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DOCHODZENIE BEATYFIKACYJNE O ŻYCIU, SŁAWIE ŚWIĘTOŚCI I HEROICZNOŚCI CNÓT KS. ALEKSANDRA WOŹNEGO W ŚWIETLE DOKUMENTÓW PROCESU BEATYFIKACYJNEGO

THE BEATIFICATION INQUIRY ON THE LIFE, FAMOUS HOLINESS AND HEROIC VIRTUES OF FR. ALEKSANDER WOŹNY IN THE LIGHT OF THE DOCUMENTS OF THE BEATIFICATION PROCESS

Streszczenie

Celem niniejszego opracowania jest ukazanie dochodzenia beatyfikacyjnego o życiu, sławie świętości i heroicznosci cnót ks. Aleksandra Woźnego w świetle dokumentów procesu beatyfikacyjnego. Jest to swoiste studium źródłoznawcze, w którym czytelnik zostanie zaznajomiony z rodzajami i wartością zgromadzonych materiałów. W parafii pw. św. Jana Kantego w Poznaniu na przestrzeni lat powstały liczne inicjatywy zmierzające do rozpoczęcia procesu beatyfikacyjnego kandydata na ołtarze, które został zapoczątkowany 25 stycznia 2014 roku. Po półtorarocznej pracy Trybunału, Komisji Historycznej oraz Komisji Teologów Cenzorów 23 maja 2015 roku, w kościele pw. św. Jana Kantego w Poznaniu, odbyła się ostatnia publiczna sesja kończąca proces diecezjalny służki Bożego. Obszerna procesowa dokumentacja, licząca ponad 6,5 tys. stron, została przygotowana do przekazania jej do Dykasterii Spraw Kanonizacyjnych. Z tego powodu do zasadniczych prac postulatora na etapie rzymskim należało opracowanie *Positio*, które jest podstawowym dokumentem pracy przy studiowaniu i pogłębieniu danej sprawy.

Cała *Positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis. Posnansis beatificationis et canonisationis Servi Dei Alexandri Woźny sacerdotis dioeciesiani (1910–1983)* została tak opracowana, by mogła wystarczyć do wyrobienia obiektywnego sądu konsultorom teologom, a następnie kongregacji zwyczajnej kardynałów i biskupów, aby dzięki zebranych dowodom zdobyć pewność moralną przy udzieleniu odpowiedzi na *dubium* początkowe, które w procesie o życiu, sławie świętości i heroicznosci cnót ks. Aleksandra Woźnego brzmi następująco: „Czy udowodniono cnoty teologalne: wiarę, nadzieję i miłość tak w stosunku do Boga, jak i do bliźniego, a także cnoty kardynalne: roztropność, sprawiedliwość, wstrzemięźliwość i męstwo, a nadto cnoty im pokrewne, w stopniu heroicznym oraz opinię świętości w tej konkretnej sprawie i w aspekcie, o jaki chodzi?”. Odpowiedź na powyższe pytanie jest możliwa nie tylko po wnikliwej analizie zeznań świadków, ale przede wszystkim po pogłębieniu merytorycznym i analizie zebranej całej dokumentacji procesowej,

która znajduje swoje odzwierciedlenie w jednej z części *Positio*, mianowicie w *Summarium Documentorum*.

Słowa kluczowe: *Summarium Documentorum*, dokumenty personalne ks. Aleksandra Woźnego, pisma ks. Aleksandra Woźnego, prześladowanie przez komunistów

Abstract

THE BEATIFICATION INQUIRY ON THE LIFE, FAMOUS HOLINESS AND HEROIC VIRTUES OF FR. ALEKSANDER WOŹNY IN THE LIGHT OF THE DOCUMENTS OF THE BEATIFICATION PROCESS

The aim of this study is to show the beatification inquiry about the life, fame, holiness and heroic virtues of rev. Aleksander Woźny in the light of the beatification process documents. It is a kind of source study in which the reader will be acquainted with the types and value collected materials. In the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznan (Poznań), over the years, numerous initiatives have been created to start the beatification process of the candidate for the altars, which was initiated on January 25, 2014. After a year and a half of work of the Tribunal, the Historical Commission and the Censors Theologians Commission on May 23, 2015, in the church of St. Jan Kanty in Poznan (Poznań), the last public session ending the diocesan process of the Servant of God took place. Extensive procedural documentation, over 6,500 pages, has been prepared for submission to the Department for the Causes of Saints. For this reason, one of the fundamental works of the postulator at the Roman stage was the preparation of the *Positio*, which is the basic document of work in studying and deepening a given matter.

The whole *Positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis. Posnaniensis beatificationis et canonisationis Servi Dei Alexandri Woźny sacerdotis dioecesanii (1910–1983)* was designed in such a way that it could suffice to form an objective judgment for theological consultants, and then for the ordinary congregation of cardinals and bishops, to gain moral certainty through the collected evidence in answering the initial *dubium* which in the process of life, fame, holiness and heroic virtues, rev. Alexander Woźny reads as follows: “Have the theological virtues been proven: faith, hope and love towards God and neighbor, as well as cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, temperance and bravery, and also virtues related to them, to the extent of a heroic and an opinion of holiness in this particular matter and in what aspect it is about?”. An answer to the above question is possible, not only after a thorough analysis of the testimonies of witnesses, but above all after the substantive deepening and analysis of the entire trial documentation, which is reflected in one of the parts of the *Positio*, namely in the *Summarium Documentorum*.

Keywords: *Summarium Documentorum*, personal documents of rev. Aleksander Woźny, the writings of rev. Aleksander Woźny, persecution by communists

Introduction

At the beginning of his pontificate, St. John Paul II, visiting the Vatican dicasteries, also came to the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints. Having met with all its employees, leaving, he stopped for a short conversation with the promoter of faith at that time – Fr. Monsignor Sandro Corradini. Leaning against the window frame, the Pope said: “I have come here so many times as a bishop, a cardinal ... and I could not help but come as Pope. How easy it is to come here in life, and how difficult after death. John Paul II, also after his death, "came" very easily to the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints. A month after his death, Pope Benedict XVI,

by granting a dispensation, allowed the canonization process of the Pope who died on April 2, 2005 to begin¹.

Fr. Aleksander Woźny, Poznań priest, parish priest of the parish of St. Jan Kanty (1910-1983), also quickly returned after his death "to his church", which he was building, and to the parish of which he was the parish priest. After a year and a half of work of the Tribunal, the Historical Commission and the Commission of Theologians of Censors, on May 23, 2015, in the church of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, the last public session ending the diocesan process of Fr. Aleksander Woźny. It was attended by Archbishop Stanisław Gądecki, the Metropolitan of Poznań, the established Tribunal: the episcopal delegate, the promoter of justice, a notary public and a postulator. The archbishop, by his decree, declared that the diocesan investigation was finally closed², and each separately took an oath to faithfully fulfill his duties and to maintain official secrecy³. Extensive procedural documentation, consisting of over 6.5 thousand pages, with the remaining files, including thirty-seven testimonies of witnesses of the diocesan investigation, was prepared for transmission to the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints. This new stage, which is called the Roman phase of each process of a candidate for sainthood, ended the time of collecting documents and began the period of their substantive development.

For this reason, the essential work of the postulator at the Roman stage included the elaboration of the *Positio*, which is the basic work document for studying and deepening a given case. The whole *Positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis. Posnaniensis beatificationis et canonisationis Servi Dei Alexandri Woźny sacerdotis dioecesiani* (1910-1983), submitted to the dicastery on February 4, 2019, was prepared in such a way that it could be the basis for making an objective judgment of the theological consultors, and then members of the Congregation, so that, thanks to the collected evidence, they could gain certainty moral in answering the opening *dubium*⁴, which in the trial about the life, fame of holiness and heroic virtues of Fr. Aleksander Woźny reads as follows: "Have the theological

¹ Zdzisław Kijas, „Sługa Boży ks. Aleksander Woźny jako przykład życia kapłańskiego”, in: *Droga do świętości. Biuletyn informacyjny* vol. 4, ed. Wojciech Mueller (Poznań: Wydawnictwa „Kontekst”, 2020), 14.

² Archives of the Metropolitan Curia in Poznań, *Archetypum. Sessio XXXV ac Postrema. Decretum conclusionis causae*, Poznań: 25 May 2015.

³ Archives of the Metropolitan Curia in Poznań, *Archetypum. Sessio XXXV ac Postrema*, Poznań: 25 May 2015. See: *Sanctorum Mater – instrukcja Kongregacji Spraw Kanonizacyjnych o prowadzeniu dochodzenia diecezjalnego lub eparchialnego w sprawach kanonizacyjnych* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2011), 144 §1,1–3.

³ Sławomir Oder, „Złożenie akt dochodzenia diecezjalnego w Kongregacji Spraw Kanonizacyjnych, weryfikacja jego ważności i opracowanie «Positio»”, in: *Świętość Kanonizowana* vol. 3, ed. Szczepan Praškiewicz (Kraków: Wydawnictwa Karmelitów Bosych, 2009) 94.

⁴ Sławomir Oder, „Złożenie akt dochodzenia diecezjalnego w Kongregacji Spraw Kanonizacyjnych, weryfikacja jego ważności i opracowanie «Positio»”, in: *Świętość Kanonizowana* vol. 3, ed. Szczepan Praškiewicz (Kraków: Wydawnictwa Karmelitów Bosych, 2009) 94.

virtues been proven: faith, hope and love both towards God and towards one's neighbor, as well as the cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude, and also related virtues, to a heroic degree and a reputation for holiness in this particular matter and in what respect?" – *An constet de virtutibus theologalibus Fide, Spe, Caritate tum in Deum tum in proximum, necnon de cardinalibus Prudentia, Iustitia, Temperantia, Fortitudine, iisque adnexis in gradu heroico, atque de fama sanctitatis, in casu et ad effectum de quo agitur?*⁵

The answer to the above question is possible not only after a thorough analysis of the testimonies of witnesses, but above all after a substantive in-depth analysis and analysis of all the collected procedural documentation, which is reflected in one of the parts of the *Positio*, namely in the *Summarium Documentorum*. Therefore, at this point, questions should be asked regarding the above issue: Are the collected documents and all evidence during the beatification process of Fr. Aleksander Woźny during the diocesan phase are sufficient to get to know not only the person of God's servant, but also the virtues he performed to a heroic degree? Is the scope and division of documents correct? Have all the guidelines of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints been followed when answering the initial *dubium*?

1. Summarium Documentorum

The start of the *Positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis Posnaniensis beatificationis et canonisationis Servi Dei Alexandri Woźny sacerdotis dioecesiani* editorial process (1910-1983) was preceded by a preliminary assessment by the relator – Father Dr. hab. Zdzisław Kijas OFMConv, and then discussed and approved in the ordinary congress, attended by: prefect, secretary of the dicastery, undersecretary, promoter of the faith and general relator, as well as the relator of the cause⁶. Although the postulator is the material author of the *Positio*, the relator takes responsibility for its form and content, which must meet the standards adopted in the practice of the Dicastery and meet the criteria corresponding to the purpose for which it is created: proving the heroic practice of the theological, cardinal and related virtues, as well as opinions of holiness⁷.

⁵ Congregatio de Causis Sanctorum, *Regolamento della Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi*, (Rome, 1983), 62 §2,2.

⁶ Oder, *Złożenie akt dochodzenia*, 94.

⁷ Oder, *Złożenie akt dochodzenia*, 94.

Each part of the *Positio* has its substantive value⁸, but for the purposes of this article, the author will focus only on the material reflecting the wealth of available documents concerning Fr. Aleksander Woźny, and which can be used to edit *Summarium Documentorum*. Its diversity consists of original official documents, curial and personal correspondence, press articles, unpublished and published papers, which have been collected in various archives. The most numerous and valuable sources, both handwritten and printed, as well as other memorabilia come from the Archives of the Parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań at Grunwaldzka Street 86 and from the Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań in Ostrów Tumski. The Archives of the Polish Bishops' Conference, documents from the Institute of National Remembrance in Poznań, the Institute of Church Studies *Lubranscianum* in Poznań, the Archives of the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site and the collections of Poznań libraries have numerous documents. Materials have become invaluable sources, including all documents related to the period of World War II, when the servant of God was a prisoner of the German concentration camps in Buchenwald and Dachau.

The Diocesan Historical Commission made a detailed query in each of the mentioned archives, presenting in its opinion what documents each of them contains. Thanks to the collected and examined material, we can get to know the life of a candidate for the altars as a zealous confessor, a charismatic pastor who is completely devoted to people, a man of deep faith, who based his priesthood on the unity of personal life and pastoral work filled with the attitude of spiritual childhood. For this reason, the collected documentation was divided. The first part deals with personal documents, the second with all the writings of the Servant of God, the third is a collection of documents regarding the persecution of Fr. A. Woźny by the communist system and the last one, concerning documents about the candidate for the altars.

2. Personal documents of Fr. Aleksander Woźny

The personal documents collected in the beatification process of the diocesan phase include very extensive material, both of civil and ecclesiastical importance, located in various archives. The whole allows you to get to know the person of Fr. Aleksander Woźny in the time and circumstances in which he lived. Documents relating to important and special events

⁸ The Regulations of the Congregation provide certain requirements that are somewhat schematic for all *Positio* and recommend that all its material be arranged in chronological order, i.e. according to the phases of the life of the Servant of God. Each *Positio* is different and has its own evidential, historical, local and personal conditions. – Henryk Misztal, *Prawo kanonizacyjne według ustawodawstwa Jana Pawła II* (Lublin–Sandomierz: Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne w Sandomierzu, 1997), 317–327.

from various periods of his life have been collected, supported by appointments to clerical positions and functions, curial correspondence, personnel files, opinions of his superiors, exemplary exams he took during his stay at the seminary, appointment decrees and priestly examinations, and also documents related to the economic affairs of the parish.

Personal documentation is not complete. First of all, many documents from the period of World War II and documents concerning the parents of the servant of God are missing. Taking into account the size of the collected material, a prior substantive selection was carried out in order to reveal and present in chronological order moments and events from the life of the servant of God. Against such an outlined background, one can briefly edit the biography of Fr. Woźny on the basis of 16 documents, from the baptism certificate to the death certificate.

According to the entry in the parish book, Aleksander was born in Uzarzewo Hubach at 19:10. His parents were Anna née Rogozia and Edmund Woźny⁹. He was baptized on July 10 at 10:00, and the godparents were Michał Woźny from Kostrzyn and Marianna Woźna from Uzarzewo – Aleksander's sister¹⁰. Formed religiously by his parents, and at the same time experienced by life after the loss of his mother, Aleksander on May 31, 1923, in the Poznań Cathedral, received the sacrament of confirmation from the hands of cardinal Edmund Dalbor, Primate of Poland, choosing the name Jan¹¹. In 1928, after graduating from St. Maria Magdalena in Poznań¹², he applied to the seminary. In the years 1928-1933, in Gniezno and Poznań, he prepared himself for the priesthood under the guidance of eminent professors and educators, today blessed or candidates for the glory of the altars: Bishop Michał Kozal, Fr. Aleksander Żychliński and Fr. Kazimierz Rolewski¹³. In his request of October 6, 1932, before his ordination to the diaconate, Aleksander wrote: "Eminence! Most dignified Primate! I humbly ask Your Eminence to ordain me to the diaconate. I am aware of the duties that will be imposed on me from the moment of my ordination. Accepting them completely voluntarily, I want to fulfill them faithfully and zealously until the end of my life – with a sincere and pure intention of serving the Kingdom of Christ in souls for my own salvation"¹⁴.

⁹ Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań, Teczka personalna: KA-26330, *Księga chrztów parafii pw. św. Michała Archaniola w Uzarzewie*, Uzarzewo, pos. 33/1910. See: Wojciech Mueller, *Jeden z nas. Księdza Aleksandra Woźnego tajemnica powołania* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo „Kontekst”, 2017), 19.

¹⁰ Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań, *Certificato del battesimo*, Uzarzewo, 25 June 1928.

¹¹ Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań, *Testimonium confirmationis*, Poznań, 25 September 1929.

¹² Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań, *Świadectwo dojrzałości*, Poznań, 11 May 1928.

¹³ See: Wojciech Mueller, *Ks. Aleksander Woźny. Spojrzenie na wiarę* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo „Kontekst”, 2013), 9.

¹⁴ Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań, *Prośba Aleksandra Woźnego o udzielenie święceń diakonatu*, Poznań, 6 October 1932.

He was ordained a priest on June 10, 1933 in the Poznań Cathedral by Cardinal August Hlond. He asked for them in the following words: "Eminence! Most dignified Primate! I most humbly ask Your Eminence to ordain me a priest. I submit my request completely voluntarily, assuring Your Eminence that I wish to fulfill the duties imposed on me by my ordination until the end of my life, in accordance with the intentions of our Master, for the glory of the only God in the Holy Trinity".¹⁵ Fr. Rector Kazimierz Rolewski in the personnel sheet at the end of his seminar studies wrote: "exemplary, well-mannered, polite, zealous"¹⁶.

The Servant of God as a vicar worked in Poznań in the parish of St. Stanisław Kostka¹⁷ and in the cathedral parish¹⁸. In 1938 he was sent to the parish of St. Consolation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Borek, where he worked until he was arrested by the German gendarmerie in 1940¹⁹. He was imprisoned in German concentration camps for over five years, first in Buchenwald and then in Dachau²⁰. After returning to Poland on August 20, 1945²¹, he became the administrator and later the parish priest of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań. He began the organization of pastoral life with efforts to obtain a post-German, wooden restaurant building, which was to serve as a temporary temple. He was not spared the persecution of the Stalinist period. On February 13, 1950, he was arrested. The reason for the arrest was a pastoral letter, which the then authorities did not agree to read. He, disregarding the ban, told the contents of the letter from the pulpit. He stayed in prison until December 1²².

The pastoral activity of Fr. Woźny was not limited to the church and parish. He played a significant role as the National Women's Chaplain²³. As part of his priestly ministry outside the parish, he led retreats closed to priests, seminarians and nuns. Throughout all the years of

¹⁵ Archidiecezjalne Archiwum w Poznaniu, *Prośba Aleksandra Woźnego o udzielenie święceń kapłańskich*, Poznań, 17 May 1933.

¹⁶ Archidiecezjalne Archiwum w Poznaniu, *Arkusz personalny Aleksandra Woźnego*, Poznań, 10 June 1933.

¹⁷ Archidiecezjalne Archiwum w Poznaniu, *Opinia ks. proboszcza Stefana Kaczorowskiego na temat ks. Aleksandra Woźnego odnośnie jego pracy w parafii pw. św. Stanisława Kostki w Poznaniu*, Poznań, 8 February 1936.

¹⁸ Archidiecezjalne Archiwum w Poznaniu, *Opinia ks. proboszcza Kazimierza Szymbrowskiego na temat ks. Aleksandra Woźnego odnośnie jego pracy w kościele Archikatedralnym w Poznaniu*, Poznań, 24 June 1938.

¹⁹ Wojciech Mueller, „Wprowadzenie”, in: *Listy ks. Aleksandra Woźnego z Dachau* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo „Kontekst”, 2016), 7.

²⁰ Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies *Lubranscianum* in Poznań, a document issued by an American officer after the liberation of the German concentration camp in Dachau certifying that Fr. Aleksander Woźny was a prisoner of the above-mentioned camp from December 8, 1940 until liberation, i.e. until April 29, 1945. In the camp he was given a number: 21889, Dachau, 4 June 1945. Archives in Dachau (further AD). Certificate that Fr. Aleksander Woźny was a prisoner of the German concentration camp in Dachau, Dachau, 20 March 2014.

²¹ Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies *Lubranscianum* in Poznań, *Zaświadczenie wystawione przez punkt przyjmowania Polaków wracających do Ojczyzny w Koźlu, Koźle*, 1 August 1945.

²² Mueller, *Ks. Aleksander Woźny*, 12.

²³ Archidiecezjalne Archiwum w Poznaniu, *Dekret ustanawiający ks. Aleksandra Woźnego Krajowym Duszpasterzem Kobiet*, Warszawa, 5 September 1960.

pastoral work as a parish priest, he was a spiritual father to many people. He enjoyed universal respect, trust and love not only of his parishioners. He was a zealous confessor, a charismatic pastor, a man of deep faith²⁴, decorated with the title of Honorary Chamberlain of His Holiness the Holy Father Paul VI²⁵. Fr. Aleksander Woźny died on Sunday morning, August 21, 1983²⁶.

3. Writings of Fr. Aleksander Woźny

The Servant of God was an extremely communicative and communicative person, and at the same time, as a pastor of great heart, concerned about the good and salvation of souls. It is therefore not surprising that in studying his life we find many writings, manuscripts, typescripts and the like. The material collected over the years is in its entirety in the Archives of the Parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, the Institute of Church Studies *Lubranscianum* in Poznań and in the Archives of the Metropolitan Curia in Poznań. It shows the deep concern of Fr. A. Woźny for a spiritual life realized through the practice of virtues, as well as the apostolic life of people entrusted to him, whom he led to God as a confessor.

The collected documentation is another testimony to his tireless service and priestly life marked by suffering in German concentration camps. On March 12, 1940, Fr. Aleksander Woźny received an order from the German gendarmerie to appear in Gostyń. He was arrested along with 52 other priests, and then taken to Bruczkowo, then to Buchenwald and Dachau.

Particularly noteworthy are the letters written from the German concentration camp in Dachau. The correspondence covers the period from May 3, 1941 to December 31, 1944²⁷ and was mostly addressed to Walentyna Woźna, sister of Fr. A. Woźny. Written in German, flawless, simple German. Apart from individual cases, the lists were made on a ready-made form delivered to the prisoners by the camp staff. The repeated, identical pattern of correspondence includes: thanks for the money and parcels sent, caring questions about close and distant family members and friends, perfunctory comments on the messages received by Fr. A. Woźny in letters from his sister, thanks for remembering in prayer and assurances of his prayers for all loved ones. The sparse, very generally and mildly expressed information

²⁴ Wojciech Mueller, *Świadkowie wiary Archidiecezji Poznańskiej. Święci, błogosławieni, słudzy Boży oraz kandydaci na ołtarze* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo „Kontekst”, 2014), 84.

²⁵ Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań, *Dokument Sekretariatu Stanu dotyczący otrzymania przez ks. Aleksandra Woźnego godności Szambelana Honorowego Jego Świątobliwości Ojca Świętego Pawła VI*, Watykan, 6 November 1965.

²⁶ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Akt zgonu ks. Aleksandra Woźnego*, Poznań, 22 August 1983.

²⁷ Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies *Lubranscianum* in Poznań, *Listy z Dachau 1941–1944*.

about the hardships of camp life (letters were censored by the camp authorities) was always "closed" by the prospect of joy and anticipation of the next holidays in the church year and faith in God's Providence²⁸.

During the beatification process of the diocesan phase, letters and travel cards were also found written to cousin Czesław Woźny. The first was deleted in Poznań on November 11, 1973 and concerned the death of his brother – Tadeusz Woźny²⁹. The next ones concerned greetings from holiday trips from Ephesus on May 23, 1975³⁰, and from Dębki on July 19, 1982³¹.

After being liberated from the camp and returning to Poland, Fr. A. Woźny devoted himself to pastoral work. In the confessional he waited for penitents until late in the evening. From a group of penitents and students of monthly teachings, the Community of God's Children³² with a deep inner life was formed, partly prepared for apostolic action for the benefit of the entire parish community. He led it through the meetings of the "Teaching about the inner life", preached on the third Sunday of the month and Lenten retreats, as well as correspondence with the members of the community, in which he gave tips on the inner life. During the beatification process of the diocesan phase, twenty letters were found written to the Community of God's Children³³, as well as two written to specific communities: "Letter to parishioners"³⁴ and "Letter to the sick"³⁵. All this was an original way of conducting spiritual direction.

A separate group of documents is the two-part diary of the cleric Aleksander Woźny, which was written in the years 1929–1933. The seminar notes present the spiritual figure of the future servant of God, they also contain notes from retreats preached in the seminary. The young alumnus coherently and honestly mentions his own faults and weaknesses, which he struggles with, but which do not harm his image in the slightest. On the contrary, they testify to the direction of his spiritual growth and priestly ministry³⁶.

²⁸ *Listy ks. Aleksandra Woźnego z Dachau*, 19–23.

²⁹ Wojciech Mueller, *Bohater wiary. Ksiądz Aleksandra Woźnego duszpasterski styl* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo „Kontekst”, 2019), 494–496.

³⁰ Mueller, *Bohater wiary*, 407.

³¹ Mueller, *Bohater wiary*, 498.

³² Wojciech Mueller, *Potyczki księdza Aleksandra Woźnego z komunizmem* (Poznań, Wydawnictwo „Kontekst”, 2018), 343–344.

³³ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Listy ks. Aleksandra Woźnego Wspólnoty Dzieci Bożych za lata 1959–1976*.

³⁴ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *List do parafian*, Poznań, 21 October 1976.

³⁵ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *List do chorych*, Poznań..

³⁶ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Pamiętnik kleryka Aleksandra Woźnego* (Gniezno–Poznań, 1929–1933).

Another group of documents concerns fragments of the teachings of Fr. A. Woźny, papers and sermons. It should be noted that the first people who collected sources on the life and spirituality of the candidate for the altars were lay people and penitents. The Servant of God did not leave behind a literary legacy in the form of scientific works devoted to specific issues. His theological reflection was contained in numerous writings, articles, sermons, written conferences and meditations. Transcribed on a typewriter, they spread almost all over Poland. The topics of reflections, pastoral speeches, sermons and meditations³⁷ were very large and varied, mainly of an educational and marriage nature. He discussed the issues in a matter-of-fact way, based on the main principles of the Gospel and referring to numerous examples. He gave simple and accurate advice.

It was the pastor's concern for the fulfillment of the vocation of both priests and the Christian vocation of lay people to live in marriage and family, care for the best possible upbringing of children, and for the formation of seminarians. This section contains the following documents: sermon by Fr. Aleksander Woźny at the end of 1967³⁸, a paper presented in Poznań at the 11th Scientific Seminar of Liturgical Lecturers in Theological Institutes in Poland entitled *The sacrament of penance without the spirit of penance?*³⁹, fragments of retreat teachings for seminarians of the Archbishop's Theological Seminary in Poznań⁴⁰, paper entitled *Motherhood is the full development of a woman. Woman's Inner Renewal*⁴¹.

Particularly noteworthy are the memories of Fr. Woźny from the war years 1939–1945⁴², which he wrote down on May 16, 1974. He did so at the request of the Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań, which on January 20, 1974, sent a letter to priests, former prisoners of German concentration camps: "The Archdiocese of Poznań in the years of World War II. Questionnaire on the wartime fate of the clergy". The Servant of God answered the questions contained in the survey, and also attached a typescript of his memoirs. If the image of Dachau were built solely on this account, one could get the wrong impression that the world behind

³⁷ Wojciech Mueller, *Księżda Aleksandra Woźnego koncepcja „dzieciństwa duchowego”* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo „Kontekst”, 2011), 10.

³⁸ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Kazanie ks. Aleksandra Woźnego na zakończenie roku 1967*, Poznań, 31 December 1967.

³⁹ Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies *Lubranscianum* in Poznań, „*Sakrament pokuty bez ducha pokuty?*” *Referat wygłoszony w Poznaniu na XI Seminarium Naukowym Wykładowców Liturgiki w Zakładach Teologicznych w Polsce*, Poznań, 5 September 1973.

⁴⁰ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Fragmety nauk rekolekcyjnych dla kleryków Arcybiskupiego Seminarium Duchownego w Poznaniu* (Poznań, 1977).

⁴¹ Archive of the Polish Episcopal Conference in Warsaw, *Macierzyństwo pełni rozwoju kobiety. Odnowa wewnętrzna kobiety* (Warszawa, 1981).

⁴² Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Wspomnienia z lat wojny 1939–1945*, Poznań, 16 May 1974

the barbed wire was not as tragic in its dimension as we know it from the accounts of other prisoners. This shows an important feature of the personality of Fr. Woźny who looked for the good in everyone. He even said about the block supervisor who beat him: "The block supervisor was really a good man (...). He didn't usually hit anyone, he just slapped someone from time to time when they were moving too slowly." The letters he wrote from the German concentration camp in Dachau, despite the fact that they had to meet the requirements of censorship, bring the reality of camp life closer⁴³.

4. Documents related to persecution by communists

By carefully studying the biography of Fr. A. Woźny, should be treated separately and refer to the events related to the persecution of him by the communist authorities. The development of this ideology in Poland began after regaining independence in 1918. In March 1925, the Third Congress of the Communist Workers' Party of Poland took place, during which it was transformed into the Communist Party of Poland. It was a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist party of a new type. It differed from other parties operating in Poland at that time in two fundamental aspects: the anti-Polish program of action established in 1934 and the possession of its own armed forces concentrated in a secret Military Department. They waited for the opportune moment to start a bloody revolution in Poland. It is worth noting that in Poznań there was a secret Soviet staff for sabotage, directed by the NKVD directly from Moscow. When the Red Army entered Poland in 1944, and the Yalta and Potsdam conferences agreed that the Homeland would remain under the influence of the Soviet Union, the slow and laborious building of a communist apparatus based on the dictatorship of Marxist ideology began⁴⁴.

The hardest thing for Fr. Woźny was the year 1950 which turned out to be full of painful experiences for him. The reason for the persecution, detention and arrest of the Servant of God was the bishops' letter on the liquidation of the Catholic organization Caritas, which the then authorities did not agree to read. Fr. A. Woźny told the letter from the pulpit. Although he did not read the letter, the next day he was arrested on the basis of the decree of

⁴³ *Listy ks. Aleksandra Woźnego z Dachau*, 476.

⁴⁴ Wojciech Mueller, *Błogosławiona krew – męczeństwo służby Bożego ks. Stanisława Streicha* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo „Kontekst”, 2017), 41–42.

June 13, 1946 on particularly dangerous crimes during the period of state reconstruction and was imprisoned at Młyńska Street in Poznań⁴⁵.

The communist system was permeated with hatred for the faith and the Catholic Church. The consequences of state atheism manifested themselves in active and sometimes brutal hostility towards religion, the truths of Christian faith and customs, persecution of religious institutions, believers, especially clergy. Fr. A. Woźny was one of the many victims of this system. If an individual wanted to succeed in society, he was strictly required to demonstrate atheism and stay away from temples. This practice was particularly intensified during the Stalinist period in the Soviet Union, as well as in the countries under its influence. In practice, this manifested itself in the extremely harsh treatment of the prisoners, in the abuse of them, in the use of sophisticated means destroying their health, leading to terrible agony and complete annihilation. This attitude resulted from the ideology that was instilled through propaganda and programmatic atheistic training. It was this system that led to the death of millions of people⁴⁶.

The list of documents begins with the statement of the episcopate on Caritas of January 30, 1950⁴⁷, which contributed to the initiation of repressions against the clergy. On February 12, 1950, the servant of God told from the pulpit the content of the episcopate's letter on the liquidation of Caritas. This fact was recorded in a special report drawn up by a secret communist agent who was at the Holy Mass at that time. in the church of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań at Grunwaldzka Street⁴⁸. In connection with the ongoing investigation, it was decided to temporarily detain the suspected Fr. A. Woźny⁴⁹ and start an investigation against him⁵⁰. Two interrogations of the servant of God took place on February 13 and 18, 1950⁵¹, which ended with a decision on his temporary arrest⁵². The witnesses present on Sunday, February 12, 1950, at the Holy Mass were questioned. in the parish. On July 27, 1950, against

⁴⁵ Mueller, *Potyczki księdza Aleksandra Woźnego*, 204–211.

⁴⁶ Adam Dziurok, Marek Gałęzowski, Łukasz Kamiński, Filip Musiał, *Od niepodległości do niepodległości. Historia Polski 1918-1989* (Warszawa: Instytut Pamięi Narodowej, 2010), 268–272.

⁴⁷ Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Oświadczenie Episkopatu w sprawie „Caritas”* (Kraków: 30 January 1950).

⁴⁸ Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Raport sporządzony przez tajnego komunistycznego agenta*, Poznań, 12 February 1950.

⁴⁹ Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Postanowienie tymczasowego zatrzymania podejrzanego ks. Woźnego Aleksandra*, Poznań, 13 February 1950.

⁵⁰ Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Postanowienie wszczęcia dochodzenia*, Poznań, 17 February 1950.

⁵¹ Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Protokół przesłuchania oskarżonego – odpis na maszynie*, Poznań, 13 February 1950; Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Protokół przesłuchania oskarżonego*, Poznań, 18 February 1950.

⁵² Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Postanowienie o tymczasowym aresztowaniu*, Poznań, 18 February 1950.

Fr. Aleksander Woźny the indictment⁵³ regarding the crime provided for in Art. 29 of the Little Penal Code, "that on Sunday, February 12, 1950, in Poznań, he publicly insulted the system of the Polish State, spreading in church sermons false and derogatory to the People's Democracy System in force in Poland, that it, among other things, fought against the freedom of worship and religious practices"⁵⁴. On August 1, 1950, a complaint was filed with the Court of Appeal in Poznań by lawyer Marian Podbiera, so that the situation of Fr. Woźny⁵⁵ changed as soon as possible. This happened only on December 1, 1950. After the earlier trial and verdict⁵⁶, Fr. A. Woźny was able to return to his parish and continue his pastoral work.

The years of communist repression in Poland did not stop. Fr. In the eyes of the communists, A. Woźny was constantly considered an enemy, a person who was harmful to the people's Polish state, as evidenced by the years of struggling and fighting for the truth, for dignity, for the opportunity to practice one's faith⁵⁷. Fr. A. Woźny, as in a lens, shows the fate of the Poznań clergy who were victims of two totalitarianisms: national and international socialism. It is also an example of victory over the powers of darkness, which sought to introduce idolatry in Poland⁵⁸.

5. Documents about the servant of God

A separate group of documents concerning Fr. A. Woźny, which could be used in the editing of *Summariium Documentorum*, refers to the material collected over 30 years since his death in 1983. These are not only memories and testimonies about him, but above all press articles, biographies and biographies, as well as theological works. They all reflect not only the teaching of Fr. A. Woźny, but above all, they are a testimony about a man who led a deep and intense inner life.

Fidelity in transmitting God's will and courage in setting high expectations for oneself undoubtedly resulted not only from my own experience, but above all from the close union of

⁵³ Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Akt oskarżenia przeciwko ks. Aleksandrowi Woźnemu*, Poznań, 27 July 1950.

⁵⁴ Mueller, *Potyczki księdza Aleksandra Woźnego*, 253.

⁵⁵ Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Zażalenie wystosowane przez adwokata Mariana Podbierę dotyczące ks. Woźnego*, Poznań, 1 August 1950.

⁵⁶ Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Wyrok – protokół z rozprawy głównej*, Poznań, 1 December 1950; Institute of National Remembrance – branch in Poznań, *Uzasadnienie wyroku*, Poznań, 1 December 1950.

⁵⁷ Archidiecezjan Archives in Poznań, *Decyzja w sprawie ks. Aleksandra Woźnego*, Warszawa, 15 January 1962.

⁵⁸ Archidiecezjan Archives in Poznań, *Oświadczenie dotyczące sprawy ks. Aleksandra Woźnego*, Warszawa, 13 March 1962; Archidiecezjan Archives in Poznań, *Powiadomienie odnośnie postępowania wyjaśniającego dotyczącego ks. Woźnego*, Warszawa, 4 June 1962.

Fr. A. Woźny with God. Everything he demanded of others, he first tried on himself⁵⁹. He was a modern pastor, attached to the rich past of the Church, at the same time open to what is new⁶⁰. He treated all his pastoral duties as a service to the community entrusted to him, as a sacrifice of his life to the Lord God for the parish⁶¹. This made him ready at any moment to give his best and seek the good of his faithful⁶².

The collection of selected documents includes: the funeral sermon of bp. Zdzisław Fortuniak delivered on August 23, 1983⁶³, speech by bp. Tadeusz Etter during the funeral of the servant of God on August 24, 1983⁶⁴, a memory about Fr. Aleksander Woźny prepared by the dean, Fr. Zygmunt Thimm⁶⁵, a fragment of the pastoral letter of the Archbishop of Poznań, Stanisław Gądecki, concerning the beatification process of the Servant of God⁶⁶, a fragment of the homily of Fr. prof. Jan Kanty Pytel delivered during the Jubilee Week in the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań⁶⁷, fragment of the homily of Fr. can. Zdzisław Potrawiak delivered during the Jubilee Week in the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań⁶⁸ and the testimonies of: Anna Kokot⁶⁹, Beata Kabacińska⁷⁰, Agnieszka Malicka⁷¹, Dariusz Witkowski⁷² and Jolanta Jasińska⁷³.

Conclusion

⁵⁹ Tadeusz Piaczyński, „W I rocznicę śmierci. Wspomnienia wikariusza”, *Przewodnik Katolicki* 34 (1984): 6.

⁶⁰ Jan Kanty Pytel, „Wspomnienie o Autorze książki”, in: *Bóg jest najważniejszy*, ed. Aleksander Woźny, (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Hlondianum, 1994), 6.

⁶¹ Maciej Karol Kubiak, *Życie i posługiwanie księdza Aleksandra Woźnego w świetle nauki Soboru Watykańskiego II o duszpasterzu*, maszynopis (praca magisterska, Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, 1990), 89.

⁶² Stefan Stuligrosz, *O Autorze*, in: „Wychowanie dla Boga”, ed. Aleksander Woźny (Wrocław: Oficyna Współczesna, 1994), 68–69.

⁶³ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Kazanie pogrzebowe bp. Zdzisława Fortuniaka*, Poznań, 23 August 1983.

⁶⁴ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Przemówienie bp. Tadeusza Etterera podczas pogrzebu ks. Aleksandra Woźnego*, Poznań, 24 August 1983.

⁶⁵ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Wspomnienie na temat ks. Aleksandra Woźnego, sporządzone przez dziekana ks. Zygmunta Thimma*, Poznań, 2 November 1983.

⁶⁶ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Fragment „Listu Pasterskiego” Arcybiskupa Poznańskiego Stanisława Gądeckiego dotyczący procesu beatyfikacyjnego ks. Aleksandra Woźnego*, Poznań, 13 October 2013.

⁶⁷ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Fragment homilii prof. Jana Kantego Pytla wygłoszonej podczas Tygodnia Jubileuszowego w parafii pw. św. Jana Kantego w Poznaniu*, Poznań, 14 October 2013.

⁶⁸ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Fragment homilii ks. Zdzisława Potrawiaka wygłoszonej podczas Tygodnia Jubileuszowego w parafii pw. św. Jana Kantego w Poznaniu*, Poznań, 15 October 2013.

⁶⁹ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Świadectwo Anny Kokot*, Poznań, 28 August 2015.

⁷⁰ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Świadectwo Beaty Kabacińskiej*, Poznań, 6 February 2017.

⁷¹ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Świadectwo Agnieszki Malickiej*, Tanowo, 3 August 2017.

⁷² Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Świadectwo Dariusza Witkowskiego*, Poznań, 3 August 2018.

⁷³ Archives of the parish of St. Jan Kanty in Poznań, *Świadectwo Jolanty Jasińskiej*, Poznań, 13 September 2018.

In Positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis. Posnanesis beatificationis et canonisationis Servi Dei Alexandri Woźny sacerdotis dioeciesiani (1910–1983) contains 55 documents appropriately divided and assigned. All of them made it possible to edit the *Informatio*, which concerns the answer to the initial *dubium* in the trial about the life, fame of holiness and heroic virtues of Fr. Aleksander Woźny. It reads as follows: "Have the theological virtues been proved: faith, hope and love both towards God and towards one's neighbor, as well as the cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude, and also related virtues, to a heroic degree, and holiness in this particular case and in what aspect?".

After a thorough analysis of the testimonies of witnesses, but above all after a substantive in-depth analysis and analysis of the entire process documentation collected, it should be stated that the collected documents and all evidence during the beatification process of Fr. Aleksander Woźny during the diocesan phase are sufficient to get to know not only the life of the servant of God, but also the development of the fame of holiness and heroic virtues. The selection of documents and their division placed in *Positio* is correct and correct. When editing the issue, all the guidelines of the Vatican Dicastery for the Causes of Saints were preserved.

As Fr. Zdzisław Kijas, OFMConv, rightly notes: "The spirituality of our Servant of God strikes a certain 'being'. He made of his life one great "encounter" with God, in which he included every encounter with man. He was therefore not a priest of these or other "meetings", but a priest – the shepherd of souls who meets everyone in Christ. In him he discovers their joys and problems, healing them with the light and truth of God. In his life, a kind of *stabilitas* must strike, a spirituality of faithful persistence at the post, i.e. in the same parish"⁷⁴. It was in it that he sanctified himself, developed in it, and it was in it that all the virtues practiced to an above-average degree were reflected, as evidenced by the numerous collected documents of the beatification investigation.

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⁷⁴ Kijas, *Śługa Boży ks. Aleksander Woźny*, 19.

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