confreres of the Vice-Province. He assured Father Winne that the matter of control over the proposed house had been settled and that the Polish Visitor, Father Józef Kryska, C.M., had written to the Superior General, Father William Slattery, C.M., in support of the idea of a Polish Vice-Provincial house in Chicago. Father Mazurkiewicz closed his letter by citing the fact that other communities were opening houses in Chicago. "[W]hy," he questioned, "should we be the last?"[21]

On May 18, 1949, Father Winne wrote Father Slattery informing him of the Polish Vice-Province's renewed request for a house in Chicago and asking him for his opinion on the matter. At the conclusion of the letter, Father Winne expressed a concern that would be regularly repeated over the next three decades. "With a house in Chicago the Polish confreres would probably pick up vocations, which they need now that now [sic] more can come from Poland, and also funds that might aid the Polish province. However, the younger generation of Poles in this country are not keeping up the language so, within another generation, there will probably be no need of these national parishes." Father Winne then questioned if permission was granted, might it not be a good idea to

[21] Mazurkiewicz to Winne, 22 April 1949, De Andreis-Rosati Archives; John L. Jankowski to Monsignor John M. Gannon, 25 November 1948, Archives of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania (A. R. C. D. E.); Gannon to "To whom it may concern," 27 November 1948, A. R. C. D. E.

have a time limit of twenty or thirty years on the Foundation. He worried that "[o]nce a house is established it would be difficult to get rid of it." Father Slattery, concurred.[22]

In mid-July 1949, Father Winne contacted Father Mazurkiewicz to inform him that the Superior General and the Western Provincial Council had granted permission for the Polish Vice-Province to establish a house "in the Archdiocese of Chicago, or some place in the west [sic], for missions among Polish-speaking Catholics in our province," on the conditions that it agree to a twenty-year renewable limit on the house and that Father Mazurkiewicz secure approval from the particular Ordinary and that he be fully aware that "the confreres of such house will be under the jurisdiction of the Vice-Visitor of the Polish Province in the United States and not under the jurisdiction of the Visitor of the Western Province of the Vincentian Fathers." On July 16th, Father Mazurkiewicz confirmed his receipt of Father Winne's letter and informed the Western Province's Visitor that "the approval would be forwarded to Father Kryska for further consideration." No further action was taken on the proposal.[23]

While the Polish Vice-Province failed to secure a house in the West, two of the Polish confreres who had fled China, and sought safe haven in the United States, Father Józef Grabka, C.M. and Father Ignacy Wieczorek, C.M., came to reside in the Western Province and hoped to become naturalized American citizens and return to Asia as missionaries in Formosa. Their refusal to join their fellows in the Polish Vice-Province led to a heated exchange of letters between Father Mazurkiewicz and the new Western Provincial, Father James W. Stakelum, C.M. In a February 17, 1953 letter, Father

[22] Winne to Slattery, 18 May 1949, Ducournau Archives; Slattery to Winne, 18 June 1949, Ducournau Archives.
[23] Winne to Mazurkiewicz, 13 July 1949, De Andreis-Rosati Archives; Mazurkiewicz to Winne, 16 July 1949, De Andreis-Rosati Archives.

Mazurkiewicz, citing the "great demand for Polish speaking [sic] priests at the present time as two died and some others are ill and aged," asked that Father Stakelum "kindly release them or at least one for the time of Lent."[24]

On April 22nd, Father Stakelum replied to Father Mazurkiewicz in a letter tinged with an animosity that foretold some of the problems that the Polish Vice-Province would experience in the 1960s. After explaining that both "local government authorities and the F.B.I. investigators advised that these two Fathers would do best to remain in this area," and reminding Father Mazurkiewicz of the difficulty of communicating with the Polish Visitor, Father Stakelum challenged Father Mazurkiewicz's charge that the two Polish confreres were being detained by him. "In view of the explanation and quotation given above, Father," Father Stakelum wrote, "I was very much surprised at your request that I release these two Confreres.' These Confreres are not being held captive by us. We are, indeed, very fond of them and greatly attached to them because of the great services they have rendered to Bishop Quinn and the other Confreres in the diocese of Yukiang. If either wish to join you, Father, he will write you to that effect after the Superior General has been informed." The motivations and concerns that characterized the decision regarding a Chicago house for the Polish Vice-Province—personnel, the assimilation of American Polonia, and the location of a Vice-Provincial house in the territory of another Province—would come to characterize the inter-provincial relations of the Polish Vice-Province for the next two decades.[25]

The House that became the main point of contention in the Polish Vice-Province's interaction with the two American Provinces of the Congregation of the Mission was

[24] Mazurkiewicz to Stakelum, 17 February 1953, De Andreis-Rosati Archives.
[25] Stakelum to Mazurkiewicz, 22 April 1953, De Andreis-Rosati Archives.

Saint John Kanty College in Erie, Pennsylvania. Like the Polish Vincentians' house at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, Saint John Kanty College underwent significant changes during the Second World War. While the need for and quality of the college division had been questioned before the war, it was the call to arms during the war that finally spelled its demise. After 1945, Saint John Kanty existed only as a college-preparatory high school.[26]

Like the youth of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish, the students of Saint John Kanty Prep were actively negotiating a Polish-American identity unique from the immigrant or second-generation identity of their parents. This syncretism was evident in the pages of the school's student magazine, the *Kantianus*. In the February 1943 edition, for example, two articles illustrate the biculturalism of the student body. In "Dlaczego Kocham Polskę?" ("Why Do I Love Poland?"), the author wrote that his love for Poland stemmed from the fact that not only was Poland the land of his parents' nativity, it was also "[m]y motherland, ancient and dear soil." It was "[t]he mother from which one million issue." This Polish-language ode, however, was countered three pages later in an essay entitled, "What Uncle Sam Means to Me." Falling into slumber after reading of the "[d]eath and bloodshed" of the war, the narrator encounters "a tall, old man, with white hair and beard . . . the brow of a thinker, the eyes of a dreamer, the shoulders of a laborer and the hands of a sculptor or doctor." Embodying all that is America, the narrator has Uncle Sam associate himself with the Statue of Liberty, "the clatter and bang of the New York Traffic . . . the lights on Broadway . . . the roaring crowd at Madison Square Garden as

[26] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 66-67. From this point, the Polish Vice-Province's school in Erie, Pennsylvania will be referred to as "Saint John Kanty Prep."

two fighters battle for the welter crown," and "the hundred thousand rain-coated, shivering crowd at the Army-Navy football classic."[27]

For the young men enrolling at Saint John Kanty Prep in the years immediately after the Second World War, any sense of *polskość* was brought to campus from home, not a sensitivity that was instilled by the faculty and staff of the school. Although not universal, the students' ability to speak Polish was a result, most often, of their upbringing. In a 2004 interview, Daniel Kij (1948) recalled that, while an overwhelming majority of the students had Polish surnames and spoke Polish, it was not their first language. His fluency, he continued, was a result of his upbringing and the fact that his father, Joseph F. Kij, Sr., M.D. (1921) used the language in his medical practice. John Ptak (1949), recalled that his father, who was born in Buffalo, New York, returned to Poland at a very young age, and came back to the United States in his mid-twenties, understood very little English. Ptak mentioned that he spoke Polish with his parents until their deaths. Edward Szemraj (1952), "a first-generation American," spoke Polish exclusively until he entered elementary school. His mastery of Polish was so good that he gave the Polish-language address at his graduation ceremony.[28]

The students at Saint John Kanty Prep in the immediate wake of the Second World War were Polish Americans. During his years at the school, Kij recalled that only one student was born in Poland. For many of these students, the decision to attend Saint John Kanty Prep was a result of contact with an alumnus of the school. Kij was a legacy of the school; Ptak was influenced by the pastor of Saint Valentine Parish in

[27] "Dlaczego Kocham Polskę?," *Kantianus*, February 1943, p. 4; "What Uncle Sam Mean to Me," *Kantianus*, February 1943, p. 7.
[28] Daniel Kij, John Ptak & Edward Szemraj, interviewed by author, tape recording, Lackawanna, New York, 21 August 2004.

Cheektowaga, New York, a graduate of the Kanty class of 1917; Szemraj, in turn, decided to apply to the school at the suggestion of a prominent attorney alumnus of Saint John Kanty Prep, Joseph S. Matała, Sr. (1923).[29]

For most of the immediate postwar students, their enrollment at the School was, like their predecessors, still considered a first step to personal upward mobility, an effort to obtain "a certain degree of status in life." In the case of John Ptak, his father, an employee of the Pillsbury Flour Mill, had to borrow the $300.00 from a bank to pay his son's tuition. "They [the students at Saint John Kanty Prep] were the sons of immigrants," Daniel Kij affirmed, "and they did something quite well for themselves and for their community in America."[30]

The community into which these young men entered was an isolated one. Because of the recruitment methods used by the Polish Vincentians, the students came primarily from Connecticut, Brooklyn, New York, the vicinity of Buffalo, New York, and the area around Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. These localities were ones with high concentrations of Polish Catholics and where the Polish Vice-Province had a parish. Very few Polish Americans from Erie attended the School. With very few exceptions, the students boarded at the school. Except for Wednesday afternoons, when no classes were held, and Sundays, the students remained on campus, surrounded by a large swath of land that included a farm that provided food for the student meals and woods.[31]

Socially, Saint John Kanty Prep was also isolated from the Polish community in Erie, Pennsylvania and the other schools in the Erie Roman Catholic Diocese. No dances

[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.

or social events took place on campus. John Ptak recalled that, while the Polish Vincentians served a number of area parishes on the weekends, there was little interest shown by the young men of Polish extraction from Erie in attending the school. He attributed this to the fact that the Polish-American community in the city perceived Saint John Kanty Prep "as a school for the rich and elite."[32]

Within the Kanty community, there was a strict sense of discipline enforced by the faculty, staff, and upperclassmen. Students were awakened at 6:30 a.m. by one of the confreres, who announced, in Latin, to the sleeping students, "Let us praise the Lord," to which they were to respond, "Praise be to God!" The school day included at least two study-hall sessions before lights out at 9:00 p.m. On Saturdays, students were assigned clean-up duties, both by the priests and by the seniors. While described by Edward Szemraj as "severe," the discipline dispatched by both the upperclassmen and the confreres was instrumental, according to John Ptak, in instilling a unique "Kanty spirit."[33]

This Americanization of the student body of Saint John Kanty Prep was matched by an Americanization of the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province. Following in the footsteps of the confreres forced to return to the United States from Poland with the outbreak of the Second World War, a new generation of postwar candidates attended the Eastern Province's Mary Immaculate Seminary at Northampton, Pennsylvania. Bicultural while sharing backgrounds with their fellow candidates from the Eastern Province, these men, Fathers Julian Szumiło, Joseph Lachowski, Frederick Piłatowski, Stephen Minkiel, George Dąbrowski, Chester Mrówka, and others, all ordained between

[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.

1950 and 1959, would play pivotal roles in the establishment of the New England Province.[34]

While the 1950s witnessed increased Americanization among the students of Saint John Kanty Prep and the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province, it also saw a continuation of relations between the confreres in the United States and the Polish Province. With the confreres in Poland chafing under the continued pressure from the communist government, however, this relationship evolved from one in which the Vice-Province was perceived as subservient to the Mother Province to one in which it served as a caretaker for the Polish confreres who remained outside the borders of their home country. This transition and its influence on how the confreres of the Vice-Province thought about their relations with confreres of the Polish Province is evident in the correspondence between the Polish Vice-Visitor, Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz, and the Very Reverend Nicholas Rossiter, C.M., the Visitor of the Australian Province.

In 1949, after their expulsion from Communist China, a number of confreres from the Polish Province, unable to return to Poland, were received into the Australian Province to serve the spiritual needs of the Polish Catholic population living in New South Wales and Queensland. While serving the postwar Polish diaspora in Australia, these confreres resided in houses of the Australian Province. In the spring of 1951, conflict arose between Father Mazurkiewicz and Father Rossiter over the control of funds generated by and the supervision of this group of confreres. Responding to Father Mazurkiewicz's questions regarding their treatment, Father Rossiter explained, "I wish to

[34] John G. Nugent, C.M. to "Dear Confreres," 22 October 1974, Ducournau Archives; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 232-258; Edward P. Gicewicz, *Kanty: 1909-1959, First Fifty Years of St. John Kanty College and Preparatory School at Erie, Pennsylvania*, (Erie: St. John Kanty Press, 1959), p. 163.

put them on the same footing as the others [confreres of the Australian Province] re. poverty, and do not encourage the view that they were separate, a community within a community, but rather equal in status of the permanent members of the province." In addition, Father Rossiter explained that his immediate supervision of the Polish confreres, as well as the funds generated by them in their work among the Polish diaspora, was further justified by the fact that "no Bishop would consider a Polish house, and I would not favour it, as their work among the migrants requires that they spread far apart in different centres."[35]

On April 4, 1951, Father Mazurkiewicz responded to Father Rossiter with a letter that illustrates the degree to which the Polish Vice-Province sought to maintain the authority its Mother Province in Poland over its members as well as the preservation of *polskość* among the displaced Polish population in Australia. Reacting to Father Rossiter's treatment of the Polish confreres, Father Mazurkiewcz warned, "They are at the present time under your jurisdiction, but on the other hand they did not cease to be members of the Polish Province, which has sent them and is and will be always greatly interested in their welfare and in their work among the Polish migrants." Seeking to rectify the reasons for his expressed concern about the control of funds collected by the Polish confreres, Father Mazurkiewicz cited the ongoing mistreatment of Polish refugees, who were moved "from camp to camp to make place for a 'better class of people'" by Australian authorities This immediate regard for control of funds, he continued, was necessary for the establishment of Polish national parishes in Australia. Citing the fact that such churches were instrumental in the proper fusion of Polish and American

[35] Rossiter to Mazurkiewicz, 20 March 1951, A. N. E. P.

identities among the descendents of Polish immigrants in the United States, Father Mazurkiewicz expressed his hope that "in Australia all state and church authorities will go in line with other countries, which have solved the migration problem in such splendid and successful manner." He concluded his letter by asking Father Rossiter to permit "God to do something in this case to enlighten all concerned of the necessity of such [a] house."[36]

Back in the United States, Father Mazurkiewicz noted, the ongoing assimilation of American Polonia and the stringent policies of the communist government in Poland were beginning to erode the Polish nature of life at Saint John Kanty Prep. Beginning in 1950, the Vice-Province contracted with the Felician Sisters to aid in the kitchen at the school. In May 1957, however, the Felicians informed the confreres that they had to withdraw at the end of the 1957-1958 academic year. In January 1958, the St. John Kanty Prep House Council still had not found replacements for the Felicians. Suggestions were made to contact such Polish orders as the Bernadine Sisters, the Sisters of the Resurrection, the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Third Order of Saint Francis, the Franciscan Sisters of Blessed Kunegunda, as well as the Ursuline Sisters and the Daughters of Mary of the Immaculate Conception. By March of that year, no progress had been made locating a group of Polish nuns willing to work at the school. The House Council soon after began considering either relying of laywomen or "Mexican or Spanish Sisters to keep house for us." Finally, with the assistance of Carroll Kearns, Congressman from the State of Pennsylvania (Harrisburg), the Polish Vice-Province was able to secure the services of the Servants of Mary (Servite Sisters). If they liked it or

[36] Mazurkiewicz to Rossiter, 4 April 1951, A. N. E. P.

not, the confreres of the Vice-Province were becoming part of the multi-ethnic American Catholic Community.[37]

More pressing for the well-being of Saint John Kanty Prep, however, was the combination of rising costs and the increased educational alternatives available for the English-speaking young men of American Polonia. At its January 1958 meeting, the Erie House Council discussed the issue of tuition and the growing competition for students between Saint John Kanty Prep and the Eastern Province's school in Princeton, New Jersey. With the cost of tuition at Saint Joseph's Seminary being "much lower" than that of Kanty, Father Edward Gicewicz, C.M. recommended that the Vice-Province institute a scholarship for students, who "have at least a 'C' in every subject." In addition, he recommended that a reduction in tuition be instituted for young men considering joining the Polish Vice-Province. After discussing the fact that many potential candidates for the priesthood lost their interest in the vocation while at Kanty and the perception that they might receive a better education at the Eastern Province's minor seminary at Princeton, the Council decided that every candidate for the Vice-Province be given a discount on his tuition if he asked for one. That September, the issue of tuition came up again. Recognizing the need to raise the general tuition while maintaining some sense of *polskość* at the School, Father Gicewicz suggested that the school "could do it like it is done at Alliance College: raise tuition for everyone and grant a reduction in the form of a scholarship to those who know Polish." While the historical record does not indicate if the above proposal was accepted, the minutes of the October 1958 meeting mention that,

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[37]*Saint John Kanty Prep House Council Minutes*, 29 August 1950, 3 May 1957, 7 January 1958, 5 February 1958, 5 March 1958, 13 May 1958, 5 June 1958, 8 July 1958, 17 September 1958, 5 December 1958, 28 May 1959, 5 October 1959, A. N. E. P.

with the faculty's approval, the house council raised the tuition by $100.00. With the increasing costs of maintaining the property at the school and a batch of newly erected diocesan high schools against which it had to compete for students, Saint John Kanty Prep was at a crossroads at the end of the 1950s.[38]

Exacerbating the anxiety resulting from the need to raise tuition in the face of growing competition from the Eastern Province's minor seminary and newly established high schools in the dioceses from whence their students came was the growing concern over the quality of students being accepted to Saint John Kanty Prep and the resulting disciplinary problems. At the July 8, 1958 meeting of the House Council, after a discussion of whether student prayers should be said in English or Polish, Father Gicewicz brought up the subject of a new student disciplinarian, a post he believed needed to be filled by an American-born confrere, one who understood the psyche of American youth. The subject of "disciplinary problems arising in the school" arose again in October 1959. Perceiving an ongoing and accelerating deterioration of student discipline, Father Gicewicz proposed as a solution "a more strenuous physical fitness program to relieve the boys' energies and tension, or in view of [the] national trend of delinquencies to follow the advice of some to disband the whole present student body and renew this September with accepting freshman only for a new four-years of a community seminary course."[39]

The students that were the target of Father Gicewicz's criticism were members of a generation of American Polonia transitioning further into the American mainstream

[38] *Saint John Kanty Prep House Council Minutes*, 7 January 1958, 17 September 1958, 23 October 1958, A. N. E. P.; John Ptak, interviewed by author, tape recording, Lackawanna, New York, 21 August 2004.
[39] *Saint John Kanty Prep House Council Minutes*, 8 July 1958, 5 October 1959, 27 January 1960, A. N. E. P.

than the one that came to Saint John Kanty Prep in the immediate wake of the Second World War. Like their predecessors, the young men who arrived in Erie in the mid-1950s came from households with a mixed sense of ethnic identity. For Henry Jacek (1959), Polish was something he had learned while growing up and not a subject to which he had to devote much time at Saint John Kanty Prep. For others, Polish was the language of the home, acquired without an academic sense of grammar. While Bernie Lepkowski (1960) did not speak Polish at home, he recalls Polish-language conversations between his two parents and his older siblings. His classmates, Mike Lombardo (1960) and Joe Adkins (1960), by contrast, were both fluent in the language. Lombardo recalled that he was one of only two students who entered Saint John Kanty Prep who were able to converse in their native language with the Polish nuns and Polish laywomen who worked at the school.[40]

The Saint John Kanty Prep attended by Adkins, Jacek, Lepkowski, and Lombardo was drastically different than the one attended by Kij, Ptak, and Szemraj. In a little over a decade, the ethnic identity of the school had begun to ebb. While he spoke fluent Polish, Jacek believed that a mastery of the language was not necessary to succeed at the school, for all the priests spoke English. The emphasis that was placed on a Polish identity was more akin to a sense of group pride that depended on getting as many Polish-Americans into "positions of authority" as possible. Adkins, Lepkowski, and Lombard concurred that there was little conscious attention given to the idea of *polskość*.

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[40] Henry Jacek, Ph.D., interviewed by author, tape recording, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, 23 August 2004; Bernie Lepkowski, interviewed by author, tape recording, North Canton, Ohio, 8 April 2004; Mike Lombardo, interviewed by author, tape recording, North Royalton, Ohio, 8 April 2004; Joe Adkins, interviewed by author, tape recording, Clinton, Ohio, 7 April 2004.

While not the Saint John Kanty Prep of the late-1940s, the School still maintained traditions that distinguished it from other Catholic high schools. One particularly controversial one mentioned by the alumni of the classes of 1959 and 1960 was the ongoing role that the senior class played in the discipline doled out to the underclassmen. A political scientist at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Jacek compared the freshman to slaves, the sophomores to serfs, the juniors to freemen, and the seniors to masters. Lombardo characterized the seniors in his freshman year as the "disciplinary arm" of Father John Stuczyński, the school's student director. Lombardo, who later attended The Citadel, described the methods used by the seniors against underclassmen as "sheer brutality." The only thing, Lepkowski recalled, that saved him from being called into the senior clubhouse, the "smoker," for disciplining was the fact that his brother was a senior when Lepkowski was a freshman. The class of 1960, however, was the last to experience such extreme discipline as more modern theories of discipline soon arrived at the school.[41]

The changes that Saint John Kanty Prep underwent in the second half of the 1950s were the beginning of a process that would continue for decades to come. By the end of the 1950s, there were still distinct differences between Kanty and other Catholic secondary schools. Upset with the "bullying" that took place in the "smoker," Lepkowski transferred to the Erie Catholic Diocese's Cathedral Prep after his freshman year. The size and culture of the much larger Cathedral Prep, however, soon brought Lepkowski back to Saint John Kanty Prep. Henry Jacek, on the other hand, completed four years of study at the school before entering the Eastern Province's Saint Joseph

[41] Ibid.

College. The difference between the two Vincentian Schools, he recalled, was stark. Lacking the intimacy of a school the size of Saint John Kanty Prep, Jacek described Saint Joseph College as cold and insensitive to the poor. As a fifth-year student coming from the Polish Vice-Province, he and fellow Kanty Alumni were considered "aliens." At a time when John F. Kennedy brought his youth, energy and faith to the White House, Jacek stated that the political hero of the Eastern Province was the conservative gadfly, William F. Buckley Jr. While he never claimed a particularly strong ethnic identity beforehand, Jacek's experience at the college assigned him one. "They were the Irish . . . There were the Irish and there were the Poles. . . . I was an outsider from day one."[42]

Accompanying the above changes in the confreres and students of Saint John Kanty Prep were efforts to reorient the Polish Vincentians' presence in Erie, Pennsylvania and to expand the Vice-Province's presence and influence among the Polish-American enclaves in the eastern half of the United States. With its large swath of underdeveloped land, Archbishop John M. Gannon's plan to erect a new parish for area Catholics, and "an acute shortage of priests" in the Erie Diocese, the Vice-Visitor of the Vice-Province, Father Kazimierz T. Kwiatkowski, C.M., authorized the Rector and Superior at Saint John Kanty Prep, Father Julian A. Szumiło, C.M., in early October 1959 "to offer the services of the Vincentian Fathers of his Vice-Province to organize and to care for this new *territorial parish* if it be God's Will." (emphasis added) In offering the confreres' assistance to Archbishop Gannon in the creation of a territorial parish, Father Kwiatkowski and his Consultors recognized that the changes they saw before them in the

[42] Bernie Lepkowski, interviewed by author, tape recording, North Canton, Ohio, 8 April 2004; Henry Jacek, Ph.D., interviewed by author, tape recording, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, 23 August 2004.

students of Saint John Kanty Prep and the parishioners in their three parishes in Connecticut required a reimagining of the Vice-Province.[43]

Earlier, in the summer of 1959, expansion plans of a different sort brought the Polish Vice-Province into conflict with the Eastern Province of the United States. The focal point of this dispute was the city of Detroit, Michigan. On June 30th, Father Sylvester Taggart, C.M., the Provincial of the Easter Province wrote to Father William Slattery, C.M., the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and a former Provincial of the Eastern Province, in reaction to a proposal by the Polish Vice-Province to establish a house in the Archdiocese of Detroit. Father Taggart informed Father Slattery that the Eastern Province had considered erecting its own house in Detroit and was concerned "that the foundation of a Polish House might jeopardize our own chances." Father Taggart and his Consultors, aware of the sensitive nature of the situation, "thought it prudent to submit it for your [Father Slattery's] consideration."[44]

In his reply to Father Taggart, Father Slattery reiterated the fact that he did "not wish to do anything that would be an obstacle to your Province obtaining a place in the Archdiocese of Detroit." Without making a firm statement on the proposed Detroit house, Father Slattery suggested that Father Taggart contact Archbishop John Dearden or one of the Detroit Diocesan Consultors to take a reading of where the Archbishop stood on the matter. On September 3, 1959, Father Taggart wrote back to Father Slattery informing him that he had spoken with Archbishop Dearden and the Archbishop had

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[43] Szumiło to Archbishop Gannon, 9 October 1959, A. R. C. D. E.. Bishop Gannon became Archbishop (personal title) on November 25, 1953. It is important to note that if given responsibility for a territorial parish, the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States would have been given an assignment to minister to a population without any ethnic restrictions or limitations.
[44] Taggart to Slattery, 30 June 1959, Ducournau Archives.

"definitely settled the question," rejecting the idea of a Polish Vice-Provincial house in Detroit.[45]

The efforts to establish a territorial parish on the campus of Saint John Kanty Prep and a Vice-Provincial house in Detroit, Michigan were but the opening moves in a campaign to expand the reach of and orientation of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. The next one was not too far behind. Approximately eight months after Archbishop Dearden's rejection, Monsignor Bernard Janczewski of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, New York, an alumnus of Saint John Kanty College, conveyed to Father Kwiatkowski Bishop Walter A. Foery's willingness "to consider the possibility of the establishment of a Mission House" in his diocese. On May 20, 1960, Bishop Foery wrote to Father Kwiatkowski, informing him "that the Congregation of the Mission of the Vice Province of America has my permission to establish a Mission House in the Diocese of Syracuse." He concluded his letter by suggesting that Father Kwiatkowski consider establishing the house "in the vicinity of Utica" where the Polish Vice-Province will have the "best opportunity for expansion and for service to our priests and parishes."[46]

Later that summer, Father Kwiatkowski telephoned Father William M. Slattery, C.M., the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, asking to meet with him to present Bishop Fiery's letter of consent for the erection of the house in Utica, New York as well as a second letter from Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien of Hartford, Connecticut, granting permission for the Polish Vice-Province to establish an Apostolic School and Scholasticate in the Archdiocese. Like the rejected proposal to move into

[45] Slattery to Taggart, 29 July 1959, Ducournau Archives; Taggart to Slattery, 3 September 1959, Ducournau Archives.
[46] Kwiatkowski to Bishop Foery, 25 April 1960, Archives of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, New York (A. R. C. D. S.); Bishop Foery to Kwiatkowski, 20 May 1960, A. R. C. D. S.

Detroit, the expansion plans into Utica and Hartford, however, would infringe upon the territorial rights of the Eastern Province. Being "very anxious to accept both these offers," Father Kwiatkowski informed Father Slattery that all of the Vice-Provincial Houses were "filled up" and that the Vice-Province "need[ed] to expand," but more importantly for the Eastern Province, that the confreres of the Vice-Province "would confine their efforts to the Polish element in these localities." In concluding a letter to Father Taggart, Father Slattery stated: "We here do not see any serious danger for your Province in this matter, but, of course, you know best since you are, as it were, on the scene."[47]

On August 27, 1960, the Provincial Consultors of the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission, responding to Father Slattery's request, met to consider the Vice-Province's appeal to establish Houses in the Hartford, Connecticut and Utica, New York. The vote on both proposals was unanimous in opposition. In his letter of explanation to the Superior General, Father Taggart emphasized that the proposed Apostolic School and Scholasticate in the Hartford Archdiocese "would seriously compromise our vocation programs." First among the reasons cited was the "complicated problem" of confirming that the Polish Vice-Province would be complying with their promise to "confine their efforts to the Polish elements in these localities." One thing that complicated the enforcement of the above restriction was the very definition of "the Polish elements in these localities." As seen above in the shifting identity among the students at Saint John Kanty Prep, intermarriage and assimilation had

[47] Slattery to Taggart, 29 July 1960, Ducournau Archives.

brought the youth of American Polonia into the American mainstream, blurring the lines that circumscribed ethnic identity.[48]

Furthermore, similar to the justification for the rejection of the Detroit proposal, Father Taggart cited the fact that the "trend in this country . . . is to eliminate as far as possible purely national parishes. With the number of Polish immigrants and the demand for Polish-speaking priests both falling, the practicality of the proposed Hartford house was quite limited. In buttressing this argument, Father Taggart explained that "[m]any of the priests ordained from Orchard Lake, the only Seminary in this country which trains Polish-speaking seminarians for the Diocesan Priesthood, actually do not use the Polish language after Ordination." If the proposed houses were permitted, he continued, the final result would be a retrenchment of the "position of the Polish Vice-Province and of the national parishes and groups," or, with the demise of Polish-language apostolates, the opening of the Apostolic School and Scholasticate to "non-Polish as well as Polish" students, thereby bringing them into direct competition with the Houses of Formation of the Eastern Province. The above reasons were also given for the Provincial Council's rejection of the proposed Mission House in Utica, New York.[49]

In a letter in response to Father Taggart's explanation, Father Slattery asked that the Provincial of the Eastern Province and his Council reconsider their decision. Along with his request, Father Slattery dispelled the intensity of the threat posed by the houses in Hartford, Connecticut and Utica, New York. In addition, he wrote: "We would not wish to give the Polish Vice-Province the impression that we were hemming them in too

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[48] *Eastern Provincial Council meeting Minutes*, 27 August 1960, Ducournau Archives.; Taggart to Slattery, 30 August 1960, Ducournau Archives.
[49]Taggart to Slattery, 30 August 1960, Ducournau Archives.

tightly, nor on the other hand, would we wish to do the least thing that would be a serious handicap to our Eastern Province." Before a second vote was taken, Father Slattery suggested that Father Taggart contact the Assistant General of the Congregation of the Mission, Father John Zimmerman, C.M., to receive his counsel on the matter of the Polish Vice-Province's proposals.[50]

Even as they negotiated to erect houses in the Archdiocese of Hartford and the Diocese of Syracuse, the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province continued to communicate with Syracuse's Bishop Foery, a process that continued to bring results. On September 15, 1960, Monsignor David J. Dooling received a letter from the Office of the Assistant Chancery, confirming that he was to rent to the Polish Vincentian Fathers the old convent located at Saint John the Evangelist Parish. The situation was a temporary one until the confreres could secure for themselves property on Cavanaugh Road for the construction of their Mission House. With or without permission, Father Kwiatkowski and his Consultors were moving forward with their expansion plans for the Vice-Province.[51]

Unaware of the progress on the establishment of a Polish-Vincentian presence in Utica, Father Taggart wrote to Father Slattery in early October 1960 with the results of the Provincial Council's reconsideration of the Polish Vice-Province's proposal. Once again, both the Hartford and Utica projects were rejected. "This double decision . . . ," Father Taggart wrote, "is, understandably, one of the most difficult which we have ever had to make. All of the Consultors and I felt a great deal of reluctance in having thus to voice our judgments contrary as they are to the wishes of our Polish confreres."

[50] Slattery to Taggart, 18 September 1960, Ducournau Archives.
[51] Assistant Chancellor to Monsignor David J. Dooling, 12 September 1960, A. R. C. D. S.

Furthermore, Father Taggart mentioned that he consulted Father John Zimmerman, who offered a new suggestion from Father Slattery to allow the Polish Vocations Director to speak about vocations in the schools in the Eastern Province. Father Taggart and his Council, citing the fact that "[t]he average Diocesan Vocations Director would not distinguish between the Polish Vice-Province and our own Province," rejected the idea.[52]

By the end of 1960, then, the Polish Vice-Province in the United States found itself in a rather precarious situation in regards to its relationship with the Eastern Province of the United States. Even though its membership was becoming increasingly American, a situation that mirrored the enrollment at Saint John Kanty Prep in Erie, Pennsylvania, the Polish Vice-Province's corporate identity was still one of a filial Vice-Province of the Polish Province headquartered in Kraków, Poland. This identity was severely tested, however, by both an assimilated American Polonia and a communist regime in Poland, which complicated both the communication and exchange of personnel between the Motherhouse house in Kraków and the houses of the Polish Vice-Province in Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania. This question of identity, both external and internal would continue to complicate relations between the Vice-Province and the Eastern Province and Polish Province for the next fifteen years.[53]

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[52] Taggart to Slattery, 5 October, 1960, Ducournau Archives.

[53] The 1954 Constitutions of the Congregation of the Mission identifies two types of vice-provinces. The first, an "autonomous vice-province," is defined as "one which depends on no fully constituted province, but which is governed by a Vice-Visitor under the direct and immediate power of the Superior General, like other fully constituted provinces." The Polish Vice-Province was a "filial vice-province," which the 1954 Constitutions defines as "one which takes its origin from another province already fully constituted, from which it receives its members and with which it forms one whole; this vice-province is ruled by a Vice-Visitor under the direct and immediate power of the Visitor of the province to which it is united." See: *Constitutions and Rules of the Congregation of the Mission*. (Paris: The Motherhouse of the Congregation of the Mission, 1954), p. 14.

The identity crisis of the Polish Vice-Province was far from settled, when, in late-February 1961, Father Slattery wrote to Father Taggart yet again on its activities. In a postscript to a letter dated February 22, 1961, Father Slattery asked if he had forwarded information to Father Taggart about Father Kwiatkowski's recent activities. "Through the Polish Assistant-General [Father Gerard Domogała] and through a publication in a Polish periodical," he wrote, "we learned that the Polish Confreres had established themselves in Utica or near Utica, for mission-work." In a recent letter, he continued, Father Kwiatkowski, himself, had confirmed the fact. Father Slattery also included a transcript of the letter he wrote to Father Kwiatkowski, informing him that he had never granted permission for the Utica Mission House. Recognizing the fact of its existence and the need to save the Congregation unnecessary embarrassment, Father Slattery allowed for the continued use of the house, but refused to erect the house canonically. Instead, he made it a rattaché of the Polish Vice-Province's Mission House in Whitestone, Queens. Father Slattery concluded his letter by questioning how Father Kwiatkowski could misunderstand his directive and assigning the future of the Polish Vincentians in Utica "to Divine Providence."[54]

By August 1961, work had progressed in Utica to the degree that the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province had rented a former Daughters of Charity convent on Park Avenue in Utica and had made a number of renovations, including a new chapel. In his letter of August 6th, Father Kwiatkowski asked that the Polish Vincentians be permitted

[54] Slattery to Taggart, 22 February 1961, Ducournau Archives. A rattaché is a house whose members are attached to another house. This attachment involved economic dependence on another house. Those priests living in the rattaché are required to obey the orders of the Superior of this second house. The "attaching" of the Utica House to the Whitestone House meant those confreres living in Utica could not act indpendently of the Superior in Whitestone.

to name the house the Saint Vincent de Paul Mission House" and thanked Bishop Foery "for the privilege of serving the Diocesan Clergy in whatever from [sic] we may be called upon to give that service." To further this apostolate, the Polish Vice-Province secured property in nearby Marcy, New York, where a "new mission house and a semi-public chapel" [without parochial status] were to be erected.[55]

While Father Kwiatkowski was positioning the Saint Vincent de Paul Mission House to serve the clergy of the Diocese of Syracuse, New York, irrespective of their ethnicity, Bishop Foery proposed an alternative apostolate. With the Christ the King Retreat House in Syracuse built only fifteen years previously and recently expanded, he thought the idea of the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province opening a second retreat house would be a waste of resources and personnel. "Our present and most serious need," he wrote Father Kwiatkowski in late January 1962, 'in which you may be able to help, is for priests or brothers qualified to teach in our Catholic secondary schools." With the Syracuse Diocese building a number of new high schools, Bishop Foery thought the efforts of the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province could be better utilized in replicating the educational success they had at Saint John Kanty Prep.[56]

At Saint John Kanty Prep, itself, a reorientation of the mission and structure of the school was under consideration in the early 1960s. On August 16, 1963, a diocesan committee, led by Auxiliary Bishop Edward P. McManaman, met with Father Stephen J. Minkiel, C.M. the Director of Students, and Father Wacław Czapla, C.M., the Rector and Superior of Saint John Kanty Prep. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the

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[55] Kwiatkowski to Bishop Foery, 6 August 1961, A. N. E. P.; Kwiatkowski to Bishop Foery, 25 January 1962, A. R. C. D. S.
[56] Bishop Foery to Kwiatkowski, 29 January 1962, A. N. E. P.

possibilities of converting the school into a comprehensive diocesan high school. With approximately 700 boys graduating annually from the Diocese's elementary schools and Cathedral Prep equipped to accept only half that number, the committee claimed that "another high school could be filled by this overflow of eighth grade boys [sic], and with its accreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Saint John Kanty Prep "would be a solution to pupil overflow for the Diocese, depending upon the faculty of the Vincentian Fathers."[57]

With the potential to expand the student body from its present 110 to approximately 1,000, there were a number of issues to be resolved, the primary one being how to maintain the culture and traditions of Saint John Kanty Prep, two of the more important being the school's six-day school schedule and its student discipline. Recalling the disciplinary problems introduced during the Second World War with the acceptance of day students, "day-hops," Father Czapla believed that a new generation of commuting students, especially girls, would severely erode the conduct of the boarding students. He further mentioned that for many parents the appeal of Saint John Kanty Prep was its isolation from the distractions usually found in contemporary high schools.[58]

Accommodating a student body of approximately 1,000 would also require a rapid renovation of the school's faculty and physical plant. From its current ten certified instructors, the faculty of the school would have to triple. When asked from whence he could get additional teachers, Father Minkiel replied that lay instructors as well as women religious would have to be recruited. When pressed by Bishop McManaman about

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[57] *Minutes of the Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee to Study the Possibility of Diocesan Secondary School Facilities at Saint John Kanty Prep, Erie, Pennsylvania*, 16 August 1963, A. R. C. D. E.
[58] Ibid.

additional confreres, Father Czapla replied that the Vice-Province could increase the number of Vincentian instructors to fifteen in four years' time. Along with its inadequately small faculty, Saint John Kanty Prep also lacked the classrooms, cafeteria, gymnasium, and library to serve such a large student body.[59]

Towards the end of the meeting, after Bishop McManaman recalled the number of non-Polish names on the diplomas at the last commencement ceremony, Father Czapla concurred that the school, while once exclusively for the sons of American Polonia, now possessed a more "cosmopolitan atmosphere." Although the two confreres could agree with Bishop McManaman on this first point, they could not concur with his next one. Citing the fact that the City of Erie did not need a second Catholic college preparatory high school, Bishop McManaman inquired if the Polish Vice-Province would be willing to convert Saint John Kanty Prep into a comprehensive high school, a shift that would allow the school to grow. With the high caliber of the school's English and mathematics curriculum and the fact that ninety percent of its graduates went on to college, Father Minkiel replied that such a shift would have to be discussed further with the Vice-Visitor and his Council. Recognizing the structural and philosophical limitations of the faculty and facilities of Saint John Kanty Prep, it was decided to abandon any further consideration of a diocesan high school to be run under the administration of the Polish Vincentian Fathers.[60]

A few months before the meeting between the committee from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie and Fathers Czapla and Minkiel in the summer of 1963 another meeting took place, one that serves as the opening salvo in a struggle between the Polish

[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

Vice-Province and the Eastern Province of the United States. On May 3, 1963, Father Taggart wrote Father Slattery, informing him of a conversation Father John Nugent, C.M. and he had with the Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province, Father Kwiatkowski. While assembled at an ordination ceremony at the Mary Immaculate Seminary, the three confreres discussed the possibility of having the Utica mission house of the Polish Vice-Province canonically erected and the state of relations between the Eastern Province and the Polish Vice-Province. Father Taggart informed Father Slattery that he was "reluctant to discuss all the angles of the subject" with the Vice-Visitor until he had conferred with the Superior General. The Provincial, however, did make one point clear to Father Kwiatkowski, "that we were opposed to the founding of any House of Formation in the United States for the Polish Vice-Province."[61]

Part of Father Taggart's suspicion came from the news that the Polish Vice-Province had begun construction of a new mission house in Utica on Crosby Manor Road. In an effort to get a better idea of the Polish Vice-Province's plans for the new building, Father Taggart dispatched Father Nugent and Father Carey Leonard to reconnoiter the construction site. Sensitive to the possibility that the Polish Vice-Province might sometime in the near future convert the facility to a seminary, the pair of confreres meticulously described the layout of the building and its rooms in a letter dated May 15, 1963. With the exception of one room in the central wing of the building, "[n]o rooms seemed to be manifestly designed as classrooms." With the rooms in the rear wing being capable of holding a "class of fifteen or twenty," however, and the possibility of

[61] Taggart to Slattery, 3 May 1963, Ducournau Archives. Ordained in 1949, Father John Nugent, C.M. was a Canon lawyer and member of the Eastern Provincial Council. He would later be instrumental in the negotiations between the Polish Vice-Province in the United States and the Eastern Province that resulted in the establishment of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission.

converting the basement and central-wing dining room, the potential of a seminary being established in Utica, the two confreres concluded, could not be ruled out.[62]

Striking a cautious tone, Father Slattery wrote to Father Taggart on May 27th, informing him that he had met with Father Kwiatkowski while the Vice-Visitor was en route to the Polish Provincial Assembly in Kraków. Father Kwiatkowski explained that he had sent confreres from the Polish Vice-Province to Utica in "good faith." In an effort to clarify the motives of the confreres of the Vice-Province, Father Slattery counseled Father Taggart to meet with Father Kwiatkowski to discuss the topic more fully either in Philadelphia or at the upcoming General Assembly.[63]

In preparation for the General Assembly, Father Slattery wrote Father Taggart on June 17, 1963, asking that he have his Consultors update him on their opinion of relations between the Eastern Province and the Polish Vice-Province. In no uncertain terms, the Provincial Council responded on August 2, 1963. The status quo between the two groups of Vincentians should be maintained; no "new Foundations," seminaries, "canonical Houses or rattaches," were to be established. The objective of these prohibitions was clear: "the Polish Vice-Province in America will die outk [sic] eventually."[64]

On the same day that the Eastern Provincial Council met, Robert J. Kujawa, a candidate of the Polish Vice-Province in America, then studying at the Mary Immaculate Seminary in Northampton, Pennsylvania, wrote to Father Kwiatkowski. After informing the Vice-Visitor of the Eastern Province's plan to sell its residence in Springfield, Massachusetts and the "private postulatum" for an immediate "canonical visitation by the

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[62] Nugent to Taggart, 15 May 1963, Ducournau Archives.
[63] Slattery to Taggart, 27 May 1963, Ducournau Archives.
[64] *Eastern Provincial Council Minutes*, 2 August 1963, Ducournau Archives.

Superior General or a delegate," Kujawa recalled a recent conversation in which he was asked by an unnamed confrere at the Seminary if the Polish Vice-Province's "recruitment of vocations is limited to boys of Polish descent." When he replied in the negative, he was "asked if it were true that Father Taggart is insisting on this." Kujawa responded that he did not know, but if it were true, Father Kwiatkowski "should know that the Visitor of the Central American Province has complained to the Superior General that the Eastern Province is taking vocations out of Panama which should go to the Central American Province according to the Holy Father's wishes." Kujawa went on to inform Father Kwiatkowski that Father Taggart had "refused to accept the reasoning on the basis that his men work in Panama and therefore his Province is entitled to the native vocations." Hoping that his Superior could use the Eastern Provincial's own logic to defend the Polish Vice-Province's claim to non-Polish vocations, Kujawa concluded, "We work here and are entitled to any prospective vocations that come our way." Battle lines between the Eastern Province of the United States and the Polish Vice-Province regarding the sensitive issues of territory and vocations were becoming more rigid. The full potential of the conflict, however, would not become manifest until six months later with the appointment of a new Vice-Visitor.[65]

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On February 4, 1964, Father Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M. wrote to Father William Slattery, C.M., the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, accepting his nomination as the sixth Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. American-born and a veteran military chaplain who had served during the Second World

[65] Kujawa to Kwiatkowski, 2 August 1963, Archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Kraków, (A. C. M. K.).

War and the Korean War, Gicewicz brought a more aggressive and direct management style to the office of the Vice-Visitor, a change that was immediately evident in his letter to Father Slattery. After quickly accepting the position of Vice-Visitor, Father Gicewicz sought the Superior General's approval to locate his "headquarters" in the newly completed Saint Vincent Mission House on Crosby Manor Road in Utica, New York. Enclosing a copy of a letter of support from Bishop Foery of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, New York, Father Gicewicz requested that Father Slattery authorize the canonical erection of the Utica House. Father Gicewicz argued further that with the Polish Vice-Province being incorporated in the State of New York and the fact that the Utica House was "centrally located to all our other homes," it was only logical that he should reside there. Rejecting the subordinate tone taken by his predecessors and foreshadowing his future actions, Father Gicewicz concluded his letter: "Please excuse my military terseness in the above as basic communication was odor [sic] of the services and I promise to become flowery in the future."[66]

Father Gicewicz's elevation to Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States came at a time of drastic changes in the Roman Catholic Church, as it began the daunting task of implementing the *aggiornamento* of the Second Vatican Council. This reorientation of the Universal Church was especially disturbing to religious Communities. In his study of the Society of Jesus, Peter McDonough identifies

[66] Gicewicz to Slattery, 4 February 1964, A. N. E. P.; Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M., interviewed by author, written transcript, Enfield, Connecticut, 1 October 2004. The approval letter from Bishop Foery read in part: "We are pleased, as Bishop of Syracuse, to extend a cordial invitation to the Reverend Fathers of the Congregation of the Mission to settle in our Diocese. We are pleased accordingly, to grant all the necessary permissions in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Canon Law, particularly Canons 495 to 497 for the Canonical erection of a religious house by the Fathers of the Congregation of the Mission at 277 Crosby Manor Road, Utica, New York 13502." It should be noted that Bishop Foery does not recognize the appeal as coming from the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. See: Foery to Slattery, 2 February 1964, A. N. E. P.

three qualities of organizational satisfaction that were severely tested in the mid-1960s. According to McDonough, individual and collective satisfaction with any organization depends on the fulfillment of three needs: the need for mastery, "the sense of exerting control over an area of performance," the need for meaning, "[t]he sense of clerical mission," and the need for "emotional support . . . the prestige and élan." While recognizing that a religious Community like the Society of Jesus is "too complex for this integration to be attained in practice," the ideal fulfillment of these three needs creates "a motivational metaphor [that] . . . approximates not only a preference but a perception of organizational reality . . . a context of understanding and a habit of feeling."[67]

Interpreting the pronouncements of the Second Vatican Council and the Congregation of the Mission's response to them as an opportunity to bring about "a revolution," by redefining the "motivational metaphor" of the Polish Vice-Province, Father Gicewicz saw his elevation to the Vice-Visitorship as an opportunity to move "full speed ahead." He wasted no time. On February 3, 1964, at the first meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council following his appointment, he led a discussion about opening a house of formation in Orchard Lake, Michigan, proposed purchasing the Eastern Province's House in Springfield, Massachusetts, and establishing a novitiate in the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut. While these ideas had been first proposed during the Visitorship of Father Kwiatkowski, they received renewed attention by Father Gicewicz.[68]

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[67] Peter McDonough. *Men Astutely Trained: A History of the Jesuits in the American Century* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), pp. 8-9.
[68] Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M., interviewed by author, written transcript, Enfield, Connecticut, 1 October 2004; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 3 February 1964, A. N. E. P.

Although characterized by a new dynamism, the Polish Vice-Province still faced the formidable opposition of the Eastern Province. This resistance became quite evident in Father Slattery's response to Father Gicewicz's request for the canonical erection of the Utica House. Informing the new Vice-Visitor that he and his Council had discussed such action twice in the past, "we have not consented, because the Provincial Council of the Eastern Province, U.S.A. has, for serious reasons, been opposed." Father Slattery did, however, mention that Father Gicewicz could make his request again "in about two months' time." Without the bravado of his initial letter to the Superior General, Father Gicewicz replied: "With charity, humility, and expression of lack of information, I am going to approach Father Taggart to brief me on the objections of erecting the Utica house."[69]

Four days after Father Gicewicz wrote Father Slattery, conditions between the Polish Vice-Province and the Eastern Province deteriorated further. The catalyst for this deepening of the crisis was a letter sent by William Consiglio, a candidate from the Vice-Province who was studying at the Eastern Province's Novitiate in Ridgefield, Connecticut, requesting a transfer from the Vice-Province to the Eastern Province. Explaining that his decision "was not formed on the spur of the moment," Consiglio explained that as he "got to see more of a cross section of their [the Eastern Province's and the Polish Vice-Province's] houses, their confreres, their works, their spirit . . . I found myself leaning toward the Eastern Province. In the conclusion to his letter, Consiglio mentioned that he was waiting for a response from Father Julian Szumiło,

[69] Slattery to Gicewicz, 13 February 1964, A. N. E. P.; Gicewicz to Slattery, 21 February 1964, A. N. E. P. Father Slattery also wrote Bishop Foery on the Eastern Province's opposition to the canonical erection of the Utica House, citing the fact that it would be to its "disadvantage . . . in the area of upper New York State." See: Slattery to Foery, 22 February 1964, A. R. C. D. S.

C.M., asking for "his counsel." On March 9th, Father Taggart wrote Consiglio, expressing his willingness to accept Consiglio.[70]

On February 28, 1964, Father Gicewicz met with Father Taggart at the Eastern Province's Saint John the Baptist Parish in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York to discuss the canonical erection of the Utica House. After addressing a few minor issues, Father Gicewicz asked Father Taggart for his opinion on "the best solution for the question of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States." What he heard shocked him. "I told Father that I fully appreciated all the difficulties and complications that would necessarily be involved," Father Taggart recalled, "but that, speaking from the viewpoint of the common good of our Eastern Province, I felt that the only long-range acceptable solution would be the amalgamation of the Polish Vice-Province with our Eastern Province."[71]

Although Father Gicewicz was, in Father Taggart's words, "at least somewhat taken aback," he soon rallied and countered with a proposal equally radical. With the anticipated sale of the Eastern Province's House in Springfield, Massachusetts, a move that he falsely assumed would leave the New England states without an Eastern Provincial foundation, Father Gicewicz proposed a plan "allowing the Polish Vice-Province to set up a territorial division in New England." Established as "a new Community jurisdiction, not strictly Polish in character," Father Gicewicz assured Father Taggart that "[h]e would permit the confreres of our Province [Polish Vice-Province] to conduct missions and novenas in such a territory. In addition, he offered to exchange

[70] Consiglio to Taggart, 25 February 1964, Ducournau Archives.
[71] Taggart to Slattery, 24 March 1964, Ducournau Archives.

"those Houses of the Polish Vice-Province which are presently outside the territory of New England" for the Eastern Province's Springfield, Massachusetts house.[72]

Father Taggart responded with a resolute refusal. "I told Father Gicewicz," he wrote Father Slattery, "that I, in no way, would approve of such a proposal. Neither the Consultors nor I would approve of giving up any territory within the present boundaries of the Eastern Province to any new separate Community jurisdiction, nor would we be willing to relinquish any Community House for such a jurisdiction." Father Taggart concluded his letter by informing him that he had received word that Bishop Christopher J. Weldon of Springfield, Massachusetts had granted permission to the Polish Vice-Province to establish a house in his Diocese.[73]

Although he had met with strong opposition in his conference with Father Taggart, Father Gicewicz continued his rapid-assault campaign to secure permission for the establishment of new Houses for the Polish Vice-Province. At the March 1964 Vice-Provincial Council meeting, he announced that his visit with Archbishop O'Brien of Hartford, Connecticut has been a success. The Archbishop, renewing an invitation made to the Polish Vice-Province in November 1959, granted permission for the establishment of a novitiate and mission house in the Archdiocese of Hartford. Plans were finalized for Father Gicewicz, accompanied by Fathers Jankowski and Starzec, to inspect sites for the future novitiate. In addition, the Vice-Provincial Council "decided that the Utica house [sic] should be a retreat house for the entire Community" with all members of the Vice-Province making their future personal retreats there.[74]

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[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 9 & 10 March 1964, A. N. E. P.

Father Gicewicz's blitzkrieg-like campaign to eliminate the Polish Vice-Province's reliance on the Eastern Province for the formation of its candidates also led to a visit to the Saints Cyril & Methodius Seminary in Orchard Lake, Michigan. While the confreres had received permission to send their candidates to the seminary, they were unable to identify a suitable building that they could purchase and convert into their house of study. In addition, Father Gicewicz had contacted Archbishop John F. Dearden of Detroit, who "was very cooperative" and welcomed the opportunity for the Polish Vice-Province to establish a house in the Archdiocese. These two proposals, along with the previous correspondence with the Bishop of the Springfield, Massachusetts Diocese were undertaken, according to Father Karol Pacherski, C.M., because the Polish Vice-Province was "losing vocations to the American province because we have to educate our young seminarians in the American province."[75]

Along with the Polish Vice-Province's expansion plans, Father Gicewicz and his Consultors were keenly aware of the problems at Saint John Kanty Prep. At the Council meeting held on March 9th & 10th they closely scrutinized the situation at Saint John Kanty Prep. With the high cost of room and board for the students, a proposal was made to examine the possibility of converting it into a day school. Two days later Father Gicewicz made a second proposal in a letter to Archbishop John M. Gannon of Erie, Pennsylvania. Recalling a conversation he had with the Archbishop on February 11th, Father Gicewicz wrote: "I humbly request Your Excellency for the establishment of a territorial parish in honor of our founder's tercentenary named Saint Vincent de Paul, with our Vincentian Fathers in charge." It should be noted that Father Gicewicz's request

[75] Ibid.

for the establishment of a church on the grounds of the school specifically mentioned a territorial parish without any ethnic limitations to membership.[76]

Two days before the Polish Vice-Provincial meeting the Consultors of the Eastern Province met with Father Taggart. One of the topics discussed was William Consiglio's request to transfer to the Eastern Province. The Council voted unanimously to accept him. Late the following month, at its meeting, the Polish Vice-Provincial Council discussed the situation of another of its seminarians studying at the Mary Immaculate Seminary of the Eastern Province in Springfield, Massachusetts. Robert Kujawa, who, the previous year, had informed Father Kwiatkowski of the questions Eastern Province confreres at the seminary had asked him, now complained about the rescinding of the seminarians' vacations. Father Gicewicz announced at the meeting that he would personally investigate the situation.[77]

The action of the Eastern Province in the situation of William Consiglio and the personal response of Father Gicewicz to the complaint from Robert Kujawa were closely tied to a document that became a shot across the bow of the Eastern Province warning it of the growing animosity towards it among the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. Addressed to the "Most Honored Father Superior General," the resolution was a declaration of independence from the perceived tyranny of the Eastern

[76] Ibid, Gicewicz to Gannon, 12 March 1964, A. R. C. D. E. It should be noted that Father Gicewicz did not receive a quick response from Archbishop Gannon. After writing to him a second time on August 10, 1964, Father Gicewicz finally received a reply on August 11th. Archbishop Gannon wrote: "I brought your request for establishing a parish on the St. John Kanty property to the attention of the two Pastors and church committees now covering that territory with a view of gaining their consent. Both filed objections on the grounds they are carrying enormous debts for their present buildings. I then presented your request to the Diocesan Board of Consultors and on ballot they unanimously sustained the Pastors. There is no petition on the part of the people for a new parish in that neighborhood." See: Gicewicz to Gannon, 10 August 1964, A. R. C. D. E. & Gannon to Gicewicz, 11 August 1964, A. R. C. D. E.

[77] *Minutes of the Provincial Council of the Eastern Province of the United States*, 7 March, 1964, Ducournau Archives.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 27 April 1964, A. N. E. P.

Province. Mincing no words, Father Gicewicz took immediate aim at Father Taggart and his previous treatment of the Polish Vice-Province. "WHEREAS: The Very Rev. Visitor Taggart proposed that the ultimate solution of the Polish Vice-Province in the U.S.A. would be to amalgamate with the Eastern Province. BE IT RESOLVED: That the U.S.A. Polish Vice-Province emergant [sic] as self-sufficient in numbers and possibly third best situated financially in the community [sic], through the kindness, justice, charity, and constitutional authority of the office of the Superior General, receive its own territory in the United States." With three parishes under its care in Connecticut and the permission of Archbishop O'Brien of Hartford, Connecticut, Father Gicewicz also declared the Polish Vice-Province's intent to establish a "House of Study near any Religious Community Philosophy College in the Archdiocese of Hartford." Father Gicewicz furthermore announced his design to acquire the Eastern Province's Springfield, Massachusetts House and to claim New England as the territory for a new American Province.[78]

While the first three points of the resolution were brazen, they paled in comparison to the justification that followed them. "WHEREAS: The Eastern Province, directly and indirectly, has canvassed for itself Fathers Szumilo, Wojciechowski, Lachowski, Frederick and Eugene Pilatowski, Stephen Minkiel, [Edward] Spurgiasz, [Chester] Mrówka, [Edmund] Gutowski, [George] Dąbrowski, [Ronald] Wiktor, Seminarian Theologians Kujawa and Przywara, plus having already influenced Robert Tyburski to join the Eastern Province and presently upon Father Taggart's acquiescent knowledge to attempt to accept Mr. Consiglio (Polish Mother) when he takes his vows in

[78] Gicewicz to "Most Honored Father Superior General: Resolution for Your Kind Consideration," 19 April 1964, A. N. E. P.

June 1964. BE IT RESOLVED: That the newly-to-be-formed New England Province form its own members, in its own institutions." In Father Gicewicz's mind, the attempted piracy of the Eastern Province had to be squelched before it could claim another victim.[79]

With its independence proclaimed and the Eastern Province warned off of further impressments of his confreres, Father Gicewicz announced that as a sign of its elevation as a Province of the Congregation of the Mission, the New England Province would now have the responsibility of spreading the Gospel in its own mission territory. He proposed Madagascar. Along with listing "many-yeared volunteers [sic]," including himself, from the ranks of the current confreres of the Polish Vice-Province, Father Gicewicz thought that such strenuous mission work as that to be found in Madagascar would entice wayward confreres to rejoin him in the newly constituted New England Province. In returning to the primitive mission of the Community, Father Gicewicz sought to revitalize the lagging élan of a calcifying Polish Vice-Province.[80]

The next two sections of the resolution dealt with Houses outside of the proposed territory for the New England Province. The first of the two proposals called for the sale of the Courbevoie House in France, first given to the Polish Province in 1929 and partially administered by the Polish Vice-Province since the end of the Second World War. The confreres stationed there, Father Gicewicz continued, would be permitted to return to Poland or to the proposed New England Province or to "remain unified with the French episcopacy, which appears to be an eventuality." Exposing a militant American patriotism, long evident during his formation in Poland and his two terms of service in the United States military, Father Gicewicz theorized that the confreres who remained in

[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.

France could "serve as an underground railway for confreres who when the 'cassatio congregationis' [nullified congregation] is effected by the Communists, may eventually be transported from France to the United States or Brazil."[81]

While less dramatic, the next proposal was more controversial and would become one of the principal points of contention between the Polish Vice-Province and the Eastern Province up through the middle of the 1970s. "WHEREAS: the totally Polish parish [sic] of St. Stanislaus, Brooklyn, and primarily Polish Mission House at Whitestone would be outside the territory of the New England Province: BE IT RESOLVED: That the above two houses be considered as two vice-provincial homes [sic] of the New England Province." It is interesting to note that Father Gicewicz's reference to ethnic affiliation of the two New York City Houses and the fact that he emphasizes the fact that William Consiglio's mother was of Polish extraction sharply contrasts with his reference to the Vice-Province as the "U.S.A. Polish Vice-Province."[82]

In the final proposal of the resolution, Father Gicewicz attempted to reconcile these two identities by guaranteeing the continued financial support for the Polish Province as well as the Polish Vice-Province in Brazil and the confreres in France. While the financial support would continue, the relations between them and the New England Province would be reconfigured with an independent American Province having a superior position both financially and politically than the Vice-Province in Brazil and the oppressed Polish Province barricaded behind the Iron Curtain. The new Province Father Gicewicz proposed would be free from the tyranny it had been under from the Eastern

[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.

Province for the last forty years, free to reach out on its own terms to aid its less fortunate fellows in Communist Poland and Brazil.[83]

It should be kept in mind at this point that while Father Gicewicz's autonomy campaign concentrated on negotiations with the Eastern Province of the United States, it also required the sympathy and support of the Polish Visitor in Kraków. Elected in January 1961, Father Aleksander Usowicz, C.M. led the Polish Province during a period of oppression of the Catholic Church by the Communist Government. Along with the Government's prohibition of the teaching of religion in Polish schools and the induction of seminarians into the military, it engaged in a campaign of surveillance and incarceration of the clergy. In 1962, the authorities closed the Polish Province's Kleparz Novitiate in Kraków. The physical and psychological toll on the Polish Visitor was great.[84]

At its meeting on April 27, 1964, the Council of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States discussed the sudden resignation of Father Usowicz, a decision that came without any explanation or list of potential successors. While the Superior General had not yet accepted Father Usowicz's resignation, the idea of a new Polish Visitor and the possibilities it held added to both the uncertainty and possibility for the future of the Vice-Province in the United States. Evidence of this potential is found in some of the other topics discussed at the meeting. In a vote on the future status of the Vice-Province, the Consultors split over whether to maintain their filial relationship with the Polish Province or to push for autonomy, a transformation that had financial, personnel, and

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[83] Ibid.
[84] Monticone, *The Catholic Church in Communist Poland, 1945-1985*, pp. 35-37; Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 380-381.

Foundation requirements the Vice-Province did not meet. In a second vote, the Consultors unanimously called for complete control of the formation of the Vice-Province's candidates.[85]

Less than two weeks after his thunderbolt resolution, a second pronouncement of Father Gicewicz and the Vice-Provincial Council was announced at the House Council of Saint John Kanty Prep. With a number of confreres at the School being unhappy with their teaching assignments and the fact that the Vice-Province had "lost two of seminarians [sic] to the Eastern Province already," it was announced that, beginning with the next academic year, Saint John Kanty Prep would be converted into a Novitiate for the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. While current students of Saint John Kanty Prep would be allowed to return in the fall, they "would be required to keep the seminarians life and schedule [sic]." Expressing concern over the mingling of the seminarians and the prep students and maintaining a sufficient number of prep students to keep the school financially viable, Father Chester Mrówka, C.M. suggested that the empty convent be converted into a house of studies. Unsure of the proper path to pursue, the House Council decided to contact Kraków. Characterized by Father Gicewicz in a 2004 interview, the conversion of Saint John Kanty Prep was to be a temporary solution, protecting Vice-Provincial candidates from the alleged corrupting influence of the

[85] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 27 April 1964, A. N. E. P.; Less than a month after the discussion of Father Usowicz's resignation, it was announced that Father Franciszek Myszka, C.M. would be the next Visitor of the Polish Province. It would be Father Myszka, joined by Fathers Edward P. Gicewicz and Henry Sawicki of the Polish Vice-Province, Father Sylvester Taggart of the Eastern Province, and Father William Slattery, the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, who would dominate the first negotiations over the autonomy of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. See: Rospond, *Misjonarze św. Wincentego a Paulo w Polsce*, pp. 381-382.

Eastern Province. Work continued to find houses of formation at Orchard Lake, Michigan and in Connecticut.[86]

On May 21, 1964, Father Gicewicz travelled to Erie, Pennsylvania and presented the details of his plans to the members of the Saint John Kanty House. In regards to the rules under which the students would now live, he stated that seminarians and non-seminarians alike would attend daily Mass, be limited in the number of visits to town, and have "no association with girls." If the non-seminarians agreed to live by these rules and had exhibited "sufficiently good moral and intellectual character" in the past, they would be allowed to return in the fall. Father Gicewicz also announced that "there would be no restrictions due to nationality for entrance into the seminary." The proposed novitiate, as conceived by Father Gicewicz, was to be an American institution that would prepare American young men to serve the American Catholics. After the plan had been fully explained, "[t]he house council unanimously agreed to his new rulings." With the conversion of Saint John Kanty Prep and the expectation of territory in the New England States, Father Gicewicz and the confreres began the difficult task of reimagining Polish Vice-Province into an American Community.[87]

In an effort to win the approval of Father Slattery for the establishment of the New England Province, Father Gicewicz flew to Rome to discuss the matter personally with the Superior General. On May 2, 1964, Father Slattery wrote to Father Taggart,

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[86] *House Council Meeting Minutes, Saint John Kanty*, 1 May 1964, A. N. E. P.; Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M., interviewed by author, written transcript, Enfield, Connecticut, 1 October 2004.

[87] *House Council Meeting Minutes, Saint John Kanty*, 21 May 1964, A. N. E. P. While the vote of the members of the House Council at Saint John Kanty Prep was unanimous, a division did exist among the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province over Father Gicewicz's decisions. In an October 2004 interview, Father Gicewicz explained that it was the American-born confreres who tended to support his initiative. See: Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M., interviewed by author, written transcript, Enfield, Connecticut, 1 October 2004.

describing the meeting and his and his Council's suggestions on how to proceed. Father Slattery advised that "some sort of an 'Agreement' (to be presented to our General Council) be drawn up, covering a number of key points, including the territory, mission activity, houses of formation, the establishment of new houses in the proposed province, the recruitment of vocations, and a mutually satisfactory method of "dealing with the Hierarchy in regard to matters that might pertain to both our Eastern Province and *the Polish (or so-called Polish) Confreres*." (Emphasis added.) While he exhibited a continued identification with the Eastern Province in the United States, Father Slattery attempted to stay above the mounting tensions between the two Communities of confreres.[88]

Any possibility of a peaceful resolution to the dispute between the Eastern Province and the Polish Vice-Province was lost when, on May 7th, Father Gicewicz wrote Father Taggart to inform him that he and his Consultors denied William Consiglio permission to transfer to the Eastern Province. Taking the next logical, but drastic step, Father Gicewicz announced: "We also serve notice that in view of the direct or indirect influence on Mr. Robert Tyburski and Mr. William Consiglio, beginning with September, we shall withdraw all the students under formation by the Eastern Province and form them under our own guidance." Exhibiting further audacity, Father Gicewicz then declared the Polish Vice-Province's interest in buying the Eastern Province's House in Springfield, Massachusetts. Father Taggart's only response to the letter was to acknowledge his receipt of it.[89]

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[88] Slattery to Taggart, 2 May 1964, Ducournau Archives.

[89] Gicewicz to Taggart, 7 May 1964, Ducournau Archives; Taggart to Gicewicz, 19 May 1964, Ducournau Archives. Robert Tyburski, after applying to join the Polish Vice-Province in 1955, was sent by Father

Two days later, Father Gicewicz wrote the Superior General to make his case against the danger the Eastern Province posed to the viability of the Vice-Province. In a previous letter to Father Taggart, Father Gicewicz announced that "in view of Rev. Mr. Robert Tyburski's and Mr. William Consiglio's direct or indirect influence to change provinces, that beginning in September we would form our own men." The threat, however, was not limited to the loss of these two men. "I had heard only in the form of a rumor that if Consiglio receives the permission to transfer," Father Gicewicz continued, "Mr. John Sledziona [sic] will request the same permission also." Although he recognized the attraction for the Vice-Province's candidates of "the opportunity for changes in the Eastern Province," Father Gicewicz promised that the members of the proposed province "would be working only in the Polish dense areas." Although he called for the establishment of a new American province with territory in New England, Father Gicewicz still retained an ethnic argument to defend the Vice-Province from being amalgamated into the Eastern Province.[90]

Two weeks after Father Gicewicz wrote his letter, Father Taggart penned a reply to Father Slattery's letter of May 2, 1964. He announced that after discussing the matter with his Consultors and receiving their unanimous consent, he saw only two solutions: "(1) an immediate, or nearly immediate, absorption of the Polish Vice-Province by the Eastern Province, U.S.A.; (2) a future absorption of the Polish Vice-Province by the Eastern Province, U.S.A." With his announcement that it was not a matter of if the Vice-

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Mazurkiewicz to the Eastern Province's Saint Joseph's College in Princeton, New Jersey. In his second year at the College, he decided to pursue his vocation in the Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut. In 1957, still attending Saint Joseph's College, Tyburski changed his mind again and applied for admission into the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission.

[90] Gicewicz to Father Slattery, 9 May 1964, A. N. E. P.

Province would be absorbed into the Eastern Province, but when it would be amalgamated, however, Father Taggart expressed his opposition to the Vice-Province's current attempt to reimagine itself. "We are opposed," he announced to Father Slattery, "to any continuance of the use by the Polish Vice-Province of the term 'Vincentian Fathers' or 'Congregation of the Mission' without the qualifying word 'Polish.'" While the amalgamation of the Polish Vice-Province into the Eastern Province seemed to be a fait accompli, the timing of its assimilation into the American branch of the Vincentian Family remained a hotly disputed topic. For Father Taggart and the other confreres of the Eastern Province, the nativity of a growing number of the Vice-Province's confreres and the assimilation of the second- and third-generation into American society negated any need for the ethnically defined Polish Vice-Province. When the Vice-Province used a similar logic to support its claim for autonomy, Father Taggart used the "ethnicity card" to trump Father Gicewicz's efforts.[91]

Father Taggart also informed Father Slattery of two other incidents related to the question of the autonomy of the Polish Vice-Province. At a recent luncheon in Albany, New York, he recalled, he sat next to the Auxiliary Bishop David F. Cunningham of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, New York, who was "evidently unenthusiastic towards the foundation of the House in Utica." When Father Taggart informed Bishop Cunningham that the confreres of the Vice-Province were not "under the jurisdiction of the Eastern Province, he [Bishop Cunningham] referred to the potential danger of an arrangement where one Community Jurisdiction was located within the confines of

[91] Taggart to Slattery, 22 May 1964, Ducournau Archives.

another Community Jurisdiction." In addition, the Bishop also expressed his opposition to "furthering national parishes of any purely national jurisdictions [sic]."[92]

Along with discovering Bishop Cunningham's position on the Polish Vice-Province, Father Taggart also thought he had found an explanation for Father Gicewicz's charges of "direct or indirect influence" of the Eastern Province over the candidates from the Polish Vice-Province. It seemed that Father Leo Campbell, the First Prefect at Saint Joseph's Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey, had been asking the candidates "whether they had made a definite decision to belong to the Polish Vice-Province." While Father Campbell's questions were not made "to influence them towards joining the Eastern Province," Father Taggart hastened to add, they might be construed "to imply some kind of influence." He asked that Father Campbell desist from asking such questions.[93]

The tension over the perceived threat to the Vice-Province's candidates, however, continued under a thin veneer of mutual friendship. "As friend to friend, it disturbs me," Father Gicewicz wrote Father Taggart, "to hear that John Sledziona and Mitchell Wanat [two candidates from the Polish Vice-Province] are only awaiting the outcome of William Consiglio's request of transfer before requesting the same kind of permission." The Vice-Visitor next turned to the situation of Robert Tyburski, informing Father Taggart that he had "never found any written consent in my files releasing him from the vice-province [sic]." In closing his letter, Father Gicewicz attempts to soften the blow of

[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.

his previous words by concluding: "Hope this little unburdening of mine doesn't disturb you unduly, but we must know our minds, is it not true?"[94]

During the rest of the summer of 1964, Father Gicewicz struggled to maintain good relations with the Eastern Province as he sought to lay the foundation for his proposed New England Province. Central to this campaign was an agreement with Father Taggart regarding territory and vocations. Progress in the talks was slow. In early July, Father Taggart reported to Father Slattery on several talks he had with Father Gicewicz at a recent meeting of Superiors in Denver, Colorado. While he characterized the dialogue as "kindly," Father Taggart informed the Superior General that Father Gicewicz and he were "not of the same mind" regarding a mutually acceptable solution. In a letter written on July 11, 1964, Father Slattery informed Father Taggart that any further discussion on the matter would have to wait until Father John F. Zimmerman, C.M., the Assistant General of the Congregation of the Mission, had the opportunity to speak with the confreres of the Vice-Province.[95]

Growing anxious with no alternative to the Eastern Province's Houses of Formation, Father Gicewicz approached both Father Joseph L. Kerins, C. SS. R. and Father James Fischer, C.M. about sending candidates to either the Redemptorist Fathers' Saint Alphonsus College in Suffield, Connecticut or the Western Province's Saint Mary's Seminary in Perrysville, Missouri. On June 8, 1964, Father Kerins wrote Father Gicewicz to explain that, while he was aware of the fact that he was asking only for space

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[94] Gicewicz to Taggart, 24 May 1964, Ducournau Archives. In his reply to Father Gicewicz, Father Taggart stated: "Neither the authorities at Ridgefield nor I had any knowledge of this information." See: Taggart to Gicewicz, 6 June 1964, Ducournau Archives.

[95] Taggart to Slattery, 9 July 1964, Ducournau Archives; Slattery to Taggart, 11 July 1964, Ducournau Archives.

in the classroom, the new Provincial of the Redemptorists, Father Ronald Connors, C. SS. R., had already received "requests from Canada and from the Lower Islands to open our doors to aspirants to the priesthood from those areas." Even though chances were not good, Father Gicewicz wrote back to Father Kerins that he was requesting transcripts from the Eastern Province's Saint Joseph College.[96]

On July 20, 1964, Father Fischer wrote Father Gicewicz and informed him that he and the members of the Western Provincial Council thought that the decision to place candidates from the Polish Vice-Province in the Western Province's seminary "should be handled through the Superior General," and suggested that a detailed description of the situation be forwarded to Father Slattery. In order to keep all parties informed, Father Fischer sent copies of the letter to Fathers Slattery, Zimmerman, and Taggart. Nine days later, Father Gicewicz responded to the letter. He informed Father Fischer that Father Taggart and he were "continuing discussions and in a spirit of conciliation we have rescinded the withdrawal of the students in formation with the Eastern Province."[97]

The relations between the Vice-Province and the Eastern Province remained strained. At a Vice-Provincial Council meeting on July 22, 1964, Father Gicewicz announced that the proposed House of Formation in Springfield, Massachusetts was "at present lost," when he learned that the Eastern Province had decided not to sell the property. Immediately after this announcement, Father Gicewicz announced that he would approach Father Taggart with "a proposal . . . of keeping our students in the Eastern province [sic] with them reconsidering the acceptance of the house [sic] in Utica,

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[96] Kerins to Gicewicz, 8 June 1964, A. N. E. P.; Gicewicz to Kerins, 15 June 1964, A. N. E. P.
[97] Fischer to Gicewicz, 20 July 1964, De Andreis-Rosati Archives; Gicewicz to Fischer, 29 July 1964, De Andreis-Rosati Archives.

N.Y." While he continued to press forward with his plans, Father Gicewicz quickly found that he had very few cards left in his hand in his gamble to establish his New England Province.[98]

One of the biggest problems that continued to thwart his efforts was the anxiety evident among the members of the Vice-Province. Faced with a split between the American-born and Polish-born confreres in regards to his proposed plan for autonomy and the feared defection of the Vice-Province's candidates under formation in the Eastern Province, Father Gicewicz also had to confront other confreres' dissatisfaction with life in the Vice-Province. In May 1964, for example, Father Gicewicz announced at the Vice-Provincial Council meeting that Father George Dąbrowski, C.M., currently assigned to the House in Erie, Pennsylvania, had written with a request "to become a chaplain in the Armed Forces." Father Dąbrowski's dissatisfaction stemmed from the fact that he felt unprepared to serve as an athletic coach at Saint John Kanty Prep, a position he lasted in for only one week. After being reassigned to teach history, he received word that Father Gicewicz was planning to send him to college to study library science to become the Novitiate's librarian. It was at this point that Father Dąbrowski sought permission to join the military. With Father Gicewicz's permission, he joined the United States Air Force as a chaplain and, over the next 24 years, served in Washington State, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Greenland, Colorado, England, Mississippi, Korea, Hawaii, and Florida. Over this entire time, his only communication with his fellow Vincentians was occasional letters and the monthly newsletter.[99]

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[98] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 22 July 1964, A. N. E. P.
[99] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 18 May 1964, A. N. E. P.; George Dąbrowski, interviewed by author, written transcript, Enfield, Connecticut, 1 October 2004.

For Father Gicewicz, the retaining of the current confreres as well as the recruiting of new ones depended on a revitalization of the missionary spirit of the Vice-Province. As he had mentioned in his April 19th Resolution, Father Gicewicz considered foreign mission, in particular in Madagascar, to be the tonic needed to reenergize the men under his command. In an effort to advance this project, Father Gicewicz wrote Father Slattery on July 28, 1964, asking permission for Father Adam Minkiel, C.M., the Publicity and Vocational Director of the Vice-Province, and him to visit a fellow Vincentian doing missionary work in the African island country in order to gauge the viability of "opening a new foreign mission territory for out Vice-Province." After leaving Madagascar, Father Gicewicz proposed that he and Father Minkiel meet with Father Slattery and Father Franciszek Myszka, C.M., the Polish Visitor "to discuss these and other matters."[100]

Father Gicewicz's plan suffered a setback that fall when Father Anthony Czapla, C.M. announced at the Vice-Provincial Council meeting on October 13, 1964 that the Polish Province "would not take over Madagascar." Made by Father Myszka, himself, the statement cited the "insufficient funds" as the reason for the decision. Similar financial reasoning for the rejection of his Madagascar plan was evident among the Consultors of the Vice-Province. In his report on the status of the Vice-Province on October 18th, Father Gicewicz declared: "The shock of accepting a foreign mission in Madagascar disturbs some materialistic thinking and the reaction is uncharitable to all those favoring Madagascar Missions. . . . Some who do not want the Madagascar Mission say the expenses of the Vice-Visitor visiting Madagascar were unnecessary." According

[100] Gicewicz to Slattery, 28 July 1964, A. N. E. P.

to Father Gicewicz, this opposition to the Madagascar trip did not come from genuine concern for the financial health of the Vice-Province, but from an unhealthy attachment to the material comforts of life in the United States. "Let's face it," he wrote, "The materialistic world has crept into all the Communities and it will be hard to initiate a change to the return to the primitive spirit." If it did not overcome this unhealthy obsession, the Vice-Province, according to Father Gicewicz, was doomed. Along with its corrupting influence on the current members, the rejection of the Madagascar proposal would eliminate missionary opportunity whose rigors would attract a vital cohort of new confreres.[101]

With his maverick attitude and aggressive manner, Father Gicewicz won few allies outside the Polish Vice-Province during his campaign for autonomy. One of those few who aided him was Father Alexander Rigazio, C.M., the second of Father Slattery's six Assistants General. Writing on the eve of his meeting with Father Zimmerman, Father Rigazio coached Father Gicewicz on a few key themes that he must impress on the Assistant General so that he would return to Rome with an "objective look of the problem [sic]." Reminding him that the Polish Vice-Province was "not on the moon," Father Rigazio informed Father Gicewicz that after "many hours of looking" he failed to find an official document establishing the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. Adding

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[101] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 13 October 1964, A. N. E. P.; *Relatio de Statu Vice-Province*, 18 October 1964, A. N. E. P. In his report of October 18, 1964, Father Gicewicz also mentioned that the "hard-core missions" once conducted by the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States were being replaced by "novenas, devotions, and substitutions." The novenas conducted in the United States were no longer ones traditionally found in "Polish churches in the U.S.A.," such as those "to the Little Flower" and "to the Miraculous Medal." Instead, growing numbers, Father Gicewicz continued, participated in "the Novena to St. Jude." This shift in the devotional life of American Catholics, especially among Catholic women, is examined by Robert A, Orsi. See: Robert A. Orsi, *Thank You St. Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), passim.

further pressure, Father Rigazio stated that if Father Gicewicz wished to establish an apostolic school, it was necessary for him to receive the permission of the Visitor of the Mother Province in Poland, not that of the neighboring Eastern Province. Even with these formidable barriers facing the Vice-Province, Father Rigazio emphasized the inappropriate nature of the Eastern Province's announcement that the only viable option for it was amalgamation. In strictest confidence, he closed his letter to Father Gicewicz with a word of caution. "I think it is not prudent speak [sic] presently about this autonomy; this will come certainly, but with time." It still remained to be seen to what extent Father Gicewicz would heed these words.[102]

By the beginning of August 1964, Father Zimmerman was well at work on his extraordinary visitation to the United States. On August 3rd, Robert Tyburski wrote Father Taggart informing him of his meeting with the Assistant General. At Father Zimmerman's suggestion, Tyburski detailed his reasons for his leaving of the Polish Vice-Province and his later application to the Eastern Province. Tyburski planned to present Father Gicewicz with a copy of his statement of explanation sometime during the latter half of August and hoped that it would "obviate any future misunderstandings."[103]

Father Zimmerman's visit with the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province could also be deemed a success. In a letter to Father Slattery, Father Gicewicz characterized the Assistant General as a confrere worthy of imitating. Along with impressing Father Gicewicz, he succeeded in "talking with reluctant confreres and not appear[ing] to be a 'company man.'" Gushing in his praise for the Assistant General, Father Gicewicz noted

[102] Rigazio to Gicewicz, 2 August 1964, A. N. E. P. Father Rigazio's instructions to Father Gicewicz were written in Latin and read: "licentia Visitatoris Provinciae matricis, non Provinciae vicinae."
[103] Tyburski to Taggart, 3 August 1964, Ducournau Archives.; statement of "(Rev. Mr.) Robert Francis Tyburski, C.M.," 15 August 1964, Ducournau Archives.

that "he came as an outsider to our little group, but he ingratiated himself to us and the common consensus is that he can always come back to visit us because he is our friend." Bolstered by Father Zimmerman's treatment of the confreres and remembering Father Slattery's promise to reconsider the status of the Utica House, Father Gicewicz closed his letter by petitioning for its canonical erection. A faint stream of light seemed to have appeared for the Polish Vice-Province in the United States.[104]

The anticipation that materialized with Father Zimmerman's visit, however, continued to bolster Father Gicewicz and the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province for the remainder of 1964. No word came forth from Rome on the status of the Utica House or the petition for the Vice-Province's autonomy. This lull, however, did not dull Father Gicewicz's desire to increase the number of houses under his command. At the October meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council, he announced that he had received word from both the Archbishop of Hartford, Connecticut and the Bishop of Springfield, Massachusetts granting permission to establish a house in their respective dioceses.[105]

Even more enticing was Father Gicewicz's announcement that with the death of Father Feliks F. Burant, the Pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in the East Village, a new opportunity arose to expand the Polish Vincentians' parish apostolate into Manhattan. Having served as the Pastor for the last forty years, Father Burant's demise required a successor to be appointed quickly, a task made more difficult by the lack of Polish priests in the Archdiocese of New York. Sensing an opportunity, Father Gicewicz wrote Cardinal Francis Spellman, offering the services of the Vice-Province. With Cardinal Spellman in Rome, his Vicar-General informed Father Gicewicz that he

[104] Gicewicz to Slattery, 26 August 1964, A. N. E. P.
[105] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 13 October 1964, A. N. E. P.

would discuss the matter with the Cardinal upon his return. At the November meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council, it was announced that the Vicar-General "was favorably disposed" to the idea. The decision, when it came later that winter, went against the Vice-Province. Instead of accepting Father Gicewicz's offer, Cardinal Spellman appointed Father Jan Józef Karpiński Pastor of Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish, a position he held for the next 24 years. There would be no Vice-Provincial presence in the Archdiocese of New York.[106]

As Father Gicewicz was about to begin his second year as the Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, he found most of his initiatives to be stuck in limbo. With his military-like discipline and unity of purpose, he continued to probe for a weak point in his opponents' defenses. Aware of this disposition, Father Rigazio wrote him on January 1, 1965 counseling continued patience. "I understand easily you are waiting some news [sic] about your Vice Province. But you must also understand we are at Rome, and 'Roma est aeterna.'" The Assistant General went on to inform Father Gicewicz that Father Zimmerman was writing a "Relatio about this problem" and anticipated it would be finished by the end of January. In addition, he informed Father Gicewicz that since the end of November he and the other Assistants General had been studying "the affair 'boundaries' of the Vice-Provinces in Brasil [sic] (Polish and Dutch)," and believed that it would serve as an important "precedent" for a future decision on the Polish-Vice-Province's petition for autonomy.[107]

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[106] Ibid; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 11 November 1964, A. N. E. P.; Danuta Piątkowska, *Polskie Kościoły w Nowym Jorku* (Opole: Wydawnictwa Świętego Krzyża, 2002), p. 87.
[107] Rigazio to Gicewicz, 1 January 1965, A. N. E. P.

Father Rigazio further counseled caution regarding Father Gicewicz's relations with the Polish Province. "As you ask my opinion," he wrote, "I can say that you began running too quickly, and so you have now many people—specially polishmen [sic]—who are against you." After emphasizing that Father Gicewicz's primary objective at this point should be the establishment of "the Vice-Province's bounderies [sic]," Father Rigazio explained that the reasons given by Father Myszka, the Polish Visitor, for opposing autonomy for the Polish Vice-Province in the United States "are not bad." According to Father Rigazio, "the Communists allow the Confreres to work in Polland [sic] and have a Seminary there because the Province has a territory in America and sends Confreres there." He concluded his letter by emphasizing the fact that a special sensitivity would be needed when negotiating autonomy from the Polish Province. So as not to endanger the Polish Province by completely breaking its relations, Father Rigazio mentioned to Father Gicewicz that he "can urge a 'status' between your Vice-Province and the Polish Province."[108]

The thinking of Father Gicewicz on the issues of territory and relations with the Polish Province at this time may be surmised by an undated document, "Basic Problems," found among the correspondence between Fathers Rigazio and Gicewicz immediately after Father Rigazio's January 1st letter to Father Gicewicz. First among the issues addressed in the document was "the future canonical status of the province [sic]" and its impact on the establishment of a "minor seminary" and the "drive for vocations." Three options were listed on the question of the retention of the Vice-Province's "Polish character." The first option was to maintain its ethnic identity "[t]emporarily" for the

[108] Ibid.

"next 10 or 20 years before becoming assimilated." The second option was to work "always among the Poles, and thus limited by a formal aim in the set-up of the province [sic], to merely personal jurisdiction, as are the Polish parishes." The third option was eliminate any ethnic affiliation, "accepting all, even non-Poles right from the beginning, and aiming to accept and recruit those of non-Polish origin and seeking work, e.g., schools or missions among non-Poles."[109]

The second point addressed in the document was immediately related to the first one. Where, Father Gicewicz asked, should the new province concentrate its activities? He lists five possibilities: the areas around New York City, Erie, Pennsylvania, Upstate New York, specifically near Utica and Syracuse, New York, Detroit, Michigan and parts of the Midwest, and New England, specifically the states of Connecticut and Massachusetts. Without exhibiting any preference for one particular area, Father Gicewicz concluded: "The importance of clarifying the problem of where to stress one's activities is seen from the fact that the decision where to stress our activity will affect the decisions of where to strive MAINLY for vocational recruitment and for expansion of houses and works, e.g. mission houses, parishes, or schools."[110]

In the third and final section of the document, Father Gicewicz outlined the "various models for minor seminaries as well as each model's advantages and disadvantages." Of primary importance was the interaction between the students who would enroll in the Novitiate and, if the Vice-Province maintained its college preparatory program, those students enrolled in the "secular high school." Drawing on the models of the Franciscan seminary in Watkins Glen, New York and the Benedictine seminary in

[109] "Basic Problems," n.d., A. N. E. P.
[110] Ibid.

Latrobe, Pennsylvania, Father Gicewicz sought the proper balance for the seminarians so as to "avoid the danger of effiminacy [sic] and of being completely cut off from their contemporaries." While the ideal situation would have been to "[b]uild a seminary entirely separate from Kanty," making the new school "the ideal situation, starting all afresh, imbuing the place with a new spirit," Father Gicewicz would settle for a seminary large enough to support a "sports program." With athletic teams to rally around, the seminarians would quickly develop a much-needed *esprit de corps*.[111]

Father Gicewicz's objective in all this planning remained fixed on fending off the attacks of the Eastern Province. He insisted that the members of the Vice-Province had to "[m]ake it clear to them [the confreres of the Eastern Province] that we are Americans also and intend to stay and work autonomously and that there is work enough for us all. The candidates from the Vice-Province, Father Gicewicz continued, must be formed "to be American in spirity [sic]." While he placed emphasis on the fact that the Vice-Province's candidates should see themselves as Americans, Father Gicewicz also stressed the need to cultivate an American identity separate from that of the Eastern Province and rooted in "our Polish background with its wonderful cultural and religious contribution to our upbringing." As he contemplated the future, Father Gicewicz reimagined a new province that would have the right to assimilate into the American branch of the Vincentian Family on its own terms.[112]

A victory in his campaign for autonomy came to Father Gicewicz at the end of January 1965, when Father Slattery canonically erected the Utica House. In a letter of gratitude written to the Superior General, he wrote: "Words fail me in showing my

[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.

appreciation to you, Mon Pere, for your personal efforts in connection with this event." While Father Gicewicz basked in this victory, Father Taggart and the members of his Council had to have been questioning Father Slattery's decision. In a January 28th letter to Father Taggart, he outlined his reasoning for his decision. Recognizing the fact that Father Kwiatkowski had "been told by the former Polish Assistant-General [Father Gerard Domogała] that the General Council approved [the establishment of a House in Utica], he overlooked the fact "that the approval was conditioned by the consent of the Visitor and Provincial Council of the Eastern Province." Having decided that the former Vice-Visitor's actions were done in "good faith," and that Father Gicewicz has confirmed that "the Confreres at Utica will confine themselves to their ministry for the Poles and those of Polish descent, and that they will not do anything that will be to the detriment of the Eastern Province," Father Slattery and the General Council "deemed it best to ask the Sacred Congregation of Religious to permit the residence at Utica to be a canonically erected House for the Polish Vice-Province."[113]

Although it was a victory for the Polish Vice-Province, the canonical erection of the Saint Vincent Mission House in Utica, New York was not a harbinger of an easing of inter-provincial relations. Writing to Father Gicewicz on March 2, 1965, Father Zimmerman cautioned that "the matter [of the autonomy of the Polish Vice-Province] remains exactly the same as when you spoke to me at Perryville. Upon my return to Rome, I was told (what you had told me previously) that because the Visitor of Poland, Father Myszka, was opposed to any change that of necessity your status must remain as it is." When Father Zimmerman presented Father Slattery with a file of documents

[113] Gicewicz to Slattery, 10 February 1965, A. N. E. P.; Slattery to Taggart, 28 January 1965, A. N. E. P.

collected by Father Gicewicz supporting the Vice-Province's claim for autonomy, the Superior General reiterated "that the matter was closed as long as the Visitor of Poland remained opposed to any change."[114]

Back in the United States, with the canonical erection of the Saint Vincent Mission House, Father Gicewicz turned his attention to broadening the Vice-Province's base in northwestern Pennsylvania. On February 1, 1965, he wrote to Archbishop Gannon regarding the Vice-Province's "temporary administration" of Saint Teresa Parish in Union City, Pennsylvania. Having served in the Erie Diocese for over fifty years, Father Gicewicz petitioned that "as a token of appreciation and gratitude from Your Excellency," Archbishop Gannon make the confreres permanent administrators over the Parish. Two days later, the Archbishop wrote that at that time no decision on parish assignments were being made and that he would forward the letter to the Diocesan Board of Consultors" for its consideration. When the decision finally came in the late spring, it must have angered Father Gicewicz. Citing "the pressure of senior Priest applicants," Archbishop Gannon explained that the Committee rejected any change in the status of the parish. "In other words," the Archbishop concluded, "it [the Committee] could not, without grave reactions, advise that the parish be committed to the Vincentian Fathers." The longtime animosity between the secular clergy of the Erie Diocese and the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province, a condition that had its roots in the Polish Vincentians' conflict with Father Andrzej Ignasiak, had come back to haunt Father Gicewicz.[115]

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[114] Zimmerman to Gicewicz, 2 March 1965, A. N. E. P.
[115] Gicewicz to Gannon, 1 February 1965, A. R. C. D. E.; Gannon to Gicewicz, 3 February 1965, A. R. C. D. E.; Gannon to Gicewicz, 1 June 1965, A. R. C. D. E.

Beginning in the spring of 1965, the standoff between Father Gicewicz and Father Taggart took on a new dimension that superseded territorial claims and went to the very heart of the reimagining of the Polish Vice-Province. In his reply to Father Slattery's announcement of the canonical erection of the Utica House, Father Taggart requested that the Superior General require "that the Vice-Province should be called and known as the 'Polish Vice-Province' or 'The Vice-Province of the Polish Vincentians.'" With the two groups of Vincentians now sharing territory in the area of Syracuse, New York, Father Taggart hoped to alleviate any "confusion [that] will arise whereby the Polish Vice-Province will be considered as part of the Eastern Province."[116]

The catalyst for the request was the removal of the word, "Polish" from the letterhead of the Vice-Province, which was first evident in a letter dated February 12, 1964, a date that closely followed the appointment of Father Gicewicz as Vice-Visitor. On March 30, 1965, in a lengthy justification for the request, Father Taggart argued that the resulting confusion between the two groups of Vincentians would detrimentally affect not only vocations and collections for the missionary projects, but also "possible legacies and other bequests." The threat, Father Taggart continued, was not merely hypothetical. Recently, "two laymen were sent around by a confrere in Whitestone [New York] with a letter to doctors in the New York area, asking the latter for samples of medical supplies," in order "to send these to a Polish confrere in Africa." Then "[s]everal of the doctors" contacted the Eastern Province's House in Brooklyn, New York. When Father Joseph T.

[116] Taggart to Slattery, 6 February 1965, Ducournau Archives.

Tinnelly, C.M. the Superior of the Saint John the Baptist House inspected the letter, he said that it "made a very poor appearance."[117]

At its March 1965 meeting, the Polish Vice-Provincial addressed Father Taggart's charges, which were brought to Father Gicewicz's attention by a "letter from Fr. Domogała in Rome." Seeking to justify the Vice-Province's use of the modified stationery, Father Gicewicz travelled to Albany, New York, where, in the articles of incorporation from August 1930, he found that for which he was looking. "[W]e alone," the minutes of the meeting read, "have the legal title of the Vice Province of the Congregation of St. Vincent de Paul. Therefore the eastern province [sic] cannot legally use any words of our title for themselves."[118]

Throughout the remainder of the year, Father Gicewicz continued his campaign to purchase property in anticipation of the construction of new Houses, an essential step, he believed, toward the eventual autonomy of the Vice-Province. He concentrated this time on Connecticut. At its March 31st meeting, the Provincial Council of the Eastern Province learned from a notice in a Connecticut newspaper that the Vice-Province had purchased property in Mount Carmel, Connecticut, a village "adjacent to the new Quinnipiac College." The notice mentioned that the property was to become the site of a seminary and that "[t]here is no mention of 'Polish' in the article." Furthermore, when he

[117] Taggart to Slattery, 11 March 1965, Ducournau Archives; Taggart to Slattery, 30 March 1965, Ducournau Archives. Father Gicewicz was not the first Vice-Visitor to use stationery that did not have the word, "Polish" in its letterhead. In the early 1950s, while residing at the New Haven House, Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz corresponded with the Kraków on stationery whose letterhead read only "Vincentian Fathers," followed by the address. See: Mazurkiewicz to Father Superior, 22 January 1951 to 4 February 1954, A. C. M. K.

[118] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 8 & 9 March 1965, A. N. E. P. The last mention of the dispute over the changing of the name of the Vice-Province came on April 15, 1965, when Father Slattery wrote Father Taggart, informing him that the General Council had decided to wait until "the arrival of the Polish Visitor in Rome . . ., in order to see if he thinks that this change . . . might hurt the situation of the Polish Confreres in Poland before the Communist Government." See: Slattery to Taggart, 15 April 1965, Ducournau Archives.

signed the agreement, Father Gicewicz used as his name the "Very Rev. Edward P. Gates."[119]

The pace of the land campaign quickened during the summer of 1965. In June, the Vice-Provincial Council met in Enfield, Connecticut so that the Consultors could "inspect and pass judgment on a number of pieces of property which might be advantageous for our vice-province [sic]." After comparing the various plots, the Council, keenly aware of the past problems with the Utica House, "decided that unless the Superior General grants us the permission to purchase land in the Connecticut area, we should not go ahead on our own to buy this land secretively." In September, with Archbishop O'Brien in the hospital, Father Gicewicz asked Father Slattery for permission to "buy some community land" in the Archdiocese. Claiming that the Ordinary was on his deathbed and with "letters of permission already in your [Father Slattery's] files," Father Gicewicz hoped to buy "undeveloped but choice" land for a "summer house" in "the valley adjoining the Sleeping Giant State Park at Hamden, Connecticut," not far from Mount Carmel, Connecticut. In closing his letter, Father Gicewicz mentioned that he had already received permission from Father Myszka to purchase the land. Regarding the Eastern Province, he cavalierly concluded, "I know the confreres from the Eastern province may not like it, but it gives us a breath of fresh air and an eventual, fine area [sic] for a common vacation house, in conformity with directives to look after the health of the confreres."[120]

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[119] *Minutes of the Provincial Council of the Eastern Province of the United States*, 31 March 1965, Ducournau Archives.
[120] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 14 June 1965, A. N. E. P.; Gicewicz to Slattery, September 1965, A. N. E. P.

On October 6, 1965, Father Slattery replied to Father Gicewicz's request. Stating that "[t]he idea seems to me very good," the Superior General asked for Father Gicewicz's patience as he thought through the matter. Over the next few months letters crossed between the two confreres as the exact amount of land to be purchased was discussed. On December 10th, Father Gicewicz sent Father Slattery a letter of gratitude for the "pleasant Christmas gift" of permission to purchase 15.6 acres of land. A little over a month later, he again wrote Father Slattery, to inform him of the finalization of the purchase and to "humbly ask for the further permission to go ahead with the construction of the house [sic] at Mt. Carmel. There will be no publicity about this." Father Gicewicz planned to waste no time.[121]

While Father Slattery began to contemplate giving permission to Father Gicewicz to purchase property in Connecticut, the Vice-Visitor confronted a new dilemma regarding the newly established Novitiate in Erie, Pennsylvania. At its meeting on October 1, 1965, the House Council discussed the "financial burden" associated with Saint John Kanty Prep's conversion. In the course of the discussion, the members of the Council decided that the rector, Father James Mielechowski, C.M., should "request provincial funds to defray some of the expenses incurred in this work." The amount considered was substantial. Father Jan Jankowski, C.M. thought that the maximum that Father Mielechowski would be able to request was $20,000. At this suggestion, Father Chester Mrówka, C.M. pointed out that the Council had already drawn out $30,000 from savings to maintain the school and its property and that "this sum should be restored to the house funds." He also counseled that no property belonging to the school should be

[121] Gicewicz to Slattery, 6 October 1965, A. N. E. P.; Slattery to Gicewicz, 5 December 1965, A. N. E. P.; Gicewicz to Slattery, 10 December 1965, A. N. E. P.; Gicewicz to Slattery, 17 January 1966, A. N. E. P.

sold to cover expenses. Without some kind of immediate action, however, the House Council concluded, "the state of the house will surely deteriorate, financially, to an alarming degree." The Council then decided that Father Mielechowski "should bring this matter up to the Provincial and his council [sic], so that an equitable arrangement may be made with the province [sic] sharing a proper proportion of the burden."[122]

The financial condition of the Vice-Province, however, was shaky. Four days after the meeting of the Kanty House Council, the members of the Utica House Council met and discussed their financial situation. At the meeting, Father Franciszek Arciszewski, C.M., announced that he had requested a loan of $10,000 "for the upkeep of the House." His request, he reported, had been denied "because of the financial setback of our Seminary in Erie."[123]

As directed by his Council, Father Mielechowski, at the next Vice-Provincial Council meeting, which was held in New Haven on October 7th, presented his request for additional funds. Although he did not ask the Vice-Provincial Council, as Father Mrówka had suggested, to reimburse the $30,000 the Kanty House Council has withdrawn from its savings, he did raise the amount of the requested subsidy to $35,000. The response must have disappointed Father Mielechowski. The only response recorded was a lukewarm "The Council felt that it would try to help as much as it could." In his report of the status of the Vice-Province, written at the end of October 1965, Father Gicewicz failed to recognize the magnitude of the immediate problem, writing merely that "[t]he Apostolic school [sic] as a new venture has shaky feet until the complement of

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[122] *House Council Meeting Minutes, Saint John Kanty*, 1 October 1965, A. N. E. P.
[123] *House Council Minutes, Saint Vincent Mission House*, 5 October 1965, A. N. E. P.

a full enrollment is reached within five years." Many questioned if the school could hold out that long.[124]

Along with the financial burden placed on the Vice-Province, Father Gicewicz's aggressive campaign for autonomy also led to growing animosity among some of the confreres. In the October 1965 report, Father Gicewicz reported: "It goes without question that the undercurrent feeling of the foreign element in the vice-province [sic] against self-determination agitates against the Vice-Visitor through nefarious letters, but they will soon be gone in the next ten years and the future belongs to the young." The split between the American-born and Polish-born members of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States was beginning to widen.[125]

Signs of this divide are evident in the Vice-Provincial Council minutes beginning in October 1964. At the October 13th meeting, Father Gothard Krzysteczko, C.M., born in Mizerów, Poland in 1911, and Father Karol Pacherski, C.M., born in Upper Silesia, Poland in 1902, challenged Father Gicewicz's vision of the proposed Novitiate in Erie by arguing that "Kanty should reinstate the 9th grade," citing the fact that "a boy who starts the freshman year in another school doesn't readily change his school." In March 1965, Father Krzysteczko again publicly challenged Father Gicewicz when he questioned whether the finances and personnel that would be needed for a "summer house on Long Island" might be better used on other projects. Four months later the two confreres crossed swords when Father Krzysteczko questioned the decision of giving Father George Dąbrowski, C.M. the use of a Community car while he served as an Air Force

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[124] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 7 October 1965, A. N. E. P.; *Relatio de Statu Vice-Provinciae*, 30 October 1965, A. N. E. P.
[125] *Relatio de Statu Vice-Provinciae*, 30 October 1965, A. N. E. P.

chaplain. At the meeting, Father Gicewicz cryptically responded "that certain confidential information he had about Fr. Dąbrowski gave him surety that he did right in allowing Fr. Dąbrowski to have a car."[126]

Confrontations between Father Gicewicz and members of the Vice-Provincial Council continued through the remainder of 1965 and into 1966. At the October 7, 1965 meeting, Father Gicewicz announced that Father Kazimierz Kwiatkowski, C.M., his predecessor and current pastor at Saint Joseph Parish in Ansonia, Connecticut, was nearing completion of a new rectory. He then proceeded to inform the Council that Father Kwiatkowski "had agreed to relinquish his pastorship" and asked for candidates to succeed him. Fathers Pacherski and Krzysteczko, along with Father Mielechowski, protested, claiming that "it would not be a noble act to change Fr. Kwiatkowski before he was given an opportunity to live in the house he had built."[127]

When the Vice-Provincial Council met again in mid-February 1966, Father Gicewicz announced that after discussing the matter with Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien of Hartford, he decided to remove Father Kwiatkowski from the parish in Ansonia. The minutes of the meeting capture well the response of the confreres. Father Krzysteczko declared "that the visitor [sic] committed a serious error in effecting the change and also this appeared out of nowhere because he and the other members of the Council had left the last meeting with the presumption that the change would not take place so soon." Father Pacherski expressed concern that the Vice-Province "had depreciated in the eyes

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[126] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 13 October, 1964, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 8 & 9 March 1965, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 12 & 13 July 1965, A. N. E. P.
[127] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 7 October 1965, A. N. E. P.

of outsiders because of this change." When given the opportunity to speak, Father Jankowski "commented that the advice of the Council was not accepted as presumed."[128]

As justification for his unilateral decision, Father Gicewicz explained "that his decision to do what he did without further consulting the Council members was [caused by] the lack of secrecy in affairs that were discussed at the Council. As proof of his claim, Father Gicewicz cited the fact that "lay people were aware of the possibility of selling a tract of land in Erie which was brought up at the last meeting." When Father Pacherski explained that information about the possibility could have been gleaned from other sources, Father Gicewicz countered "that if this were so, he was happy because it was important for the good of the Community to keep matters discussed at the Council meetings a secret." His decision to remove Father Kwiatkowski stood.[129]

In the immediate wake of his dismissing of the Consultors' protest against the removal of Father Kwiatkowski, Father Gicewicz "announced to the Council that he had purchased a piece of land in Hamden Conn. Area [sic]." He explained that after receiving permission from Father Myszka and Father Slattery he planned to inform the members of the Vice-Provincial Council before the notice appeared, "but due to a leak somewhere it was made known and printed in the newspapers." Father Gicewicz continued by presenting a "preliminary sketch of the house," a structure that would cost "somewhere in the vicinity of $75,000.00."[130]

Responding to the anticipated cost of construction, Father Krzysteczko opined that Father Gicewicz was "going ahead too fast." With the current number of confreres

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[128] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 14 February 1966, A. N. E. P.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.

in the Vice-Province and the cost of "heat, light, insurance and general upkeep," the confreres assigned to the proposed summerhouse "would just be working for the maintenance of the building with no gain for the Community." This "waste of manpower and money" would only accelerate the falling morale in the Vice-Province. When Father Pacherski was questioned on the matter, "he had much the same attitude as Fr. Krzysteczko." Father Jankowski and Mielechowski, on the other hand, approved of the construction project. After a whole morning of debate, the matter was put to a vote. While Fathers Krzysteczko and Pacherski voted against the proposed building, Fathers Gicewicz, Jankowski, and Mielechowski voted in favor of proceeding with plans for the Hamden, Connecticut site. Three days after the meeting, however, Father Gicewicz wrote Father Slattery, once again thanking him for his permission to buy the property. Because of "increased expenditures with the apostolic school [sic] at Erie and the strength of the "conservative elements" in the Vice-Province, as exhibited in the three-to-two vote in the Vice-Provincial Council, Father Gicewicz hastened to add that he was postponing any work on the site.[131]

The strength of Father Krzysteczko's and Father Pacherski's opposition to the project and the extent to which they would go to block it is evident in the fact that on February 16th, they co-authored a "votum separatum," which they submitted to the secretary of the Vice-Provincial Council to be added to the minutes of the February meeting. After outlining the events of the meeting, Fathers Krzysteczko and Pacherski listed three reasons why they opposed the Hamden, Connecticut construction project. First, the confreres explained that in the difficult situation in which the Vice-Province

[131] Ibid; Gicewicz to Slattery, 17 February 1966, A. N. E. P.

found itself, any new project would only endanger the health and well-being of its members. Second, any reassignment of personnel would threaten the already shaky circumstance at the Vice-Province's "most valuable" House, Saint John Kanty in Erie, Pennsylvania. Third, the dissenting priests argued that assigning confreres to a new Foundation was irresponsible when both the Utica House and Whitestone House needed priests.[132]

The deteriorating financial condition in Erie worsened during the winter of 1965-1966. At its December 1965 meeting the Kanty House Council discussed Father Gicewicz's response to its request for a regular subsidy from the Vice-Provincial treasury. The Rector, Father Mielechowski, reported that "the policy is such that we will not receive any fixed amount of budget; however, on application for funds on the occasion of need the province [sic] is committed to help us." The Council concluded that while it was not the optimum solution, Father Gicewicz's proposal "was satisfactory, at least for the present."[133]

At its February 1966 meeting, the Kanty House Council again turned to the financing of the Novitiate. Although the House had recently received $15,000 ($9,000 from the sale of property and $6,000 "provided by the province [sic] as compensation for the discounted tuition of the seminarians"), more expenses loomed on the horizon. With the school preparing for an accreditation evaluation, Father Edmund Gutowski, C.M. announced that improvements needed to be made to the School's library. Father Chester Mrówka, C.M. inquired of the Rector if it would be possible for the House Council to

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[132] "Votum Separatum, " in *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 1 March 1966, A. N. E. P.
[133] *House Council Meeting Minutes, Saint John Kanty*, 12 December 1965, A. N. E. P.

"see the financial report of the past year and be informed of the current finances from time to time." Any confrere who was interested, Father Mielechowski replied, could certainly review the accounts.[134]

Father Krzysteczko's concern over the unilateral decision-making evident in the Polish Vice-Province and the tenuous financial condition of the Erie Novitiate came crashing together when the Vice-Provincial Council met on March 1, 1966. Convened in Erie, "in order [to] sound out the confreres as to their opinion regarding the present status of 'Kanty,'" the Vice-Provincial Council came to no decision on the matter, but did decide to assign Father Julian Szumiło, C.M. the daunting task of "searching for vocations." Following the appointment, Father Krzysteczko asked Father Mielechowski if any property had been sold recently. When the Rector responded in the affirmative, "Fr. Krzysteczko contended that the Council should have been made aware of this and first consulted."[135]

Three days after the Erie meeting, Father Gicewicz's efforts to establish a fourth Vice-Provincial presence in Connecticut suffered a new setback. Writing in response to a request from Father Gicewicz to revise the plans for the Hamden, Connecticut property, Father Slattery rejected a proposed "house of studies." While the Vice-Visitor rationalized the alteration as a way "to obtain a tax exemption," Father Slattery countered that "[t]o change the nature of this permission, it is thought, would cause serious inconveniences."[136]

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[134] *House Council Meeting Minutes, Saint John Kanty*, 21 February 1966, A. N. E. P.
[135] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 1 March 1966, A. N. E. P.
[136] Slattery to Gicewicz, 4 March 1966, A. N. E. P.

Father Gicewicz's reimagining of the Polish Vice-Province was dealt another blow when the Vice-Provincial Council met in Derby, Connecticut on March 17, 1966. Similar to the meeting held sixteen days earlier in Erie, the gathering at Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish had as its objective the gathering of opinions on the future of the School in Erie. When it was put to a vote, "all were in favor of accepting other students as in the past." The Council then instructed Father Mielechowski to "put this [idea] before the professors in Erie to find out their reaction and to report at the next meeting." Along with the decision to end the Novitiate experiment, the Council decided that with his chaplain duties at Griffiths Air Force Base, Father Szumiło would not have sufficient time or energy to commit to being the Vice-Province's vocational director.[137]

Eleven days after the first, a second meeting was held in Derby, Connecticut. At this one, confreres from the other "Eastern homes" had their opportunity to voice their opinion on the reconversion of Saint John Kanty to a college preparatory high school. With this opinion being the consensus of those gathered, Father Gicewicz "agreed to write a bulletin stating that the school would revert to its former status." With the collapse of the Novitiate, the postponement of construction in Hamden, Connecticut, and the dissent evident within the Vice-Provincial Council, Father Gicewicz's vision was beginning to crumble. The potential for further changes seemed to hover on the horizon as he announced that he expected the arrival of Father Myszka, the Polish Visitor, during the week after Easter.[138]

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[137] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 17 March 1966, A. N. E. P.
[138] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 28 March 1966, A. N. E. P. The potential for change was evident in a letter written by the First Assistant to the Superior General, Father Felix Contassot, C.M., to Father Taggart. "If it is a fact that Father Gicewicz has undertaken to build a Seminary or some other kind of establishment of instruction, or education, on a site that he should

On May 12, 1966, Father Myszka attended the monthly meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council. After extending his gratitude for kind treatment he had received since coming to the United States, he explained "his purpose of coming to visit the United States was to listen to the individual confreres and recognize their problems so that when he returned he could give an account both to the Superior General and his Council in Poland." Furthermore, he declared, the decisions that he would make would be "for the benefit of the Community" and that the confreres of the Vice-Province "should have the spirit of St. Vincent in mind" when they would be announced. When he returned to Europe, he promised to fulfill his duty to express faithfully the confreres' opinions and beliefs. "Uppermost in his mind and heart," he concluded, "is not to create any dissention in the Community." True to his mission, Father Gicewicz asked the Visitor about the possibility of "making some kind of a contract which would give the vice province [sic] a legal status as to how it could act." Father Myszka cautioned that any such action would be premature.[139]

Two weeks after attending the Vice-Provincial Council's meeting, Father Myszka met with the Visitor of the Eastern Province of the United States, Father Sylvester Taggart, C.M. in Northampton, Pennsylvania. At the meeting the two Visitors agreed that "the status quo would be maintained between the Eastern Province and the Vice-Province of Poland in the U.S." There were four terms of the status quo. First, the Polish Vice-Province was to retain the word "Polish" in its name and "in any appeal for

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utilise for the building of a 'maison de repos' for his confreres, the Assistant General wrote, it is certainly surprising. As Father Myszka, Visitor of the Province of Poland, has just arrived in the United States, where he is to make a Visitation of his Vice-province [sic], we have informed him of the matter. We will wait for his reply and report." See: Contassot to Taggart, 26 April 1966, Ducournau Archives.

[139] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 12 May 1966, A. N. E. P.

vocations, funds, etc., the identity of the Vice-Province as 'Polish' be made clear." Second, the Polish Vice-Province would acquire no territory in the Eastern Province of the United States. Third, the Polish Vice-Province would not establish a house of formation. Fourth, "there [would] be no foundation of any house of the Polish Vice-Province within the territory of the Eastern Province without the previous consent of the Visitor of the Eastern Province with his Council." Father Gicewicz's vision for a reimagined Vice-Province was seemingly now a dead letter.[140]

Two days after the Eastern Province's Council meeting, the Vice-Provincial Council met. At the meeting, Father Myszka expressed his gratitude for the warm welcome he had received at all the Houses and promised that he would be writing to the confreres in the next few days. Before retiring that night, Father Myszka received two documents that must have shocked him by their audacity. The first one, written by Father Gicewicz, was entitled, "Motivations for Petition for Autonomy as Submitted by the Vice-Visitor on the Occasion of the Canonical Visitation, June 16, 1966." After bringing Father Taggart's "desire to amalgamate the Vice-Province of Poland in the U.S.A" to Father Myszka's attention, Father Gicewicz outlined a ten-point argument for the establishment of "a distinct Northeastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission in the U.S.A." In addition to citing Canon Law, the Second Vatican Council and the "primitive spirit of St. Vincent," Father Gicewicz argued that granting autonomy to the Polish Vice-Province was justified by the fact that "the U.S.A. is the origin of birth of the

[140] *Minutes of the Provincial Council of the Eastern Province of the United States*, 14 June 1966, Ducournau Archives.

majority members of the aforesaid Vice-Province," and that "the future of the Community belongs to the young."[141]

The second document received by Father Myszka was a proposed contract between the Vice-Province and the Polish Province. Citing the fact that Poland was then celebrating its "Millennium of Christianity" and the beginning of a new age of freedom and forgiveness, the proposed contract announced that "the Mother Province of Poland, recognizing the wish of the Vice-Province of Poland in the U.S.A. to be 'equal but separate,' especially in voting to the General Assembly, contracts to arrive at such autonomy to become effective January 1, 1967." In exchange for its autonomy, the new province promised to "contribute annually for the next ten years ten percent of its financial surplus to the Province of Poland." In addition, the document explained that any Polish-born confrere would have "the right to a sabbatical two months every ten years for returning to Poland at the community's [sic] expense."[142]

On July 1, 1966, Father Taggart wrote Father Slattery and summarized the key points of his discussion with Father Myszka on May 27th when they met in Northampton, Pennsylvania. Eleven days later, Father Slattery wrote to the Eastern Provincial, thanking him for the information and informing him that he believed "that the Grand Council, in general, is of your view-point." While there seemed to be a consensus on what to do with the Polish Vice-Province, Father Slattery cautioned that no "final stand" would be taken before "the Assistants General can talk about this with Father Myszka during his proximate visit here on his way back to Poland." In early August, Father

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[141] "Motivations for Petition for Autonomy as Submitted by the Vice-Visitor to the Visitor on the Occasion of the Canonical Visit," 16 June 1966, A. N. E. P.
[142] "Contract [with Polish Province]," n.d., A. N. E. P.

Taggart replied, promising to postpone any further action regarding the Polish Vice-Province. After two years of negotiating for new houses, crusading to eliminate the Vice-Province's reliance on the Eastern Province for the formation of its candidates, and purchasing property in Connecticut and New York, Father Gicewicz was now facing a united front whose objective was to end his cavalier campaign for autonomy.[143]

With the tide seemingly turning against him, Father Gicewicz continued to make bold propositions. While he exchanged letters with the Superior General, Father Taggart received two proposals from the Vice-Visitor. The first one was "a joint apostolic school at Erie, Pa." The second was "an exchange of apostolic school students," in which candidates from both the Eastern Province and the Polish Vice-Province living in the western section of the former's territory would attend the Vice-Province's school in Erie, while those living in the eastern section would attend the Eastern Province's Novitiate in Princeton, New Jersey. The Provincial Council of the Eastern Province unanimously rejected both plans. On August 10, 1966, Father Taggart informed Father Gicewicz in a letter that "I regret turning down this proposal but I honestly do not think that it would be a good idea."[144]

Although it is not clear whether Father Taggart had previously communicated his opposition to the two proposals verbally to Father Gicewicz, Father James Mielechowski, the Rector of the Novitiate, sought out an alternative solution to the school's financial crisis. On July 27, 1966, he wrote a letter to the Erie Diocese announcing that "[t]he Kanty Fathers are agreeable to lease the three school buildings to the Diocese of Erie for

[143] Taggart to Slattery, 1 July 1966, Ducournau Archives; Slattery to Taggart, 12 July 1966, Ducournau Archives; Taggart to Slattery, 3 August 1966, Ducournau Archives.
[144] *Minutes of the Provincial Council of the Eastern Province of the United States*, 13 July 1966 & 8 August 1966, Ducournau Archives; Taggart to Gicewicz, 10 August 1966, Ducournau Archives.

school purposes for the annual sum of $20,000." The following month, Auxiliary Bishop Alfred M. Watson informed Father Mielechowski that his offer had been discussed at a recent meeting. Because "the Diocese could not undertake the staffing of another high school at anytime in the forseeable [sic] future," he had to turn down the offer of the Saint John Kanty buildings. Like the failed negotiations to establish a comprehensive high school on the Vice-Province's property, the proposed leasing of the Kanty property was a stillborn idea. The confreres were running out of possible solutions.[145]

The tenuous state of the school was evident later in August 1966 at the meeting of the Kanty House Council. After a discussion of the possible sale of a farmhouse, barn, and property, Father Fred Piłatowski, C.M., appointed "to act as principal in Erie" at the August 8th meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council, announced that, after conversations with Fathers Mielechowski and Gicewicz, it was decided that the school's accreditation by the Middle States Association would be allowed "to lapse until further decisions regarding the future would be made." Giving voice to the growing uncertainty regarding the school, "Father Piłatowski brought up the question of seeking a decision from the Provincial Council regarding the aim of the school, whether it will be a seminary or a prep school." Father Piłatowski's question had greater relevance in the wake of Father Gicewicz's announcement to reassign Father Chester Mrówka from Erie to Rome, where he would study Canon Law.[146]

The next meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council took place on October 3, 1966. At it, the Consultors discussed Father Francis Hamerski's appointment to the superiorship

[145] Mielechowski to Dlugolecki, 27 July 1966, A. R. C. D. E.; Bishop Watson to Mielechowski, 23 August 1966, A. R. C. D. E.
[146] *House Council Meeting Minutes, Saint John Kanty*, 31 August 1966, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 8 August 1966, A. N. E. P.

of the New Haven House, which was delayed "because the Superior General was waiting to meet with Fr. Myszka before he gave his *placet*." The next order of business was the election of a successor to Father Pacherski. With the submission of twelve candidates for the office of Consultor, the "Council decided he [Father Pacherski's successor] should be somewhat younger than the present Council members and secondly to be of American birth so as to give the Council younger blood and ideas from the younger generation." The members chose Father Fred Piłatowski. While significant for its continued emphasis on youth and the reimagining of the Vice-Province into an American Community, the meeting was more important because it was Father Gicewicz's last one as Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. One week later, Father William Slattery, C.M., the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission signed patent letters appointing Father Henry Sawicki, C.M. Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States.[147]

While removed by Father Myszka after two years of challenging authority in almost every quarter, Father Gicewicz remained combative even afterward. In an undated document written sometime after October 18, 1966, he declared that "[e]very unit should seek perfection so the perfect end of the filial Polish Vice-Province in the U.S.A. is to become an autonomous province." Citing the "climate for negotiations" provided by the Second Vatican Council, Father Gicewicz called for "the fullest interchange of information between all parties" through "joint committees" consisting of

[147] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 3 October 1966, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 8 November 1966, A. N. E. P.

members of the "Curia, Polish Province, [and] Polish Vice-Province." No mention is made here of the Eastern Province of the United States.[148]

Instead of turning his vitriol outward, Father Gicewicz sought out members of his own Vice-Province to criticize. Claiming that the "request for autonomy may not be the consensus of all confreres of the Vice-Province . . . it is the sense of the Senate." [emphasis in the original] He then stated that while the Polish-born confreres, most of whom opposed autonomy, "are brothers," drastic action is needed "to further the work of God." Looking to the future, Father Gicewicz quoted Jesus: "I will separate brother from brother." In his mind, there now was no reconciliation between the two cohorts of confreres. Unlike the Polish-born confreres, with their "outer crust of enfeebled or dead human conservatism that tend to form the way barnacles gather on the hull of a ship," the American-born confreres, who supported his campaign for autonomy, were afraid to challenge authority and timeworn practices. Citing the success that followed the erection of the "Los Angeles and New Orleans Vice-Provinces," Father Gicewicz alluded to the untrammeled path to autonomy. In two separate places in his notes, he wrote: "Only those in the cemetery don't make mistakes." As if rallying troops for one more assault on an enemy position, Father Gicewicz wrote near the end of the document: "But democracy delayed is democracy denied. We don't wait to see what happens, we make it happen. Let us not fight over the price of flaccid cornflakes. We must give the Holy Spirit an opportunity to work in a post-conciliar Community the implementation of the desires of the Vatican II Council. We don't wait to see what happens. We make it happen." The

[148] Edward P. Gicewicz, personal notes, n.d. A. N. E. P. The document can be dated after October 18, 1966, because in it Father Gicewicz made reference to a story published in the *New York News* on 18 October 1966 in which it was reported that the Communist government in Poland was supplying war matériel "for use against American forces in Viet Nam."

successful completion of the campaign for autonomy, however, would have to wait for cooler heads to prevail.[149]

Father Edward P. Gicewicz's tenure as Vice-Visitor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, while truncated, was a volatile nexus between the Community's Polish-immigrant past and its future as a full-fledged member of the American branch of the Vincentian Family. A leader of the first generation of American-born confreres, Father Gicewicz, even while a seminarian in Kraków, took pains to delineate the differences between the Polish seminarians at the Stradom Seminary and those with whom he travelled across the Atlantic Ocean. His particular form of American patriotism received reinforcing during his two terms of duty with the United States military. By the time Father Slattery appointed him Vice-Visitor in 1964, Father Gicewicz's sense of an American *esprit de corps* had drawn lines of distinction between the Polish Vice-Province in the United States and the Polish Province as well as the Eastern Province of the United States.

For Father Gicewicz, the future of the Vice-Province and its eventual autonomy depended on a youthful dynamism that he thought was lacking among the ranks of the Polish-born confreres. Although he was aware of the canonical legitimacy of the Polish Visitor's authority, Father Gicewicz questioned if cultural and political boundaries prevented him from making decisions appropriate for the Vice-Province. Often using American republican rhetoric, Father Gicewicz claimed that the thinking of the Congregation of the Mission had failed to keep up with the march of history. The

[149] Ibid. Both the Los Angeles and the New Orleans Vice-Provinces became filial Vice-Provinces of the Western Province, with its Motherhouse in Saint Louis, Missouri in 1958. Seventeen years later, they acquired their autonomy and became known as the Western and Southern Provinces of the Congregation of the Mission.

imperialistic practice of sending funds to Poland while the Houses of the Vice-Province, especially the Novitiate in Erie, suffered, was anachronistic and detrimental to the financial, ministerial, and spiritual health of the Vice-Province. The changing of its name and the appointment of American-born confreres to positions of leadership, according to Father Gicewicz, did not require permission from higher authorities; it was merely a recognition of the de facto conditions in the Houses of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States.

Even more infuriating for Father Gicewicz were the monopolistic attitudes evident among the confreres of the Eastern Province of the United States. As it came to rely on the Eastern Province for the formation of its candidates, most of whom were more comfortable speaking in English than in Polish, the Vice-Province, according to Father Gicewicz, was becoming demographically similar to the Eastern Province. By evolution, the Vice-Province was becoming an American Community. By failing to recognize and respond to these structural changes, the Eastern Province would kill the Vice-Province, either quickly by amalgamation, or slowly by atrophy as Polish ethnic enclaves shrank and the parishioners abandoned urban ethnic parishes for suburban territorial churches. On a number of occasions in his time as Vice-Visitor, Father Gicewicz sought to block the certain obsolescence of the Vice-Province by petitioning bishops for control of territorial parishes. This battle for identity reached its apex when the Eastern Province petitioned Father Slattery and Father Myszka to require the Vice-Province to return the word, “Polish” to its letterhead.

Blinded by the perceived justice of his campaign, however, Father Gicewicz severely damaged the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. Against the counsel of

confreres, both in the United States and Europe, he went ahead with a number of programs that unnecessarily destabilized the Community. First among these unwise decisions was the one to convert Saint John Kanty Prep to a Novitiate. A longtime anchor of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, the School in Erie brought a certain degree of recognition in Polish-American communities along the East Coast and Great Lakes. While never as successful in numbers of vocations as the complex at Orchard Lake, Saint John Kanty Prep, however, did provide the educational foundation for the upward occupational mobility of second- and third-generation Polish-American men. When the preparatory school was closed, the Vice-Province lost an essential connection to the Polish-American communities throughout the East.

When his Americanist rhetoric failed to sway opinions in the United States or Europe, Father Gicewicz resorted to unilateral actions that contradicted his words and left a black mark on the Vice-Province. This was especially evident in the second and third years of his administration, when Fathers Krzysteczko and Pacherski began to question Father Gicewicz's handling of issues like the purchase of the property in Hamden, Connecticut and the replacement of Father Kwiatkowski as pastor at Saint Joseph Parish in Ansonia, Connecticut. His frustration at the tepid response from the confreres of the Vice-Province reaches its culmination in the notes he prepared in mid-October 1966. After concluding that the Polish-born confreres could not be counted on to advance his campaign, Father Gicewicz seemingly shouted to unseen troops, "We don't wait to see what happens, we make it happen." As fate would have it, however, when he looked around him Father Gicewicz found himself alone.

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The confrere appointed to succeed Father Gicewicz faced myriad problems. Governing an entity that was still a filial Vice-Province of the Polish Province headquartered in Kraków that maintained Houses within the territorial boundaries of the Eastern Province of the United States, Father Henry Sawicki, C.M. faced the daunting task of reconstructing good relations with two dramatically different Communities that controlled much of fate of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. Equally as important and equally trying was the reconstituting of trust between the Polish- and American-born confreres within the Vice-Province. Much of the success of these tasks depended on Father Sawicki rehabilitating the image of the office of Vice-Visitor and convincing confreres in the United States and in Europe that the unilateralism that had characterized decision-making in the Vice-Province was now to be replaced by multilateral communication and transparency.

A contemporary of Father Gicewicz, Father Sawicki was born in Brooklyn, New York on February 23, 1912. He attended the school at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish, after which he enrolled in Saint John Kanty College. After completing the junior-college program at the School, Sawicki joined the Community and was ordained on June 6, 1936. While awaiting his assignment to the Missions in China, Father Sawicki returned to the United States and taught for a year at his Alma Mater in Erie. Beginning in 1937, he served at the Wenchow Mission until a Japanese invasion forced him to flee with members of the Eastern Province of the United States. Upon his arrival in the United States, he returned to Erie, where he served on the mission band for one year. In 1946,

Father Sawicki returned to Brooklyn to serve at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish. It was there, in 1966, that he received word that he was to succeed Father Gicewicz as Vice-Visitor.[150]

For the first year of his term as Vice-Visitor, Father Sawicki led the effort to repair the damage done to the fiscal well-being and morale of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States during the Gicewicz administration. Two areas were of particular concern to the Vice-Visitor and the Vice-Provincial Council: the reconstitution of Saint John Kanty Prep, and the stability of the Vice-Province's membership. Even as they conducted their triage, however, the thoughts of the confreres returned to the question of the Vice-Province's future and the rehabilitation of the campaign for autonomy.

At the first Vice-Provincial Council meeting after his appointment, Father Sawicki presided over a discussion about the future of the School in Erie. Once again, as he had during the Visitorship of Father Gicewicz, Father Krzysteczko made his opinion known from the start when he "suggested, or rather strongly insisted, that the Vice-Visitor write a letter to all Polish Pastors [sic] and alumni restating that we have a Seminary at Kanty and that we will also accept students who are not seminary-bound." It was also suggested that all members of the Vice-Province receive applications "for their convenience to keep handy when some inquiries are made." A third suggestion was a bilingual monthly magazine.[151]

Debate over the fate of the School continued at the December meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council. At the second of four separate sessions, held on December 14,

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[150] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 20; Mazurkiewicz to Very Reverend Edward [sic] Robert, C.M., 26 September 1945, C.A.R.
[151] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 8 November 1966, A. N. E. P.

1966, the confreres unanimously decided that so much of its future depended on the School that it "must be kept open at the cost of great financial sacrifice to the Vice-Province." With a "guaranteed annual income of $70,000.00 coming from the superflous [sic] assets of our Houses," the Council believed it could subsidize the School until it began to attract students.[152]

With a reached consensus on keeping Saint John Kanty open, the decision over the constitution of the School was more contested. Initially, the majority of the members of the Council "preferred to keep Kanty as a combination Boarding School and Seminary. Opinion shifted dramatically after a meeting with the priests who taught at the School. Citing the fact that if the School was promoted as a seminary, "applicants will naturally expect something at Kanty that will truly reflect a seminary image," the clerical faculty convinced the Council "that any combination of Boarding high school [sic] and Seminary is doomed to failure." When it reconvened, the Council, "with some misgivings, decided that Kanty will be exclusively a high school boarding school." With the fate of the School finally decided, the Council then voted to send the current seminary students to the Eastern Province's Saint Joseph College in Princeton, New Jersey.[153]

Two days later, after relocating to the Saint Vincent Mission House in Utica, New York, the Vice-Provincial Council began vetting candidates for the office of Superior for the Erie House. Once again, Father Krzysteczko took a prominent role. After a number of possible candidates were proposed, Father Krzysteczko "strongly recommended Father [Chester] Mrówka for consideration." Citing Father Mrówka's willingness "to voice his

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[152] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 13-16 December 1966, A. N. E. P.
[153] Ibid.

protest to the former Vice-Visitor" regarding the secret sale of Kanty property in February, his success in recruiting students for the Novitiate, and his "great prudence and stability in the *aggiornamento* meetings," Father Krzysteczko won the unanimous consent of the members of the Vice-Provincial Council. Following the decision, Father Jan Jankowski, C.M., the Procurator of the Erie House, announced that the balance in the House treasury was $15,135.07 "[I]n view of the emergency" facing the Vice-Province, Father Sawicki informed the Council that he would contact by "transatlantic telephone" Father Mrówka, who was still studying Canon Law in Rome. With a new man at the helm of a reconstituted Saint John Kanty Prep, the future looked less bleak for the Vice-Province.[154]

On Christmas Eve, Father Sawicki composed a carefully worded letter. In it, he laid out his argument before Father Slattery for the reconstitution of Saint John Kanty Prep and the recall of Father Mrówka from Rome. After emphasizing the fact that the Vice-Province "must make Kanty a boarding school if we are to survive," he informed the Superior General that he had previously asked his Superior to forward Father Mrówka's nomination to Rome. With the mail being "censored by communist officials," however, Father Sawicki wrote, he did not go into the details of the situation in Erie in his letter to Father Myszka. To avoid any misjudgment of the support for Father Mrówka, Father Sawicki felt obliged to write directly to Father Slattery. On February 1, 1967, the Superior General informed Father Sawicki that he had appointed Father Mrówka Superior of the Erie House.[155]

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[154] Ibid.
[155] Sawicki to Slattery, 24 December 1966, A. N. E. P.; Slattery to Sawicki, 1 February 1967, A. N. E. P.

With the new year, the pace of the School's reconstitution quickened. At the January meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council, Father Sawicki reported that Father Mrówka had accepted the office of Superior of the Erie House and would be returning to the United States on January 11th. Before continuing on to Erie, Father Mrówka would reside in Utica and "contact pastors and schools for new students to Kanty." Father Sawicki also reported that the General Council of the Congregation of the Mission also agreed to the reversion of the School to a college preparatory institution. The approval, however, came with a warning. In his letter to Father Sawicki, Father Giuseppe Laporcia, C.M., one of the Assistants General, cautioned not to "neglect the call for vocations in the changeover at Kanty." To aid them in both the reconstitution of the School and the recruitment of students, the Council approved the printing of 4,000 letters to be sent to "the Alumni and friends of Kanty" asking for their assistance. Furthermore, Father Sawicki forwarded a suggestion from Doctor Joseph Jachemczyk, a Kanty alumnus living in Houston, Texas, for the creation of a committee of alumni, which, "in the spirit of ecumenism" would aid the Vice-Province "with their advice and ideas to build up our school academically and spiritually." Recognizing the more immediate needs of the School, Father Krzysteczko suggested that the Vice-Visitor contact the Pastors of the Vice-Provincial parishes and ask that a special collection be taken up. He was informed that one was already on the calendar for January 22nd at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.[156]

Special parish collections, alone, however, would be insufficient to cover the cost of running the School; direct aid from the Vice-Province was required. In May, at a

[156] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 9 January 1967, A. N. E. P.

meeting of the Kanty House Council, Father Mrówka informed the members that the Vice-Province had sent the School $10,000 in April, a second $10,000 in May, and would send another $10,000 in June. While the daily operating expenses of the school were high, the situation in Erie was made worse by the fact that exterior brickwork of the recently erected gymnasium was severely deteriorating and required complete reworking. Replacement of the bricks finally began in August at a cost of $40,000. To help offset this expenditure, Father Sawicki promised to request that all Houses advance to the Vice-Province their superfluous payments for 1967. By October, although expenditures continued to surpass income, the efforts to reconstitute Saint John Kanty Prep began to bear partial fruit. In the *Relatio de Statu Vice-Provinciae* for 1967, Father Sawicki wrote: "Whereas, last year, there was a marked depresson for out [sic] future and lack of interest, the Superior from our House in Erie, writes in his report, 'the work of this House is going forward again, in spite of difficulties.'"[157]

The second issue with which Father Sawicki and his Consultors grappled was the stability of the personnel of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. While a common problem among the American clergy in the post-Conciliar Church, the loss of confreres, either through dispensation from vows or incardination into a diocese, made the challenges facing the Vice-Province more formidable. The success of reconstituting Saint John Kanty Prep depended to a great extent of the leadership and labor of the young American-born confreres who increasingly were questioning their future in the Congregation of the Mission.

[157] *House Council Meeting Minutes, Saint John Kanty*, 11 May 1967, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 10 May 1967, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 28 August 1967, A. N. E. P.; *Relatio de Statu Vice-Provinciae*, 15 October 1967, A. N. E. P.

Almost immediately after becoming Vice-Visitor, Father Sawicki had to address this problem. At the December 1966 meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council, he reported that three priests, Fathers Edmund Gutowski, Fred Piłatowski, and George Dąbrowski were contemplating leaving the Community. While reasons varied, the decisions of all three confreres were the result of their questioning of the future relevance of the Vice-Province. In the minutes of the meeting, Father Gutowski was described as being "plagued by doubts and unrest about the future status of our Vice-Province now that our filial status was upheld by the decision of the Superior General." Father Pilatowski, in speaking with members of the Vice-Provincial Council, described his situation as an "emotional crisis" requiring him "to work outside our Province to give him time to think about [the] future." Already living away from the Community as a chaplain in the United States Air Force, Father Dąbrowski's failure to communicate regularly with the Vice-Province led the Council to conclude that he "should be subject to the jurisdiction of the Utica Superior, with all consequent obligations."[158]

The possible loss of Father Piłatowski was especially damaging to the reconstitution of Saint John Kanty Prep. After refusing appointment as the new Rector of the School, Father Piłatowski announced in a letter written to Father Sawicki and forwarded to Father Slattery in Rome that he was requesting permission for a minimum of a one-year leave-of-absence to become a "professor and spiritual counselor" at the Holy Apostles Seminary in Cromwell, Connecticut. In his letter to Father Slattery, Father Sawicki explained that Father Piłatowski also sought permission to procure an automobile and "to earn, spend, and retain money while at that [sic] Seminary," while not

[158] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 13-16 December 1966, A. N. E. P.

trying to disguise the fact "that he is seriously thinking of leaving our Congregation." Father Slattery, in turn, refused to grant such permission and informed Father Sawicki that if Father Piłatowski continued in pursuing this idea, "it will be his own responsibility to apply to the Sacred Congregation of Religious for such a permission [sic]."[159]

Upon receiving word of Father Slattery's denial, Father Piłatowski wrote a second letter to Father Sawicki. This time he requested permission "to be 'appointed' to teach at Cromwell for one year, that his salary go to the Vice-Province, and that his poverty needs be taken care of by the Vice-Province. Making no decision, the Vice-Visitor again sent a copy of the letter to Rome for Father Slattery's consideration. Approval was later granted for a one-year contract and Father Piłatowski began teaching at the Holy Apostles Seminary in June 1967. When his contract came up for renewal the following spring, the Vice-Provincial Council, citing the fact that Father Piłatowski's "teaching position outside the Congregation is actually a financial drain on our Kanty House," voted to deny any extension of the contract.[160]

In May 1968, even with approval to teach for a second year at the Seminary, Father Piłatowski submitted a letter requesting dispensation from the Congregation of the Mission so that he could be incardinated into the Roman Catholic Diocese of Norwich, Connecticut. With traces of anger and animosity, Father Sawicki informed the Superior General that "the general opinion of the Confreres is, that is [sic] he wants to go, let him

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[159] Slattery to Sawicki, 27 March 1967, A. N. E. P. In a conversation with Father Sawicki sometime before the February 1967 Vice-Provincial Council meeting, Father Piłatowski informed the Vice-Visitor that "he could be incardinated immediately if he chose or be granted incardination after a probationary period of three years." So as not to make any rash decisions, Father Piłatowski said that he had selected the probationary period option. See: *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 13 February 1967, A. N. E. P.

[160] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 10 May 1967, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 21 February 1968, A. N. E. P.

go, because he will only make trouble and will be a bad influence on others." Alleging that Father Piłatowski's decision to leave was premeditated, Father Sawicki continued: "In fact, many Confreres and lay people who knew him as a student, were surprised to see him stay so long in the Community. In fact, the nun who taught him in school, said, [sic] that he will only stay in the Community, for a short time, to pay for his education, and then leave."[161]

With the ongoing instability of personnel within the Vice-Province, the maintenance of a vital formation program became increasingly important. Here again, Father Sawicki faced the difficult task of buttressing relations with the Eastern Province. After the confrontational style of Father Gicewicz, a gentler hand was required. In mid-February 1967, Father Sawicki wrote Father James Collins, C.M., the Provincial of the Eastern Province. After reminding Father Collins of the fact that candidates from the Vice-Province had been going through formation in the Province's Houses in Princeton, New Jersey, Ridgefield, Connecticut, and Germantown and Northampton, Pennsylvania, he asked if he would kindly "permit our boys from St. John Kanty Prep in Erie, Pa., as in the past, to continue their studies at St. Joseph's in Princeton" and complete their formation at the seminary in Northampton. Father Collins granted such permission. At the Vice-Provincial Council meeting the following month, Father Sawicki announced that Anthony Kuzia, a June graduate of Saint John Kanty Prep would enter Saint Joseph's College in Princeton, New Jersey in the fall of 1967. The decision to enroll students in the Eastern Province's Houses of Formation, however, did not go undisputed. Expressing the "conflicting views [found] among some of the confreres in Erie," Father

[161] Sawicki to Slattery, 24 May 1968, A. N. E. P.

Robert Kujawa, C.M. wrote Father Sawicki questioning the Vice-Provincial Council's judgment on the matter. There remained within the Vice-Province elements that continue to resist renewing the Vice-Province's reliance on the Eastern Province.[162]

Those confreres who balked at the idea of sending the Vice-Province's candidates to the Eastern Province for formation received a boost in early 1967. On January 30th, Father Myszka, the Visitor of the Polish Province, wrote Father Sawicki, informing him that at the General Council he proposed that the Vice-Province be represented by the Vice-Visitor and a delegate. In addition, Father Myszka wrote that the Vice-Province could become autonomous of the Polish Province without having to amalgamate with an "existing province." He justified this pronouncement on the grounds that it would allow the Vice-Province to maintain its "nationalistic character." Although the minutes of the Vice-Provincial Council meeting do not include any mention of a discussion of the Visitor's statement, its meaning for the members of the Vice-Provincial Council was clear from the heading the excerpt was given: "autonomy."[163]

Negotiations between the Polish Province and the Polish Vice-Province in the United States progressed swiftly over the next year. At the third session of the Kanty Domestic Assembly held on March 20, 1968, the confreres announced: "In the modern world, experience has shown the wisdom of dividing the government of any moral body into counterbalancing branches of efficient government: the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. In view of this, we propose that the new constitutions [sic] clearly delineate the various branches of government in the community and set the limits of

[162] Sawicki to Collins, 18 February 1967, Ducournau Archives; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 28 March 1967, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 10 May 1967, A. N. E. P.
[163] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 13 February 1967, A. N. E. P.

each." After declaring that the General Council should be the "Supreme legislative body" and "the Superior General with his Council" the "executive branch," the confreres gathered called for the establishment of a judicial branch, "as a source of appeal." Drawing further on federalist political thinking, the Domestic Assembly voted unanimously to implement the above model on the provincial level.[164]

The confreres then turned their attention to the Vice-Province. In a series of unanimous decisions, they decided that the Vice-Province should request autonomy from the Polish Province and "request a territory [to] be delineated for us by the Superior General with his Council or by the General Assembly." Those gathered, expressing a growing impatience, declared that the "vice-provincial assembly should urge the competent authorities, not to wait any further, but to initiate a written contract with the mother province [sic]." A new campaign for autonomy had found its voice. The next step was to present the appeal to Father Myszka and the Provincial Council in Poland.[165]

Two months later, upon his return from the Provincial Assembly in Kraków, Father Sawicki announced at the May 1968 Vice-Provincial Council meeting that "our postulatum for autonomy was officially and unanimously passed by all the delegates." In addition to granting autonomy the contract provided for one Polish priest to be sent to the United States "for permanent assignment in our Vice-Province." Two confreres were presently awaiting passports so that they could join the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. In August, in his *Relatio de Statu Vice-Provinciae*, Father Sawicki explained that the renewed interest in autonomy came principally from the ranks of the younger confreres, "who worried about their future in the Vice-Province." Having won

[164] "Minutes of the 1968 Domestic Assembly, Third Session," 20 March 1968, A. N. E. P.
[165] Ibid.

approval from Kraków, the attention of all members of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States now focused on the Superior General and the General Council.[166]

Five months after the General Assembly, the newly elected Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, Father James Richardson, C.M., informed Father Collins that, in a recent meeting of the General Council in which it reviewed "the proposals made in the Provincial Assemblies," he learned of two from the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. The first one was a petition for autonomy from the Polish Province; the second one was a request that it be given its own territory. Citing the fact that both the Vice-Province and the Eastern Province had Houses in Brooklyn, New York as the tip of the iceberg, Father Richardson questioned how the issue of overlapping territories could be solved. Further confusion resulted from the fact that Father Richardson was under the impression that Father Myszka was "of the opinion that this should not be done at the present time." After some discussion, the General Council concluded that there might be some "advantage in setting up a small committee" to weigh the alternatives. In the meantime, the Superior General asked Father Collins for his personal opinion: "Is there any possibility of coming to a reasonable agreement on this question?"[167]

A little over a week later, Father Joseph T. Tinnelly, C.M., Superior of the Eastern Province's Brooklyn House and professor at Saint John's University's law school, penned a lengthy description of the previous autonomy efforts undertaken during the Vice-Visitorship of Father Gicewicz and mailed it to Father Collins. After outlining the

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[166] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 20 May 1968, A. N. E. P.; *Relatio de Statu Vice-Provinciae*, 15 August 1968, A. N. E. P.
[167] Richardson to Collins, 30 October 1968, Ducournau Archives.

history of the conflict, Father Tinnelly justified blocking the Vice-Province's claim to New England on the fact that only fourteen of its current members resided in the region. Furthermore, Father Tinnelly, like Father Taggart, continued to emphasize the original ethnic limitations of the Vice-Province's American apostolate. With the decrease in Polish immigration to the United States, he argued, fewer Polish-speaking priests were needed in the United States. Any future needs would best be served by requesting a priest be sent from Poland. In addition, with the difficulties of working behind the Iron Curtain, granting autonomy to the Polish Vice-Province would only hurt the Polish Province. Father Tinnelly claimed further that the successful assimilation of the children and grandchildren of Polish immigrants into American culture, the creation of a new ethnically defined Province would be detrimental. "Far from the Polish Vice-Province becoming autonomous," he continued, "we should look to its ultimate suppression and, perhaps, its absorption by the Eastern Province." Father Tinnelly, after mentioning that he thought this matter "had been settled in the negative at the time the present Vice-provincial's [sic] predecessor had been removed from office," concluded, "I would most strenuously oppose the propositions which the Polish Vice-Province is urging."[168]

Confusion over the Polish Provincial's approval of autonomy for the Vice-Province as well as the renewed tension between it and the Eastern Province emerged later that winter. At a celebration in Perrysville, Missouri, Father Richardson informed Father Sawicki that he had been informed by Father Myszka that the Polish Provincial opposed autonomy for the Vice-Province. Father Sawicki explained to Father Richardson that he had gotten the wrong opinion and that "our Vice Province is not

[168] Tinnelly to Collins, 8 November 1968, Ducournau Archives. Father Joseph T. Tinnelly, C.M. was a civil lawyer and an Assistant Provincial of the Eastern Province of the Congregation of the Mission.

pushing for autonomy or for territory immediately but eventually." Father Collins, growing impatient and confused, then asked Father Sawicki, "What do you want?" In hopes of clarifying matters before responding to Father Collin's question, Father Sawicki reported to the Vice-Provincial Council in December that he had written to Father Florian Kapuściak, C.M., one of Father Richardson's Assistants General. All Vice-Provincial Consultors agreed at the conclusion of the discussion that "it will be most difficult to resolve that question." At the January 1969 meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council, it learned that Father Kapuściak had explained the verbal agreement on autonomy between Fathers Myszka and Sawicki and that Father Richardson would "discuss our autonomy and territory maturely during the General Assembly meeting in the summer."[169]

By mid-October 1969, matters between Father Richardson and Father Myszka had been resolved and at the meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council, the formal agreement between the Polish Province and the Polish Vice-Province in the United States was read. In exchange for its commitment to "continue its pastoral care of Polish immigrants, the education of youth, and maintain its mission work," the Vice-Province would receive confreres from Kraków to aid in its work. Recognizing the biculturalism evident among the laity served, the contract provided for American-born confreres "to spend some time in Poland to learn the Polish language, customs, and culture," while Polish-born confreres would be allowed to study in the United States. In addition, the contract stated that the "Board of Consultors" should consist of "two Priests, born in Poland, and two American-born." With the Polish Province now approving autonomy for

[169] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 9 December 1968, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 27 January 1969, A. N. E. P.

the Vice-Province, attention now turned to the Eastern Province, a much more formidable opponent.[170]

Throughout 1968 and 1969, as Father Sawicki and the Vice-Provincial Council continued to negotiate an agreement with the Polish Province, Father Chester Mrówka and the faculty at Saint John Kanty Prep sought to rectify the numerous problems facing the school. With little renovation, the physical plant exhibited signs of fatigue. At a meeting with Father Sawicki during the Vice-Visitor's recent canonical visit to the School, Father Mrówka asked the Vice-Province for $10,000 to pay for replacement of bathroom fixtures and for repair of the new gymnasium's brick façade. Father Mrówka also informed Father Sawicki that he would be requesting another $10,000 in the spring for insurance and vacation stipends for the confreres.[171]

Eight months later, at the December Vice-Provincial Council meeting, the Consultors forwarded another $10,000 to the School, this time for the expenses related to the recent work to update the kitchen. Father Sawicki warned the Council to expect additional expenditures the following year for the construction of new stairwells in the school building. With no mention in the minutes of future meetings, it is not clear if the funds were distributed. By May 1969, however, conditions at the School had worsened. With the State of Pennsylvania threatening to close the School because of severe fire hazards, the Vice-Provincial Council was forced to spend $59,000 to replace the stairwells and install emergency lighting. Concerned about the growing financial burden of the School, Father Arciszewski suggested that Father Sawicki write Father Mrówka to thank him for his tireless effort, but, more importantly, "to remind him to put in deep

[170] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 13 October 1969, A. N. E. P.
[171] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 1 April 1968, A. N. E. P.

freeze any future, extraordinary expenses and to limit himself to the most necessary running expenses." Father Arciszewski's warning was driven home at the November meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council when the Vice-Provincial Treasurer, Father Walenty Pieczka, C.M., announced that the Vice-Province had spent $104,000 to maintain the School in 1969. For the year, the other expenses of the Vice-Province totaled a little over $35,000. As it struggled to maintain the School's enrollment and pay its bills, the Vice-Province, recognizing the changes taking place in the Congregation of the Mission, redoubled its efforts to win its autonomy.[172]

Two events in particular illustrate not only this renewed effort, but also the distance the Vice-Province had traveled since Father Gicewicz's campaign for autonomy. At an extraordinary meeting of the Vice-Provincial Assembly on June 1, 1970, Father Sawicki announced that he had received a letter from the Superior General, who was currently in Poland. In it Father Richardson asked for the opinions of the confreres of the Vice-Province on his appointing Father Myszka to a second term as Polish Visitor. Replying to the letter, Father Sawicki wrote that there was not enough time to poll the confreres and send the information to Poland by the deadline. More importantly, the Vice-Visitor explained that "the confreres of the Vice-Province have only limited acquaintance with the Priests of the Cracow Province [sic] and are not in position to judge the merits of proposed candidates." Any such action on the part of the members of the Vice-Province, according to Father Sawicki and the Vice-Provincial Council, would

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[172] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 12-13 May 1969, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 17 November 1969, A. N. E. P. At the February meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council the total expenses associated with Saint John Kanty Prep were revised up to approximately $116,000. See: *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 18 February 1970, A. N. E. P.

set a bad precedent that would allow priests in Poland, without adequate knowledge of the confreres in the United States, to influence the outcomes of appointments in the Vice-Province.[173]

The second event took place at the June meeting of the Vice-Provincial Assembly. At that meeting, the delegates approved the creation of a commission composed of Father Chester Mrówka, C.M., the Principal and Superior of Saint John Kanty Prep, Father Ben Bielski, C.M., Superior of the Saint Vincent Mission House in Whitestone, Queens, and Father Eugene Piłatowski, C.M., a member of the Utica, New York mission band. All American-born and trained at the Eastern Province's Mary Immaculate Seminary, the commission members were "to lay down the 'ground work,' get information, territory limits, or some basis for our autonomy," and report back to Father Sawicki and the Delegates at the next Vice-Provincial Assembly. Following the Assembly, the Vice-Province would approach Fathers Richardson, Father Myszka, and Father Collins, the Provincial of the Eastern Province.[174]

By the end of the year, a plan of action had begun to emerge. In October, at the Vice-Provincial Council meeting, Father Sawicki announced that the commission would meet during the week of Thanksgiving to develop "an agenda for a meeting with Father Collins." At the next Vice-Provincial meeting, the Vice-Visitor informed his Consultors

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[173] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 28 May 1970, A. N. E. P. Another example of the divide that separated the confreres in the Polish Vice-Province from their fellow Vincentians in Poland is an exchange of letters between Father Richardson and Father Sawicki in December 1970. On December 10th, Father Richardson informed Father Sawicki of the creation of provincial groups to study "the theology of Christian life, the end of the Congregation, etc., in preparation for the next General Assembly" and asked to which language group the Vice-Province should be assigned. This list of groupings included "the English-speaking Provinces" and "Central Europe." On December 16th, Father Sawicki informed Father Richardson that the Vice-Province should be assigned to the group of "English-Speaking Provinces." See: Richardson to Sawicki, 10 December 1970, A. N. E. P.; Sawicki to Richardson, 16 December 1970, A. N. E. P.

[174] Sawicki to Collins, 21 November 1970, Ducournau Archives.

that he had written "a courtesy letter to Father Collins . . . about making arrangements to meet with our Commission either personally or through a representative." While the road before it was still long, the Polish Vice-Province in the United States looked to 1971 with hopes that the agreement with the Polish Province and its Commission on Territory would finally succeed in convincing the Eastern Province and the Superior General and his Consultors that it was a unique Community, distinct from those with whom it shared a history and territory.[175]

The efforts of the Vice-Province's Commission on Territory, however, was not without precedent. The task before Fathers Mrówka, Bielski, and Piłatowski had roots going back four decades, when the first rumblings for autonomy were felt in the Vice-Province. The marks left by the recent campaign of Father Edward P. Gicewicz, with its aggressive program of unilateral decision-making, were visible throughout the Vice-Province. The formidable task facing the Commission required a new approach—a new line of thinking—on the part of the Vice-Province as well as the Eastern Province and the Superior General and his Consultors.

Evidence of such a new line of thinking began to appear in the writings of Father Richardson as early as 1970. In December, in an open letter to the members of the Congregation of the Mission, Father Richardson described how the confreres lived at a time when "a process of continuous evolution . . . renders institutions, even the most fundamental and the most necessary, ineffective unless they are buttressed by the forward looking action of truly engaged persons." This sociological and philosophical shift applied as well to the Roman Catholic Church and the Congregation of the Mission.

[175] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 30 October, 1970, A. N. E. P.; *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 1 December 1970, A. N. E. P.

After citing the fact that "St. Vincent did not discourage originality," Father Richardson declared: "My dear confreres, I am confident that you know how to understand the words I have written in this letter; I listen to them with you. They carry all of the hope of our local communities and of the Congregation. They are my reference in face of all the problems which our provinces [sic] and each of our confreres, starting with the most tried, have to endure."[176]

In the spring of 1971, Father Richardson again wrote to the members of the Congregation of the Mission, this time on the subjects of democracy and decentralization. Recognizing that the application of democracy in the Community required the confreres "to give much more of themselves than in the past when it was possible to leave everything to the care and decision of the Superior," Father Richardson warned that the "mutual exchange of information" between provinces and individual confreres was necessary to prevent the "certain danger of fragmentation." While well aware of the pitfalls that lay ahead of it, the Superior General saw much to be gained by a more open form of governance within the Congregation of the Mission.[177]

With such rhetoric of innovation, democracy, and decentralization, the Vice-Province came to see the Superior General as an ally, whose words and thoughts validated their campaign for autonomy. This perceived justification of the demands of the Vice-Province continued in January 1972, when, in an open letter to the confreres, Father Richardson answered the questions: "As priests in the Church, today, is there room for us to exercise new apostolic initiatives?" His answer was a rousing "yes." In a meeting with other superior generals, it was decided that "[i]f the local community, or

[176] Open Letter of Father James Richardson, C.M., 8 December 1970, A. N. E. P.
[177] Open Letter of Father James Richardson, C.M., Easter 1971, A. N. E. P.

one or more of its members, has a strong inclination to introduce some innovation, let the matter be discussed in community." Once the proposal was heard, Father Richardson continued, it was the responsibility of those gathered to discuss and debate the issue. "If the local community accepts it, it can take on the quality of a local community project." If the idea was not acceptable to the local Community, the Superior could then be approached. "This," Father Richardson continued, "is the road to energetic, wise, and effective priestly ministry in our community environment." In concluding his letter, he invited provinces and vice-provinces "to exercise all possible initiative in this service to the clergy, and to follow energetically all opportunities that are providentially presented to them."[178]

In his letter to the Congregation in January 1973, Father Richardson called for further experimentation. Recognizing the fact that his previous calls had had some detrimental effects, resulting in the loss of "our first enthusiasm for some 'revised' community practices," the Superior General called for a redoubled effort in the future. He identified four means to do so. The first one was to "[a]ccept change as a fact. Accept the existence of contestation and allow particular points of view to be expressed and heard respectfully." This change, he argued, would require "a will to work together in building up true community." The second means was to "create a new consensus . . . an agreed convergence of forces toward a common objective." In order to achieve this goal, Father Richards argued that the third means was to "[m]ake good use of information and communication." The final means was to broaden the "concept of community" to include "a practical awareness of the entire Congregation, of the Church and of the

[178] Open Letter of Father James Richardson, C.M., 1 January 1972, A. N. E. P.

world." With the methodical applications of these means, Father Richardson argued, the Congregation of the Mission would be able to reimagine itself as a vital religious Community for the modern world. For the members of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States, his words, echoed sentiments that had been developing for over forty years. The time, it seemed, had come for its autonomy.[179]

Negotiations between the Polish Vice-Province and the Easter Province began in earnest in early 1971. In January, the Vice-Provincial Council learned that Father Mrówka and Father Collins would meet by the end of the month. A formal explanation of the Vice-Provincial Commission on Territory and its mission was sent to Father Collins in the middle of February. Drastically different in tone and rhetoric from the those of Father Gicewicz, the letter methodically outlined the legal justification for the Vice-Province's current autonomy efforts. Citing Articles from the Congregation of the Mission's new Constitutions and Statutes, the Commission identified the need to establish a clearly delineated territory as the principal prerequisite for the autonomy of the Polish Vice-Province. Turning to this topic, the Commission declared that "based on consultation with the members of the Vice-Province, the geographical location of our houses and the sphere of our work, as well as our own discussion . . . we should be described and identified as, e.g., the Province of New England, or the Province of the Northeast U.S.A., or the Province of Utica, with an area that is commensurate with Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Central New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont." The commission recognized that "there will be some practical implications," but, echoing the sentiment found in the writings of Father Richardson,

[179] Open Letter of Father James Richardson, C.M., 25 January 1973, A. N. E. P.

announced that "we do sincerely believe that there is no insoluble conflict of the interests of these two concerned parts of the Congregation. Recognizing the recent changes to the "Norms of the Community," the Commission, in concluding its letter, announced its desire "to be assured of our proper juridical status as an entity within the Community, to have a clear identity and proper representation in Community affairs."[180]

The responses of the two Communities to these initial efforts are oddly incongruous. At its March 1971 meeting, the Vice-Provincial Council learned that in the "preliminary meeting with Father Collins," Father Mrówka sensed "an undercurrent of opposition by the Eastern province." In particular, Father Mrówka recalled that Father Collins "cannot see a province within a province." Three weeks later, in his own letter to the members of the Eastern Province, Father Collins seemed disposed to working with the Commission on Territory. Citing the "decrees of our General Assembly" (1968-1969) and "the wishes of Father Richardson, our Superior General," he announced that the Eastern Province would carefully examine all proposals and "hopefully arrive at conclusions."[181]

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[180] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 18 January 1971, A. N. E. P.; Mrówka, et al, 12 February 1971, Ducournau Archives. The new Constitutions and Statutes was a result of an extraordinary General Assembly in 1968 and 1972. It was accepted by the Holy See in 1984 and released in an English-language edition in 1989. In it, a vice-province is defined as "a union of a number of houses circumscribed by territorial boundaries which, in accord with a contract with a province, depends on that province and forms one whole with it, and is presided over by a vice-provincial with proper ordinary power, according to the norms of universal law and our own law." Along with this filial model of vice-province, the New Constitutions and Statutes allows for the establishment of an autnomous vice-province, defined as one "which does not depend on any fully constituted province, but depends directly on the power of the superior general, and which is presided over by a vice-provincial with proper ordinary power." Each type of vice province is, "by its nature . . . transitory and is changed into a province when the required conditions are met." See: *Constitutions and Statutes of the Congregation of the Mission*, (Rome: General Curia of the Congregation of the Mission, 1984), English-language translation 1989, pp. 184-185.

[181] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 1 March 1971, A. N. E. P.; Open letter of Father James D. Collins, C.M., 23 March 1971, Ducournau Archives.

Progress in preparing for negotiations with the Vice-Province was quick. By the middle of April, Father Collins had appointed a committee, consisting of Father John Nugent, C.M. (chairman), Father Joseph T. Tinnelly, C.M., and Father Robert P. Cawley, C.M. On April 18th, Father Nugent wrote Father Mrówka, a former student of his, to ask for data on the Vice-Province, in particular "the number and size and locations of missions, novenas, retreats, etc., and the percentages of the faithful involved who were of Polish ancestry," as well as information on the Vice-Province's parishes and Saint John Kanty Prep. Furthermore, Father Nugent asked for a description of the relationship between the Vice-Province and the Polish Province. Concluding the letter on a friendly note, Father Nugent invited Father Mrówka to include anything else that might help him construct a valid image of the current state of the Vice-Province.[182]

Of primary concern to Father Mrówka and the Polish Vice-Province was, of course, territory. A fact that he made clear to Father Nugent. With both Communities having at least one house in the other's territory, exclusive claims to a particular region of the United States were quite implausible. The alternative proposed by Father Mrówka was "overlapping territory," a situation in which both Communities maintained Houses in the same geographical area. Such a situation had existed in Brooklyn, New York since the 1920s. While the Polish Vice-Province served Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, the Eastern Province ministered to the spiritual needs the parishioners at

[182] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 26 April, 1971, A. N. E. P.; Nugent to Mrówka, 18 April 1971, Ducournau Archives. Caution, bordering on suspicion, was evident in the Vice-Provincial Council meeting on April 26, 1971. Following the announcement of the members of the Eastern Provincial committee, Father Franciszek Arciszewski, C.M. declared that "the less is written on the matter [of the negotiations] the better it is. Oral discussions are not recorded, whereas written correspondence stands."

Saint John The Baptist Parish and the educational requirements of the students at Saint John's University in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn.[183]

With a long history of strained relations between the Polish Vice-Province and the Eastern Province, however, Father Mrówka's call for territory set alarm bells off for Fathers Tinnelly and Cawley. Taking an unusually sympathetic tone, something he would do throughout the negotiations, Father Nugent explained that "they are not saying that they want a 'piece' of the Eastern Province, from which the Eastern Province (EP) would then be excluded." He further stated that the Vice-Province currently lacked the expansionist outlook that characterized its efforts under Father Gicewicz. It had no plans for "any new establishments at the moment, but wanted to maintain the status quo between it and the Eastern Province. As it was explained to him by Father Mrówka, Father Nugent concluded: "The one thing they want to protect themselves from most of all is unilateral action from Poland."[184]

Hoping to clarify matters in regards to the Vice-Province's claim of overlapping territory with the Eastern Province, Father Nugent contacted Bishop Joseph McShea of the Catholic Diocese of Allentown, Pennsylvania on October 31, 1971. To provide context for his questions, Father Nugent explained that the Vice-Province's motivation for autonomy came, in part, from the Congregation of the Mission's recent General Assembly where a draft of a section of its Constitutions was changed to prevent one Province from excluding another Province from its territory. Father Nugent then asked,

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[183] Nugent to Tinnelly & Cawley, 12 September 1971, Ducournau Archives.

[184] Ibid. In the opinion of the Vice-Provincial Council, the complete case for autonomy had been made by Father Mrówka in his meeting with Father Nugent. At its October 1971 meeting, the Vice-Provincial Council received a report of the meeting. In the minutes of the meeting, the notice of the meeting is followed by the sentence: "Our case rests and it is now up to the Eastern Province to reach a decision." See: *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 4 October 1971, A. N. E. P.

"Is there any doctrine of common law that would say that, due to the presumption of the territorial nature of law in the Church, a law such as our Article 162, Section 2 would be an exception that ought to be circumscribed by restraints?" In addition, he inquired whether "the [Superior] General and his Council would be justified in raising the Polish Vice-Province to the status of province [sic] only for sufficient cause of an apostolic need and that its activity should be generally restricted to fulfillment of this purpose."[185]

Although meant to make a legal inquiry of Bishop McShea, Father Nugent's letter provides interesting insight into the opinions of the Eastern Province regarding autonomy for the Polish Vice-Province. At the beginning of the letter, as an aside, Father Nugent mentioned that "[t]he delegates from the Eastern and Western Provinces of the U.S. fought against this section, but were overwhelmingly outvoted by the Assembly." Later in the letter, Father Nugent makes an important distinction between himself and the other two members of his committee. Both Father Tinnelly and he had been members of the Eastern Province's Provincial Council in the mid-1960s, an experience that left lasting impressions on both confreres. Even after repelling the assaults of Father Gicewicz and recognizing the obsolescence of national parishes, and by extension the ethnically defined Polish Vice-Province in the United States, Father Nugent observed: "On the other hand I think that the Poles are the strongest of all the national groups in their determinations and there is just so much you can force human beings to do." Although Father Gicewicz and some members of the Vice-Province would have disagreed with Father Nugent's

[185] Nugent to McShea, 31 October 1971, Ducournau Archives. Article 162, Section 2, cited by Father Nugent reads: "Etsi unaquaeque Provincia territorialibus limitibus circumscripta sit, non excluditur quod altera Provincia adsit in eodem territorio."

characterization of the Community as Polish, they would have applauded his recognition of their drive and determination.[186]

A little over two months later, Father Richardson wrote Father Sawicki to inform him that during his upcoming visit to the Eastern Province he hoped to meet with the confreres of the Saint John Kanty House in Erie, Pennsylvania and the Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. He emphasized that he did not want to meet individually with the confreres and would like to discuss issues other than autonomy. Hoping to present his trip more as a fact-finding junket than an official visit, Father Richardson mentioned that he would have Father Florian Kapuściak, C.M., one of his Assistants General, make a formal visitation. Father Kapuściak, however, continued to postpone any such trip until he had an opportunity to improve his English.[187]

Concern over the selection of the best confrere to assess the situation in the Vice-Province emerged at the January 1972 Vice-Provincial Council meeting after Father Sawicki announced Father Richardson's plan to visit the Eastern Province. Along with announcing that the Superior General would visit the Saint Stanislaus Kostka House on February 17th and 18th and the Saint John Kanty House on March 3rd and 4th, the Vice-Visitor explained that while Father Richardson had no plans to conduct individual interviews with the confreres of the Vice-Province, he would "be available for personal and private talks." Turning to the question of who should conduct an "official visitation" Father Arciszewski argued that Father Kapuściak "would not be the best possible choice

[186] Ibid.
[187] Richardson to Sawicki, 8 January 1972, A. N. E. P. It is interesting to note that Father Richardson hoped to send his Polish Assistant General to visit the Polish Vice-Province and Father Kapuściak delayed going until he learned enough English to communicate with the confreres. While the Superior General, in this circumstance, identified the Vice-Province as an extension of the Polish Province, his Assistant considered it to be an American Community.

since he does not appreciate our Polish-American psychology." His opinion was countered by those of Fathers Sawicki and Krzysteczko.[188]

Over the next month, Father Nugent continued to wrestle with his thoughts regarding the situation of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States. In a letter to Father Collins dated February 6, 1972, he described his dilemma. "As you probably know, both Joe [Tinnelly] and Bob [Crawley] are quite strong on the side of the Eastern Province in the controversy. To me, the question is not so clear; I can see both sides, and I cannot say that I am honestly convinced of either one." His indecision extended even to the role he was to play in the negotiations with the Vice-Province. Being capable of seeing arguments for the position of both Communities, be described the alternatives. "I can act like a lawyer defending his client and bring up only those arguments that favor our side . . . or I can bring up all the arguments I see on both sides." In light of his "ambivalence," Father Nugent questioned if the Provincial might think it better to remove him from the Committee.[189]

Six days after his letter to Father Collins, Father Nugent wrote to the other two members of the Committee, enclosing a "Position Paper" and a "Response to the Position Paper" he had sent previously to Father Collins and them. With a close attention to legal precedents, the first paper constructs a strong legal argument against "[t]he overlapping of jurisdictions." While citing the same territorial ecclesiastical jurisdiction he had mentioned in his letter to Bishop McShea, Father Nugent concentrated his attention in the first paper on the lack of a justification for the Vice-Province's continued existence. With the waning need for Polish-speaking confreres to serve Polish-speaking

[188] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 17 January 1972, A. N. E. P.
[189] Nugent to Collins, 6 February 1972, Ducournau Archives.

congregations, the Vice-Province lost its raison d'etre. If there would be such a justification, he continued, "there would be no objection to making the territorial limits of the Polish Vice-Province coextensive with the territory of the United States."[190]

The second paper took a more sociological approach than the first. It asserted that the "jurisdiction of religious institutions," such as the Congregation of the Mission, "is directly only over their members," not over the individuals served by the institutions' members. Therefore, "[t]he argument about the practice of the Church in requiring a justifying reason to permit overlapping territories must be kept in the context of religious institutes." Father Nugent then explained that an ecclesiastical precedent existed for permitting "overlapping territories in the same religious institute after the original justifying causes have ceased to exist." This point, along with the fact that, "the two overlapping provinces each have their own spirit [sic] within the general spirit of the institute, and their own traditions, approaches, contacts and appeal," served, according to Father Nugent, as a counterweight against the Eastern Province's argument in favor of amalgamating the Vice-Province.[191]

In concluding his letter to his two fellow committee members, Father Nugent put their work with the Vice-Province into a different perspective. No longer merely a problem to be solved "on purely legal grounds," the dilemma of the Vice-Province was "a pastoral problem in which all must look to the good of the Congregation as a whole and the good of the Church." Recognizing this fact, Father Collins informed Father

[190] "Position Paper" in Nugent to Tinnelly & Cawley, 12 February 1972, Ducournau Archives.
[191] "Response to Position Paper" in Nugent to Tinnelly & Cawley, 12 February 1972, Ducournau Archives. At the conclusion of the "Response to Position Paper," Father Nugent, in a stroke of genius, also addressed any future confusion between the Vice-Province and the Eastern Province in communicating with the public. "Regarding the objection that confusion would arise if the word 'Polish' were left off letterheads in matters of fund-raising and recruitment and the like, this could easily be averted by the use of 'Philadelphia Province' and 'Utica Province.'"

Nugent that "our [the committee's] commission is broader than the commission to discuss territorial lines." Fathers Nugent, Cawley, and Tinnelly along with the members of the Vice-Province's Commission on Territory now had the opportunity to reimagine relations between the two Communities.[192]

The next step in this process took place on March 3, 1972 at the Saint John Kanty House in Erie, Pennsylvania. Meeting with Fathers Nugent and Mrówka, Father Richardson announced that even though Article 162, Section 2 of the draft of the new Constitutions stated that "the borders of a territory are not exclusive" and Article 167, Section 3 allowed "a Provincial authority to establish a house without further authorization," he would not make any decisions based on Article 162, Section 2 "before the next General Assembly."[193]

More pressing, he argued, were four other questions facing the Vice-Province. The first one was "the identity crisis among the young Confreres of the Polish Vice-Province," a condition that required immediate attention. His only suggestion, however, was that the confreres of the Eastern Province empathize with the "young Confreres" of the Vice-Province. The second and third problems, the recruitment of non-Polish vocations and the ministering to the non-Polish faithful were more complicated issues. Before coming to the United States Father Richardson had authorized a search of the Curia Archives to identify "any authentic instrument of erection for the Polish Vice-Province, in which one could look for conditions set down at the time of erection." Such a justification for the Polish Vincentians' efforts in the United States was not found. Even a search of the letters written at the time of the "early foundations" was futile.

[192] Nugent to Tinnelly & Cawley, 12 February 1972, Ducournau Archives.
[193] Minutes of Meeting in Erie, Pennsylvania, 3 March 1972, Ducournau Archives.

Without the necessary documentation," Father Richardson concluded, "there is no explicit statement in this correspondence that the Polish Confreres are to be restricted to those of Polish ancestry either in recruiting vocations or in the ministry." In regards to the fourth problem, the "question of the formation of the Confreres of the Polish Vice-Province," Father Richardson cautioned that because of its small numbers, the Community should not pursue the establishment of its own Houses of Formation. Taken collectively, however, the Superior General's comments seemed to favor the Vice-Province in its claim for territory and autonomy.[194]

After allowing Father Mrówka a brief moment to express his hopes for the future and his need to sign a formal contract with the Polish Province, Father Richardson turned to the matter of territory. After summarizing the main points of the existing plan, the Superior General asked if there were any other alternative. The only one proposed was a half-hearted one whereby the new province would receive "a very small territory around the Provincial House—perhaps the City of Utica—with all the other houses established as houses in the territory of another province [sic]."[195]

Near the conclusion of the meeting, Father Richardson struck a nerve when he made mention of the previous autonomy campaign of Father Gicewicz, in particular, the former Vice-Visitor's charge that the confreres of the Eastern Province had attempted to steal candidates away from the Polish Vice-Province. Father Nugent, at this point, added that "some of the Confreres of the Eastern Province resented the fact that the Polish Vice-Province acted illegally and presented the Superior General with a fait accompli while the Confreres of the Eastern Province acted in accordance with obedience, and, nevertheless,

[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.

the Polish Vice-Province got their own way." In his response, Father Mrówka walked a very fine line. While recognizing the fact that "some things had been done illegally in the past," and reiterating that he and his Committee "did not agree with these actions," he did declare that "they were understandable, since those responsible for them had been provoked."[196]

Although these last comments exposed some of the previous animosity that had characterized relations between the two Communities in the mid-1960s, the meeting between the Superior General and the two confreres evinced the recent thaw brought on, to a great extent, by the balanced approach of Father Nugent. Territory for the Vice-Province was now a valid topic of discussion. The restrictions resulting from the ethnic identity of the Polish Vice-Province's past began to loosen. While recognizing the acerbic exchanges of the past, both sides continued to negotiate. In a letter to Father Florian Kapuściak, C.M., one of the Assistants General, Father Sawicki characterized the moment: "Father General also spoke for a long time with Father Mrówka and Father Nugent from the Eastern Province about our future autonomy and territory. I think it will be in our favor. . . . I was not 'pressing' this time. I am sure, time is in our favor."[197]

This "wait-and-see" attitude on the part of the Vice-Province is evident in the little attention autonomy received in the meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council. No mention of the negotiations with the Eastern Province was made at the meetings on January 23' and March 14, 1973. Instead, attention focused on the appointment of new Superiors and other personnel issues. After these two meetings, the Consultors did not hold another one until June 18, 1973. Again, personnel problems dominated the meeting.

[196] Ibid.
[197] Sawicki to Kapuściak, 20 March 1972, A. N. E. P.

The trickle of requests for the dispensation of vows and leaves of absence that had persisted since the early 1960s suddenly became a torrent. At this one meeting, the future of Fathers John Starzec, C.M. and Eugene Piłatowski, C.M. in the Vice-Province were discussed. Both priests had submitted to work in a diocese in New England. A third confrere, Father Joseph Paciorek, C.M., after receiving a Master's degree in counseling also requested permission to work away from the Community. With a shortage of Polish priests, he wished to work in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts. Father Paciorek, however, did not plan to leave the Community. Instead, he hoped, with Father Sawicki's consent to work in a parish so he could give the Vice-Province "a foothold in the Diocese, get into the good graces of the Bishop, [and] have a chance to look for a future Provincial's House, etc." Father Paciorek's attempt to secure a foothold in the Springfield Diocese would be aided by the fact that a personal friend of his was a Diocesan Consultor.[198]

Almost as an afterthought, the minutes mention that the Commission on Territory's work had been fruitful. Father Sawicki and Father Nugent, now the Provincial of the Eastern Province, had met on June 4, 1973 "to finalize the agreement on the draft prepared by our Commission and that of the Eastern Province." While there was one point of possible confusion in the document, Father Sawicki received assurances from Fathers Mrówka and Father Joseph P. McClain, the Assistant Provincial and new chairman of the Eastern Province's negotiating committee, "that there is no need for any

[198] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 18 June 1973, A. N. E. P.

anxiety." Father Nugent was now waiting "for the green light from Father Sawicki to send this document to the Superior General for his approval."[199]

The lack of attention the autonomy negotiations received at the Vice-Provincial Council meetings in the first half of 1973 was more than counterbalanced by the intense discussions taking place among the confreres of the Eastern Province and between them and the Vice-Province's Commission on Territory. In January, the representative of the two Communities met at Niagara University to discuss a number of issues, including the proposed territory for the Vice-Province. Arguing that New England had been "historically our sphere of influence" and citing its close association with the Daughters of Charity of the Northeast Province, Father McClain argued that the Eastern Province had more of a claim to New England than the Vice-Province. Instead, he suggested that Father Mrówka "consider territory embracing the states of Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and Michigan. In addition, Father McClain mentioned that the Eastern Province would also consider "ced[ing] some portion of Western Pennsylvania . . . so that, in the erection of the new province the house at Erie falls within its territory." The Eastern Province proposed this territory, in part, to aid the Vice-Province to develop "apostolates which are not exclusively Polish oriented."[200]

A little over a month later, Father McClain and Mrówka met again, this time at the Mary Immaculate Seminary in Northampton, Pennsylvania. At this meeting Father Mrówka rejected the idea of a territory for the proposed province running from Michigan south to Mississippi and reaffirmed the Vice-Province's desire for New England. Father McClain then called for an "attitudinal conversion" on the part of confreres from both

[199] Ibid.
[200] Report of McClain/Mrówka Meeting, Niagara University, 27 January 1973, Ducournau Archives.

Communities. If no territorial concessions could be made, he feared that the negotiations would end in a stalemate. Two weeks after the meeting with Father Mrówka, Father McClain wrote Father Richardson , explaining that he saw little possible progress in the negotiations unless the Vice-Province was "prepared to drop its Polish identity." Describing a "territorial, national province" as a "hybrid without a future," he recommended that the Vice-Province "should level with the Polish Province on this point, even if it diminishes the willingness of that province [sic] to supply it with personnel." In his reply to Father McClain, Father Richardson agreed that the idea of a "Polish identity for a territorial Province is contradictory" and that only time would wean the Vice-Province away from such an ethnic focus. As it had done before, the two conceptions of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States proved to be a twisted knot of legal and cultural strands that resisted easy untangling.[201]

Recognizing the calcifying relations between the two Communities, both Committees, at a meeting at Saint John's University on May 18, 1973, agreed that "the present condition could not continue for very much longer." After concurring that a "contractual agreement" between the Vice-Province and the Polish Province would settle the matters of financial support and personnel, Father Tinnelly inquired if the Vice-Province was capable of additional work. Father Mrówka not only replied in the affirmative, he charged that there was not enough work to go around. "At present, if a man at Erie wanted to transfer from teaching to a parish ministry," the minutes of the meeting read, "this could not be done since the positions in the parishes are all filled."

[201] Report of McClain/Mrówka Meeting, Mary Immaculate Seminary, 3 March 1973, Ducournau Archives; McClain to Richardson, 17 March 1973, Ducournau Archives; Richardson to McClain, 30 March 1973, Ducournau Archives.

When the topic of amalgamation was raised, the Vice-Provincial Commission took a less rigid position than it had in the past. "Perhaps at a later date, if the new Province proved unsuccessful, its amalgamation with the Eastern Province would prove the right answer."[202]

The confreres gathered at the meeting, at this point, agreed that "the committees should begin to think more long-term when considering a solution to the current dilemma" and immediately came to a number of key agreements. First one was regarding vocations. Described as a "difficulty to be surmounted rather than one which impeded solution," the two committees agreed that, while each Community would not recruit candidates "in the territory of the other," they would allow for vocations that would come through "apostolic works," such as those that might result from contact with "the Daughters of Charity of the Northeast Province" and the confreres serving at Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Second, the territory of the new province would consist of the states of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire. Third, each Community would "retain the Houses which each has in the territory of the other at the time of the erection of the new Province." The establishment of a new house on the territory of the other Province, however, would require its "explicit agreement." Fourth, the Provincial of the new Province was required to live in its territory. Fifth, in the short-term, both Communities could "accept missions, novenas, retreats, or similar apostolic works within the territory of the other," especially in parishes it had served regularly in the past. Over time, however, both Communities

[202] "Report of the Meeting of the 'Ad Hoc Committee on the Polish Vice-Province' of the Eastern Province with Its Counterpart in the Polish Vice-Province Held at St. John's University," 18 May 1973, Ducournau Archives.

were expected to limit their work to parishes within their territory. Finally, recognizing the need to remain flexible, the two sides agreed that the agreed upon terms should be reexamined and renegotiated "[w]ithin a period of five to ten years."[203]

Three days after the writing of the memorandum of agreement, Father McClain informed Father Cawley that the Superior General, keenly aware of the damaging effects of the failed attempt to convert Saint John Kanty Prep into a Novitiate, had conveyed his concern about any attempt by the new Province to establish its own House of Formation. He was not the only person to express his opinion. At the July 1973 meeting of the Eastern Provincial Council, confreres voiced a desire to place a deadline for one Community's withdrawal from Houses existing within the territory of the other. Still stinging from Father Gicewicz's attempt to convert existing or proposed Houses into Houses of Formation, the Consultors suggested that "during the specified period wherein one province may have a house [sic] within the territory of the other, it shall not be permissible to change the nature of that house." Father Nugent expressed this same concern to Father Richardson a month later when he informed the Superior General that suspicion of the Vice-Province still lingered. Reflecting the optimism and flexibility that had allowed him to shepherd previous discussions between the two Communities, he concluded: "As time goes on, I think of this matter less as a project to clear up a long, on-going [sic] tension and antagonism, and more as a project to work out a step leading to cooperation at a future date when we will truly need each other and be able to be of great

[203] Ibid; "Memorandum of the Meeting Regarding the Polish Vice-Province," 4 June 1973, Ducournau Archives.

help to each other in our works." It seemed like the long-awaited consensus between the Vice-Province and the Eastern Province had finally been reached.[204]

Two days after Father Nugent contacted Father Richardson, amidst discussions of leaves of absences for Fathers Starzec and Eugene Piłatowski, Father Sawicki announced his September 20th departure for Poland. He planned to meet with the new Provincial of the Polish Province, Father Tadeusz Gocłowski, C.M. to assure him "that our new autonomous status will not affect our relation to Kraków [sic]." Financial subsidies and personnel, he would assure the Polish Provincial, would continue to cross the Atlantic Ocean.[205]

Two days before his scheduled trip to Kraków, Father Sawicki met with the members of the Vice-Provincial Council for their September meeting. One of the topics discussed was a letter sent by Father Nugent. In the letter, the Eastern Provincial explained that as the proposed agreement on the establishment of territory for the Vice-Province began circulating through the Eastern Province a number of confreres objected to the lack of a timetable for the Vice-Province's withdrawal from the Houses at Utica and Whitestone. The Vice-Provincial Council dug in its heels. Father Sawicki and his Consultors "vigorously and unanimously agreed to oppose any such move and to abide by the original terms of the contract." While negotiations had come a long way since Father Sawicki had been appointed Vice-Visitor, there was still a way to go before

[204] McClain to Cawley, 7 June, 1973, Ducournau Archives; *Minutes of the Provincial Council of the Eastern Province of the United States*, 3 July 1973, Ducournau Archives; Nugent to Richardson, 5 August 1973, Ducournau Archives.
[205] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 7 August 1973, A. N. E. P.

reaching the goal of autonomy. The road still ahead of them would prove to be a trying one.[206]

In early 1974, Father Florian Kapuściak, C.M., one of Father Richardson's Assistants General, made a visitation to the Vice-Province. At the Vice-Provincial Council on February 11, 1974, he reported favorably on the confreres' efforts at Saint John Kanty Prep and "strongly recommended" that they "continue it, if at all possible." Earlier in the meeting, Father Sawicki and the Council approved a $6,000.00 subsidy for the "general maintenance" of the school. Turning to the issue of the Vice-Province's autonomy, Father Kapuściak reported that Father Richardson would make a decision "after the General Assembly in Rome this year." While both Fathers Richardson and Nugent favored autonomy for the Vice-Province, some confreres of the Eastern Province continued to question such a decision. The sticking points were the high percentage of confreres currently working outside of the proposed New England territory and the refusal of the Vice-Province to give up one of the two Mission Houses. Recognizing the significance of these two Houses, the Assistant General "promised to present counter-arguments to the Superior General" upon his return to Rome in early March.[207]

Two weeks after the Vice-Provincial Council meeting, Father Kapuściak met with representative of both Communities at the Eastern Province's Mary Immaculate Seminary in Northampton, Pennsylvania. At the meeting, the Assistant General shared his observations. Recognizing the fact that an "ideal solution" to the situation did not

[206] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 18 September 1973, A. N. E. P.; Nugent to Sawicki, 9 September 1973, Ducournau Archives. The frustration felt by the members of the Vice-Provincial Council regarding this new opposition to its territorial plans had to have been exacerbated when Father Sawicki reported on his return from Poland that "he met with absolutely no opposition" from the confreres of the Polish Province. See: *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 23 October 1973, A. N. E. P.

[207] *Vice-Province of the Congregation of the Mission Council Minute Book*, 11 February 1974, A. N. E. P.

exist, he recommended that all those involved in the negotiations seek "not the selection of a better good, but [the] prevention of an evil." The autonomy the Vice-Province sought from the Polish Province depended on securing territory, without which it would possibly lose additional confreres—an evil for both the Community and the people it served. In addition, the insistence of the Eastern Province that the Vice-Province abandon one of its two Mission Houses would result in a second evil: the "older confreres within the Vice-Province who would experience serious difficulties in withdrawing from houses in which they have resided for a long time." A third evil would be the financial loss to the Vice-Province and the ill will among donors who had funded the construction of the Utica House. The delegation from the Eastern Province firmly responded with the argument that any future decree would be "a foundational document" that "should concretize the direction in which development is to take place." Recognizing the problems resulting from the lack of such a document for the Polish Vice-Province, they continued to stand firm on the immediate need to redirect the Vice-Province's apostolate toward the territory of New England.[208]

The opposition expressed by the Eastern Province's Ad-Hoc Committee paled in comparison to the maelstrom that broke out at the Provincial Assembly. In his April 27th letter to Father Richardson, Father McClain characterized the Assembly as having an "angry emotional attitude" and a "certain vigilantism," which influenced the selection of

[208] Memorandum of Meeting—Mary Immaculate Seminary, 26 February 1974, Ducournau Archives. In early April Father McClain and Father Nugent both wrote Father Richardson, expressing their opinions on the state of negotiations with the Vice-Province. In his letter, Father McClain mentioned that "matters did not change greately [sic] as a result of the discussion." He still believed that all those involved needed to convey to the Vice-Province the vital link between the success of the proposed province and the clarification of its territorial borders. Father Nugent concurred, but added that he saw the task of the committees as one of "promot[ing] a good apostolate in the new territory," rather than selecting the lesser of two evils. See: McClain to Richardson, 5 April 1974, Ducournau Archives; Nugent to Richardson, 7 April 1974, Ducournau Archives.

delegates to the upcoming General Assembly. Refuting Father Nugent's claim that he "bungle[d] the presentation," Father McClain described how a "bomb went off when he mentioned the magic words 'New England.'" Like their fellows in the Vice-Province, the confreres of the Eastern Province were divided over the future direction of the proposed province.[209]

In an effort to relieve some of the pressure among the confreres of the Eastern Province, Father Richardson invited individuals to write him with their thoughts about the autonomy plan for the Vice-Province. Welcoming all opinions, he asked that the priests keep in mind that it is "the only Viceprovince [sic], at least in the recent history of our Congregation as far as I have been able to discover, that has never had territory of its own." In addition, Father Richardson pointed out the ongoing misperceptions associated with identifying the Vice-Province as a "Polish" community. The last point Father Richardson hoped the confreres would keep in mind while writing him was the Vice-Province's "overwhelming opposition to amalgamation with the Eastern Province."[210]

Throughout the summer of 1974, members of the Eastern Province gave thought to the future of their Community and its relationship with the Vice-Province. By early September, consensus began to emerge. On the subject of territory, the increasingly popular opinion was to give the Vice-Province Connecticut and Rhode Island along with the Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania and Syracuse, New York. Father McClain, however, looked to the future viability of the new province and determined that the proposed territory was insufficient. Any such announcement would result in "serious tensions

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[209] McClain to Richardson, 27 April 1974, Ducournau Archives.
[210] James W. Richardson, C.M., "Answer to the Request of the Provincial Assembly April 15-20 Addressed to the Superior General," 17 May 1974, Ducournau Archives.

between us and the Vice-province [sic]." Furthermore, he felt that Father Sawicki would not accept the "bad bargain." Both responses, Father McClain explained, would result only in "a lot of restlessness in the troops." Discounting the rumblings that would emerge with the announcement of the Vice-Province receiving the entirety of New England, he concluded: "I would prefer to get it over and done with—make a clean and decisive break—than live with the problem which the proposed solution, in my thinking, is creating."[211]

On October 22, 1974, Father Nugent wrote an open letter to the confreres of the Eastern Province summarizing the events that had taken place during the recent General Assembly in Rome. At a meeting with representatives from the Eastern Province and the Vice-Province, Father Richardson suggested a series of meetings to be held throughout the Eastern Province where representatives from the two Communities would answer questions on the proposed autonomy plan. The Eastern Provincial Council selected Saint Vincent's Seminary in Germantown, Pennsylvania, Saint John's University, and Niagara University as the locations for the meetings.[212]

Characterized by Father Nugent in a second open letter as a "free and spontaneous exchange" of information, the meetings concentrated on the question of territory for the proposed province. Starting with a discussion of the irrelevance of territory to the early Vincentians, the confreres gathered learned that "the first motion to require territorial limits of all provinces and vice provinces [sic] came in 1947." Furthermore, Father Nugent explained, "Church common law" had no territory requirement. It was only in

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[211] Joseph P. McClain, summary of telephone conversation with Father Richardson, 21 September 1974, Ducournau Archives.
[212] Nugent to the Confreres of the Eastern Province, 22 October 1974, Ducournau Archives.

1954, he continued, that "[t]he question of territorial limits becomes explicit in our constitutional law in the new Constitutions."[213]

When asked about the Vice-Province's future pastoral plans, Father Mrówka stated that "the Confreres would concentrate all their new initiatives in the territory of New England. With the long history of setbacks and disappointments regarding past requests for territory, he explained that the Vice-Province was taking a wait-and-see attitude. The only post-autonomy plans agreed to up to that point, Father Mrówka continued, was one calling for an extraordinary assembly to investigate "the expansion or curtailment of works, the introduction of new works, the problems of vocations, long range planning and similar urgent problems." Turning to the topic of the houses outside New England, he explained that with Saint John Kanty Prep being a "grave financial burden" to the Vice-Province and the Utica House serving more as a "kind of home for the elderly and sick Confreres," he expected that the members of the Vice-Province "would probably leave some of these places eventually, but they would like to do so at their own pace."[214]

Closely related to the issue of territory was that of the Vice-Province's continuing focus on serving Polish-speaking Catholics. In the meetings, Father Mrówka stated that the confreres of the Vice-Province "wish[ed] to be Americans." While most of the current confreres were from Polish-American families, he foresaw the reimagining of the Community to include "vocations from all ethnic backgrounds." While the confreres

[213] Nugent to the Confreres of the Eastern Province, 5 November 1974, Ducournau Archives.
[214] Ibid.

would continue to serve the Polish-speaking Catholics currently under their care, "[t]hey wish[ed] to minister to all peoples and groups in New England."[215]

With his emphasis on the proposed province being an American Community, Father Mrówka was asked about the Community's future relationship with the Polish Province, especially the sending of confreres from Poland to the United States. Referencing the conflict between American-born and Polish-born confreres during Father Gicewicz's autonomy campaign, Father Mrówka explained that the confreres who were then arriving in the United States "become Americanized much more rapidly, and feel quite at home among the American-born." The granting of autonomy to the Vice-Province, according to Father Mrówka, was not a radical innovation, but merely a recognition of a preexisting fact. As Americans, its confreres petitioned for equal rights within the Vincentian Family.[216]

On November 27, 1974, at the request of the Superior General, Father Nugent penned a consultation on the autonomy proposal of the Vice-Province. "The idea behind this proposal," he wrote, "is to give the new Province maximum opportunity for growth and development with maximum flexibility in moving from works in our territory to works in New England." His recommendations included the granting of the states of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island" as a territory for the new "Province of New England." Furthermore, the Provincial of the New England Province had to take up residence immediately in its territory. Any future plans of one Province to establish a house within the territory of the other would require the approval of the Superior General. Preexisting Houses, such as the ones at Brooklyn,

[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.

Erie, Utica, Whitestone, and Springfield would be allowed "to continue in existence until such time as the Province to which a house belongs [sic] should decide to close it, on condition that no such house may undertake new works without the permission of the Superior General." In the area of vocations, Father Nugent recommended that "[e]ach Province may actively recruit vocations in the other's territory only in connection with the works it is legitimately performing in the other's territory." Confreres wishing to transfer from one Province to the other would have "full liberty to do so." Father Nugent also recommended a "common formation program," in which "the New England Province [would] contribute personnel for the faculties in the houses of formation [sic]."[217]

With Father Nugent's letter sent to Rome, Father Sawicki and the confreres of the Vice-Province could only wait for word from the Superior General. The chances of winning autonomy, however, had never been better. At the December meeting of the Vice-Provincial Council, Father Sawicki reported that Father Nugent had informed him that his report was a favorable one. A little over a week later, Father Nugent wrote the Vice-Visitor again, this time conveying the news that Father Richardson had acted upon the advice of the Western Province of the United States and erected the Los Angeles and New Orleans Vice-Provinces into independent Provinces. Unlike the Polish Vice-Province, these two Communities had well-established boundaries, but Father Nugent seemed to indicate that it forebode well for the future of an independent New England Province. "It is all in his [Father Richardson's] hands now and in the hands of God."[218]

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[217] Nugent to Richardson, 27 November 1974, Ducournau Archives.
[218] Nugent to Sawicki, 18 December 1974, Ducournau Archives; Editorial Staff of the Vincentian Studies Institute, "A Survey of American Vincentian History: 1815-1987" in *The American Vincentians: A Popular*

The decision finally came on January 25, 1975. "Responding to the requests of the Utica Vice-Province, in view of the agreement of the Province of Poland, and with due consideration to the letters received from members of the Eastern Province, the Superior General with the consent of the General Council decrees the erection of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission consisting of the territory of the states of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island; and having as its members those who up to the present have constituted the Filial Vice-Province in the United States of the Province of Poland."[219]

Drawing directly from Father Nugent's consultation of November 27th, Father Richardson included fourteen conditions to the erection, turning appropriately first to the issue of territorial rights. Along with requiring the Provincial to live within the borders of the New England Province, the decree urged the new Community "to orient its pastoral effort toward its own territory, in the interests of the Church and of the province [sic] itself." Future relations between the New England Province and the Polish Province were to be regulated by a written contract; those between the New England Province and the Eastern Province "must be governed by our Constitutions and Statutes." Recognizing the history of tension over the establishment of houses by the Vice-Province without the previous consent of the Eastern Province, Father Richardson stipulated that "the future erection of a house of one province within the territory of another would be reserved to the Superior General and his Council." Just as Father Nugent had recommended, the

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History of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, 1815-1987. Edited by John E. Rybolt, C.M. (Brooklyn: New City Press) p. 90.

[219] "Decree: Erection of the Province of New England in Territory Taken from the Eastern Province of the United States," 25 January 1975, A. N. E. P.

Superior General permitted the Houses at Brooklyn, Erie, Utica, Whitestone, and Springfield to remain under the control of their respective Provinces.[220]

The second topic addressed in the conditions was apostolates. In regards to ministering to the needs of the Daughters of Charity, Superiors from Houses in either Province could assign confreres as long as they did so in response "to an invitation of the Daughters of Charity and that it [the invitation] is approved by their Provincial Director." Responding to the Eastern Province's concern about being cut off from the parishes it previously served, Father Richardson authorized its Novena Band to "continue its present work in the New England territory." Any other work by confreres from one Province in the territory of the other required the approval of the latter's Provincial. If "habitual" the work should be approved in writing.[221]

Turning his attention to the disputed issue of vocations, Father Richardson, in an effort to avoid future charges of candidate-stealing, declared that "recruitment of vocations in another province is permissible in connection with the works that are legitimately performed there, but not otherwise." Furthermore, when a young man who lived in the territory of one Province expressed his interest in joining the other Province, Father Richardson required that the potential candidate be "informed about the province where he lives and allowed full liberty to join wither province [sic]." The Superior General also insisted that the two Provinces continue "in a common formation program."[222]

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[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Ibid.

Lastly, the Superior General addressed financial relations between the two Communities. He authorized that the Central Association of the Miraculous Medal of the Eastern Province was at liberty to work in New England. With the exception of Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, "[c]ollections for the Missions in parishes," Father Richardson declared, "are restricted to the territory of one's own province." In the final condition, he stated that there were "no financial relations to be regulated between the New England and the Eastern provinces [sic]."[223]

The final step in the establishment of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission came on April 23, 1975, when Father Sawicki and Father Tadeusz Gocłowski, the Provincial of the Polish Province, signed a contract defining the future relationship between the two Communities. In it, the New England Province agreed to "continue its pastoral and mission work among Polish ethnic Americans [sic] within the confines of its New England territory as well as in all their [sic] established Houses, which are now beyond the territorial limits of their New England territory." Turning to the important matter of personnel, the contract gave the confreres of the new Community the right "to become members of the Province of Poland, while they continued to work in the New England Province." Those individuals who decided to return to the Polish Province, however, were guaranteed "the same privileges" and would have "the same duties as the confreres of the New England Province." To guarantee the vitality of the new Community, the Polish Province promised to provide "no less than ten confreres for the Province of New England during the next ten years." While these men would immediately "be subject to the authority of the Provincial of the New England

[223] Ibid.

Province," they would be permitted to return to Poland after a period of five years of service in the United States. To compensate the Polish Province for the "cost of training and educating" these confreres, the New England Province agreed to pay a sum of $8,000 per year. In addition, the New England Province promised to pay retirement benefits for any confrere who wished to return to Poland after a "period of no less than 25 years." With the signing of this second document, the process of the reimagining of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States into an American Community was completed.[224]

While finally winning its autonomy, the New England Province stepped into the future shouldering a heavy load. The loss of young American-born confreres continued to plague the new Community and Saint John Kanty Prep, still reeling from Father Gicewicz's attempt to convert it into a Novitiate, continued to drain much needed funds from the Provincial Treasury. The mixed emotions that characterized the new Community in the spring of 1975 were captured by Father Sawicki in a letter to Father Kapuściak, describing the plans for the celebration to follow the formal erection of the New England Province. "After mass [sic]," the new Provincial wrote, "we will have a small reception in the lower parish hall, because the big hall upstairs is not suitable for receptions, the roof is leaking and needs repair. . . . The accommodations are not first class, which the young confreres in Erie resent, but the dinner will be first class, the best and catered."[225]

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[224] "Contract between the Province of Poland, represented by the Very Rev. Tadeusz Gocłowski, C.M., Provincial and the Province of New England, represented by the Very Rev. Henry Sawicki, C.M., Provincial," 23 April 1974, A. N. E. P.
[225] Sawicki to Kapuściak, 21 March 1975, A. N. E. P.

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While the postwar history of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States possesses a number of facets, disputes over territory, the challenge of erecting new Houses and, charges of pirating seminarians, to name only three, these conflicts grew from a deeper and more fundamental issue. Underpinning the efforts of both the American- and Polish-born members of the Vice-Province was an effort to maintain a unique collective identity, one that, by the end of the Second World War, possessed both American and Polish elements. This syncretism, while possessing qualities shared with other Provinces of the Congregation of the Mission, created a unique religious Community subculture.

In his study of twentieth-century Irish priests serving in the United States, William L. Smith utilizes "subcultural identity theory" to explain the cultural dynamics evident between both the Irish- and American-born clergy. This model may also offer important insight into the Polish Vice-Province's autonomy efforts in the three decades following the Second World War. According to Smith: "Religion survives and can thrive in pluralistic, modern society by embedding itself in subcultures that offer satisfying morally orienting collective identities which provide adherents meaning and belonging." Grounding Smith's theory is Thomas Sullivan's definition of a subculture: "a group within a culture that shares some of the beliefs, values, and norms of the larger culture but also has some that are distinctly its own." Membership in such a subculture involves inclusion in "a network of social relationships" with "normative characteristics" that are

"the product of socialization and interaction within the subculture rather than the result of conflict with the larger society."[226]

Like individuals in secular society, Roman Catholic priests and brothers are members of distinct subcultures. Examples to which they might belong include a particular religious Community, Jesuits, Redemptorists, Dominicans, or Vincentians, a member of a certain subdivision of that Community, a Province or House, or certain ethnic groups. Each of these subgroups is "embedded with distinct beliefs, values, and norms." In the case of the Irish clergy studied by Smith, clear distinctions are evident between "Irish-born priests and American-born Irish priests." With the former group of clerics considered "a different breed from American-born clergy of however recent Irish descent," Smith argues, the place of a priest's birth trumped the country in which he received his religious training. If one would substitute the ethnic modifier, "Irish," with "Polish" or "Vincentian," one could reasonably argue, the previous two paragraphs would go a long way to explain many of the conflicts experienced by the confreres of the Polish Vice-Province in the United States between 1945 and 1975.[227]

A visual method of representing the above interplay of subcultures by 1975 may be taken from elementary-school mathematics. Imagine a Venn diagram with the largest of its circles labeled "Roman Catholic Church." Located within this circle, this "subculture," if you will, is a second circle representing the Congregation of the Mission. Found within this second circle, in turn, are three overlapping circles. The circle in the

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[226] William L. Smith, *Irish Priests in the United States: A Vanishing Subculture*. (Dallas: University Press of America, 2004), pp. 1-3. Drawing on T. H. Breen's "charter society" concept discussed earlier in this dissertation, one may think of a Smith's "subcultures" as groups whose "normative characteristics," while differing from those of the mainstream culture, are within tolerable limits. With such cultural overlap, the subculture may share space, both spatial and cultural, with the dominant society.
[227] Ibid, pp. 3 & 50.

middle is labeled the “New England Province”; the overlapping circles on the left and right are labeled respectively the “Polish Province” and the “Eastern Province.”

Such a diagram would illustrate the point that the Congregation of the Mission is a subset of the Roman Catholic Church and that the three Provinces are subsets of the Congregation of the Mission, sharing both the cultures and norms of the Roman Catholic Church and the Vincentian Family. The New England Province, while autonomous of both the Eastern Province of the United States and the Polish Province, maintains both cultural and administrative overlap with these two other Vincentian Communities. While maintaining “normative characteristics” all their own, these three provincial subcultures, these three ways of being a Vincentian, were shaped by a variety of factors, including the historical and societal contexts within which each group of confreres have found themselves. The cultural overlap between these three provincial subsets, the collection of shared “beliefs, values, and norms,” however, is not static, but dynamic, being constantly renegotiated by the members of the three Communities at a particular point in history.

Over the three decades examined in this chapter, a period of dramatic change in the Roman Catholic Church and the Congregation of the Mission, the overlapping of the Eastern Province and Polish Province with the Polish Vice-Province shifted, sliding like tectonic plates, often with equally convulsive results. The catalyst for much of this change came from the evolution of American Polonia and its wartime isolation from Poland. While tremors had been felt as early as the First World War, the maturation of the first generation of American-born children accelerated the process. In both the pages of *The Patron*, Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish’s magazine, and the attitudes and objectives expressed by the students of Saint John Kanty Prep, one may glimpse this

dialectic transformation. With articles such as “Pole and Celtic,” which called for tolerance between the two ethnic groups, and “Not Polak—But Pole,” which charged readers to correct individuals expressing derogatory slurs, *The Patron* promoted the legitimacy of a Polish-American identity. With precocious chutzpah, probably learned on the street of Greenpoint, “Wanda” returns to her native Poland and joins the Underground in its fight against the occupying Nazis. At postwar Saint John Kanty Prep, students, such as Daniel Kij, John Ptak, and Edward Szemraj, studied and lived in an ethnically defined environment that prepared them for success outside the ethnic enclave in college and the American middle class. Although reapportioned, these elements of *polskość* and American pride were both evident at the School into the early 1960s.

While there were confreres, such as Father Antoni Mazurkiewicz, C.M., who, with his continued identification with Poland and years of service in the United States, begged to be relieved of his duties, the postwar period saw a new generation of confreres joining the Polish Vice-Province. Like Kij, Ptak, and Szemraj, these American-born confreres were bicultural; their Polish heritage posed no challenge to their American identity. With priests of this generation, such as Fathers George Dąbrowski, Chester Mrówka, and Julian Szumiło, along with the maverick American confrere, Father Edward P. Gicewicz, questions were raised about how much overlap there actually was and should be between the circles the Polish Vice-Province in the United States and its Mother Province in Poland.

As early as 1958, Father Gicewicz and the members of the Erie House began to grapple with balancing the Polish and American aspects of Saint John Kanty Prep. Quick on the heels of this effort came one that further illustrates the shifting vision of the Vice-

Province: the offer to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania of land on the Saint John Kanty Prep grounds for the erection of a *territorial parish*. This attempt to reorient the work of the confreres to a Catholic community free of ethnic restrictions is also evident in the Vice-Province's efforts to establish new Houses in Detroit, Utica, and Hartford.

This campaign received further impetus with the appointment of Father Gicewicz as the first American-born Vice-Provincial. From his days studying at the Polish Province's Stradom Seminary in Kraków, Poland, Father Gicewicz placed special emphasis on his American identity. While he saw no need to cleanse the Vice-Province of its ethnic history, Father Gicewicz considered the ongoing administrative and financial ties between it and the Polish Province anachronistic. Although many of his decisions, such as the rush to establish a Vice-Provincial House of Studies and the conversion of Saint John Kanty Prep into a Novitiate, were ill-timed and clumsily executed, they evince Father Gicewicz's almost blind determination to establish a unique American identity for the Vice-Province, one as American as those of the other two Vincentian Provinces in the United States, yet firmly rooted in "our Polish background with its wonderful cultural and religious contribution to our upbringing."

As he attempted to tug the Polish Vice-Province out from under the overlapping cultural and administrative influence of the Polish Province, however, Father Gicewicz began to encroach on the position of the Eastern Province of the United States. With ongoing Americanization of its membership, the Eastern Province anticipated an eventual amalgamation of the Vice-Province. Citing Canon Law and the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Mission, the Eastern Province mounted a solid legal argument for

their "charter society" claims. The Vice-Province, however, supported its claim with a more cultural-based defense. The clash between these two justifications is quite evident throughout the Visitorships of Father Gicewicz and his successor, Father Henry Sawicki, C.M. With efforts to restrict it to a shrinking "Polish element" in the eastern United States and expectation of the Vice-Province's resulting demise or absorption, the Eastern Province strongly protested Father Gicewicz's attempt to create a competing American identity. This effort is easily seen in the dispute over the removal of the word "Polish" from the Vice-Province's letterhead in 1964-1965. Not merely a parochial dispute over ethnic identity, a new American Province would have been a direct challenge to the Eastern Province's territorial claims and the good will of its benefactors.

For the confreres of the Vice-Province, however, Father Gicewicz's actions, as poorly timed and awkwardly executed as they were, were efforts to square the administrative identity of the Vice-Province with its evolving subculture and that of the parishioners it served. With its history firmly rooted in the Polish-accented Catholicism and Vincentian traditions brought by Fathers Głogowski, Trawniczek, and Wasko in December 1903, the confreres of the Vice-Province had developed by the early 1960s a particular Vincentian subculture. Increasingly demographically similar to their fellow Vincentians in the Eastern Province, Father Gicewicz and the confreres of the Vice-Province felt justified in claiming an American Vincentian identity. The Polish roots and Polish-American traditions of the Vice-Province, however, made it different from the other American Provinces. It was, in the opinion of its members, an American Community increasingly composed of Polish-American confreres. Any proposed amalgamation of the Vice-Province into the Eastern Province was taken by Father

Gicewicz and his supporters as a questioning of the authenticity of their American Vincentian identity.

Although his aggressive manner and radical proposals brought forth ireful responses from both the Eastern Province and the Polish Province and led to his eventual removal from the Office of Vice-Visitor, Father Gicewicz's ideas held the field and received continued attention under his successor, Father Henry Sawicki, C.M. The efforts of Father Sawicki, much more diplomatic than his predecessor's, received added impetus from a watershed shift in the mainstream culture of the Roman Catholic Church and the Congregation of the Mission. With the pronouncements of the Second Vatican Council and the resulting changes within the Congregation of the Mission, the former radical proposals of Father Gicewicz found new legitimacy.

With the interpretation of the decisions of the Second Vatican Council as a legitimizing of new freedoms within the Roman Catholic Church, such as the "freedom of conscience, academic freedom, professional freedom, personal freedom, and freedom of the press," the calls for autonomy from the Vice-Province seemed less extreme at the end of the 1960s. Adding further legitimacy to this claim was Father James W. Richardson's December 1969 call for the balancing of new sense of decentralization, or "subsidiarity," with "the principle of unity." The method by which a particular Province practiced the Vincentian Mission now became more increasingly the domain of the confreres of that Province. Within a short span of time, the once dissident ideas of the subculture of the Vice-Province became ones embraced by the larger cultures of the Roman Catholic Church and the Congregation of the Mission. Like other "great social upheavals," the changes that took place in the Roman Catholic Church and the

Vincentian Family following the Second Vatican Council brought about a certain degree of "anomie " or "normlessness" that "often leaves whole segments of society in confusion or uncertainty." It was under such conditions that the New England Province, the product of the efforts of the bands of brothers of the Congregation of the Mission and the Second Vatican Council, turned to its future.[228]

[228] John Seidler & Katherine Meyer, *Conflict & Change in the Catholic Church*. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press), pp. 71 & 76.

Afterword

Like many historical studies, this dissertation ends at a beginning. While it became an autonomous American Province of the Congregation of the Mission in January 1975, the New England Province launched into its future from a rather precarious position. Over the next three decades, the confreres of the Province faced numerous difficulties, both internal and external, that tested their mettle and their ability to adjust to changes within the Congregation of the Mission, the Roman Catholic Church, and American Polonia. These dilemmas beleaguered both the Province's corporate identity and its viability. Although a full treatment of these issues lies beyond the scope of this dissertation, a cursory outline of them will convey the tenuous and conditional nature of the autonomy achieved. The first test came in the Vincentians' education apostolate.

Long a part of the Polish Vincentians' Mission in the United States, the academic and spiritual development of young men remained a foremost, yet increasingly difficult, mission following the establishment of the New England Province in 1975. Still recovering from its failed conversion into a Novitiate, Saint John Kanty Prep experienced low enrollment from Polish-American communities in Connecticut and New York, a condition that led the discontinuation of its boarding program in July 1976. Never successful at attracting Polish-American young men from Erie, Pennsylvania and, now, cut off from its historical sources of students, Saint John Kanty Prep became a Catholic day school divorced from its traditional links to Polish America.[1]

Although the School continued to rely on subsidies from the Province to meet its financial obligations, its enrollment, consisting of boys from Erie, many of whom were

[1] Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the Saint John Kanty College Association, March 8, 1976, A. N. E. P.

not of Polish ancestry, grew in the years after autonomy. From a student body of 179 students in the fall of 1977, enrollment grew to 192 by the next year, and 208 by October 1979. While significantly different from its predecessor, the reconstituted Saint John Kanty Prep seemed to have a promising future. By February of the following year, however, some members of the Province began questioning if the financial and personnel costs of maintaining the school were justified.[2]

At the request of two confreres, the Provincial of the New England Province, Father Julian Szumiło, C.M., authorized his Assistant Provincial, Father John Sledziona, C.M., to make an official inquiry into the "work of education at Kanty Prep." In mid-February 1980, Father Sledziona consulted the seven confreres assigned to the Erie House and met with Coadjutor Bishop Michael J. Murphy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania. At the end of the month, the Provincial Council traveled to Erie to discuss the future viability of Saint John Kanty Prep with Erie's Bishop Alfred M. Watson and Coadjutor Bishop Murphy, as well as the Kanty College Board.[3]

While many of the confreres considered the School a "good apostolate for the Community" and a task force from the Diocese indicated that the Vincentians should keep it open, Father Sledziona's report identified a number of grave problems at Saint John Kanty Prep. With an increasing workload shouldered by the small band of confreres, the loss of a number of lay instructors, a projected decrease in the school-age population of the State of Pennsylvania, the necessity of receiving state accreditation, the

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[2] Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting of the Saint John Kanty College Association, October 10, 1977, A. N. E. P.; Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Saint John Kanty College Association, October 17, 1978, A. N. E. P.; Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Saint John Kanty College Association, October 16, 1979, A. N. E. P.

[3] Minutes of the Meeting of the Kanty College Association, February 26, 1980, A. N. E. P.

"apparent opposition from [the] local clergy," and the expected continued reliance on subsidies from the Province, the fate of the School was bleak. Bishops Watson and Murphy made no offer of relief with either supplemental funding or instructors. They could only suggest the Vincentians seek assistance from local businesses and other religious Communities.[4]

On February 28, 1980, two days after the meetings with Bishops Watson and Murphy and the Kanty College Board, Father Szumiło informed the parents that Saint John Kanty Prep would close at the end of the academic year. That same day, the President of the School, Father Ronald Wiktor, C.M., composed a letter, informing the alumni of their alma mater's fate. He cited two primary reasons for the Province's decision: "the declining availability of Vincentian Priests and Brothers to staff the school adequately in accord with the seventy-year old tradition of the school, and the growing financial burden of supporting the school, which has exhausted all the financial resources that have been available to it." Saint John Kanty Prep graduated its last class in the spring of 1980. Father Wiktor remained on the grounds, maintaining the property until the suppression of the Erie House on September 6, 1982.[5]

Even with the closing of Saint John Kanty Prep, the confreres of the New England Province did not completely abandon their education apostolate. On May 23, 1980, the Province signed an agreement with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester, New

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Open letter of Father Julian Szumiło to the parents of the students of Saint John Kanty Prep, February 28, 1980, A. N. E. P.; Open letter of Father Ronald Wiktor to the alumni of Saint John Kanty Prep, February 28, 1980, A. N. E. P.; Edward P. Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission, 1904-2004* (Manchester, Connecticut: Vincentian Fathers, New England Province, 2004), p. 224. While definitely disturbing, the announcement of Saint John Kanty Prep's closing was not unexpected. As early as June 1977, Father Wiktor informed the Erie House Council that there was "a strong rumor in Erie that our school will be closing in 2 or 3 years." See: Erie House Council Meeting Minutes, June 15, 1977, A. N. E. P.

Hampshire to supply "at least two full-time priests and one brother to teach in Bishop Brady High School," located in Concord, New Hampshire. That August, Father Sledziona, Father Mitchell Wanat, C.M., and Brother Joseph Zurowski, C.M. moved into a house in Bow, New Hampshire. With the beginning of the academic year, Father Sledziona became Principal of Bishop Brady High School, a position he held until 1986, while Father Wanat and Brother Zurowski became, respectively, the chaplain and head of the English department at the High School. Father Wanat left Bishop Brady High School in 1989 and was followed by Brother Zurowski the next year. With their resignations, the educational apostolate of the New England Province, which started with the opening of Saint John Kanty College in 1912, came to an end.[6]

While Fathers Sledziona and Wanat and Brother Zurowski continued serving students, their work was in a diocesan, not a Vincentian, high school. The New England Province did make one last-ditch effort to maintain its own educational/formation program. Established in August 1983, the De Paul House of Studies in Wethersfield, Connecticut was staffed by Father Joseph Lachowski, C.M., who served as its Director and Novice Master, and Father Anthony Kuzia, C.M., who acted as Vocational Director. "[I]nadequate for the purpose intended," however, the New England Province closed the De Paul House of Studies at the end of September 1985.[7]

A second apostolate that struggled after the establishment of the New England Province was that of parish missions. A victim of shifting Catholic devotional practices following the Second Vatican Council, the demise of parish missions contributed to the

[6] Agreement between the Diocese of Manchester (The Roman Catholic Bishop of Manchester) and the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission (The Vincentians)," May 23, 1980, A. N. E. P.; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 190, 251, 255 & 258.
[7] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 223.

closing of two Houses, both located outside of New England. In December 1990, the Provincial, Father Chester Mrówka, C.M., closed the Whitestone Mission House and sold the property to the Redemptorist Fathers. The New England Province closed the Saint Vincent Mission House in Utica, New York in 1997 and sold the property to the Good News Foundation, a lay Catholic organization in June 2001.[8]

In less than two decades, the above developments had reshaped the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission in two significant ways. First, with the closing of Saint John Kanty Prep and the Mission Houses in Whitestone (1990) and Utica (1997), the Province, in compliance with its Erection Declaration, began "to orient its pastoral effort toward its own territory." The one exception remained Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Second, with few exceptions, the confreres were now limited to parish ministry. These developments severely restricted the Province's presence in the Eastern United States and limited the Province's ability to recruit and train new members at a time when the number of new vocations in the United States plummeted.

Even as their numbers stagnated new parish opportunities became available to the confreres of the New England Province. They received their first offer of a parish—Saints Cyril & Methodius Church in Lisbon Falls, Maine in 1976. A historically Slovak community, the fate of Saint Cyril & Methodius Parish was bleak after the Franciscan Fathers announced their decision to leave. Hoping to save their parish, suffering from falling membership, a group of parishioners began a campaign to find a new pastor. In December, after their Bishop had contacted the New England Province, they received

[8] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 168 & 186.

word that Father Edward P. Gicewicz, C.M. would be coming to Lisbon Falls. At the conclusion of Father Gicewicz's pastorate in 1982, Father Edmund R. Kowalski, C.M. (1982 to 1991) served as pastor and Father James E. Mielechowski, C.M. (1991 to 1992) served as parish administrator. When the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine decided to begin merging dwindling parishes, Father George Dąbrowski, C.M. became pastor of both Saint Cyril & Methodius Church and Holy Family Church.[9]

That same year, Father Mitchell J. Wanat, C.M. became pastor of another Lisbon Falls community, Saint Anne Parish. Father Wanat served as pastor of all three parishes from 1993 to 1996. Under the direction of Father Anthony Kuzia, C.M., the last American-born vocation of the New England Province, the three parishes merged under the name Holy Trinity Parish. Father Kuzia served the new community until 2000, when a diocesan priest took over pastoral responsibilities.[10]

Four years after their arrival in Lisbon Falls, the confreres of the New England Province expanded their parish work into the State of New Hampshire. This apostolate developed, in part, out of the efforts the three confreres who left Saint John Kanty Prep upon its closing and taught at Bishop Brady High School in Concord, New Hampshire. Initially the three confreres lived at the Laboure House, which was canonically erected on August 1, 1980. With the offer of Saint Peter Parish in Concord, the Laboure House was suppressed at the end of August 1983 and the three confreres moved into the parish rectory.[11]

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[9] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 187-189.
[10] Ibid, 189.
[11] Ibid, pp. 190 & 224.

A primary reason for the offer of Saint Peter Parish to the New England Province was Father Ronald Wiktor's previous work at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Pittsfield, New Hampshire. The first Vincentian Pastor of the Parish was Father Chester Mrówka (1983 to 1987), who was followed by Father Sledziona (1987 to 1996), Father Wanat (1996 to 2000), and Father Francis X. Maguire, C.M. (2001 to 2005), a member of the Eastern Province, who served alongside Father Stephen Minkiel, C.M., of the New England Province.[12]

Like their fellow Vincentians in Maine, the confreres in Concord were affected by the changing demographics of American Catholics. One year after becoming Pastor of the Concord congregation, Father Kuzia was put in charge of a second community, Sacred Heart Parish, when it was "twinned" with Saint Peter Parish. In November 2008, the future of the Vincentians work in Concord received scrutiny when the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire announced that a third congregation, Saint John the Evangelist Parish "will eventually merge" with the other two Concord parishes. The decision to merge, it was announced, depended, to a great extent, on the New England Province's continued presence in the Diocese. Esther Crowley, a member of Saint Peter Parish and a member of the task force that analyzed the possible merger of the three communities, stated that the presence of the three Vincentians permitted the two diocesan priests now at Saint John the Evangelist Parish to tend to the spiritual needs of

[12] Ibid, pp. 190, 193 & 224. As an experiment in cooperation between the two Provinces, Father Maguire served as Pastor of the parish while Father Minkiel served as Superior of the House.

that community. If the Vincentians would be pulled out of Concord, however, Ms. Crowley warned, the three parishes would be forced to merge.[13]

The New England Province's next parish acquisition was that of Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish in Greenpoint, New York. An historically Polish parish, it celebrated its first Mass on October 14, 1917. Work began on the current church building in 1951 and was completed by the end of the following year. Over the next four decades, drastic changes to the demographics of the Greenpoint neighborhood tested the diocesan priests who served at Saint Cyril & Methodius Parish. One especially significant change was the re-polonization of the neighborhood by a new wave of Polish immigrants in the 1980s and 1990s. By the mid-1990s, the Parish suffered from financial problems, seemingly exacerbated by tensions between the Pastor, Father Robert Czok, and some of the parishioners. With Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish close by, Bishop Thomas V. Daily asked the New England Province to take over the Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish in 1996. Father Józef Mietelski, C.M. became the Parish's first Vincentian Pastor and served in this capacity until 2002. Following a brief time when Father Rafał Kopystyński, C.M. served as Parish Administrator, Father Roman J. Kmieć, C.M. became Pastor. He, in turn, was succeeded by the current Pastor, Father Tadeusz Maciejewski, C.M.[14]

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[13] Shira Schoenberg, "3 Catholic Churches to Merge," *Concord Monitor*, November 27, 2008 (http:www.concordmonitor.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20081127/FRONTPAGE/811270301).

[14] *SS. Cyril and Methodius, Brooklyn, New York, Golden Jubilee, 1917-1967*, (South Hackensack, New Jersey: Ecclesiastical Color Publishers, 1967), p. 6; Father Robert Czok, "Some Words of Farewell," Saint Cyril & Methodius Parish Bulletin, August 25, 1996, p. 2A; Father Robert Czok to parishioners, Saint Cyril & Methodius Parish Bulletin, 18 August 1996, p. 2A; Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 197-199; "Where You Can Find Us," website of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission (www.nepcm.org/where.html). The New England Province's acquisition of Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish reignited tensions between it and the Eastern Province of the United States. While the New England Province had received the Brooklyn's Bishop's approval to minister to the Parish, it did not

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the confreres of the New England Province have served in two other parishes. Responding to a request from the Eastern Province, Father Ronald Wiktor, C.M. replaced Father Henry Bradbury, C.M. as Pastor of Our Lady of Lebanon Parish in Niagara Falls, New York in 2001. Father Wiktor, in turn, served at the Parish until 2005. The second congregation, the Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Stamford, Connecticut was assigned to the New England Province in 2003. The first Vincentian pastor, Father Stanisław Staniszewski, C.M., previously served as a vicar and the Administrator of the Parish from 1996 to 2002. Currently, two confreres, Father Eugeniusz Kotliński, C.M. (Pastor) and Father Jan Szylar, C.M., serve the Stamford congregation.[15]

Like the demise of its education and mission apostolates, the transformation in the New England Province's parish work exhibits changes in the cultural and demographic topography in which the confreres worked. Of the eight parishes the New England Province acquired after its establishment only two, Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn and the Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Stamford, Connecticut, are historically Polish communities. While three of the others were established as ethnic Parishes—Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish in Lisbon Falls, Maine (Slovak), Sacred Heart Parish (French Canadian), and Saint Peter Parish (Italian and Irish)—they now serve ethnically diverse congregations.[16]

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receive one from the Eastern Province of the United States, within whose territory Saint Cyril & Methodius Parish lies. The decision to accept the new parish seemed to fly in the face of one of the conditions for the erection of the New England Province, which stated that the New England Province was "to orient its pastoral effort toward its own territory, in the interests of the Church and of the province [sic] itself." See chapter five.

[15] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 204 & 206.

[16] Schoenberg, "3 Catholic Churches to Merge."

The sacramental culture of the new Parishes served by the New England Province exhibits an interesting mixture of Polish and American, elements that are evident in the number of Polish- and English-language Masses. In all but two of the communities served by the confreres, those being Saint Peter Parish and Sacred Heart Parish, there is at least one Polish-language weekend Mass. Of the four Connecticut communities, however, only one, the Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Stamford, Connecticut, has parity in the number of English- and Polish-language Masses—four each. In each of the other Connecticut communities, which the Polish Vice-Province had served for decades before autonomy, English-language Eucharistic Celebrations outnumber Polish-language ones: Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven (4 to 3), Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish in Derby (5 to 1), and Saint Joseph Parish in Ansonia (4 to 1). This trend, however, is reversed in the two Greenpoint parishes, where Polish-language Masses outnumber the English-language ones by a ratio of two-to-one: Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish (6 to 3) and Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish (4 to 2).[17]

The linguistic and cultural bifurcation evident in the New England Province parishes is also apparent in the current assignments of the confreres. Of the eight Houses that comprise the Province, only two, the De Paul Provincial House in Manchester, Connecticut, and the "twinned" Concord, New Hampshire Parishes, have staffs with an American-born majority (two American-born and one Polish-born confreres), while Saint

[17] Sacred Heart Parish webpage: http://www.catholicchurchnh.org/directory/index.cfm?intType=2&id=75; Saint Peter Parish website: http://www.stpetersconcordnh.4lpi.com; Holy Name of Jesus Parish webpage: http://www.bridgeportdiocese.com/stamford.shtml; Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish webpage: http://www.archdioceseofhartford.org/cgibin/masssearch.pl?typeid=city&selectcity=New%20Haven&ma=1;SaintMichael,theArchangelParishwebpage:http://www.archdioceseofhartford.org/cgibin/masssearch.pl?typeid=city&selectcity=New%20Haven&map=1; Saint Joseph Parish website: http://www.rc.net/hartford/stjoseph/Main/schedule.html; Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish website: http://www.ststanskostka.org/masses.html; Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish website: http://www.cyrilandmethodius.org/masses.html.

Joseph Parish in Ansonia, Connecticut is currently staffed by one American-born and one Polish-born confrere. All the other Parishes are staffed entirely by Polish-born confreres. Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, with five Polish-born priests in residence, is the largest New England Province Parish. While Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish has the largest Polish-born population, the De Paul Provincial House in Manchester, Connecticut has the greatest number of American-born confreres. With the exception of the current Provincial, Father Rafał Kopystyński, C.M., all four confreres residing there are American-born. Two other American-born confreres are assigned to the Provincial House but live elsewhere.[18]

Further demographic analysis illustrates further the ongoing bicultural division within the New England Province. Of the current 27 members of the Province, ten are American-born and seventeen are Polish-born—approximately a two-to-three ratio. The significance of this ratio becomes more evident when the average age of the confreres from the two cohorts is considered. Of the ten American-born confreres, three were born

[18] Webpage: "Where You Can Find Us," www.nepcm.org/where.html. In May 2009, the Parishes of the New England Province were staffed by the following confreres: Saint Peter and Sacred Heart Parishes: Father Anthony Kuzia, C.M. (American-born), Father Jarosław Lawrenz, C.M. (Polish-born), and Father John Sledziona, C.M. (American-born). Saint Joseph Parish: Father Mitchell Wanat, C.M. (American-born) and Father Wacław Hłond, C.M. (Polish-born). Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish: Father Roman Kmieć, C.M. (Polish-born), Father Marek Sadowski, C.M. (Polish-born), and Father Stanley Miękina, C.M. (Polish-born). Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish: Father Roman Górowski, C.M. (Polish-born) and Father Bolesław Potomski, C.M. (Polish-born). Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish: Father Marek Sobczak, C.M. (Polish-born), Father Jan Urbaniak, C.M. (Polish-born), Father Józef Szpilski, C.M. (Polish-born), Father Stanisław Staniszewski, C.M. (Polish-born) and Father Łukasz Sorys, C.M. Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish: Father Tadeusz Maciejewski, C.M. (Polish-born) and Father Józef Wiśniewski, C.M. (Polish-born). Holy Name of Jesus Parish: Father Eugeniusz Kotliński, C.M. (Polish-born) and Father Jan Szylar, C.M. (Polish-born). De Paul Provincial House: Father Rafał Kopystyński, C.M. (Polish-born), Father Chester Mrówka, C.M. (American-born), Father Edmund Gutowski, C.M. (American-born), Father Ronald Wiktor, C.M. (American-born), and Brother Joseph Zurowski, C.M. (American-born). There are three confreres who live outside the Community. Father George Dąbrowski, C.M. (American-born), who is attached to the Provincial House, resides at the Saint Catherine Infirmary in Germantown, Pennsylvania; Father Julian Szumiło, C.M. (American-born), also attached to the Provincial House, resides at the Saint Joseph Residence in Enfield, Connecticut. Father Joseph Lachowski, C.M. (American-born) is attached to Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish but resides at the Ozanam Hall in Bayside, Queens, New York.

in the 1920s, four in the 1930s, and three in the 1940s. The oldest of the American-born confreres was born in 1927 and the youngest in 1949. Of the seventeen Polish-born confreres, one was born in the 1920s, four in the 1930s, three in the 1940s, one in the 1950s, *seven in the 1960s*, and one in the 1980s. While the oldest member of the Polish-born cohort in only two years younger than the oldest confrere of the American-born cohort, the youngest member of the Polish-born cohort, born in 1981, is approximately 32 younger than the youngest of the American-born confreres.[19]

This cultural division is further evident in the number of confreres in positions of Provincial authority from the two cohorts. Of the eight New England Province Parishes, only three, the "twinned" Sacred Heart Parish and Saint Peter Parish in Concord, New Hampshire and Saint Joseph Parish in Ansonia, Connecticut, have an American-born Pastor. The other five congregations, Saints Cyril & Methodius Parish and Saint Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, New York, Saint Michael, the Archangel Parish in Derby, Connecticut, Saint Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr Parish in New Haven, Connecticut, and the Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Stamford, Connecticut are headed by Polish-born confreres.[20]

The division of power between American- and Polish-born members of the New England Province is also evident in the Office of the Provincial. From 1975, when the American-born Father Julian Szumiło, C.M. became Provincial, there have been six men to hold the office. Along with Father Szumiło (1975 to 1981), two other Americans, Father Chester Mrówka, C.M. (1987 to 1996) and Father John Sledziona, C.M. (1996 to

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[19] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, pp. 232-258; Vincentian Encyclopedia website: www.famvin.org/wiki/Lucas_Sorys.
[20] "Where to Find Us" webpage, www.nepcm.org/where.html.

2005) have served as Provincial. The three Polish-born confreres to hold this office are Father Wacław Hłond, C.M. (1981 to 1987), Father Roman Górowski, C.M. (2005 to 2008), and Father Rafał Kopystyński, C.M. (2008 to the present).[21]

The prominence of Polish-born confreres in the New England Province is even more evident when one compares the number Polish Vincentians serving there to the number serving in other Vincentian Provinces around the world. In addition to the New England Province, there are a total of ten Communities with at least one Polish confrere who has transferred into it. They are the Chinese Province, the Province of Holland, Province of the Congo, Curitiba Province (Brazil), the Province of Madagascar, the German Province, Puerto Rico, Hungary, and the Vice-Province of Saints Cyril & Methodius, which covers the countries of Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine. With the sixteen confreres listed on the Polish Province's website, the New England Province is the largest recipient of Polish confreres. The second largest one, the Vice-Province of Saints Cyril & Methodius, geographically much closer to the Provincial House in Kraków than the New England Province, had twelve Polish Vincentians in 2007, while the Curitiba Province, which was established at the same time as the Polish Vice-Province and became autonomous from the Polish Province less than a decade before it, is currently served by only six Polish confreres.[22]

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[21] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 194; "Recent Meetings of the National Conference of Visitors" webpage: http://famvin.org/wiki/National_Conference_of_Visitors.

[22] "Konfratrzy przeniesieni do innych prowincji," http://misjonarze.org/index.php/prowincja/konfratrzy-zagranica. It should be noted that the listing of confreres is in need of revision. It still lists Father Walenty Pieczka, C.M., who died in August 2007 and omits Father Jan Urbaniak, C.M. and the newest member of the New England Province, Father Łukasz Sorys, who was ordained in spring 2009. Erected in 2001, the Vice-Province of Saints Cyril & Methodius is a cooperative effort between the Polish, Hungarian, and Slovakian Provinces of the Congregation of the Mission and AIC members from Germany and Italy. The Vice-Province was established, in part, to eliminate any unnecessary competition between the five groups of Vincentians serving in Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine. See: "Highlights for [sic] the December Issue"

The ongoing relationship between the New England Province and the Polish Province is not limited to the receipt of personnel. It also includes a significant financial aspect. This relationship is most easily seen in the annual compensation paid by the New England Province to the Polish Province for the "training and educating of a young man for the priesthood in the community [sic] in Poland and his eventual transfer to the province [sic] of New England." In the contract signed in July 1975 the payment was $8,000 per annum per confrere. This figure rose to $12,000 when the contract between the two Provinces was renewed in July 1986 and to $20,000 the following decade. Along with this yearly expenditure, the New England Province promised to pay a monthly retirement stipend to any Polish-born confrere who, after serving 25 years in the United States, decided to return to Poland. The New England Province also continues to contribute financially to the establishment of new Houses in Poland. In May 2007, for example, then Provincial, Father Roman Górowski, C.M., traveled to Krzeszowice, Poland, where he concelebrated the "Mass of Blessing" of the Polish Province's new Retreat House. The homilist at this Eucharistic Celebration was Father Arkadiusz Zakreta, C.M., the Provincial of the Polish Province, who "expressed his gratitude [in his sermon] to the New England Province for our financial assistance." Although autonomous for over thirty years, the New England Province continues to maintain very close relations with the Polish Province.[23]

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of *Nuntia*: http://famvin.org/en/archive/nuntia-cm-dec-issue-online & website of the Irish Province of the Congregation of the Mission: www.vincentains.ie/EasternEurope.htm.

[23]"Umowa między prowincji polską reprezentowaną przez Ks. Wizytatora Taduesza Gocłowskiego I prowincji New England w Stanach Zjednoczonych Ameryki Północnej reprezentowaną przez Ks. Wizytatora Henryka Sawickiego," 11 July1975, Archives of the Congregation of the Mission Kraków (A. C. M. K.); "Umowa między prowincją polską i prowincją New England, w Stanów Zjednoczonych, zawarta 10-go lipca 1986," 10 July 1986, A. C. M. K.; "Umowa pomiędzy Polską Prowincją, prowincją

As daunting as this maintained link with the Polish Province has been over the decades—decades which has seen the fall of Communism and the reemergence of a democratic form of government in Poland, the New England Province has confronted an equally and arguably more pressing relationship—one between it and the Eastern Province of the United States. Like the other four American Provinces, the New England Province has had to face a number of unprecedented challenges in the wake of the Second Vatican Council., two of the most pressing problems being the plunging number of vocations in the United States and the resulting aging of the ranks of the Vincentian confreres. The efforts to establish greater cooperation between the American Provinces in order to address these and other issues predate the establishment of the New England Province.

Just over a year before the erection of the New England Province, the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, Father James Richardson, C.M., asked that the American Visitors supervise the translation into English of Saint Vincent de Paul's *Correspondence, Conferences, Documents*. For the next five years, the Visitors, including those from English-speaking Provinces outside the United States, met. Cooperation on this project soon led to additional interaction between the Provinces. Taking the name the "Vincentian Conference," the Visitors of the five American Provinces decided in 1978 "to initiate a three-year cycle for meetings" to address issues

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pochodzenia, reprezentowaną przez Czcigodnego Księdza Stanisława Wypycha CM, Wizytatora Polskiej Prowincji, a Prowincją Nowej Anglii, prowincją przeznaczenia, reprezentowaną przez Czcigodnego Księdza Chestera Mrówkę CM, Wizytatora Prowincji Nowej Anglii w USA," n.d., A. C. M. K.; Open letter of Father Roman Górowski, C.M. Newsletter of the Congregation of the Mission, New England Province, July 2007, p. 1.

of common interest, first between themselves, later adding the Visitors from the Irish, Australian, and Asian Provinces.[24]

In the next few years, while dealing with such drastic issues as the closing of Saint John Kanty Prep, the New England Province participated in discussions with the other Provinces on "interprovincial cooperation" in areas such as "formation program [sic], vocation recruitment, seminars on Vincentian spirituality, rural ministry, and exchange of personnel." One result of these discussions was the creation of the Vincentian Studies Institute, which had its Constitutions and Bylaws approved at the Vincentian Conference's meeting in Los Angeles, California in October 1979. The following March, at the inaugural meeting of the Vincentian Studies Institute, the Provincials proposed expanding their cooperative efforts to include the Visitatrixes of the Daughters of Charity.[25]

The next phase of interprovincial cooperation began in November 1997, when the Superior General, Father Robert Maloney, C.M., traveled to Saint Louis, Missouri to request the American Visitors "to pursue the goal of uniting the provinces." Recognizing that any future cooperation would "depend largely on your [the Provincials'] analysis of your concrete situation and on your creativity in envisioning possible forms of government," Father Maloney concluded that "in these circumstances, common government and planning will enable us to mobilize our personnel better, to organize a unified program of formation, to conserve on the number of people involved in provincial administration, and to use our financial resources more effectively." In response to the

[24] John Sledziona, C.M., "History of the National Conference of the Visitors of the US (NCV)," Vincentian Encyclopedia website: http://famvin.org/wiki/History_of_National_Conference_of_Visitors_-_USA.
[25] Ibid.

Superior General's order, the Provincials established a committee of five confreres to collect data, investigate cooperative efforts undertaken by other religious Communities, and make recommendations on ways to involve "the confreres of all five provinces in the discussion."[26]

At a meeting of Provincials from the English-language Provinces in June 2001, Father Thomas McKenna, C. M., the Visitor of the Eastern Province of the United States, addressed the challenges to be surmounted in the reorganization of the American Vincentian Provinces. Recognizing the merging of Provinces as "the ultimate step in interprovincial collaboration," Father McKenna cautioned that any such effort, which would require "provinces melding their individual selves to form a brand new entity—and a new identity," would require "clear analysis, disinterested ('holy indifferent') thinking, and most particularly, building a wide consensus." Such extreme efforts, Father McKenna continued, were motivated by a combination of the need for "simple survival" and "improved mission." With each of the five American Provinces situated on a "spectrum" between these two poles, he stated that any consideration of a reconfiguration of the American Provinces required the confreres to wrestle "with the very reasons we as a Community are in existence in the first place." He concluded that the maintenance and improvement of the Vincentian mission in the United States was "to predominate our deliberations."[27]

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[26] Thomas McKenna, C.M., "Reorganization of Provinces," a speech given in Dublin, Ireland on June 15, 2001, *Vincentiana*, Vincentian Encyclopedia website: http://famvin.org/cgi-bin/library?e=q-000-00---0vincenti--00-0-0--0prompt-10---4----dtx--0-1l--1-en-50---20-about-Thomas+McKenna--00031-001-1-0utfZz-8-00&a=d&c=vincenti&cl=search&d=HASH0176584c146040953ce19491.
[27] Ibid.

Echoing Barbara Strassberg's concept of "Catholic 'dialects' . . . the many variants of the supranational Roman Catholic culture," Father McKenna recognized particular forms of Vincentian "dialects," which were influenced by "operational misunderstandings," caused by the "considerable dissimilarity in spirit and outlook between two provinces who follow the very same general mission." These unique dialects were substantial, but not insurmountable road blocks to the reconfiguration of the American Provinces. Recognizing the "subterranean discussion" that emerges from "the losses people fear will happen," the "most basic" of which was the loss of identity, Father McKenna stated that the differences between large and small Provinces and "the past strains in relationships between different provinces," should not distract the confreres from their primary objective of maintaining and improving mission of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, a hefty burden in the best of situations. Before concluding his remarks, Father McKenna cautioned: "A key task is to keep the purpose focused and not let it get blurred by secondary, though interesting, issues. The whole reconfiguration question has struck me as a kind of corporate Rorschach test. It holds up a blurry image of what might be and evokes from the confreres a wealth of hope, fears, creative ideas, suspicions, and desires. Just because of the range of those feelings and thoughts, I think it is doubly important to bring clarity and discipline to the discussion and try our best to keep it on line."[28]

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[28] Barbara Strassberg, "Polish Catholicism in Transition," in *World Catholicism in Transition* edited by Thomas M. Gannon, S.J. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988), p. 186; Thomas McKenna, C.M., "Reorganization of Provinces," a speech given in Dublin, Ireland on June 15, 2001, *Vincentiana*, Vincentian Encyclopedia website: http://famvin.org/cgi-bin/library?e=q-000-00---0vincenti--00-0-0--0prompt-10---4----dtx--0-1l--1-en-50---20-about-Thomas+McKenna--00031-001-1-0utfZz-8-00&a=d&c=vincenti&cl=search&d=HASH0176584c146040953ce19491.

Over the remainder of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the level of cooperation between the American Provinces of the Congregation of the Mission, while bringing forth mixed results, has increased. In May 2002, Father Maloney authorized the establishment of the National Conference of Visitors of the United States. With Father John Sledziona serving as its first President, the National Conference of Visitors had four primary purposes: "1. To develop interprovincial cooperation with a view to possible reconfiguration. 2. To foster collaboration with the Daughters of Charity and the Vincentian Family. 3. To handle other items of national business. [and] 4. To provide mutual support for the Visitors."[29]

The results of the recent efforts of the National Conference of Visitors and the American confreres towards greater interprovincial cooperation and reconfiguration are just now becoming evident. With a history of tense relations between them, the New England Province and the Eastern Province have made strides recently at cooperation. From 2002 to 2005, Father Anthony Kuzia, C.M. of the New England Province and Father John Gouldrick, C.M. of the Eastern Province shared responsibilities as Vicar for Priests in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland Maine. A second example of cooperation between the two Provinces began in June 2007, when confreres from the Eastern Province participated in the New England Province's annual retreat, which was led by Father Gregory Gay, C.M., the new Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission. At the conclusion of the retreat, the Visitor of the Eastern Province, Father

[29] "Statutes of the National Conference of Visitors of the United States," *Vincentiana*, Vincentian Encyclopedia website: http://famvin.org/cgi-bin/library?e=q-000-00---0vincenti--00-0-0--0prompt-10---4---dtx--0-1l--1-en-50---20-about-statutes+of+the+national+conference+of+visitors+of+the+united+states--00031-001-1-0utfZz-8-00&a=d&c=vincenti&cl=search&d=HASH01a0bc8b490706e2ec6370f6.

Thomas McKenna, C.M., invited the confreres of the New England Province to participate in a joint retreat the following year.[30]

As I write these final paragraphs of this afterword, the fate of the New England Province of the Congregation may only be glimpsed at as if "through a glass darkly." Its future I leave to a historian of the next generation to decipher. I feel safe, however, in stating that whatever may happen to the successors of those first Polish Vincentian confreres who arrived in the United States in late 1903, the destiny of the New England Province will be shaped by the announcement in September 2008 of the merging of the Midwestern, Southern, and Western Provinces of the United States into a "new Western Province." Slated to be established in January 2010, this new Province will encompass all the States west of the Mississippi River. If this merger will serve as a precedent for a future decision among the Vincentians residing east of the Mississippi River, a history of often tense relations between the two bands of brothers and the cultural differences between Polish- and American-born confreres must be overcome. If, however, the New England Province decides to maintain its autonomy, it will become one of only three American Provinces, dwarfed in territory, foundations, and personnel by the other two American Communities. To a great extent, any future decision will depend on the ability of the confreres of the New England Province to bridge the cultural gulfs between themselves and their Vincentian fellows in the United States and Poland.[31]

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[30] Gicewicz, *Growth of the New England Province*, p. 243; "Anthony Kuzia, Pastor," Saint Peter Parish website: http://www.lpiwebsuccess.com/websuccess/ViewContactBio.do?contactId=3530&subdomain=stpetersconcordnh; Open letter of Father Roman Górowski, C.M., Newsletter of the Congregation of the Mission, New England Province, July 2007, p. 1.

[31] Open letter of Father Paul L. Golden, C.M., Executive Coordinator for Reconfiguration, website of the Congregation of the Mission, Western Province: www.westernprovince.org.

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