

address the subject of canonization law and to analyse the changes which Popes Benedict XVI and Francis introduced in the years 2007–2017.

The conference gathered over 100 people from all over Poland: postulators, members of canonization tribunals, ecclesiastic courts and others who are interested in canonized holiness for various reasons.

Translated by Tomasz Pałkowski



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INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE
“STEFAN CARDINAL WYSZYŃSKI—A TEACHER
OF GOD’S LAWS”
Lublin, January 13, 2018

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On January 13, 2018, the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin hosted the International Scientific Conference “Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński—a teacher of God’s Laws.” It was organized by an organizational committee composed of: Rev. Mirosław Sitarz, PhD, Hab, an associate professor of Catholic University of Lublin (chairperson), Waldemar Bednaruk, PhD, Hab, an associate professor of KUL, Judyta Dworas-Kulik, PhD, Agnieszka Romanko, PhD, (secretary), and Anna Słowikowska, PhD.

The conference began with a speech delivered by Rev. Prof. Sitarz and Krzysztof Wiak, PhD, Hab, an associate professor of KUL, Dean of the Faculty of Law, Canon Law and Administration. The conference speakers from Germany, the Czech Republic and Poland, were introduced. The event was organised in response to the appeal of John Paul II from 1981, who directly wanted Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński to be remembered and prayed for. The first part of the conference was led by Prof. Krzysztof Wiak. The second part was led by Rev. Prof. Józef Krukowski.

During the conference ten papers were delivered. The first to speak was Dr Agnieszka Romanko, who prepared a paper entitled “The rights of the family, the Church and the State to schooling as interpreted by Fr Stefan Wyszyński.” Her speech drew on publications by Fr Wyszyński from the period 1924–1946. Dr Romanko pointed out that the above mentioned literary activity addressed social problems from the Church’s point of view. One such problem was misbehaviour resulting from inadequate schooling. The home and school can alter every person significantly. However, it is the rights of parents that are treated as rights of the first law-givers. The right to educate belongs to the parents by the very fact that they gave life to a child. The school may further educate young people, but it is the parents who are supposed to set the example for their children. Fr Wyszyński showed the importance of religion for the preservation of social order, since the State should cooperate with the family and the Church.

Another paper “The concept of the moral renewal of the Nation according to the Primate of the Millennium” was presented by Rev. Prof. Sitarz. He pointed out that Fr Wyszyński had anticipated the ideas of the Second Vatican Council because he had far-sightedness in relation to the tasks of the Church, which will be very important for the nation's future. The Church has to fulfil specific tasks set by Christ. Teaching Man is one of the Church's obligations, intended to strengthen the faith in Christ. He also showed the special significance of Our Lady for the Polish nation. Pope John Paul II would say that it was necessary to go back to the vows of Fr Stefan Wyszyński and to the examination of conscience. Moral renewal cannot take place without the providence of the Mother of God.

Dariusz Gabrel, PhD, of the Institute of National Remembrance delivered the third paper. In 2000, he was personally involved in an investigation into the imprisonment of Primate Wyszyński. The inquiry led to the identification of the perpetrators of the unjustified imprisonment of Primate Stefan Wyszyński. They are no longer alive. When charges were formulated against Fr Wyszyński, his hostile attitude and abuse of church functions were pointed out, aspects which were contrary to the legal regulations in force at that time. Some government officials went to visit Wyszyński to have him return to Warsaw. At the time, the regime feared an uprising similar to the one that had taken place in Hungary. Dr Gabrel emphasized the fact that Fr Wyszyński, despite different situations, always maintained his dignity.

The fourth presentation was delivered by Dr Anna Słowikowska. The presentation was entitled “The Contribution of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński to the Teaching of the Second Vatican Council.” Subjective exclusion was used in the preparation of the paper, since the participation of Fr Wyszyński in the Council had a very wide scope. She discussed the first speech made by the Cardinal to give thanks to Christian families. When preparing his own speech, Primate referred to the appeal of St Paul: “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.” In his speech on the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the Cardinal rejected the protests of the Council Fathers, who proposed to exempt clergy from the obligation to celebrated the liturgy of the hours. Fr Wyszyński reminded us of the fundamental duty of the media, namely the

reading of the Gospel. The maternal role of the Mother of God for all the sons of God was indicated.

The last lecture in the first part of the conference was delivered by Waldemar Bednaruk, PhD, entitled "The vision of university in the teaching of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński." It was argued that the reconciliation of the faith and the Church posed a problem, for believers of little faith claimed that exploring the faith would have harmful effects. Fr Wyszyński had a different approach to that. He was of the opinion that science could be reconciled with faith, encouraging the practice of science in order to avoid flawed teaching methods. He believed that a learned man is obliged to share with others what he has achieved. Wyszyński warned against favouritism, because every human being has to come to certain things by himself, but science should go hand in hand with faith.

The second session of the conference was opened by Monika Menke, PhD, (Palacky University Olomouc) with a speech entitled "The message of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński in a letter to the 'friends' in Czechoslovakia." In the years surrounding the millennium of the Baptism of Poland, Fr Wyszyński wrote letters to his friends. The first letter was addressed to the German bishops and the second one to the Czechoslovak bishops. In his address to the Czechoslovaks, he emphasized the ties between Poles, Czechs and Slovaks. The letter is only two pages long, and it commemorates the figure of St Wojtech [St Adalbert of Prague—Translator's note] and the very strong ties between Czechs and Slovaks are indicated. The said letter did not appear in the press because it was not interesting for propagandists.

The second paper, entitled "Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński's attitude towards the USSR" was prepared by Rev. Dr Stanisław Kawa (Theological Institute of Saint Józef Bilczewski, Lviv, Ukraine). The speaker recalled the teaching of the Primate of the Millennium, who appealed that socialism and communism were hostile to Man. The denial of God's law from economic law led mainly to the enslavement of workers. Collectivization and removal of religious beliefs from society were intended to combat religion. However, every form of government cools off when it encounters difficulties.

Advocate Stefan Hambura gave a paper entitled "Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński's contribution to the shaping of Polish-German relations." The visible beginning of Polish-German relations was the message to the German bishops of 1965. The bishops did not take a clear-cut stand. Nazi crimes would never be forgotten. The message of the bishops was that we forgive and expect forgiveness because the Polish nation had to defend itself against Nazi attacks. The speaker argued that propaganda would dwindle and the Polish Nation would reach the truth.

Rev. Ireneusz Skubiś, PhD, presented a text on "Primate Wyszyński's concern for the cultural identity of Europe." After he was released from custody, Stefan Wyszyński gave a speech not only for Poles but for the whole of Europe. He dealt primarily with national affairs, claiming his love of his homeland was second to his love for God. The issues of national identity and Christian identity were very close to him.

The last speech delivered during the second part of the conference was entitled “The attitude of the authorities of the Polish People’s Republic to the activity and ministry of Primate Wyszyński,” and it was presented by Prof. Peter Raina. He pointed out that Fr Stefan Wyszyński knew that communism had to be opposed by means of revolution. The Stalinist system wanted to destroy the Polish identity. Gomułka’s monologues overshadowed Fr Wyszynski. The nation stood first, right after the Gospel. For Primate, it was very important what the Church did for the Nation.

The questions and answers were followed by thanks and goodbyes to all the participants of the international conference.

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