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SODALITIES OF OUR LADY
EXISTING IN KRAKÓW SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN THE 19TH CENTURY AND IN THE SECOND POLISH REPUBLIC

The Sodality of Our Lady, also known as the Marian Congregation, is a Catholic congregation of lay persons, called into being by Fr Jan Leunis SJ within the student circles of Rome in the latter half of the 16th century. The origins of this congregation can be traced to a slightly earlier period. At the Jesuit College in Sicily, Fr Sebastian Carabassi, gathered young people for special services and teachings to venerate the Mother of God on selected days of the week. He was succeeded by Jan Leunis in 1560, who imposed within a certain framework on these practices. He designated Saturday as the day for meetings and services as the best way to “win the favours” of the Blessed Virgin, emphasising “diligence in discharging the duties befitting the state.” For these meetings, he would accepted only the most diligent and morally upright young people. His educational activity was recognized, and the Order’s general appointed Leunis to the Roman College, “so that as well as instilling knowledge in the hearts of the youth in his care he would shape their characters and ingrain Christian virtues in them.” This is an era in which Jesuit-led Catholicism embarked on a counter-offensive against the Reformation. The veneration of Our Lady was undermined by the Protestants. In 1563, Leunis founded a religious association with the consent of his superiors. It included 70 boys affiliated with the church of the Annunciation of Our Lady at the Roman College. It was named Sodalitia Mariana (Congregation of the Annunciation of Our Lady). The goal of the congregation

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was to strive for Christian virtues through love for the Blessed Mother and Her faithful service. The first sodalists adhered to the motto *In pietate litterisque progressus* (progress in piety and study). The Latin term *sodalis* denotes someone “belonging to an association.” Sodalists were those members who, having completed a period of probation, were officially admitted to the Sodality. Congregations were initially made up of students attending only Jesuit colleges. They strove for perfection according to their state, and this was manifested by their “progress in studying.” According to the sodalitarian rules, discharging the duties of the state was the path chosen by God leading to spiritual heights. Throughout the centuries of sodality existence, formation work has always been aimed at personal development and striving for the sanctity of all sodality members, preparation and assistance in the Christian formation of their religious and social life, development of readiness and ability to undertake apostolic tasks of a larger scope. The impact of youth sodalities on the environment is also noteworthy, which initially was manifested by its opposition to heresy and the promotion of Catholic feelings, as well as preservation of the Catholic religion in the following centuries.¹

Popes extended their care of the thriving sodalitarian movement. Pope Gregory XIII issued the bull *Omnipotentis Dei* on 5 December 1584, in which he elevated the *Primaria Congregatio Mariana* at the Church of the Gesù in Rome to the dignity of archcongregation. The Pope praised its salvific role and its influence on moral upbringing of young people. At that time, Marian congregations at Jesuit colleges were developing in all Catholic countries and comprised about 30,000 Marian sodalists. The general of the Jesuit Order was also allowed to establish such congregations in religious colleges and aggregate them in the Roman Congregation. In this way, the foundation of a large international religious organization for lay Catholics became a fact. The Sodalities of Our Lady gathering school youth were established on the premises of Jesuit colleges. Being supported by magnates and the nobility, Jesuit colleges quickly grew into the most powerful school

¹ Alfred WRÓBLEWSKI, *Sodaliczka Mariańska. Czem jest—jak ją zakładać i prowadzić?* (Kraków, 1904), 6–8; Tadeusz USZYŃSKI, “Sodaliczki Mariańskie,” in *Leksykon duchowości katolickiej*, edited by Marek Chmielewski (Lublin–Kraków, Wydawnictwo “M,” 2002); Franciszek KWIATKOWSKI, “Sodaliczki Mariańskie w służbie Kościoła Chrystusowego,” *Sodalis Marianus* 34, no. 4 (1935): 52; Aleksander KAMIENSKI, *Prehistoria polskich związków młodzieży* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1959), 121–132; Maria NĘDZEWICZ, *Sodaliczka Mariańska Panien p.w. Najświętszej Maryi Panny Niepokalanie Poczętej i św. Teresy od Dzieciątka Jezus przy kościele o.o. Jezuitów w Toruniu w latach 1945–1949* (Toruń: Mirosława Buczyńska, 2007), 11–13.

complex in the world. The work initiated by Gregory XIII, continued and extended by Sixtus V in his bulls *Superna Dispositione* (5 January 1587) and *Romanum Decet Pontificem* (29 September 1587), as well as by Clement VIII's breve and Gregory XV's bull of 15 April 1621, whereby they extended access of school youth and the faithful of all states and ages, including lay and religious clergy to the Sodalities.²

The objectives and structure of the Sodalities changed slightly over the centuries. Leunis gave the congregation full independence with respect to the choice of its authorities. In his *Common Rules* written in 1567, Jesuit general Claudio Aquaviva created a slightly more centralised model of the Sodality. The goal of the congregations remained the same: the formation of lay people who were aware of their vocation in the Church. "[...] It is a state-oriented association of lay people who, through their zealous devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, strive to become perfect Catholics to promote apostolic work for the Divine cause in all their states and professions, to defend the Church from enemies and their assaults."³ The ultimate goal of the Sodality was to live by the principle *Per Mariam ad Jesum*.⁴ Fr Aquaviva demanded that sodalists confess and receive the Eucharist on the first Sunday of the month, on the feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary and major church solemnities. He also demanded that the functional members of the congregation should celebrate the sacraments at least once every two weeks, examine their conscience every day, pray the rosary⁵ and say the Sodality prayers.⁶

The rules prescribed visiting prisoners or seeing the sick in hospitals, helping the poor, and teaching the faith. The congregation could not reach

² Stanisław ZAŁĘSKI, *O sodalisach mariańskich* (Kraków, 1886), 5–8; Stanisław ZAŁĘSKI, "Sodalisi Maryi," in *Encyklopedia Kościelna*, edited by Michał Nowodworski, vol. 26 (Warszawa: [s.n.], 1903); Filip LÖFFLER, "Kongregacja maryjańska, jej istota, rzut oka na jej dzieje," *Sodalis Marianus* 9 (1910): 133–134; PIUS XII, "Konstytucja apostolska *Bis saeculari* o Sodalicyjach Mariańskich z 27.09.1948," *Chrześcijanin w Świecie* (1985): 94–103; Ludwik GRZEBIEŃ, editor, *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach na ziemiach Polski i Litwy 1564–1995* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 1996), 629–630.

³ "Myśl przewodnia Sodalicyji i zasadnicze jej cele," *Cześć Marji* 4, no. 4 (1926): 51–54; F. HERZOG, "Idea Sodalicyji w jej historycznym rozwoju po r. 1773," *Sodalis Marianus* 28, no. 1 (1929): 1–5; W. BANGHA, "Apostolstwo świeckich a Sodalicyja Mariańska," *Sodalis Marianus* 33, no. 4 (1934): 66–68.

⁴ Georg HARRASSER, *Katechizm Sodalicyjny*, translated by Dobromir Ziarniak (Poznań: Nakładem Związku Sodalicyj Marjańskich Archidiecezji Gnieźnieńskiej i Poznańskiej, 1935), 15–20.

⁵ J. MATHIAS, "Różaniec, sodalicyjną modlitwą," *Sodalis Marianus* 33, no. 10 (1934): 157–160.

⁶ Stanisław CHORZEMSKI, *"Ignis Ardens" w Sodalicyjach Mariańskich* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Księży Jezuitów, 1927), 29–31.

out to masses, instead it was an elite association whose work was country-specific. Fr Aquaviva's rules survived until 1855 when they were edited anew by Fr J.M. Parthenius and announced by Superior General Peter Beckx. The third redaction was completed in 1910 under Superior General Franz Xavier Wernz. A comparison of these three editions shows that the original spirit of the Sodality of Our Lady had not been changed in any way.⁷ In the 17th century alone, the Prima Primaria Sodality produced 80 cardinals, 7 of whom were elevated to the dignity of pope, namely: Urban VIII, Alexander VII, Clement IX, Clement X, Innocent X, Innocent XI, and Clement XI.⁸

Pope Benedict XIV, who himself was a sodalist of the Roman College, was one of the greatest protectors of the congregation. In his golden bull *Glorisae Dominae* (27 September 1748), he granted great favours to the Sodalities of Our Lady, approved and extended their privileges, as well as permitting the establishment of female sodalities (in reality, they had existed much earlier but were impossible to be aggregated to the Prima Primaria). By virtue of the bull, each sodality was to be established with the Blessed Virgin Mary as its patron saint. Each of them would choose one of the privileges or mysteries of the life of the Mother of God celebrated by the Church. Since this holiday was titular, it was to be solemnly celebrated by sodalists. These holidays are: Immaculate Conception, Assumption, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Candlemas, or other minor feasts falling on Sundays, such as the feasts of Seven Sorrows, Motherhood, Chastity, and Care. Pope Benedict XIV permitted and encouraged the adoption of a second patron saint for sodalities, which would always be one of the saints of the Lord. For boys, Saints Stanisław Kostka, Casimir Jagiellon, Aloysius Gonzaga, Jan Berchmans, and for girls and young women Saints Cecilia, Agnes, Theresa, Salomea, Bronisława, Jolanta and Kinga. Each sodality aspired to have its own chapel or altar with the image of Our Lady in the church, as well as a conference room.⁹

Sodalities thrived in the 17th and the first half of the 18th centuries. They gathered not only school students, but also popes, crown dignitaries, kings, the nobility, clergy, bourgeoisie, craftsmen, military and servants. The Order,

⁷ Franciszek KWIATKOWSKI, "Trzysta pięćdziesiąt lat temu," *Sodalis Marianus* 33, nos. 7–8 (1934): 116.

⁸ F. HERZOG, "Idea Sodalicji," 5; *ibid.*, no. 2, 32–33; Franciszek KWIATKOWSKI, "Sodalicje Mariańskie w służbie Kościoła Chrystusowego," 72–77.

⁹ Alfred WRÓBLEWSKI, *Sodaliczka Mariańska. Czem jest*, 30–32.

wherefrom the Sodalities originated and which provided its support, began to suffer aversion and even persecution in the 18th century. In 1773, the famous breve *Dominus ac Redemptor* of Pope Clement XIV dissolved the Jesuit order all over the world, thus taking away the basis of livelihood from the Sodalities. Although the Prima Primaria Sodality of Rome still existed under the secular rule of the Church, most Sodalities suspended their activities.¹⁰ Only after several decades, Pope Pius VI, partially restored the operation of the liquidated order, which Pius VII did fully in 1814. In 1824, the Prima Primaria was restored to the administration of the Jesuit Order. In 1825, due to the small number of Jesuit priests, at the request of the Father General Aloysius Fortis, Pope Leo XII permitted the Sodality to be divided into two separate branches, linked with each other only by an act of canonical aggregation to the Prima Primaria. The first branch comprises sodalities existing in the houses and churches of the Order, and the other branch encompasses sodalities established in other churches and chapels, being subordinate to diocesan pastors. In the mid-19th century, the situation of the Marian congregations changed after Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, which ushered in a new era of worship, and thus a new period in the development of the Sodality. The statistics show an impressive growth of the congregation. From 1584 to 1854, for 270 years, the number of all types of sodalities aggregated to the Prima Primaria was 5,625, while from 1854 to the end of 1922 the number reached 40,248 (growing by almost 1000 every year). During that period, successive superiors general of the Order passed new laws adapting sodalitarian life to the new needs of the times. Within particular sodalities, more and more sections were created. Various unions emerged, either trade or diocesan ones, national unions were created in some countries, as well as international federations.¹¹

The first Sodality of Our Lady for Polish school students was established in Braniewo in 1571 at the Jesuit college.¹² The second one was established in Vilnius in the same year, and in 1573 it was aggregated to the Prima Primaria. In 1590, there were as many as five congregations at the college of

¹⁰ Stanisław ZAŁĘSKI, "Trzechsetni jubileusz Kongregacji," *Przegląd Powszechny* 2, no. 5 (1885): 55.

¹¹ Jan ROSTWOROWSKI, *Przewodnik Sodalitacji Mariańskich* (Kraków, 1927), 19–26; IDEM, "Rzut oka na dzieje Sodalitacji Mariańskiej," *Cześć Marji* 11, no. 4 (1923): 53–56.

¹² Marek INGLÓT and Ludwik GRZEBIEN, editors. *Uczniowie-sodalisi Gimnazjum Jezuitów w Brunsberdze (Braniewie) 1579–1623* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 1998), 9–13; Jan KOREWA, "Sprowadzenie Jezuitów do Polski," *Nasza Przyszłość* 20 (1964): 46–49.

Braniewo because there were different groups of young people studying under the direction of the Jesuits (two seminaries and a college). The Jesuit school was a religious school since its whole school curriculum and educational framework was based on religion. The congregations were not only pious fraternities for the best students. In order to socialize young people (often coming from wealthy and even magnate families) and involve them in charity, social and apostolic work, sodalities were organized in schools. In the late 16th century, there were congregations established at colleges in Pułtusk, Poznań, Lublin, Kalisz, Dorpat, Jarosław, Połock. In Kraków, a sodality was set up by Piotr Skarga in 1584/85. All sodalities participated in church life—in services (from the 17th century the liturgy of the hours about the Immaculate Conception, and from the 16th century May devotions), processions, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, pilgrimages, and above all conducted charity work.¹³

All sodalities had a Marian designation, most commonly the following: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary or the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. At larger colleges, there were two or three types of congregations, divided with respect to the age of the youth: major ones (*maior*, *maxima*), bringing together older students, mainly of philosophy, medium ones (*media*), gathering young people attending rhetoric and poetics classes, and minor ones (*minor*), intended for grammar classes. Sodalities were comprised mainly of young people who were distinguished by piety and academic achievement. Not only did they shape the students' personal devotion, but they also laid strong emphasis on social and apostolic activity. Sodalists were present at all church ceremonies, mainly Marian ones. They improved the academic standard of their schools owing to their hard school work. They learned self-governance (Sodalities of Our Lady were self-governing organizations) and rational management of the common assets. Regardless of their origin and state, they taught children about the Catechism, helped less able classmates with their school work, and looked after the poor and the sick in hospitals and poorhouses. They constituted a significant number of candidates for the clergy.¹⁴

¹³ Stanisław BEDNARSKI, *Upadek i odrodzenie szkół jezuickich w Polsce* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Księży Jezuitów, 1933), 404–405; Mieczysław BEDNARZ, “Jezuici a religijność polska (1564–1964),” *Nasza Przeszłość* 20 (1964), 202–205.

¹⁴ *Uczniowie-sodalisi Gimnazjum Jezuitów w Brunsberdze (Braniewie)*, 9–11.

Estimation of the number of Marian school congregations in Poland is based mainly on the statistics of the Jesuit Order. In the second half of the 18th century, the Order in Poland had four provinces in: Greater Poland (Prowincja Wielkopolska), Lesser Poland (Prowincja Małopolska), Masovia (Prowincja Mazowiecka) and Lithuania (Prowincja Litewska), constituting an *assistance*, comprising a total of 51 colleges, 18 residences and over 60 houses and missionary stations. There were a total of 66 secondary and higher schools, seminars and monastery schools. With each school there was always one and commonly two or three congregations for school students of different ages.¹⁵ After the dissolution of the Order, the sodalities came under the jurisdiction of local bishops, and numerous congregations—identical or similar to Jesuit congregations (e.g. Children of Mary)—were established, having their own personality but not being part of the structure of Marian congregations.¹⁶ In 1820, a small group of Jesuits who survived in Belarus, came to Galicia and opened their first schools in Ternopil (Pol. Tarnopol), and then in Sącz and Lviv (Pol. Lwów).¹⁷ Their work was interrupted by Emperor Ferdinand's decree of 7 May 1848, which forbade the Society of Jesus to work and establish permanent houses in Austria. The Jesuits returned to Galicia in 1856, but due to accumulated prejudice it was difficult for the Order to revive the sodalitarian movement on a large scale. In 1872, a youth sodality was established in the monastery school in Ternopil and in 1888 in Khyriv (Pol. Chyrów). In 1887, Fr Stanisław Załęski founded a sodality for schoolgirls in Tarnów; another was also established in 1887 in Kraków in the Ursuline Gymnasium for Girls.

Krakow was a city where sodalities of secondary school youth thrived during the discussed period. The first school sodality in Krakow was founded by the superior of the Ursuline Monastery in Krakow, Stanisława Sulkowska. The founding meeting took place on 24 May 1887, and the Blessed Virgin Mary Immaculately Conceived was chosen as its female patron saint, and Saints Stanisław Kostka and Joseph became the monastery's male patron saints. Prince Albin Dunajewski, the Bishop of Kraków at the time, approved the first sodalitarian laws on 15 May 1887, and on 31 July, the sodality was aggregated to the Roman congregation.¹⁸ Lviv was a place

¹⁵ Stanisław ZAŁĘSKI, *O sodalisch mariańskich*, 16–17.

¹⁶ Edward KABAT, "Kongregacje Dzieci Maryi uczennic szkół średnich w diecezji tarnowskiej," *Folia Historica Cracoviensia* 5, no. 3 (1996), 233–234.

¹⁷ Stanisław ZAŁĘSKI, *Jezuici w Polsce porozbiorowej 1820–1905*, vol. 2/1 (Kraków: W.L. Anczyc, 1906), 699.

¹⁸ "50-letni jubileusz Sodalitacji Mariańskiej Gimnazjum SS Urszulanek w Krakowie," *Cześć Maryi* 16, no. 9 (1938): 281–283.

where the sodality was reborn, too. There, Fr Stefan Bratkowski founded a boys' congregation in 1889. In 1894, he moved to Kraków, where he began to promote the idea of sodality among school youth on a larger scale.¹⁹ In this way, under the supervision of Jesuit priests, school sodalities began to reappear in the Polish lands after several decades of non-existence. In 1907, a sodality of female college students was established in Kraków under the leadership of Fr Rostworowski, and in 1910 a sodality of teachers from the Cracow district was founded.²⁰

In the late 19th century, the sodality movement began to develop vigorously among various social strata, and in 1896 the National Union of Sodalities of Our Lady was founded in Lviv, albeit prematurely. However, it had no common body to unite it. Founded in 1902, the periodical *Sodalis Marianus* slowly began to develop the core ideas of the movement and connect spiritually the individual sodalitarian nests, as they were called. In 1905, the Jesuits already had 126 different congregations at their churches, 24 in Kraków, 15 in Nowy Sącz, 14 in Kolomyja (Pol. Kołomyja), 13 in Lviv, 12 in Stara Wieś, 12 in Chernivtsi (Pol. Czerniowce), 10 in Ternopil (Pol. Tarnopol), 7 in Karwina, 6 in Cieszyn, 6 in Ivano-Frankivsk (formerly Stanisławów, Poland), 4 in Stryi (Pol. Stryj), 4 in Opava (now in Czech Republic, formerly Opawa, Poland), 2 in Khyriv, 2 in Zakopane, and one in each of the other towns. After Poland regained independence in 1918, sodalities were to be found all over the country. In a free homeland, a broad range of possibilities opened up for ideological organizations which drew inspiration from the past of the nation and the spirit of the Gospel. The Sodality of Our Lady was the case in point. The activity of sodalitarian groups started anew with immense enthusiasm after 1918. Numerous conventions of Sodality members and printed magazines had discussions on the statutes and objectives of the organization, with a Jesuite father, Henryk Haduch, playing an important role.²¹ He was the author of a guide book on sodalities of Our Lady, which systematised the statutes and the way of managing sodalities.²²

¹⁹ Krzysztof PANASOWIEC, *Sodalicje Marijańskie uczniów szkół średnich we Lwowie w latach 1919–1939* (Lublin: Archiwum Uczelniane KUL, 1992), typescript, pp. 41–43.

²⁰ Władysław REJOWICZ, "Działalność polskich Sodalicji Marjańskich," *Sodalis Marianus* 19, nos. 9–10 (1920): 129–139; IDEM, "Rozwój i działalność Sodalicji marjańskich w stuletnią rocznicę prowincji," *Nasze Wiadomości* 6, no. 28 (1922): 93–97.

²¹ *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 629–630; "Z minionych dziejów," *Moderator* 6, no. 1, (1934): 167–170.

²² Henryk HADUCH, *Przewodnik Sodalicyj Maryjańskich złączonych kanonicznie z Sodalicyą Rzymską Prima Primaria zostających pod opieką zak. OO. Jezuitów. Ustawy zasadnicze i sposób prowadzenia sodalicyi* (Kraków: Nakładem Wydawnictw Tow. Jezusowego, 1914).

During the period of autonomy after 1866, Kraków was the main centre of education in Western Galicia. Thanks to the work of patriotic educators and independence youth organizations, the numbers of conscious Poles were growing. Also in the period of the Second Polish Republic, Kraków was one of the main centres of science, culture and education. Krakow's youth as well as adults were characterized by genuine devotion. In the reborn and independent Poland, schools were the places where numerous youth organizations of ideological and educational character were burgeoning. They gathered the best young people, ready to serve for the regained homeland to build its better future, and their refuge was invariably in the Catholic Church. Among numerous youth organizations, the Sodality of Our Lady flourished, and the one in the Kraków diocese was growing the most dynamically. Work in the sodalitarian groups was commenced with extraordinary enthusiasm right after the First World War, with good results.²³

The development of youth Marian congregations can also be attributed in a large measure to the Polish Episcopate, which issued a decree ordering all secondary school catechists to organize sodalities in their schools.²⁴

The sodalitarian movement gained strong footing in two powerful sodalitarian unions of secondary school youth: for boys and for girls. The spiritus movens of the first one was Fr Józef Winkowski, who edited a magazine for young men entitled *Pod znakiem Marji*, which was published from 1920 to 1939. Fr Winkowski was a catechist at the boys' gymnasium in Zakopane, the founder and president of the Union of Sodalities of Our Lady of Secondary School Boys,²⁵ organizer of the youth camp centre in Śnieżnica in

²³ Stanisław STRZELECKI, *Sodalicyjne promienie Miłosierdzia w Białymstoku* (Białystok: Książnica Podlaska im. Łukasza Górnickiego, 2006), 96.

²⁴ Józef WINKOWSKI, "Wielkie dzieło sodalicyjne na ziemiach polskich," *Sodalis Marianus* 23, nos. 5–6 (1924): 19.

²⁵ Father Winkowski was affiliated with Krakow, his father was a school professor at the 3rd Gymnasium in Krakow, and then the head teacher of the 5th Liceum. Born on 23 January 1888, he graduated from a liceum in Kraków. In the years 1906–1914, he studied Polish philology and theology at the Jagiellonian University. He was ordained to the priesthood on 29 June 1914, and he was employed as a catechist at the gymnasium in Zakopane, where he worked until his retirement until 1948. Willing to educate the young Catholic intelligentsia, he involved himself in the organisation of school sodalities. He published two volumes of sermons and exhortative essays for Marian congregations entitled *Egzort dla uczniów szkół średnich* (1917, 1919), and the valuable *Praktyczny podręcznik duszpasterstwa w szkole średniej*. He died on 8 July 1951. The relevant information can be found in the Archives of the Metropolitan Curia in Kraków, in the folder entitled "Spuścizna po ks. Józefie Winkowskim." See "Księża katecheci diecezji krakowskiej 1880–1939," in *Słownik biograficzny*, vol. 1, edited by Maciej Gawlik and Jan Szczepaniak (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Św. Stanisława BM Archidiecezji Krakowskiej, 2000), 320; M. KWARCINSKA, "Książdz

Beskid, and the originator of active pastoral care and closed retreats for secondary-school graduates.²⁶

The other union was led by Fr Józef Chrzyszcz. He was the president of the Union of Sodality of Our Lady of Secondary School Girls. The official magazine of the Union was the *Cześć Marji* monthly, published from 1923. In the mid-1920s, in each of these congregations, there were more than a hundred nest groups and about 5,000 members.²⁷

In 1922, Włodzimierz Ledóchowski, the Superior General of the Jesuits, appointed the Central Secretariat of the Marian Congregations in Rome, to coordinate the activities of national federations and individual congregations operating under the care of the Order. Introduced in 1910, the new Sodality Rules—providing for the position of “director” of the union—largely limited the former autonomy of the congregations.²⁸ The greatest development of the Sodality took place at the turn of the 20th century. The leading activists of the sodalitarian movement at that time were Fathers Stanisław Załęski,²⁹ Marian Morawski,³⁰ Marcin Czermiński³¹ and Stefan Bratkowski.³² Fr Załęski was the superior of the Saint Barbara’s House in Kraków, he revived the Sodality of Our Lady in 1886, and organised the first retreat for university students.

In 1886, the first non-school congregation for salesmen was established in Kraków; in 1891 an academic congregation and a separate congregation for gymnasium students were established, too; and in 1892 a congregation of rural citizens (landowners) in Stara Wieś was established. In the years to come, sodalities of almost all states and trades appeared. The sodality structure was now adapted to the new conditions.

Józef Winkowski (1888–1951),” *Chrześcijananie*, vol. 5, edited by Bohdan Bejze (Warszawa: Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1980), 196–213; Zofia ROSZEK, “Szerzyciel idei maryjnej,” *Chrześcijananie*, 5, 213–236.

²⁶ Józef WINKOWSKI, “Nasze rekolekcje dla sodalisów,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 10, no. 8 (1930): 224; “Kolonja wakacyjna sodalicji,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 13, no. 7 (1933): 130.

²⁷ “Dzieje Sodalicji Mariańskiej,” *Cześć Marji* 4, no. 2 (1926): 17–21.

²⁸ “List P.N.O. Generała o Sodalicjach Marjańskich,” *Nasze Wiadomości* 7, no. 31 (1923): 253–259; *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 629–630.

²⁹ Ludwik GRZEBIEŃ, *Słownik jezuitów polskich 1564–1990*, vol. 12 (Kraków: [s.n.], 1993), 191; *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 780.

³⁰ Ludwik GRZEBIEŃ, *Słownik jezuitów polskich 1564–1990*, vol. 7 (Kraków: [s.n.], 1993), 198–199; *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 438.

³¹ Ludwik GRZEBIEŃ, *Słownik jezuitów polskich 1564–1990*, vol. 2 (Kraków: [s.n.], 1993), 174; *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 111.

³² Ludwik GRZEBIEŃ, *Słownik jezuitów polskich*, vol. 2, 9; IDEM, *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 66.

Unlike the structure from the period before the Order's dissolution and that of the largely self-governing organisations of school students, more central administration was introduced.

At the head of each sodality was a priest moderator, appointed by the church authorities, who had significant powers in the congregation. The power of the moderator was determined by statutes. In contrast to individual sodalists, the moderator had absolute power to admit them, as well as the power to appoint lower officials; the more senior officers, forming the management authority (Pol. *konsulta*), were selected by the sodalists from among the candidates presented by the moderator. The priests in charge of the sodalities had full spiritual power over them and management in material matters. In order for the moderator to work fruitfully, he needed to know the sodalitarian work well, was to be "wholeheartedly" devoted to it. The moderators received their authority from the ordinaries or provincials and were accountable to them. They were chosen for this work by the Jesuit Order. The Order authorities recommended that it be remembered that: "The Sodality is a higher school of spiritual life—the Moderator is to be its master." At the convention of moderators in Budapest, it was pointed out that: "We must remember one thing in our administration of the Sodality, this school of Blessed Mary: behold, the highly Marian spirit is to reign in it, not only among the ones governed, but also, and above all, among the administrators."³³

Only the managing department, i.e. the *konsulta*, would be appointed by way of election, which would choose candidates for sodalitarian positions, establish customary laws of the sodality, and managed their activities. The duties of the managing officers were as follows: they were to be exemplary in their love for the Blessed Virgin and zealous at work, receive the Holy Communion often, and faithfully observe the laws of the Sodality. They should respect the opinion of their moderator retaining their right to their own opinion, unanimously defend the moderator, the president and the management department against the rest of the Sodality. The existence of the whole Sodality depends on them, therefore its well-being is of utmost importance.³⁴ The elected prefect (the head of a male sodality) or woman president (the head of a female sodality) had executive powers, the so-called assistants cover for the prefect in his absence and constituted an advisory and

³³ Władysław REJOWICZ, "Konferencje o pracach w sodalicjach marjańskich i na polu kaznodziejstwa," *Nasze Wiadomości* 6, no. 28 (1922): 122–130; "Moderator—jego autorytet i właściwości," *Moderator* 7, nos. 3–4 (1935): 414–423.

³⁴ "Obowiązki Wydziału Sodalicji," *Cześć Marji* 1, no. 11 (1923): 144–146.

supervisory body. The consultors only had voting rights in the meetings of the managing department. The secretary was responsible for the office and took part in meetings of the body. The treasurer was in charge of the finances. The instructor, who was well acquainted with the laws, history and nature of the union, educated the candidates for sodalists. There were several types of sodality meetings, which can be divided into three groups, i.e. management, general and sectional meetings. The general meetings were divided into ordinary, extraordinary, electoral and social meetings. The management assembly was the heart of the whole congregation, so to speak, therefore it was important that it be held regularly in a designated room.³⁵

Within the managing department, sections were created to address different types of apostolate. The largest sodalities had a maximum of eight sections, mostly five: Eucharistic, apologetic, missionary, charity and singing. The first inter-sodality union with a joint secretariat and unified leadership were established. At the 4th union convention in Poznań (7 July 1922), the establishment of the Union of Sodalities of Our Lady of Secondary School Boys in Poland was approved. The approved act on the Union of Sodalities says that its main purpose is to expand and reinforce the sodalitarian action in Poland and to organize its work in a uniform manner. Section 20 of the Act provides that: "Every four years, the Executive Department convenes a general convention of the Union of Sodalities at Jasna Góra in Częstochowa in order to bring boy sodalists from all over Poland closer together and reinforce the strength of the Union."³⁶

In that year, the National Secretariat of the Sodality of Our Lady was established, responsible for communications between the sodalities and coordinating their activities. Organisational structures were developing: sodalities with the same profile formed unions, courses and conventions were organised. Theoretical foundations were created, mapping out the road maps for the whole country.³⁷

In 1925, the union had 86 school sodalities throughout the country, and in the following year the number was as many as 125. In those years, in Krakow there were the following sodalities of school students: Ursulines School

³⁵ "O organizacji życia sodalicyjnego," *Cześć Marji* 5, no. 2 (1927), 29–30.

³⁶ Archiwum Prowincji Małopolskiej Towarzystwa Jezusowego w Krakowie [henceforth abbreviated as APMTJ]. *Akta Sodalicyj Marijańskich. Ustawa Związku SM Uczniów Szkół Średnich w Polsce*, file ref. no. 2426, pp. 251–254.

³⁷ Jan ROSTWOROWSKI, "Do kwestyi sodalicyj maryjańskiej w szkołach średnich," *Sodalis Marianus* 17, nos. 5–6 (1918): 109–116.

(Kraków I), State Gymnasium (Kraków II), and Branch School of the State Gymnasium (Kraków III). As far as teacher training colleges are concerned, there were altogether three sodalities: State Teachers College (Kraków I), Holy Family Teachers College (Kraków II), and Society of Folk Schools (Kraków III).³⁸

During the interwar period, the Jesuit Order was the most pastorally active in the Diocese of Cracow, promoting the three-century-long tradition of Sodality of Our Lady, and Kraków had become the centre of the movement of all Marian congregations in Poland.³⁹ The secretariat of the Sodality was opened in Kraków, headed by Fr Romuald Moskała. In 1925, he was appointed vice-superior of the house at the Church of Saint Barbara in Kraków; he set up the Central Secretariat of Polish Sodalities. In the years 1931–1936, he was the editor-in-chief of the *Moderator* magazine. He organized sodalitarian courses, conventions of moderators and gave numerous lectures.⁴⁰

The Sodality had its own *Sodalis Marianus* magazine and the moderators had their *Moderator*. Many sodalities also published their own magazines, the yearly *Sprawozdania*, *Kalendarzyki* or anniversary jubilee books.

Starting at the turn of the 20th century, the changes in the religious life of the Second Polish Republic followed the path determined by the evolution of relations in individual partitions. There was an increase in the religiousness of the intellectual elite accompanied by a decrease in the average religiousness and morality of ordinary people. The religiousness of the intelligentsia became more aware and profound, but at the same time the confines of traditional morality became more relaxed. Religious revival started with the young generation, which was represented by academic youth grouped in Catholic organizations. The movement reached as far as secondary schools. The development of academic religious life at the turn of the second decade of the interwar period should be largely attributed to the influx of young

³⁸ "Nasza statystyka," *Cześć Marji* 4, no. 1 (1926): 10.

³⁹ APMTJ, *Statut Komitetu Sodalitacji Mariańskich w Krakowie uchwalony dn. 18 maja 1925 r.*, file ref. no. 1198-XXI, p. 52; Stanisław PIECH, "Odnowiona diecezja krakowska w obliczu „znaków czasu” 1879–1978," in *Kościół krakowski w życiu państwa i narodu polskiego*, edited by Andrzej Pankowicz (Kraków: Wydawnictwo PAT, 2002), 134, 142.

⁴⁰ Ludwik GRZEBIEŃ, *Słownik jezuitów polskich 1564–1990*, vol. 7, 206–207. Fr Romuald Moskała periodically managed sodalities in Lublin in 1920–1921 and in Katowice in 1927–1931. During World War II he was arrested by Gestapo twice. After the war, he resumed his sodalitarian activity, created an educational centre and a vocational school for young people near Bochnia. Arrested in 1950 on an unjust charge of weapon possession, he was imprisoned at the Wronki and Rawicz prisons. Released conditionally in 1954, he died in 1956 in Kraków.

people educated in school sodalities. The growth of social Catholic activity relied mainly on social activists who were religiously aware and had some moral depth, so it was vital to educate groups of Catholic social activists. After the First World War, only Catholic organisations were the place of training, especially youth organisations. At the end of the decade, Jasna Góra in Częstochowa became a “centre of spiritual revival.” The pilgrimage and Marian marriages of academic youth in 1936 gave rise to similar religious manifestations of the other strata of society. In 1937, the pilgrimages of teachers (20 thousand) and landowners (almost 50% of the total number) were particularly noticeable.⁴¹

For example, before the outbreak of World War II (as of 1938), sodalities of various states were already operating in all major urban and numerous rural centres, with about 20,000 members. These were school sodalities (several hundred), alumni of clerical seminaries (9), male intelligentsia (54), female urban intelligentsia (123), women landowners (23), academic men teachers (8), academic women teachers (5), school teachers (37), urban men (8), urban women (5), country fathers (2), country youths (2), country girls (17), urban teenage girls (41), urban young people (10), and female workers (14).⁴²

Below is presented the development of school sodalities, illustrated using some statistical data representing the nationwide membership of school students in the Sodality of Our Lady. The figures refer to the latter half of the 1930s and are based on incomplete reports published by *Sodalis Marianus*.

Table 1. Sodalities of Our Lady of secondary school students in the years 1925–1928

Number of sodalities	1,925	1,926	1,927	1,928
Union of Sodalities of Our Lady of Secondary School Boys	118	135	156	180
Union of Sodalities of Our Lady of Secondary School Girls	125	150	195	160
Total	243	285	351	340
Sodalists in the Union of Secondary School Boys	5,091	6,387	7,344	8,180
Sodalists in the Union of Secondary School Girls	5,000	5,000	8,110	8,265
Total	10,091	11,387	15,444	16,445

Source: Stanisław BEDNARSKI. “*Sodalitje Marjańskie w Polsce w r. 1928.*” *Sodalis Marianus* 28, no. 3 (1929): 41

⁴¹ Edward KOSIBOWICZ, “Sprawy Kościoła,” *Przegląd Powszechny* 54, nos. 7–9 (1937): 169–170.

⁴² *Encyklopedia wiedzy o jezuitach*, 630.

These figures show that school sodalities were developing dynamically. The largest number of sodalities existed in the Union of Sodality of Gymnasium Students. In 1928, they numbered 180. Together with girls' sodalities, there were 320 of them throughout Poland, gathering over 16 thousand young people. The number of teenagers in sodalities is difficult to determine in respect of particular years due to the mobility of students, who would leave the ranks of this type of sodalities upon graduation. Some of them, depending on their further life path, moved to academic sodalities or sodalities for adults.

No statistics can fully illustrate the inner life of young people in individual sodalities, and this life manifested itself in a variety of ways, such as attendance at meetings, hard work, and also the apostolic spirit. It is difficult to say more about the scope of apostolic, educational, social and charitable work on the basis of the statistics only. Meetings and services rank first, as illustrated by Table 2. In 1925–1928, the figures were as follows:

Table 2. The number of meetings and services in sodalities in the years 1925–1928

	In sodalities of older people	In sodalities of school boys	In sodalities of school girls
Department meetings	1,173	1,550	1,205
General meetings	1,912	1,753	1,562
Church services	1,665	1,291	1,277

Source: Stanisław BEDNARSKI. "Sodalitje Marjańskie w Polsce w r. 1928," 43

In a report from the Poznań Convention in 1927, the Union of Sodality of School Girls shed some more light on the situation of the union and its work. The union included 86 female gymnasium sodalities, 47 seminary sodalities, and 17 vocational school sodalities. In 1927/28, 23 new sodalities were created, 4 suspended their activity, and 29 were in preparation; besides that there were several dozen school sodalities outside the union. During this period, the student sodalities were very actively involved in the missionary movement, and 400 delegates took part in the Poznań Convention. Ideological speeches were delivered to address the inner life, work on character and the pursuit of virtues, especially chastity, obedience, and modesty.

The second Union of school sodalities for students, the oldest of all unions, was developing very rapidly, as shown in Table 3. However, more accurate data on the sodalitarian life was not compiled in report form until 1924, hence the difficulties in accessing earlier data on sodalitarian life.⁴³

Table 3. Activity of the Union of Sodality of Our Lady of Secondary School Boys in the years 1919–1928

Activity / Amount	Year					
	1919	1921	1923	1925	1927	1928
Sodalities	20	37	80	118	156	180
In dioceses	9	12	16	20	22	22
Members	1,425	1,865	3,677	5,091	7,344	8,180
Sections	–	42	109	127	224	253
Services attended	–	–	–	874	1,246	1,291
Holy Communion received together	–	–	–	730	1,221	1,308
General meetings	–	–	–	1,225	1,601	1,753
Sectional meetings	–	–	–	890	1,516	1,657
<i>Konsulta</i> meetings	–	–	–	1,126	1,281	1,550
Exhortative essays, lectures, papers	–	–	–	2,800	3,800	4,000
Libraries	–	19	53	91	108	135
Books	–	–	11,727	14,646	18,460	23,953
Circulation of the monthly	–	1,800	4,200	6,100	7,200	8,500
Retreats for secondary school graduates	–	–	3	4	6	5
Letters/parcels in the “Repository”	–	–	–	600	907	1,576
Turnover of the “Repository” (zlotys)	–	–	–	8,298	13,600	18,423
Presidium correspondence	–	1,191	3,441	4,269	6,131	8,979
Total cash turnover (zlotys)	–	–	–	32,274	54,968	114,360
Annual total no. of copies					91,000	85,000

Source: Stanisław BEDNARSKI, “Sodalitje Marjańskie w Polsce w r. 1928,” 45⁴⁴

⁴³ Stanisław BEDNARSKI, “Sodalitje Marjańskie w Polsce w r. 1928,” 44–45.

⁴⁴ See X *Sprawozdanie Wydziału Wykonawczego Związku Sodalitji Marjańskich Uczniów Szkół Średnich w Polsce za rok szkolny 1928/29* (Zakopane: [s.n.], 1929), 18–19.

For over a decade of their existence, the number of sodalities increased from 20 to 180, and the number of involved students increased from 1,425 to over 8 thousand. Young men took part in many services, meetings, exhortative meetings or retreats; they listened to lectures and set up sodality libraries. In this context, it is worth noting that the total cash turnover of the union was 114,360 PLN, and such a sum of money was managed by the poorest association, i.e. the sodality of gymnasium students. The association took the initiative to establish a colony in Mszana Dolna, and 150 morgens of forest were purchased for this purpose for 50,000 zlotys, and a collection was organised to erect buildings in the colony, counting on the support of the public. The reorganisation of the Union of youth sodalities was also addressed. The original statute was intended for a union with a small number of sodalities, but over time it turned out to be inconvenient. It was resolved to introduce structural changes in accordance with the structure of the Church which relied on five metropolises (Gniezno–Poznań, Warsaw, Vilnius, Lviv, Kraków). A separate structure was created for the archdiocese, the sodalities were divided into 5 archdiocesan unions, each headed by an archdiocesan moderator. Each of the 15 dioceses formed a separate structure headed by a priest acting as the diocesan moderator.⁴⁵ The priest moderators were assisted by diocesan or archdiocesan presidents, elected from among the sodalists, and together they formed the General Council of the Union. As for individual dioceses, the highest proportion of sodalities among male secondary schools was noted in the school year of 1928/29 in the following dioceses: Kraków—71%, Poznań—64%, Chełmno—61%, Kielce and Lusk—24% each, and Warsaw—22%.⁴⁶

The Union held three kinds of conventions in each three-year period, namely general conventions of all members, conventions of trade union sodalities, and archdiocesan and diocesan conventions. In 1928, a convention of priest moderators and delegates was held in Lublin, followed in 1929 by a second general convention at Jasna Góra to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Union's existence.

One more sodalitarian initiative is worth mentioning, agreed on during the Vilnius Convention in 1926. The trade union sodalities undertook to work on self-defence measures for young people against moral corruption. Each year of such work was to have its motto, around which lectures and

⁴⁵ Jerzy KŁOCZOWSKI, Lidia MÜLLEROWA, and Jan SKARBK, *Zarys dziejów Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce* (Kraków: Znak, 1986), 309–311.

⁴⁶ *X Sprawozdanie Wydziału Wykonawczego*, 18.

discussions would focus, and the resolutions passed became the work programme for gymnasium school sodalities. The first slogan saying “Be chaste” was followed by a second one: “Be dutiful.” Sodality tried to fulfil these obligations not only inside their schools, but, guided by the task of the apostolate, to foster these provisions among all young people. The 3rd Convention of the Union of Sodality of Our Lady of Secondary School Boys took place traditionally at Jasna Góra on 4–5 July, 1934. The Union was celebrating its fifteenth anniversary and the ceremony was intended to be a manifestation. It was attended by Archbishop Adam Sapieha. The priest moderators and presidents heard a speech entitled “For the greater value of our sodalities.” The young participants also received a letter with Holy Father’s blessing. In a report on the convention, Fr Winkowski regretted that of the more than 250 sodalities that existed at the time members of only 112 came to Jasna Góra, and only 60 out of 250 moderators. He demanded that priest moderators should be more conscientious in organizing and encouraging young people to take part in the conventions.⁴⁷

The life of sodalities was also connected with important religious events in the country. On 2 July 1927, the coronation of the miraculous painting of Our Lady of the Gate of Dawn took place in Vilnius. The ceremony was attended by sodality delegations and pilgrims from all over the country, including the government members headed by the President and Prime Minister Józef Piłsudski. These celebrations also provided a unique opportunity to hold the 5th Convention of the Union of Sodality of Our Lady of Secondary School Girls in Poland on 2–4 July 1927 in Vilnius. The convention was attended by 300 girl sodalists and 40 priest moderators. During the meeting, Union President Fr Chrzęszcz presented an extensive report on the activities of the Union in 1926–1927. He pointed out that work for the Sodality can be classified as both inner and external. This inner work is difficult to describe or control; it requires piety and religious practices of every sodalist, but no doubt must be formidable. This was also reflected in external activities. In 1926, there were 145 female sodalities, and as many as 195 in 1927. There were about 6,216 girl sodalists involved in various organizations, and 2,944 aspirants and candidates—a total of 9,160 girls. The number of girl sodalists was fluid, sometimes difficult to assess, as we often read in reports that “due to graduation 1,030 left the school, and in that year 2,164 were admitted, and

⁴⁷ Stanisław BEDNARSKI, “Sodalitje Marjańskie w Polsce w r. 1928,” 45–46; Józef WINKOWSKI, “III Kongres Związku S. M. Uczniów szkół średnich w Polsce na Jasnej Górze w dn. 4 i 5 lipca 1934 r.” *Moderator* 6, nos. 2–3 (1934): 267–268; *Pod znakiem Maryi* 15, no. 4 (1934/35): 10–13.

20 died.” Some sodalities suspended their activity without always informing the management authority about it. Sodalitarian work was carried out in various fields. In the presented sodalities, the Eucharistic section existed in 80 sodalities and it had 2,438 members; the missionary section existed in 40, counting 992 members; the Samaritan section existed in 30, having 438 members; the office section existed in 20 with 516 members; the liturgical section in only one sodality had 15 students; the ornamentation section in 8 sodalities counted 130 members; the abstinence section existed in one sodality with 15 girls; the section of candidates in 4 sodalities consisted of 38 members; the tourist section in one sodality counted 15 students. There were 1,575 general sodality meetings, 1,187 board meetings, 1,076 section meetings, 80 social meetings, 958 general meetings, but all sodalists also attend school meetings. 80–85% of sodalists attended the meetings regularly, 58 sodalists had their own chapels, 72 had meeting rooms, 114 had a library holding a total of 15,922 works. Thanks to the generosity of the priest moderators and donors, *Cześć Marji* monthly was published, and in 1927 its circulation was 6,000 copies. On the first day of the Vilnius Convention a presentation entitled “The Sodality as a school of the ideal” was delivered by Miss Westwalewiczówna from the Vilnius Sodality. The second day of the convention started with Holy Mass in the chapel at the Gate of Dawn and an act of sodalitarian dedication to the Mother of God was read out. Another paper entitled “A girl sodalist is a brave Christian” proclaimed that girl sodalists should be apostles of good and charity, brave Christians at home, at school and in their environment. The third day of the convention began with Holy Mass at the grave of Saint Casimir Jagiellon. The female choir of Vilnius sodalists sang sodality anthems: the anthem *Błękitne rozwińmy sztandary*, the anthem of the Vilnius sodality *Bogarodzico Dziewico* and the Union anthem *Królowej swej*. Goodbye to the participants was said by Archbishop Jałbrzykowski. The whole convention was organised with the motto of “achieving a complete Christian individuality through perfect sodalitarian work.”⁴⁸

Conventions of girl sodalists were held annually in various cities; the second convention took place in Częstochowa in 1924, the third one in Kraków in 1925, and the subsequent ones in other locations.⁴⁹ For example, the 11th Sodality Convention of Secondary School Girls took place in Warsaw. Ms Ruczyńska gave a presentation on the slogan for the school year 1937/38

⁴⁸ “Zjazd Wileński,” *Cześć Maryi* 5, no. 8–9 (1927): 105–113.

⁴⁹ “Dwudziesty trzeci—trzydziesty drugi. Myśli i wspomnienia,” *Cześć Maryi* 10, no. 5 (1932): 70–71.

entitled “I shall deepen my knowledge of Christ and His laws.” The subsequent talks were concerned with religious literature, methods of work for a sodality, the organization of girls in the so-called processions intended to facilitate and stimulate work, as well as the Eucharist and religious practices. The processions were originated by Fr Chrzyszcz and they grouped students from one class.⁵⁰

The attitude and conduct of teachers working with school girls and boys played a very important role in their development and formation. The venue for religious formation and devotions to the Virgin Mary was the school and sodalist teachers. In the sodalitarian spirit, for example, teachers were supposed to foster veneration to the Virgin Mary, using history lessons in particular since they offered many examples of rulers, leaders and knights, insurgents fighting in the name of the Virgin Mary and other religions. It was recommended that works by poets and novelists devoted to the Marian cult be used in Polish language classes. Efforts were made to exert educational and especially religious impact on young people also during singing classes and catechesis.⁵¹

It is worth noting that sodalist teachers working in schools greatly contributed to the formation of teenage girls. The Union of Sodalities of Our Lady of Marian Women Teachers in Poland was very active. In the reporting year of 1933–1934, this union included 33 sodalities with more than 1,800 members. As far as the City of Kraków is concerned, the union comprised 115 women teachers who worked mainly in the Eucharistic, missionary and charity sections. Great importance was attached to the positive influence of sodalist teachers on their apostolic activity in the local environment. A lot of attention was paid to pedagogical issues; meetings were a good venue to discuss the following topics: state education, religious children’s literature, sodalist teachers as educators, the Blessed Virgin as an educator, teachers’ influence on young people, the role of religious teachers in the education of youth. Female sodalist teachers helped the poorest children, prepared them for the sacraments, organized material aid, bought classroom aids, worked in school self-governments, organized patriotic events and evening meetings, readings for charity, nativity plays, disseminated religious publications,

⁵⁰ “XI Zjazd Sodalicyjny,” *Cześć Maryi* 16, no. 2 (1937): 39–41; Edward KABAT, *Sodalicyjna formacja i apostołstwo młodzieży szkolnej w diecezji tarnowskiej* (Praga: [s.n.], 1997), 6–7.

⁵¹ “Nauczycielka S. M. w pracy nad młodzieżą,” *Sodalis Marianus* 19, nos. 7–8 (1920): 103–109; Zofia GAJEWSKA, “Wdzięczne pole pracy dla nauczycielek,” *Sodalis Marianus* 33, nos. 7–8 (1934), 118–121.

organized May devotions, celebrations of national anniversaries, as well as conducted courses for illiterate people.⁵²

The Marian congregations of school students cooperated with ideologically affiliated organizations, such as Catholic Action, the Polish Association of Young Catholic Women and Men and the Polish Scouting Association. All of these groups felt the vocation to serve God selflessly and with devotion, Homeland and fellow human beings in collaboration with the Church. Therefore, the tasks of sodalities were basically consistent with the Church's ministerial mission. One of the educational tasks of the sodalities was to support comprehensively the pastoral activity of the Church, mainly in places which were hardly accessible to the clergy. Sodalists, as the apostolic task force, through their testimony, words and deeds, had influence on the formation of the young in their immediate environment.⁵³

It is worth mentioning that, according to the instructions adopted by the Polish Episcopate at the meeting on 5 December 1934, Marian congregations did not belong to Catholic Action in terms of organizational structure. According to Pope Pius XI, sodalities fulfilled preparatory and auxiliary tasks in relation to Catholic Action. Their members were expected, as far as possible, to be members of associations of Catholic Action corresponding to their states. In line with their essential postulates, sodalities should cover the elite circles in their activities. The Sodality forged firm, action-oriented Catholics who would fill the first ranks of Catholic Action, and were supposed to set an example and show the direction to the public—for that not only character was needed but also profound education of the Catholic elites.⁵⁴

Catholic Action, on the other hand, involved wide Catholic ranks in modern forms of apostolic work. Sodalities put the main emphasis on inner, spiritual development of their members, and achieved that using the specific Marian method. Marian congregations, thanks to their compact, tried and tested organizational structure, effectively supported all pursuits of Catholic Action. They could even join it, as an association, while maintaining their organizational structure and independence, and then they became organizations that supported Catholic Action.⁵⁵

⁵² "Związek Sodalicyj Marjańskich Nauczycielek w Polsce. Sprawozdanie za czas od 1 lipca 1933 r. do 1 lipca 1934 r.," *Sodalis Marianus* 34, no. 6 (1935): 117–125.

⁵³ Stanisław STRZELECKI, *Sodalicyjne promienie*, 97–98.

⁵⁴ Dominik AMBORSKI, "Sodalicyja szkołą dla elity katolickiej," *Moderator* 8, nos. 2–4 (1936): 599, 603–604; Stanisław BEDNARSKI, "Sodalicyja a Ligi Katolickie," *Sodalis Marianus* 27 (1927): 97–101.

⁵⁵ Georg HARRASER, *Katechizm Sodalicyjny: podręcznik dla Zarządów Sodalicyj Marjańskich i do pouczenia kandydatów* (Nakładem Związku Sodalicyj Marjańskich Archidiecezji Gnieźnieńskiej

In the schools of interwar Poland, Marian congregations also cooperated with the Scout Movement. Baden Powell, the founder of scouting, clearly stated that the scout is above all a believer, and the whole idea of scouting is based on religious education. Both organizations, albeit different in nature, pursued one and the same goal. Polish scouting teams thrived and their activity followed the ultimate scout principle prescribing that “the scout is to serve God and Poland,” but they did not imposed any special, permanent practices and forms of worship into their practice. The sodality gave young people an opportunity to nurture their faith. In schools, there was harmony between sodalities and scouting groups as both organizations complemented each other in shaping the character of young people, who “among their peers enjoyed impeccable reputation and were liked by their colleagues.” Scouts played an outstanding role in many sodalities and gave impetus to their whole work, finding lot of opportunities in scouting to achieve their apostolic goals.⁵⁶

One of the activities of the Sodality of Our Lady was the organisation of annual conventions in various cities nationwide. The first convention of the Union of Sodalities of Our Lady of Secondary School Boys took place in Cracow on 2–3 July 1919. The Union’s Chief Department was appointed, which consisted of three priest moderators and three sodalist presidents.⁵⁷ This department took care of the creation of the Union. Those sodalities which wanted to be part of the Union had to adopt the resolutions of the convention and send reports each year on their activities to the editorial office of *Sodalis Marianus*. The second convention also took place in Krakow in July 1920. More resolutions were passed there, which Fr Winkowski used to develop statutes of the Sodality of Our Lady of Secondary School Boys in Poland. In the following year, these statutes were published and distributed to individual congregations belonging to the union.⁵⁸ The convention welcomed Prince Bishop of Cracow Adam Sapieha, Suffragan Bishop of Cracow Anatol Nowak, numerous priests, including district moderators of the Sodality, Fathers Wiśniewski and Winkowski. The convention began with Holy

i Poznańskiej, 1934), 7–8; Edward KOSIBOWICZ, “Sodalicje Marjańskie a Akcja Katolicka,” *Sodalis Marianus* 34, no. 4 (1935): 67–72.

⁵⁶ Stanisław DRZEWICA, “W sprawie harcerstwa,” *Sodalis Marianus* 34, no. 10 (1935): 354–356; W. PRZYBYŚLAWSKI, “Harcerstwo a Sodalicja,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 3, no. 7 (1922/1923): 97–99.

⁵⁷ Józef WINKOWSKI, “I Zjazd księży Moderatorów i Delegatów Sodalicji uczniów gimnazjów z Polski w Krakowie,” *Sodalis Marianus* 18, nos. 7–8 (1919): 127–133.

⁵⁸ Józef WINKOWSKI, “Sprawozdanie Wydziału Naczelnego Związku,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 2, no. 1 (1921): 9.

Mass celebrated in the Church of St. Barbara and the general communion for all participants. The guiding idea of the convention were the tasks that sodalists are to perform in the reborn Poland. In their presentations, young people addressed matters related to the Union's activities. This activity of the Sodality was transferred from religious life to school life. The older members helped their younger colleagues in their lessons, and thus attracting them. Inside the Sodality, clubs were formed with such patrons as Dominic Savio, Stanisław Kostka or other saints. They aimed to organise work of older colleagues with younger ones on their character and to prepare the latter for joining the ranks of sodalists.⁵⁹

The third convention took place on 11–12 July 1921 at Jasna Góra. The main paper entitled “How to organize a Marian congregation to meet all needs of the young age?” was presented by Lucjan Biernacki. Other presentations concerned the inner life and the active life of sodalists (especially combating pornography, drinking alcohol and smoking tobacco among young people), such topics as cooperation with youth associations outside of sodalities, charity action, Samaritan clubs, physical education through the Sodality. The convention ended with rounds of sightseeing of the monuments of Jasna Góra and a conference for priest moderators. The following conventions took place elsewhere. The 5th Convention of the Union of Sodalities of Our Lady of Secondary School Boys took place in Warsaw on 2–4 July 1923. The main lecture was given by a gymnasium student from Lviv, Adam Łomnicki, entitled “Social work in a sodality of young people.”⁶⁰ It was established during the convention that social work was important, but the main goal of the Sodality was to improve oneself through inner work. “Young” sodalities should focus more on this work, and only then engage in social work. After the accompanying papers and discussions were complete, a meeting of moderators took place, during which Fr Winkowski took the floor to speak about his work in the sodalitarian sections.⁶¹ The 6th convention took place on 2–4 July 1924 in Lviv. It started with a service in the cathedral, celebrated by Archbishop Twardowski. The main paper was delivered by a 7-grader

⁵⁹ “II Zjazd Związku Sodalicii Marjańskich młodzieży szkół średnich w Polsce,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 1, no. 1 (1920/1921): 9–12; Roman JABŁOŃSKI, “Co nas młodych pociąga do Sodalicii?” *Pod znakiem Marji* 1, no. 1 (1920/1921): 2–6; Stanisław CHRAMIEC, “Praca starszych nad młodszymi przez sodalicję,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 1, no. 3 (1920/1921): 36–39.

⁶⁰ Adam ŁOMNICKI, “Praca społeczna w sodalicii młodzieży,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 4, no. 1 (1923/1924): 6–8, 21–24.

⁶¹ “V Zjazd Związku sodalicii mariańskich ucz. szkół średnich w Polsce,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 3, no. 9 (1922/1923): 129–130.

from the Adam Mickiewicz Gymnasium in Warsaw speaking on the subject: “The need for an idea in the life of youth and its realization in the Sodality.” Then there was a meeting of four sections of the convention: for the academic Sodality, for teacher sodalities, for matters of moral self-defence (alcohol, cinema, theatre), and one for organizational and financial matters of the Union. The convention ended with a meeting of the Executive Department and a plenary meeting at which a paper entitled “The role of the Konsulta in the development of the sodality of school students” was presented by Fr Józef Winkowski.⁶²

In addition to the national conventions, diocesan conventions of male school sodalities were also held. The first such convention took place in Kraków on 31 January 1922 at the invitation of the diocesan moderator. The meeting was attended by priests and prefects (students) from 9 sodalities, 7 from Kraków and 2 from Myślenice and Zakopane each. The diocesan moderator presented the condition of sodalities in the Diocese of Kraków, which covered 50% of secondary schools (11 sodalities in 22 schools). Of that, there were 7 sodalities in Kraków: 1st Sodality (moderated by Fr Dr S. Szwaja), 2nd Sodality (Fr J. Litwin), 3rd (Fr K. Prażmowski), 4th (Fr Kulig), 5th (Fr J. Rychlicki), 6th (Fr K. Prażmowski), 7th. Fr Winkowski also came from Zakopane to participate. During the session, a paper entitled “The task of the prefect of a sodality” was presented. Then all the prefects reported on the state of their organisations and their work. In the same year, there were a total of 450 members in the sodalities of the diocese, including nearly 50 secondary school graduates. The local sodalities of Kraków were encouraged by the moderators to come together by having common services and meetings.⁶³

There was also a male inter-gymnasium sodality in Kraków. In 1920, according to the report, the sodality found itself in a difficult situation, because many of its sodalists found themselves in the ranks of the Polish army, defending the Homeland. Despite these significant temporary obstacles, numerous young people would become its members—there were 63 sodalists, 23 candidates, 86 altogether. Prefect Antoni Czerwiński, Grade 7, delivered an interesting speech entitled “The religiousness of Słowacki.” All organizational issues, despite the war, were taken care of as planned.⁶⁴

⁶² “Program VI Zjazdu Związku sodalicyj marjańskich uczniów szkół średnich w Polsce,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 4, no. 9 (1923/1924): 129–130.

⁶³ “Krok naprzód,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 3, no. 6 (1922/1923): 88–89.

⁶⁴ “Nasze sprawozdania i listy,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 1, no. 8 (1920/1921): 133.

In other countries, there were also conventions of Marian sodalities of secondary school students; in 1932 in Mainz, for example, only the Cologne diocese sent in 250 delegates. The following issues were discussed there: Catholic Action, summer holiday work of sodalists and the Eucharistic life in the Sodality.⁶⁵

Academic sodalities, which from the organisational perspective constituted the next stage of school sodalities, realised the fact that despite the intense growth of gymnasium sodalities, sodalists were likely to abandon their sodalitarian life having taken their maturity exam and become university students. This was the case at the beginning of the 1920s; in 1922 there were no student sodalities at universities of Lviv, Lublin and Vilnius. They developed poorly in Kraków, Poznań and Warsaw. The last three universities gathered only 70 students in sodalities. According to reports, between 1919 and 1922, only 759 secondary school graduates were sodalists. Young people were attracted by the free academic life, new ideologies and associations, which in many cases led to the sheer abandonment of the Church. The 4th Convention of the Union of School Sodalities even imposed on secondary school graduates the obligation to join the ranks of academic sodalists in the future.⁶⁶ University students themselves called for closer contact with gymnasium students and with sodalities of men. They organized series of speeches and lectures for school students, which provided a good opportunity to get acquainted with younger sodalists. Also, after enrolling at university, it was easy to single them out and get them to continue to join the academic-sodalitarian environment. Academic sodalities made a considerable effort to take over graduate sodalists. They organized numerous lectures in gymnasium sodalities both in university cities and in local towns. Those from smaller towns and villages were advised to visit their old gymnasiums and reach out to their original sodalities. Efforts were made to have a permanent delegate at every gymnasium in Kraków, as well as in some other schools. Special social meetings were organized for sodalist graduates. In order to “get them on board” more easily at universities, lists of sodalist graduates supplied by Fr Winkowski were used.⁶⁷ The sodalitarian idea was taken further in the deliberations of academics, who postulated that contacts should be established with sodalities of men, and every year lists of university graduates

⁶⁵ “Wiadomości,” *Cześć Marji* 10, no. 5 (1932): 88.

⁶⁶ “Sprawozdanie. IV Zjazd Związku w Poznaniu w dniach 6, 7 i 8 lipca 1922 roku,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 3, no. 1 (1922/1923): 1–3.

⁶⁷ Zbigniew WOŚKOWIAK, *Sodaliczja Mariańska Akademików w Krakowie w latach 1918–1939* (Lublin: Archiwum Uczelniane KUL, 1989), typescript, p. 59.

were sent accompanied by address of the Union of Sodalities of Male Intelligentsia. It was academics who also tried to cultivate social life, organize events which were intended to unite the university environment with the sodalities of gymnasium students and men.⁶⁸

The oldest academic sodality in Poland was the one in Kraków, founded in 1891. In 1922, it had 50 members.⁶⁹ This academic congregation worked for the benefit of the poor gymnasium youth of Krakow. In the academic year 1898/99, on the initiative of Fr Bratkowski, it set up a kind of tea house in Krakow for poor teenagers. The tea house was opened at the monastery of the Felician Sisters, where you could get a mug of milk and two buns between 7 and 8 am. About 100 students daily benefited from this assistance. Students working in the tea house took care of their students, helped them with their lessons, organized medical help, took them on trips, visited their lodgings, trying also to guide them in their moral upbringing. Students organized readings, collections at Catholic rallies, fundraising events for the benefit of this activity. In 1908/09 the name of the tea house was changed to "Section For the Care of Poor School Students." Donations for this activity were also contributed by Cardinal Puzyna, Count Tarnowski, ladies of the Polish Association of Catholic Women and many others.⁷⁰

School sodalities were involved on many fronts. For the sodalists, one of the forms of self-education and self-improvement was lectures delivered at meetings. In the report of the 1st Gymnasium in Kraków we read that the readings in 1923 concerned the civic education of sodalists in the Catholic spirit. Below are some of the topics raised there: On the need for work in our society; Vague understanding of the Catholic religion shown by our intelligentsia; Church–State relations; The relationship between our constitution and the Church; Why does the Church not support left-wing parties? How to read newspapers and how to learn; The lack of religious awareness. As some teenagers did not attend these lectures, 9 members were excluded from this sodality.⁷¹

⁶⁸ J. GERSTENBERGER, "Stosunek Sodalicji Mariańskiej Akademików do Sodalicji Szkół Średnich i Inteligencji Męskiej," *Biuletyn Związku Sodalicyj Akademików w Polsce* no. 4 (1928): 6–7; Kazimierz ZIELIŃSKI, "O łączności Sodalicji gimnazjalnych z Sodalicjami akademickimi," *Biuletyn Związku Sodalicyj Akademików w Polsce* no. 9 (1930): 11–14.

⁶⁹ "Nasze sprawozdania," *Pod znakiem Marji* 3, no. 1 (1921/1922): 15–16.

⁷⁰ M. GŁĄB, *Akademickie Sodalicje Mariańskie w Polsce* (Lwów: [s.n.], 1928), 19–20, 29; "Herbaciarnia—dzieło dobroczynne Kongregacji akademickiej w Krakowie," *Sodalis Marianus* 1, no. 2 (1901/02): 67–71.

⁷¹ "Nasze sprawozdania," *Pod znakiem Marji* 3, no. 1 (1921/1922): 14.

A few years later Fr Winkowski compiled a list of recommended topics to be addressed by speakers presenting at sodality meetings. They were divided into three thematic groups:

1. Religious: Church and its meaning; knowledge versus the Church; faith versus natural sciences; the idea of religious order, its importance and significance for the world; the joy of Christian thought; contemporary threats to religion; church versus prosperity; infallibility of the Church; God in nature; prayer and Catholic worship; God and evil in the world; veneration of the Blessed Virgin in Poland.

2. Social: youth and politics; the Jewish question in Poland; need for work; the school of social work; socialism and the Church; the importance and need for organization; Catholic Social Action; the power of personality in social work; social work of youth; family as seen by Christianity versus socialism; democracy and Catholicism; on love of the Homeland.

3. Sodalitarian: what does the Sodality give us in our youth? what will the Sodality give us in the future? the sodalist as a true patriot; the sodalist as a future citizen; academic versus school sodalities; on the inner life of the Sodality; on the apostolate through the Sodality; merriment and entertainment in the Sodality; charity action in the Sodality; the Sodality and Christian ideals; the Sodality and Polish youth.⁷²

This basic proposal was complemented by presentations required by conventions and the current needs of each sodality. In the sodality of the St. Jack Gymnasium in Kraków in the school year 1922/23, presentations were delivered on Catholic missions, the Bible, and the psychology of conversion. The sodalists invited Professor Tadeusz Cybulski, a teacher of drawing, who gave an interesting talk about new trends in Polish and world art.⁷³

Patron days were celebrated particularly solemnly in gymnasium sodalities. The 6th Sodality in Krakow celebrated this day of 13 November, the feast of St. Stanisław Kostka, the patron saint of the gymnasium and the sodality. In 1921, after Holy Mass was celebrated in the school chapel by Fr Meus, the sodalists arranged a solemn evening meeting in the hall of the Catholic Workers' House.⁷⁴

⁷² *Kalendarzyk Związku Sodalicyi Mariańskich Uczniów Szkół Średnich w Polsce na rok szkolny 1926/27* (Zakopane: [s.n.], 1926), 48–50.

⁷³ *Sprawozdanie dyrekcji państwowego gimnazjum św. Jacka w Krakowie za rok szkolny 1922/23* (Kraków: [s.n.] 1923), 26–27.

⁷⁴ "Nasze sprawozdania," *Pod znakiem Marji* 3, no. 5 (1921/1922): 77–78.

The patron saint of the 2nd Real School was Saint Casimir. The sodality in this school was established a few years before World War I, founded by Father Prelate Podwin. After the war period, it was revived by moderator Fr Kazimierz Prażmowski. There were 35 candidate members in the school year 1920/21. Monthly meetings were held in the hall of the combined Kraków sodalities. On 5 March 1921, the sodality, together with the sodality of Professor Jaworski Private Real School, took part in a solemn meeting in honour of St. Casimir. A string orchestra, organised by the sodalist Czesław Gustaw, played the hymn *Omni die*. A lecture was given by the prefect of the Gymnasium sodality A. Chrzęszczkiewicz, entitled “On the life and ideals of St. Casimir.” Afterwards, hymns to St. Casimir were recited. Finally, the hymn *Boże coś Polskę* was sung.⁷⁵

Church solemnities were also cultivated. In November 1932, the sodalists of the 8th Gymnasium prepared a ceremony in memory of the dead, consisting of “the moderator’s speech, the performance of fragments of *Dziady* by Mickiewicz and a presentation. The ceremony ended with a minute of silence and a prayer for the dead members of the sodality, soldiers killed in the war, and the great sons of Poland.”⁷⁶

Sodality meetings were also often of a recreational nature. And so a group of sodalists (Kraków III) from the Prof. Jaworski Private Real School and 2nd Real School, after Mass at the Wawel Cathedral in May 1922, set off on a railway and walking trip to Czerna under the leadership of Father Moderator Prażmowski. The sodalists first visited the monastery and the Church of the Barefoot Carmelites—a Baroque monument from the middle of the 17th century. Then, on a forest clearing, they held a general meeting, hearing a speech delivered by a sodalist named Türkott on the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Mickiewicz’s literary works. The meal was followed by social entertainment, ultimately interrupted by the rain, so the boys rushed to build a shelter and spent time reading and telling stories under its cover. In the evening the company returned to Krakow.⁷⁷

We should remember about the educational impact the Sodality of Our Lady had on all youth anywhere school sodalities existed. It was very unlikely for any teenagers to play truant or lie to their professors. All school celebrations, scouting activities, clubs, social evenings and excursions

⁷⁵ “Nasze sprawozdania i listy,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 1, no. 9 (1920/21): 161.

⁷⁶ *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji VIII Państwowego Gimnazjum Matematyczno-Przyrodniczego im. Augusta Witkowskiego w Krakowie za rok szkolny 19132/33* (Kraków: [s.n.], 1933), 41.

⁷⁷ “Nasze sprawozdania,” *Pod znakiem Marji* 3, no. 1 (1921/1922), 28.

involved the participation of sodalists, because they were usually the most gifted and hardworking students in the school. Those young people, who were going to be university students, were expected to use their example to exert impact on society as future intellectuals.⁷⁸

As far as the Sodality of Our Lady of school girls is concerned, it was an outstandingly educational organization. Its assumptions, goals and working methods were intended to produce enlightened, brave and pious Catholic women. The ideal of a Polish-Catholic woman is the goal that the Sodality holds up for its members to follow. Its statutes provide that the congregation strives to educate “enlightened and brave Catholic women, adhering to their principles and consistent in life, in order to lift up the whole society.” The program of sodalitarian work was twofold. First of all, it was meant to deepen the knowledge of Catholic teaching and activity of the Church, but it was also intended to teach teenage girls how to apply the principles of faith in their personal, school, family, social and social life. The Sodality of Our Lady of Secondary School Girls published the *Cześć Marji* magazine. The first number was published in January 1923. It was edited by Fr Józef Chrzęszcz,⁷⁹ who in 1922–1926 headed the editorial office. He was followed by Fr Franciszek Marlewski until September 1929, and then by Fr Jan Kruppiak. The Union of Sodalities of Our Lady of Secondary School Girls intensified its activity by working in the so-called sodality processions. These were groups of 3–8 students who were in constant contact with each other in daily school life, meeting at least once a week for common prayer, to read reports and articles from various journals, discussing Church issues and the daily school life as well as religious and social work in their own environment. The sodalists collaborated with other organizations present in the school. The Union also had important tasks and a mission to offer to former sodalist schoolgirls who were preparing for further life. Having graduated from school, the sodalist’s task was to consolidate in herself the sodality’s pedagogy. At home, a sodalist girl was expected to be a good influence on others, as well as relieving her parents in their work and helping the siblings. At the same time, every day she should try to find a little time for some thoughts and spiritual readings; some statutes prescribed 15 minutes a day for that. Girl sodalists were advised to go to confession and

⁷⁸ Adam RADZISZOWSKI, “Co pragniemy zdziałać przez Sodalicję Marjańską—dziś i w przyszłości?” *Pod znakiem Marji* 1, no. 1 (1920/1921): 20–25.

⁷⁹ “Father Józef Chrzęszcz died on 1 August 1935 in Tarnów,” *Moderator* 7, no. 5 (1935): 453–456.

receive Communion every month. By the Union's recommendation, a girl sodalist should not shun people, she was free to go to the theatre and the cinema as long as there was a certain amount of moral value to the film, ball dancing, ice sliding or hunting as long as she deemed that not immoral.

As far as it was possible and time permitting, girl sodalists participated in social work. There were extensive areas of activity such as: charity work, teaching, improvement and management of various sectors of women's industry, running exemplary farms.⁸⁰

For example, according to the report on the Ursuline Gymnasium for Girls in Kraków for the year 1931, the Sodality department assigned certain "works" to its members to improve their character and behaviour. The topics for those "works" were: kindness to others, conscientiousness in doing homework, decent group work, doing someone a favour every day, preserving the dignity of Marian child, saying nothing wrong about others, capacity to suffer harm with calmness and cheer, or taking measures against sadness in other people. Every Saturday the girl sodalists recited the book of hours to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary, in May they sang songs for the Virgin Mary. In November 1929, a significant part of the sodalists took part in the archdiocesan convention of sodalities. In December, the Sodality of Our Lady organized a performance entitled "Maria Virgo" and the offerings collected were used to benefit the Ursuline missions in Charbina. There were 3 sections in this Sodality: the Eucharistic, social and missionary sections.⁸¹

Great emphasis was placed on the development of missionary activity. The girls were active in missionary groups, for example in the years 1936–1938 there were 36 to 45 such circles. Contributions were collected for missionary purposes, lectures were given for all young people and older audiences, school celebrations and missionary mornings were held, services were held for missionary intentions. Used post stamps were collected for this purpose, 435,134 stamps were collected in the years 1937–1938, and 295,767 stamps were collected in 1938–1939. The money raised from selling the stamps was going to be used by Missionary Stamp Action in Kraków to build a seminary in Rhodesia for the natives. Rare and valuable stamps were sold to philatelists, while others were used to make ingenious wallpapers and pictures, thus raising money for that purpose. The groups also collected

⁸⁰ "Sodaliska po ukończeniu szkoły średniej," *Cześć Marji* 2, no. 6 (1924): 87–90; Józef CHRZAŚCZ, "Metoda pracy w Sodalijach Uczennic Szkół Średnich," *Moderator* 6, no. 5 (1934): 289–293.

⁸¹ *Cześć Maryi* 9, no. 5 (1931): 119.

rosaries, holy medallions, scapulars, holy pictures, waste paper and bottles, and donated the proceeds to Christian missions.⁸²

Charitable work and works of charity were the most beautiful and edifying pages of sodalitarian history. Charitable work was a obligation stemming from relevant statutes. The first bull of Gregory XIII, which established the first Roman sodality, mentions the works of Christian charity, practised in sodalities, mentioning in particular: visiting poor sick people, whether in hospitals or private homes, visiting prisoners and reconciling people. Popes made ecclesiastical graces, like a one-year indulgence, conditional upon such works of charity. All the writings of the Holy See concerning Marian congregations addressed the importance and charitable activity of the Sodality; this was a kind of sacred heritage which sodalities could not neglect.⁸³

For example, in 1918, the sodality of school girls in Kraków donated 280 pieces of clothing made for the orphans living in the Baby Jesus Orphanage.⁸⁴ According to the report from 1922, the sodality operating in the gymnasium and secondary school run by the Ursulines in Krakow

runs the school's antiquarian shop and a stationery shop (donating its revenue for charity causes). One a year, the Sodality holds a charity lottery and Christmas collection for the benefit of poor children; in 1921 it donated almost 30,000 marks in money and almost the same amount in materials. In addition, the social section undertakes odd jobs, e.g. making clothes and underwear for the poor, supporting various works of charity.⁸⁵

School sodalities were less involved in charity work in hospitals or nursing homes because of their age and school work.

The girls' sodality at the School of Economy and Commerce in Kraków was very active in 1932; the papers presented there dealt with: on knowing oneself, our main faults, the temperaments (sanguine, choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic), our interests (observed flaws and weaknesses of female youth), girl sodalists on vacation. During the solemn meeting in veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary Immaculate, a paper was presented under the title: "The Immaculate One as a role model for the girl sodalist." Papers were also delivered in the Eucharistic and missionary sections. The schoolgirls or-

⁸² "Nasza praca dla misji. Uboczna pomoc dla misji," *Cześć Maryi* 17, no. 8 (1938/39): 139; no. 9: 172–173.

⁸³ "Działalność charytatywna a Sodalicje," *Moderator* 6, no. 1 (1934): 161–163.

⁸⁴ "Ze spraw Sodalicyjnych," *Sodalis Marianus* 17, nos. 3–4 (1918): 45.

⁸⁵ APMTJ, *Akta Sodalicji Mariańskich*, file ref. no. 1198-I, p. 165.

ganized Christmas wafer-sharing meetings and farewell meetings to honour those leaving the school and sodality, as well as trips to Częstochowa, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and Czerny. In the Eucharistic section, the members had individual adoration daily and common adoration monthly, and heard Mass once a week. They managed to collect the sum of 25 PLN, 9,000 stamps, and 1 kilogram of tinfoil for the missions. They offered 250 masses and 58 communions for the missions as well as selling mission postcards. The school library lent 1,315 books, read by 125 school students. The sodality choir sang at school liturgy.⁸⁶

In July 1922 in Częstochowa, the 1st Convention of Sodalities of Our Lady of Secondary School Girls was organised. The convention established a sodality union, passed the statute and charter of the union as well as imposing on its authorities the duty to publish the magazine *Cześć Maryi*. The second convention took place in 1924 in Częstochowa, the third in 1925 in Kraków, the fourth in 1926 in Warsaw, the fifth in 1927 in Vilnius, the sixth in 1928 in Poznań, and the seventh was held in 1930 in Lviv. The eighth convention was held in Częstochowa to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Union. These conventions created a modern Marian movement among secondary school girls. The conventions brought together girl sodalists from the remotest parts of Poland, who were able to explore regional differences and learn to appreciate them. The conventions used catchphrases, showed sodalities one direction to pursue in their work, united them spiritually in the service of the Church and the Homeland. For a decade, the union was headed by Fr Józef Chrzęszcz, whereas Fr Bolesław Ciszak was its administrator and treasurer. In 1927, a separate missionary centre was established, at first managed by Fr Kiciński.⁸⁷ The 12th convention of Sodalities of Secondary School Girls took place in Lviv on 8–30 June 1938. In 1939, another convention, the last one in free Poland, was held in Warsaw.⁸⁸

On 1–2 July 1932, the already mentioned 10th Anniversary Convention (8th Convention of Sodality Delegates) took place in Częstochowa. Teenage girls were preparing for the convention with the motto “Be friendly.” Another interesting and much needed sodalitarian initiative was support for the blind. In the school year 1937/38, the Sodality of Our Lady of Secondary

⁸⁶ “Sprawozdania,” *Cześć Maryi* 10, no. 5 (1932): 89.

⁸⁷ “Regnum Marianum. Dziesięć lat wielkiej wspólnoty mariańskiej,” *Cześć Maryi* 10, no. 10 (1931/1932): 169–170.

⁸⁸ *Cześć Maryi* 17, no. 8 (1938/39): 160–163.

School Girls began taking care of the blind. The initiative involved buying Braille plates and rewriting books them.⁸⁹

According to the recommendations of the Union's authorities, young people who belonged to Marian congregations should not engage in any political activity, and there should be no political discussions at their meetings. The secondary school youth, as the future intellectuals of the nation, or the part of society that was to take up positions of responsibility, had to form their views on the situation at home and abroad. It was believed that young people should focus primarily on science, learn the principles of parliamentarianism, political history, but not engage in political parties, as time for that would come after they had reached adult age. The youth of sodalities were warned against the agitation of various political parties.⁹⁰

It should be noted, however, that the sodalitarian movement addressed political issues and was definitely anti-socialist, which in the post-war period was also one of the reasons for the banning of the Marian movement. The boy sodalists, in conformity with Pope Pius XI's appeal, were recommended to carefully read the encyclical *On Atheistic Communism* in order to effectively combat "this greatest danger threatening the world, the Church and, in a special way, the Homeland." According to the regulations of the Union, sodalist youth were supposed to learn about the disastrous effects of socialism and fight them.⁹¹ Also at the plenary meeting of the sodality of the Kraków province, a paper was presented entitled "Sodality of Our Lady as a centre for counteracting communist ideas". This paper was delivered by A. Michałowski, a graduate of the Jan Sobieski State Gymnasium in Kraków, to the audience of 50 delegates and 200 boy sodalists of Kraków schools. In the daily work of the Sodality, separate talks were also devoted to these issues. In the 5th Gymnasium in Kraków in the school year 1915/16, the members of the older sodalities prepared the following talks for sodality meetings: Z. Kolankowski, 7th grade—"Bolshevism," T. Palmirach—"The Church and Bolshevism," and A. Bielanski, 7th grade—"Persecution of Catholics in Bolshevik Russia." Sodalists were not indifferent to the political situation in the neighbouring countries, the expression of which was the subject of talks presented, which was supposed to clarify any doubts or anxieties young people might have. And so, for example, an 8th grade student

⁸⁹ *Cześć Maryi* 17, no. 2 (1938/39): 48–49.

⁹⁰ Jerzy SZCZENIOWSKI, "Młodzież a polityka," *Pod znakiem Marji* 1, no. 9 (1920/1921): 147–150.

⁹¹ Edward KABAT, *Sodalicyjna formacja i apostołstwo młodzieży szkolnej*, 29.

Z. Jaglarz from the 4th Gymnasium in Kraków gave a talk on the subject: "Fascism in the light of the Church doctrine."⁹²

Towards the end of the Second Polish Republic there were 11 state gymnasiums and liceums in Kraków, some of which being of high academic standard. These included St. Ann's Gymnasium (now Bartłomiej Nowodworiski Secondary School), St. Jack, Jan Sobieski, Witkowski. Characteristically, only three of these schools in Krakow were girls' schools in the 1930s. In such circumstances, private schools for girls, including several secular schools, enjoyed popularity. There were 16 private gymnasiums and liceums (including 7 girl's schools), 11 state vocational schools, and 8 private vocational schools.⁹³

In the school year 1936/37 in Kraków, according to a report compiled by Fr Winkowski, there were 12 sodalities in state and private gymnasiums. Kraków III Sodality at the Father Piramowicz State Teacher Training College was dissolved, because all teacher colleges shared this fate, so the moderator moved to the Krakow I Sodality.

Kraków I. Sodality at the Nowodworskis 1st State Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Jan Mazanek. In the school year 1936/37, it had 78 members.

Kraków II. Sodality at the Hene-Wroński 9th State Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Roman Miszka. In the school year 1936/37 the number of its members increased to 107.

Kraków IV. Sodality at the Industrial School was moderated by Fr Franciszek Gabryl, and it had 36 members.

Kraków V. Sodality at the Sienkiewicz 4th State Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Dr Józef Rychlicki, and it had 168 members.

Kraków VI. Sodality at the Sobieski 3rd Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Dr Stanisław Meus, and it had 171 members.

Kraków VII. Sodality at the Saint Jack 2nd State Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Dr Franciszek Madeja, and it had 56 members.

Kraków VIII. Sodality at the Kościuszko 6th State Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Dr Stanisław Szwaja. It had 50 members.

⁹² *Cześć Maryi* 16, no. 1 (1937) 15; *XVIII Sprawozdanie Wydziału Wykonawczego Związku Sodalicyj Mariańskich uczniów szkół średnich w Polsce za rok szkolny 1936/37* (Zakopane, 1938), 4; *XII Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji Państwowego Gimnazjum IV im. H. Sienkiewicza w Krakowie za rok szkolny 1929/30* (Kraków: [s.n.], 1930), 90; *XIII Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji Państwowego Gimnazjum IV im. H. Sienkiewicza w Krakowie za rok szkolny 1930/31* (Kraków: [s.n.], 1931), 51.

⁹³ Janina BIENIARZÓWNA, editor, *Kraków stary i nowy. Dzieje kultury* (Kraków: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1968), 378; Zygmunt RUTA, *Prywatne szkoły średnie ogólnokształcące w Krakowie i województwie krakowskim w latach 1932–39* (Kraków: [s.n.], 1990), 120.

Kraków IX. Sodality at the Witkowski 7th State Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Eugeniusz Florkowski, and it had 90 members.

Kraków X. Sodality at the Kochanowski State Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Dr Jan Szymeczko, and it had 32 members.

Kraków XI. Sodality at the Municipal Economic and Commercial School was moderated by Fr Dr Eugeniusz Król, and it had 23 members.

Kraków XII. Sodality at the Jaworski Private Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Roman Miszka, and it had 33 members.

Kraków XIII. Sodality at the 20th Piarist Private Gymnasium was moderated by Fr Tytus Suliga, having 41 members.⁹⁴

In total, there were 19 sodalities of male youth in state gymnasiums in the Diocese of Kraków at the time, including 12 in the city. They covered 94% of this type of schools. In 1936/37, they were attended by 1,390 members. There were a total of 4,188 boy sodalists in the whole Kraków province. According to the report, there were 14,232 sodalists in the Union throughout the country. There were also a number of active “wild” sodalities, which were not associated in the Union and did not submit reports to the Executive Department. The archdiocesan and provincial moderator, as well as the president of the Union was still Fr Józef Winkowski.⁹⁵

In 1938, according to a report published in the *Cześć Maryi* monthly, sodalities of female youth existed in the following schools of Kraków: Wanda the Queen 10th Gymnasium and Liceum; Emilia Plater Private Gymnasium; Private Female Gymnasium Mary's Institute; 11th State Gymnasium and Teachers' Liceum; State College for Security Guards; Mikołaj Rej Private Female Gymnasium; Father Skorupka Private Gymnasium of the Presentation Sisters; Gymnasium of the Canon Sisters of the Holy Spirit;⁹⁶ State

⁹⁴ XVIII Sprawozdanie Wydziału Wykonawczego Związku Sodalicji Mariańskich uczniów szkół średnich w Polsce za rok szkolny 1936/37 (Zakopane: [s.n.], 1938), 35; see issues for the earlier years. XIII Sprawozdanie Wydziału Wykonawczego Związku Sodalicji Mariańskich Uczniów Szkół Średnich w Polsce za rok szkolny 1931/32 (Zakopane: [s.n.], 1933), 26–30.

⁹⁵ XVIII Sprawozdanie Wydziału Wykonawczego Związku, 11–13; see XIII Sprawozdanie Wydziału, 9.

⁹⁶ APMTJ, *akta Sodalicji Mariańskich*, file ref. no. 1198-XI. The erection certificate issued by Cardinal Sapięha for the Female Sodality at the Private Gymnasium of the Canon Sisters of the Holy Spirit, p. 156: “Dilecto Nobis in Christo. Reverendo Domino Petro Bober, Catechetaegymn. Priv. Puellerum. SS. Canonissarum Cracoviae. Precibus Rev. Dominationis Tuae die 3. Martii a.c. ad Nos factis annuentes ad maiorem Dei gloriam promovendam pietatemque studiosae iuventutis erga B. V. Mariam fovendam Auctoritate Nostra Ordinaria praesentibus hisce litteris Sodalitatem Marianam discipularum gymnasii privati SS. Canonissarum Cracoviae sub invocatione B.V. Mariae Reginae Poloniae necnon S. Theresiae ab Infante Jesu canonice erigimus, moderator autem huius

Female Vocational School; St. Andrew Private Secondary Vocational School; and 20th State Supplementary School of Commerce. After the war, only 4 sodalities of male school youth from Krakow were established in Rome by Cardinal Adam Sapieha, two in 1946 and two in 1947. It should be remembered that sodalities sometimes existed for several years, but only when their development was successful and steady, could the priest moderators apply for a canonical erection of a sodality in Rome.⁹⁷

In the Polish society, whose internal cohesion was seriously eroded during the partition era, the question of upbringing was a precondition for the future of the nation and state. Upbringing was a factor shaping the face of the future society, the uniformity of the nation and power of the state. The position of the Catholic Church in Poland at that time was not limited only to that of defence against attacks of godlessness and secularism. Based on the social teaching of Pope Leo XIII and Pius XI, Polish Catholicism sought to renew the religious, moral, cultural, social and economic life of the country. The Church wanted to carry out this work from the very beginning, starting with the family, education of the young generation and curing the work system. The religious revival in Poland took place only in the 1930s, and its effects could be seen only after some time. Marian congregations also made a significant contribution to this. The changes in Polish religiosity in the interwar period show signs of transformation of the traditional and superficial religiosity into a conscious and uncompromising aspiration to be with God. The Nazi occupation interrupted this historical process, but that deepened the religious life of society's elite and its young intelligentsia.⁹⁸ The development of the Sodality of Our Lady was halted by the war, but after the war, Marian congregations started anew in many centres. The dissolution of church organisations (the decree on associations⁹⁹) put an end to the activity of the Sodality of Our Lady in Poland, and thus all sodalities operating in secondary schools in Kraków.

Sodalitatis Rev. Domination Tuam Tuosque in mine Catechetæ istius scholæ Successores nominamus et Constituimus. In quorum fidem etc. Datum Cracoviae, die 4. Martii 1936."

⁹⁷ APMTJ, "Akta Sodalitacji Mariańskich. Spis erygowanych Sodalitacji Mariańskich w Polsce do Prima Primaria w Rzymie od 6 IX 1925 do 22 X 1949." Manuscript no. 1929 in *Cześć Maryi* 17, no. 3 (1938): 86–87; Zygmunt RUTA, *Prywatne szkoły średnie ogólnokształcące w Krakowie*, 51–54.

⁹⁸ Czesław STRZESZEWSKI, "Religijność polska w 20-leciu międzywojennym 1918-1939," *Roczniki Nauk Społecznych* 5 (1977): 18–23.

⁹⁹ Ordinance of the Minister of Public Administration of 6 August 1949 (Journal of Laws No. 47, item. 358) on the Decree of 5 August 1949 on the amendment of certain provisions of the law on associations. He talked about the obligation to register religious associations, which in fact meant their liquidation in the circumstances of the day. This ordinance was only repealed in 1989.

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SODALITIES OF OUR LADY EXISTING IN KRAKÓW SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN THE 19TH CENTURY AND IN THE SECOND POLISH REPUBLIC

Summary

The Sodality of Our Lady is a Catholic religious association for young people founded in the Jesuit College in Rome in 1563 by Fr Jan Leunis. The most gifted and devout boys joined the Sodality in order to spread the cult of the Mother of God. Popes provided care for the vibrantly developing movement because of the great influence Sodalities of Our Lady had on the religious formation of young people. Jesuits established Marian congregations of students attending colleges in all Catholic countries, forming an international elite organization of lay Catholics. Sodalities thrived and they spread to all social estates in the 17th and the first half of the 18th century. Not only did school students belong to it, but also popes, kings, the gentry, clergy, townsfolk, craftsmen, military men and servants. The chief objective of the Sodality was to live by the motto "Per Mariam ad Jesum." The development of the Sodality was halted by the dissolution of the Jesuit Order. In the middle of the 19th century the pronouncement of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Holy Virgin, made by Pope Pious IX, opened a new era of the cult and a new period in the history of the Sodality.

In Poland, the first Marian congregation of school students was established in Braniewo in 1571. At the end of the 18th century, before the dissolution of the Jesuit Order, in Poland there were 66 colleges, seminaries and monastery schools, and there was always at least one congregation affiliated to each of the schools. At the end of the 19th century, school sodalities were revived in Galicia, i.e. in Tarnopol, Chyrów, Tarnów, and in a girls' secondary school run by the Ursulines in Kraków. A dynamic development of Marian congregations of school students started after Poland regained independence in 1918. The centre of the sodalitarian movement for all the estates was Kraków. The movement gained solid foundations in the two powerful sodality unions of both secondary school boys and girls. Father Józef Winkowski established a sodality for boys, and Fr Józef Chrzęszcz one for girls. Sodalities published their own magazines, organized conventions, pilgrimages to Jasna Góra (Częstochowa, Poland), and ran charity organizations. In the late 1930s, nearly seventeen thousand students of secondary schools throughout the country were members of school sodalities. At the dawn of the Second Polish Republic, the greatest number of school sodalities operated in Kraków. There were 11 boys' sodalities in secondary state schools and one in a private school run by the Piarist Order, and 11 girls' sodalities in state and private schools. The Sodality of Our Lady contributed to the religious revival in Poland. The development of this organization was halted by World War II. After the war, in the years 1945–1949, the operation of the Sodality of Our Lady was resumed in many centres. The liquidation of church organizations in 1949 stopped its work for good, and its members came to be persecuted by the Communist regime.

Key words: Sodality of Our Lady; Jesuits; education of the youth; cult of Our Lady.

Translated by Tomasz Pałkowski



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