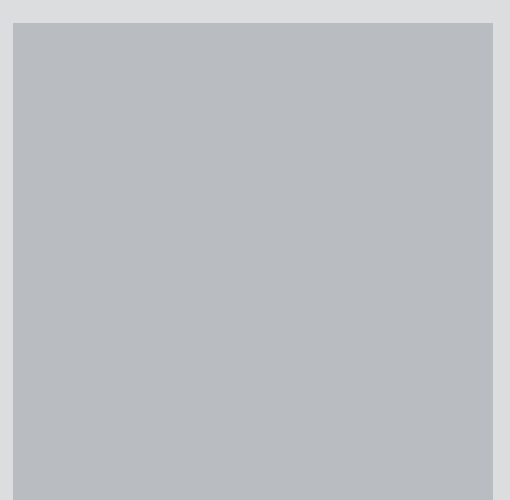
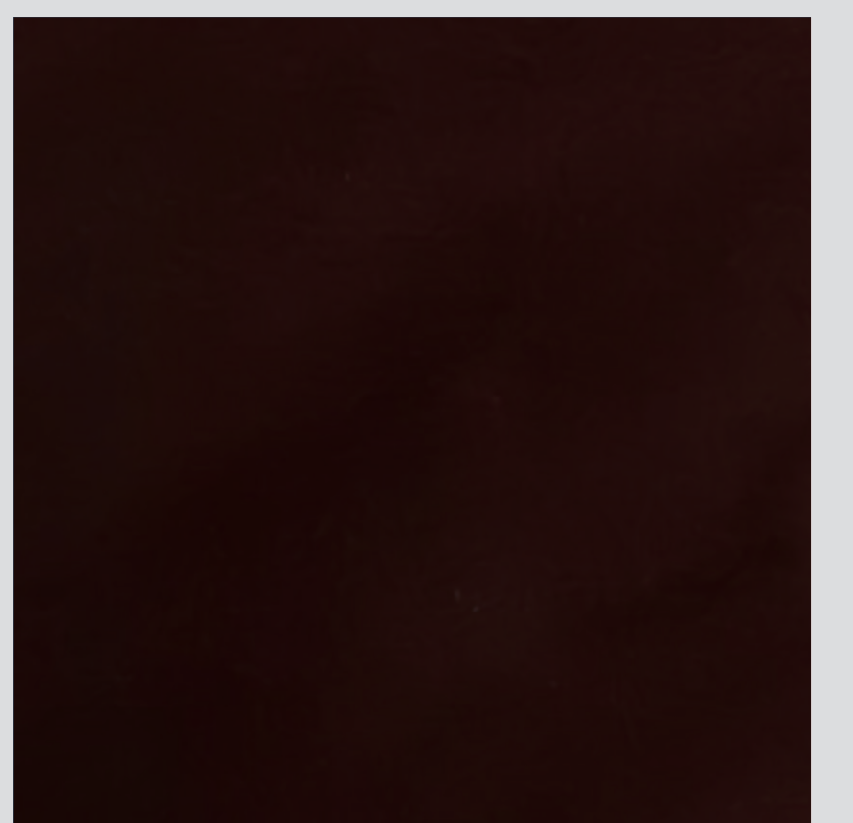
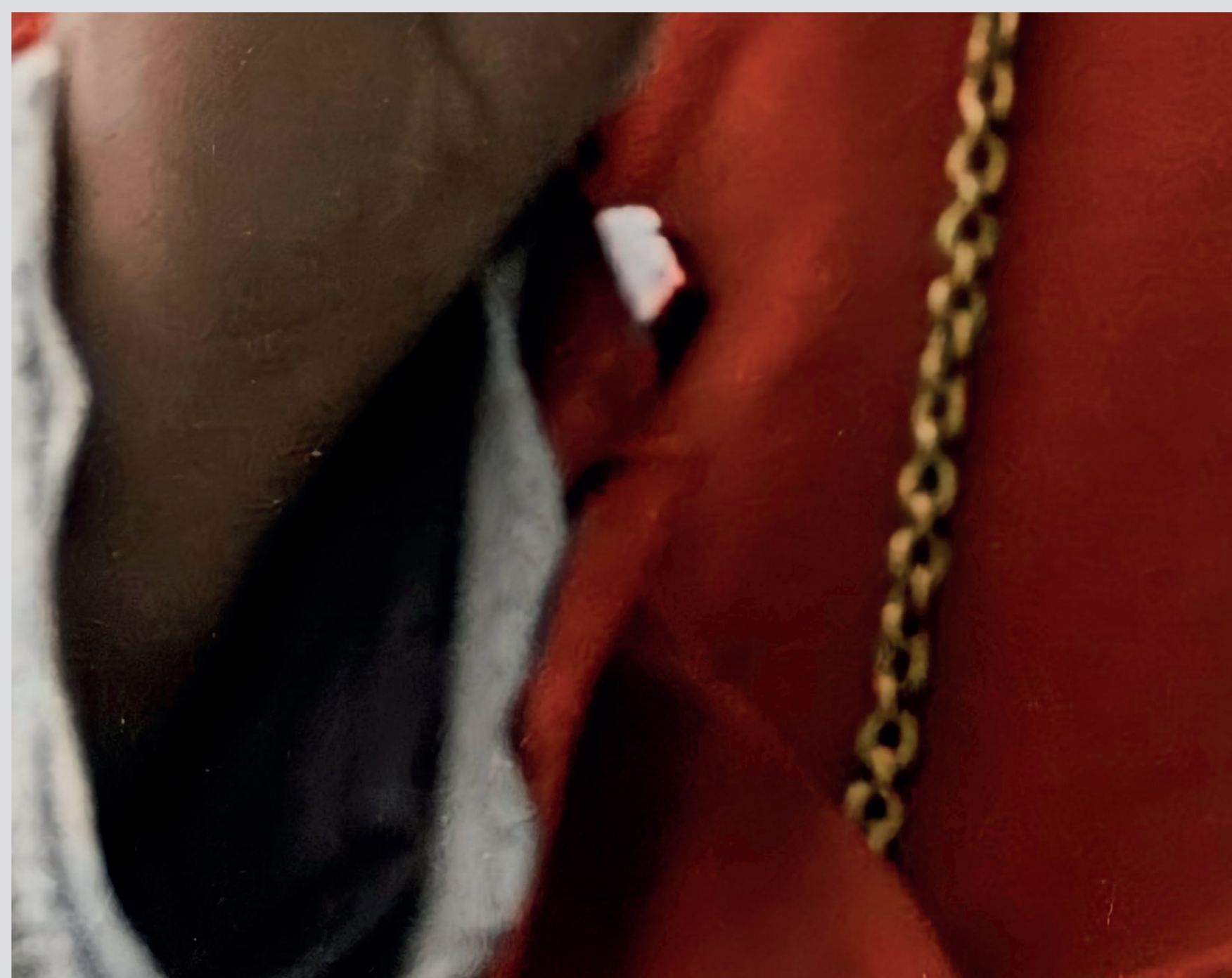
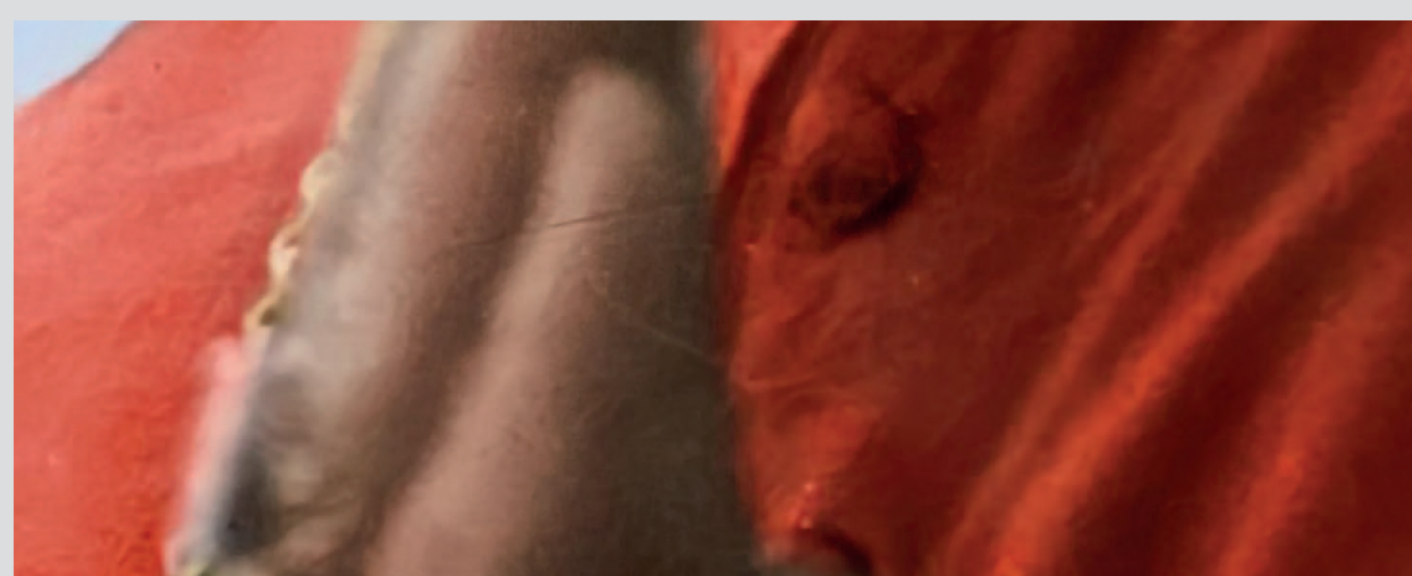


Stefan Wyszyński



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**BIOGRAFIE
WYSTAWY
ELEMENTARNE**

Youthful years

Stefan Wyszyński was born on 3 August 1901 in Zuzela on the Bug River (in the then Russian partition). On the same day, he was baptised in the local parish of the Transfiguration of Our Lord. He was the second child of Stanisław Wyszyński (organist at the local church) and Julianna, née Karp.

In 1908, he began his education at the local school and continued it in nearby Andrzejewo, where the family moved in 1910. Several months after the move, his mother died. Having completed his primary education, he entered the Wojciech Górski Gymnasium in Warsaw in 1912. The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 forced him to continue his education in other places: at the Private Seven-Class School of Commerce in Łomża, and from 1917 at the Pius X Lyceum (Lower Seminary) in Włocławek, where he passed his examination for the second school certificate in 1920.

→ *I was born in Nadbuże, where Podlasie and Mazovia meet. I still remember the simple people I observed as a boy. Their calm, trusting faith was astonishing.*
Stefan Wyszyński, *Kazania i przemówienia autoryzowane* [Authorised Sermons and Speeches], vol. XXVIII, Warsaw 1968, p. 287.

Eleven-year-old Stefan Wyszyński before departing to a Warsaw secondary school. Andrzejewo, 1912.

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Priesthood

In 1920, he entered the Major Seminary in Włocławek. He was ordained a priest on 3 August 1924 in the Chapel of Our Lady in the Basilica Cathedral in Włocławek.

In 1929, he obtained a doctorate in canon law at the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) based on his dissertation entitled „Family, Church and State Rights to School”. From 1931 to 1939, he was a lecturer and professor at the seminary in Włocławek and published over 100 texts related to Catholic social teaching. From 1932, he was the editor-in-chief of the Włocławek monthly „Ateneum Kapłańskie”.

He founded and directed the Christian University of Workers. Also, educational activities in Christian trade unions was conducted by him. He organised the Catholic Youth Workers' Union and a network of Catholic People's Universities.



↑ The Wyszyński family in 1926. From the left: Janina, Stefan, and Stanisława. Seated: half-mother Eugenia née Godlewska, father Stanisław, half-siblings Julia and Tadeusz.

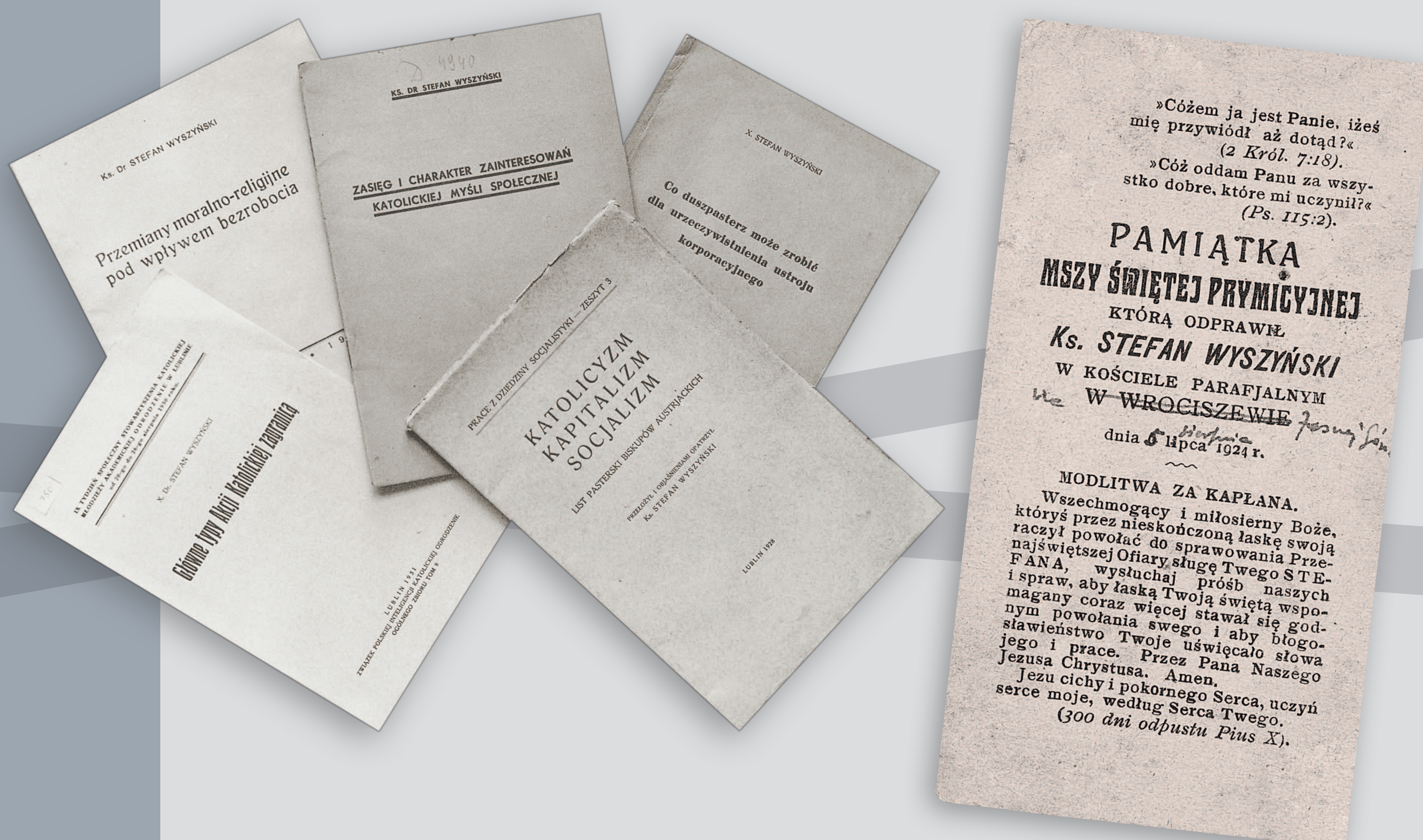
📷 AIPSKW

→ Publications by Stefan Wyszyński from 1928-1931.

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→ → Stefan Wyszyński's first mass holy card (reverse).

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During a retreat before his ordination to the priesthood in 1924, Stefan Wyszyński wrote down 10 principles of the inner life entitled *Time Deum et Illi Honorem* [Fear God and Honour Him]. He carried them in his breviary for the rest of his life.

- 1. Speak little - live without noise - silence.**
- 2. Do much, but without fever, calmly.**
- 3. Work systematically.**
- 4. Avoid dreaming - do not think about the future, it is a thing of God.**
- 5. Do not waste time, for it does not belong to you; life is purposeful and so is every moment of it.**
- 6. Have a good intention in everything.**
- 7. Pray often during your work - sine me nihil facere [without Me you can do nothing].**
- 8. Respect everyone, for you are inferior to them: God opposes the proud.**
- 9. *Omni custodia custodi cor tuum quia ex ipso vita procedit* [Guard your heart with all your might, for life flows from it].**
- 10. *Misericordias Dei in aeternum cantabo* [I will sing of God's mercy forever].**

1939-45

World War II



↑ Priest Stefan Wyszyński with teachers and pupils of the centre for blind people in Laski. July 1943.
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→ With blind children before receiving their First Communion. Laski, 1942.
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During the occupation, he hid in various localities to avoid being arrested by the Gestapo. He was a chaplain to the blind in Kozłówka and Żułów in the Lublin region, among other places. From June 1942, he served as a chaplain in the Institute for the Blind run by his mentor, Father Władysław Kornilowicz and the Franciscan nun Elżbieta Róża Czacka in Laski near Warsaw. As „Radwan III” he was a chaplain of the Home Army „Kampinos” Group; he worked, among others, during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944 in the insurgent hospital in Laski. He also conducted lectures and secret teaching for the youth from the circle of the Sodality of Our Lady.

↓ A commemorative plaque on a war cemetery in the village of Wiersze in the Kampinos Forest. There are 54 soldiers of the Home Army „Kampinos” Group buried there.

📷 Nasze Łomianki Association.



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At the head of the Polish Church

On 4 March 1946, Pope Pius XII appointed Stefan Wyszyński Bishop of Lublin, and on 12 November 1948, Archbishop Metropolitan of Gniezno and Warsaw - thus Primate of Poland. In his episcopal coat of arms, Rev. Stefan Wyszyński placed the words „Soli Deo” [To God alone] and the image of the Virgin Mary of Jasna Góra. For the purpose of protecting the Polish Church from the growing Stalinist terror, Primate Wyszyński decided to conclude a compromise between the Episcopate and the communist authorities, enshrined in the „Porozumienie państwo-Kościół” [State-Church Agreement] of 14 April 1950. The state party agreed to the liaison of the Church in Poland with the Holy See, religious education in schools, religious services in prisons, hospitals and the Armed Forces, and the activities of the Catholic University of Lublin. In return, the Episcopate pledged its loyalty to the authorities, condemned the anti-communist underground, and punished clergy that supported them with church sanctions. On 12 January 1953, Stefan Wyszyński received a cardinal nomination.



← The Virgin Mary of Jasna Góra in my Primate seal is not an adornment but a binding programme.
Stefan Wyszyński, *Dzieła zebrane* [Collected Works], vol. II, Warsaw 1995, p. 172.
AIPSKW

→ I ask only one thing of you, do not lose trust in us, faith in me, because in the days of tribulation you will need great faith, perfect fidelity to God and Homeland.
Stefan Wyszyński, *Dzieła zebrane* [Collected Works], vol. I, Warsaw 1991, p. 19.
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↓ Primate Wyszyński during his visitation of the parish in Dąbrówka Kościelna in the Gniezno Archdiocese, September 1949.
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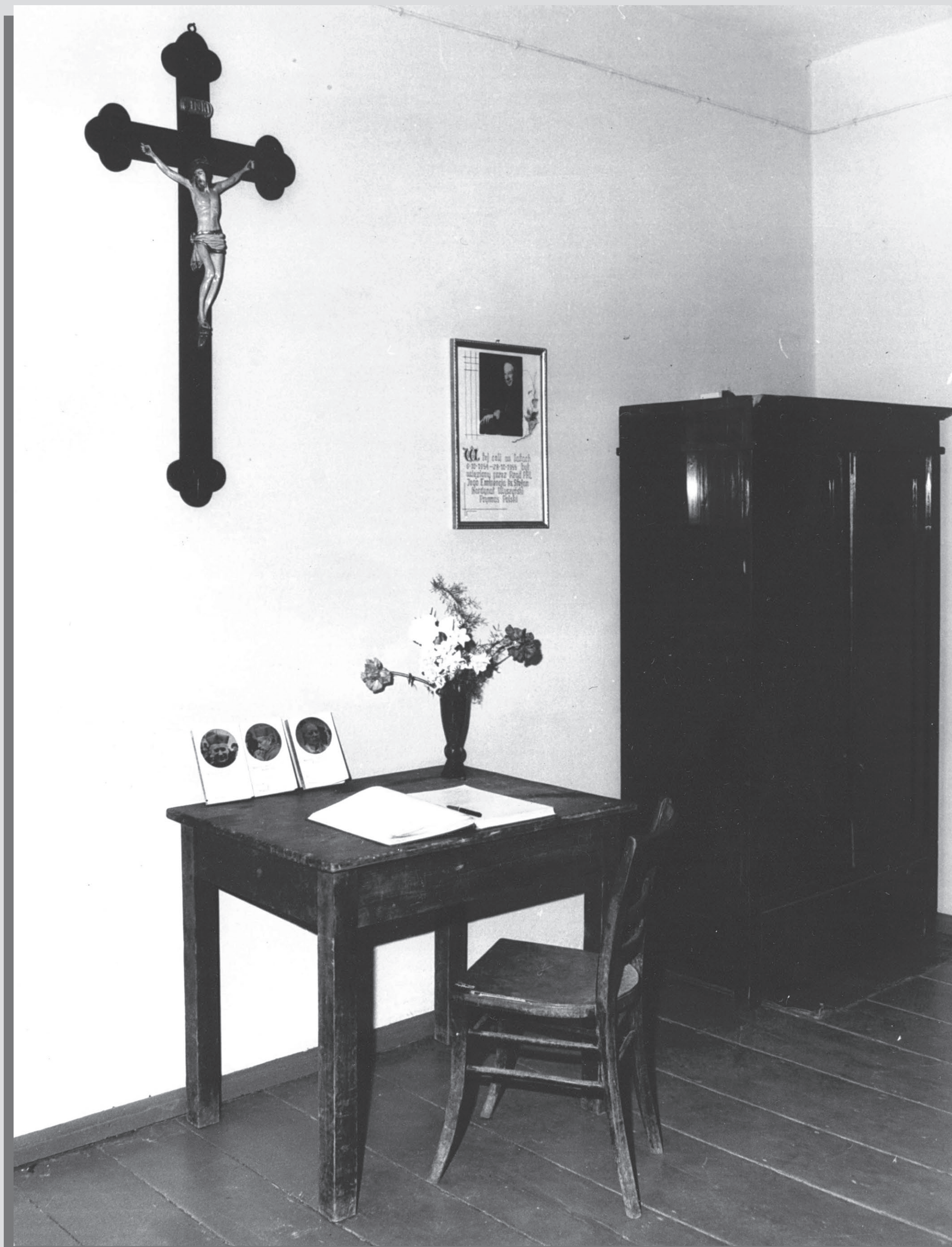
Non possumus!

Despite the signed Agreement, the communists intensified their fight against the Church. Religion was removed from schools, lower major seminaries were closed, and priests were arrested. The propaganda campaign continued. On 9 February 1953, the Council of State of the People's Republic of Poland issued a decree on the creation and staffing of church positions under the control of state authorities.

The Primate was the main author of a memorandum sent to the authorities by the Polish Episcopate on 8 May 1953. It ended with the words: „We must not lay the things of God on the altars of Caesar. Non possumus! [We cannot].”

On 25 September 1953, Stefan Wyszyński was arrested at the Warsaw Archbishops' House. He was held in isolation and under constant surveillance in former Catholic monasteries in Rywałd, Stoczek Warmiński, Prudnik Śląski, and Komańcza for three years. On the wave of the „October Thaw”, the communists asked him to return to Warsaw, to which he agreed on the condition that other bishops would be released and the lost freedom of the catholic Church will be restored. On 28 October 1956, the Primate returned to the capital.

→ Primate Wyszyński after his return from Komańcza blesses the faithful arriving at the Archbishops' House in Warsaw, 28 October 1956.
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← The Primate's cell in Prudnik Śląski.
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1956


The Jasna Góra Vows of the Polish Nation

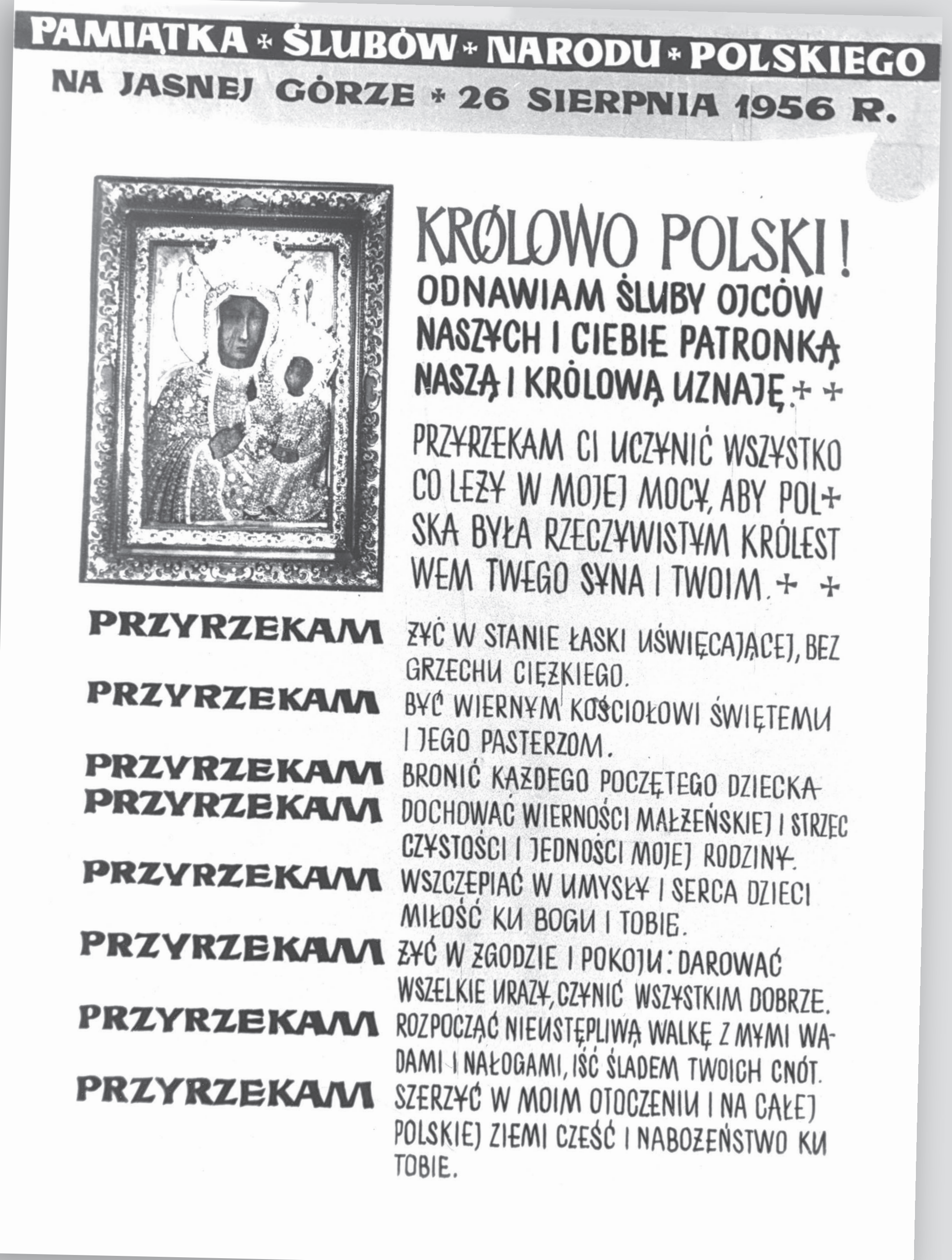
The imprisoned Primate decided to renew the vows that King John II Casimir Vasa had taken in the dramatic moments for the Poland on 1 April 1656 in the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Lvov. On 16 May 1956, when in Komańcza, Stefan Wyszyński wrote a prayer text in the form of vows. It was a programme for the nation's religious and moral renewal on the 300th anniversary of the Lviv Vows and the preparation for the 1000th anniversary of the Baptism of Poland.

On 26 August 1956, at Jasna Góra in Częstochowa, in the presence of about one million worshippers from all over the country, the vows were read out by Bishop Michał Klepacz, the then acting President of the Polish Episcopate. White and red flowers were placed on the empty seat of the Primate of Poland. It was the most prominent religious manifestation in the countries of the Soviet Bloc. Ten minutes before the reading of the proclamation in Częstochowa, Cardinal Wyszyński took the Jasna Góra Vows in the place of his imprisonment in Komańcza, in front of a picture of the Virgin Mary.

→ We promise!
 Photo from Zdzisław Sowiński's collection



→ The empty seat of Primate Wyszyński during the taking of the Jasna Góra Vows of the Polish Nation in Częstochowa.
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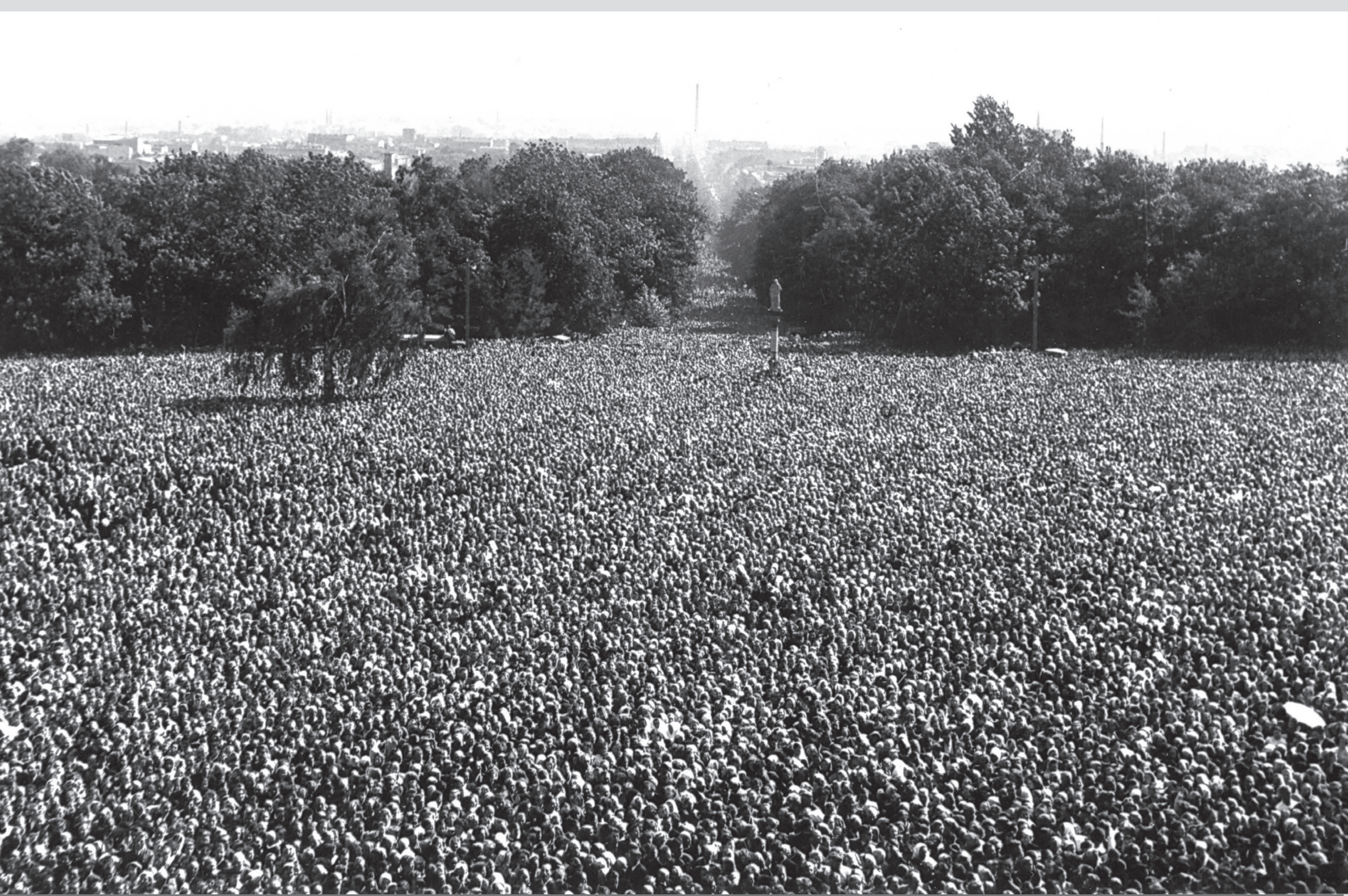
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1957-65

The Great Novena

Primate Wyszyński created and led the Great Novena, a nationwide pastoral programme to put the Jasna Góra Vows of the Polish Nation into practice and prepare Poles for the Millennium of Baptism. Each year of 1957-1966 had its motto dedicated to fundamental values such as life, love, faith, family, and nation.

These were great national retreats, with celebrations, prayers, pilgrimages, and renewal of vows. The peregrination of a copy of the icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Polish parishes accompanied them. The icon was “arrested” on 2 September 1966 by the militia and taken to Jasna Góra with a ban on peregrination. From 1960 the communist authorities organised alternative secular celebrations of the Millennium of the Polish State to draw Poles away from the Novena.



↗ The faithful came to the renewal of the Jasna Góra Vows as part of the Great Novena. Czestochowa, 26 August 1957.


📷 AIPSKW

← The parade as part of official celebrations of the Millennium of the Polish State. The inscription on the car: “PE (physical education) raises combat readiness”. Warsaw, 22 July 1966.

📷 Leszek Łożyński/REPORTER



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***This is our experience of ten
centuries, a thousand years.
Our jubilee - it is the Millennium.
Our name is - Millennium!***

Stefan Wyszyński, *Dzieła zebrane* [Collected Works], vol. XVII, Warsaw 2016, p. 243.

↑ The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Jasna Góra, 15 August 1966. Primate Stefan Wyszyński on a kneeler.


📷 NAC; colouring: Centrum Życia i Rodziny, for the periodical "Przyjacieli Rodziny".


Millennium of the Baptism of Poland

1966-67



The millennium celebrations in 1966 were inaugurated in the cradle of Polish Christianity - in Gniezno (9-16 April) and Poznań (17 April). They culminated in celebrations at Jasna Góra in Częstochowa (2-4 May), with the act of Poland's consecration "into the maternal slavery of Mary, Mother of the Church, for the freedom of the Church of Christ", celebrated in all Polish parishes. Again, there was an empty seat on the ramparts of Jasna Góra as the communists did not agree to the visit of Pope Paul VI, invited by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński to Poland. Millennium pilgrimages of professional and social groups came to the shrine of the Queen of Poland, and solemn masses - attended by the Primate and hundreds of thousands of the faithful - were celebrated in Polish cities until mid-1967.

↑ Millennium celebrations
at Jasna Góra, 3 May 1966.
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→ Cardinal Wyszyński
preaching the Millennium
Homily. Next to his secretary
- priest Władysław Padacz.
Lublin, 6 May 1966.
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Stefan Wyszyński and Karol Wojtyła

They met for the first time in August 1958 in Warsaw, when the Primate summoned Father Karol Wojtyła to inform him of his appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of Cracow. From then on, they worked closely together, including during the Second Vatican Council and in Millennium undertakings. The Communist Secret Service did everything to divide and discredit them and break up the Polish Church. However, there was always understanding, loyal cooperation, and friendship between the two cardinals.

Stefan Wyszyński wanted Karol Wojtyła to be his successor. It happened otherwise. On 16 October 1978, the Vatican's College of Cardinals elected Karol Wojtyła as Pope, who took the name of John Paul II. Cardinal Wyszyński, who was also one of the candidates to the throne of Peter, had a part in the election.

↓ Audience for Poles with the new Pope John Paul II. In the photo, the Holy Father and the Primate of Poland, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński. Vatican City, 23 October 1978.

📷 AIPSKW



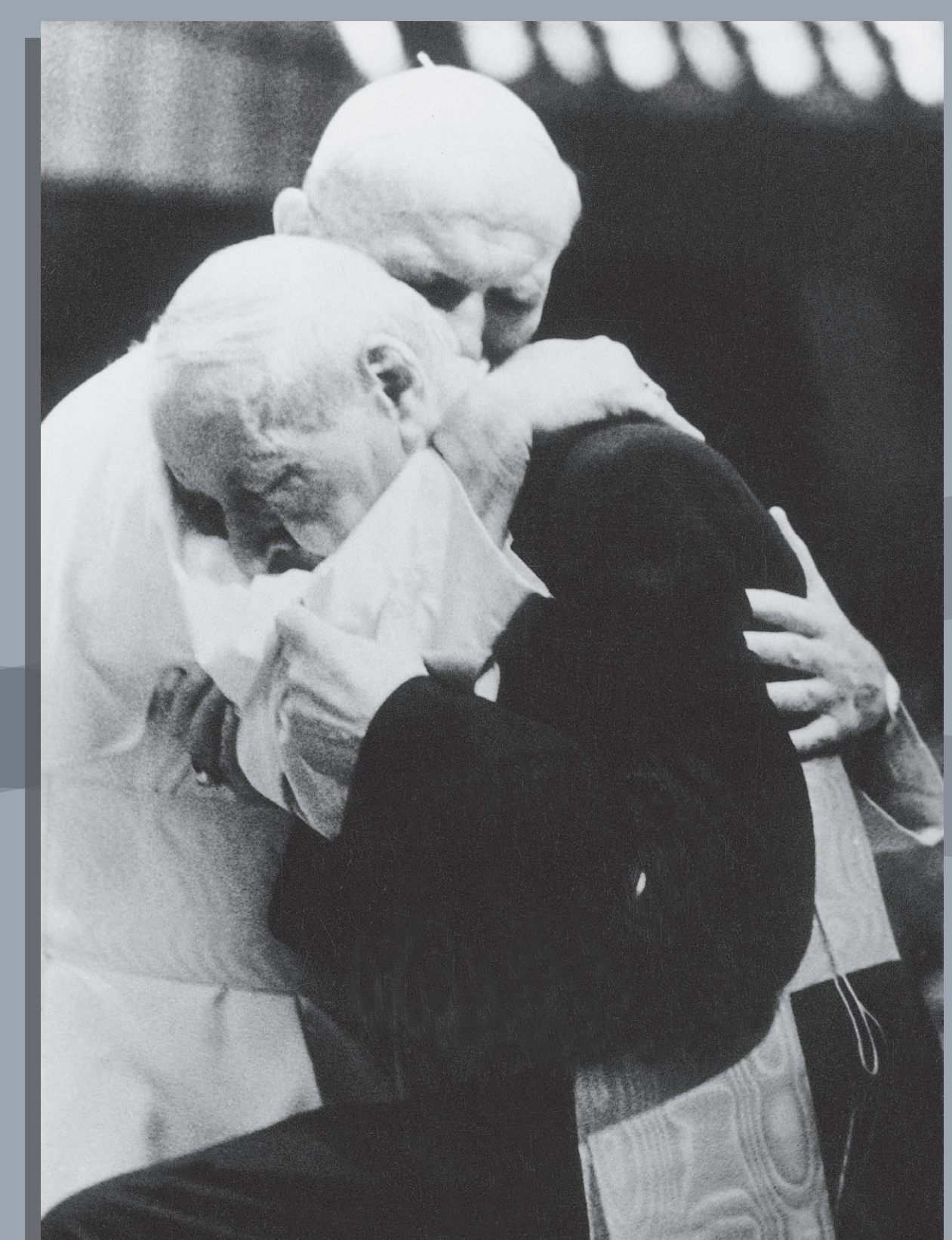
↑ Primate Wyszyński and Archbishop Wojtyła during their holidays in Podhale. Bachledówka, July 1973.

📷 AIPSKW



↑ Primate Stefan Wyszyński blesses the faithful during the Millennium celebrations. Also seen from the right: Archbishop of Krakow Karol Wojtyła, Bishop of Płock Bogdan Sikorski, Archbishop of Poznań Antoni Baraniak. Behind the Primate, his secretary - priest infultat Władysław Padacz. Płock, 13 November 1966.

📷 AIPSKW



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Per Mariam Soli Deo

→ Audience with Pope John XXIII. Cardinal Wyszyński presents the Pope with a list of Polish Marian sanctuaries. Vatican City, 29 November 1958.
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Stefan Wyszyński attached great importance to the development of Marian devotion, which is why in 1964, he had Mary proclaimed Mother of the Church by Pope Paul VI. He often expanded his episcopal motto with the words: “Per Mariam - Soli Deo” [Through Mary - To God Himself]. From 1946, he crowned 41 and re-crowned 6 Marian images in Poland.

His last great pastoral programme was the preparations for the jubilee of the six hundredth anniversary of the Marian sanctuary at Jasna Góra in Częstochowa, which he announced in 1976.

← Primate Wyszyński crowns the statue of Our Lady of Ludźmierz. 15 August 1963.
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↓ Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński with a painting of Our Lady, particularly dear to him, painted by Prof. L. Torwirt in 1957. Stryżawa, July 1961.
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Statesman



Stefan Wyszyński was Primate for 33 years in the times of the People's Republic of Poland, a communist state imposed on Poles, aiming at their total atheisation. From 1946 until the end of his life, he was constantly under surveillance and harassed by the security apparatus. He repeatedly negotiated the conditions of coexistence of the Church and the hostile state with the dignitaries of the People's Republic of Poland, always bearing in mind the nation's peaceful development without bloodshed. Stefan Wyszyński's great work was building the structures of the Polish Church on the lands incorporated into Poland after World War II. It was sanctioned by Pope Paul VI on 28 June 1972 with the Bull "Episcoporum Poloniae Coetus", issued thanks to the Primate's efforts.

Despite deteriorating health in the early 1980s, he became personally involved in the struggle for the legalisation of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union of Individual Farmers "Solidarity", which was crowned with success on 12 May 1981.

↳ Cardinal Wyszyński delivers a homily during the Millennium celebrations on Ostrów Tumski. Wrocław, 16 October 1966.

📷 AIPSKW

← One of Stefan Wyszyński's last photos. The Delegation of Farmers "Solidarity" visiting the Primate. Warsaw, 6 February 1981.

📷 from Dawid Chrobak's family archive



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Farewell

1981

In 1981, Stefan Wyszyński's health rapidly deteriorated. On 12 May, he celebrated his last Mass. He died on the day of the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord on 28 May at 4.40 a.m. Three days later, on 31 May 1981, the funeral ceremonies in Warsaw were attended by hundreds of thousands of our compatriots, numerous national and foreign delegations, clergy, and laity. Thousands of people wishing to pay their last respects to the Primate passed in front of the sarcophagus with the deceased's body in the Archcathedral Basilica of St John the Baptist. After five years, his sarcophagus was transferred from the Archbishops' Crypt in the Cathedral's basement to a chapel in the northern nave of the Cathedral dedicated to him alone. In July 1981, Archbishop Józef Glemp succeeded Primate Stefan Wyszyński.

→ The funeral wreath sash with the inscription: "To the Uncrowned King of Poland", made in tribute to Stefan Wyszyński. The Seminary Church in Warsaw, 29 - 31 May 1981.
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→ Processional carrying of Primate Stefan Wyszyński's coffin after the funeral Mass to the Cathedral of St John the Baptist.
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The Primate of the Millennium


Commonly called the Primate of the Millennium, Stefan Wyszyński remains in our memory. His monuments, streets, squares, schools, and housing estates named after him bear witness to that.

In Zuzela (Mazowieckie Voivodeship), where Stefan Wyszyński was born, there is a museum of his childhood years with a reconstruction of his flat and school classroom. There is also the baptismal font where he was baptised and a bell “Stefan Wyszyński” weighing 1800 kg. In Rywałd, Stoczek Klasztorny, Prudnik, and Komańcza, the period of the Primate’s imprisonment (from 25 September 1953 to 26 October 1956) is commemorated.

The Act of the Sejm of 3 September 1999 transformed the Academy of Catholic Theology into the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. In 2016, by the decision of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, the John Paul II and Primate Wyszyński Museum was established to commemorate and disseminate the life work of these figures.



← The Monument to Primate Stefan Wyszyński at Krakowskie Przedmieście in Warsaw. Contemporary photograph.  Andrzej Michalik / AIPN

↓ Primate’s tomb chapel in the Archcathedral of St John the Baptist in Warsaw. Contemporary photograph.  Andrzej Michalik / AIPN

→ In 1989, Primate Józef Glemp began efforts to elevate Stefan Wyszyński to the altar. On 23 April 2021, the Metropolitan of Warsaw, Cardinal Kazimierz Nycz announced that the beatification of Stefan Wyszyński would take place on 12 September 2021 in Warsaw together with the beatification of the Venerable Servant of God Elżbieta Róża Czacka. In the photo, Stefan Wyszyński, Mother Elżbieta Róża Czacka and Maria Okońska. Łaski, September 1946.

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The Primate's Institute

From 1942, Fr Wyszyński was the spiritual guardian of a group of eight women, living on the model of Christian monastic communities. The women belonging to this group were called "Ósemki" [Eights], and they were led by Maria Okońska from the clandestine Marian Sodality. The celibate women of the congregation were always among the most trusted co-workers of the Primate and had a great share in all his works.

Since 1993 "Ósemka" exists as the Institute of Primate Wyszyński. It preserves the heritage and teaching of Stefan Wyszyński, carrying out archival, publishing, scientific, educational, and pedagogical activities. In Choszczówka in Warsaw, where Cardinal Wyszyński rested and wrote his pastoral letters, the Institute runs the Centre of Jasna Góra Mother of the Church.

In 2007. The Institute was awarded the medal "Gloria Artis for Merit to Culture" - given by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage.

→ Primate Stefan Wyszyński's room in Choszczówka. Contemporary photograph.
📷 Piotr Życieński / AIPN



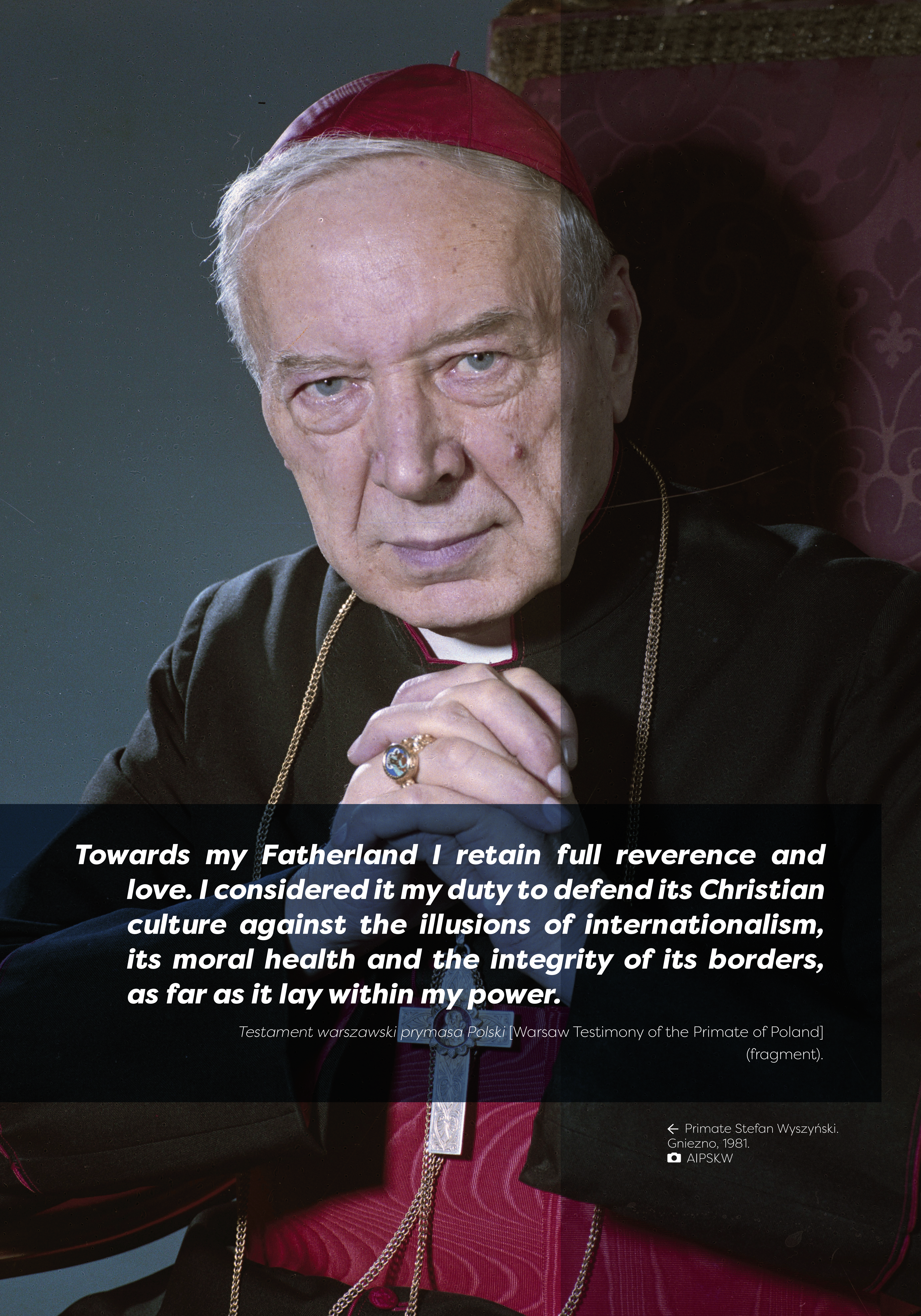
↑ The "Ósemki" recite the evening prayer with the Primate and Archbishop Wojtyła. From the left: Archbishop Karol Wojtyła, Teresa Romanowska, Primate Stefan Wyszyński, Krystyna Szrajter, Urszula Grzelak, Katarzyna Michalska, Alicja Balcerzak, and Filomena Morawiec. The Chapel in Bachledówka, July 1972.

📷 AIPSKW

→ Pope Paul VI's gift to Primate Stefan Wyszyński - a rosary, kept in the Primate's Institute. Contemporary photograph.
📷 Piotr Życieński / AIPN



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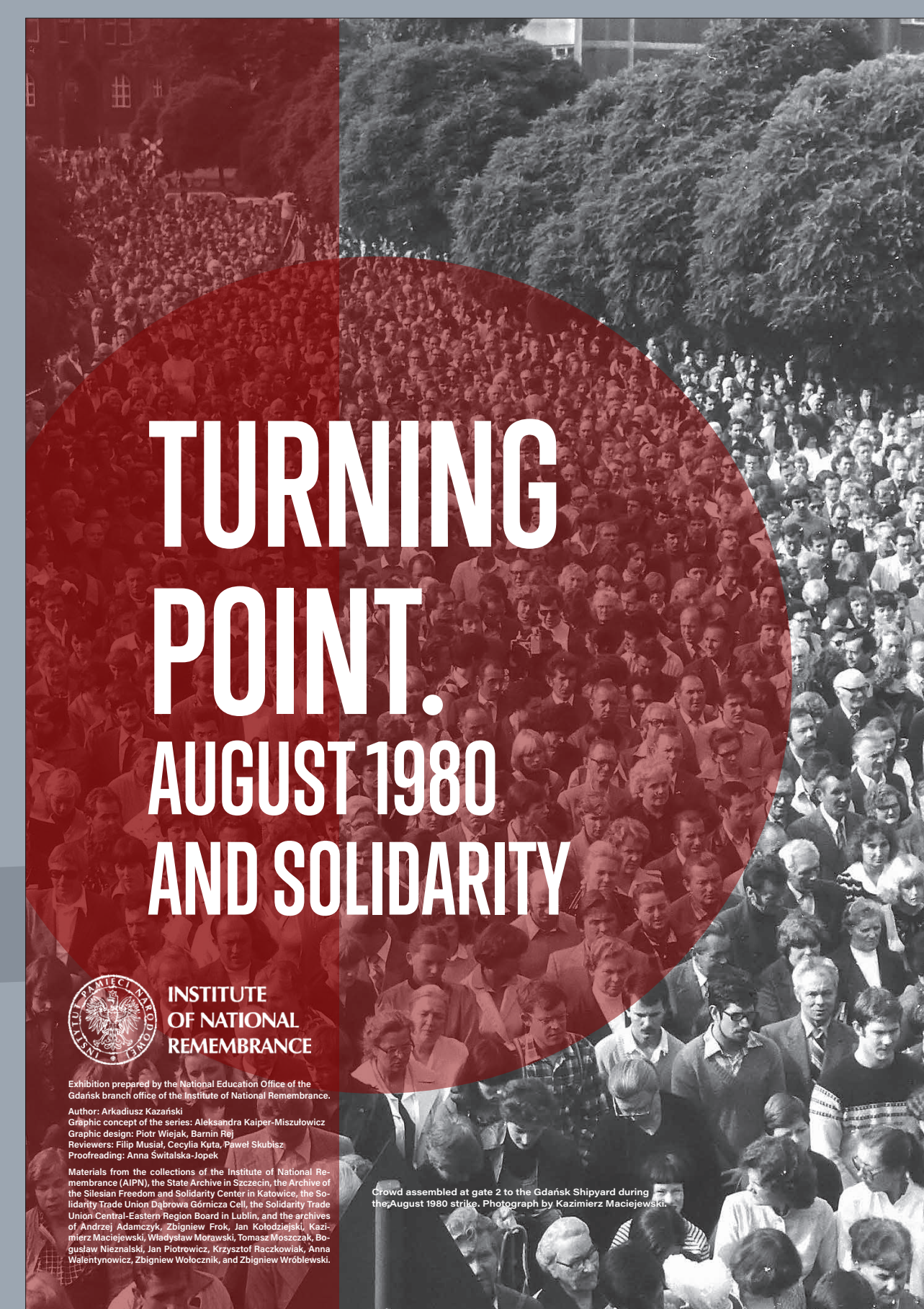
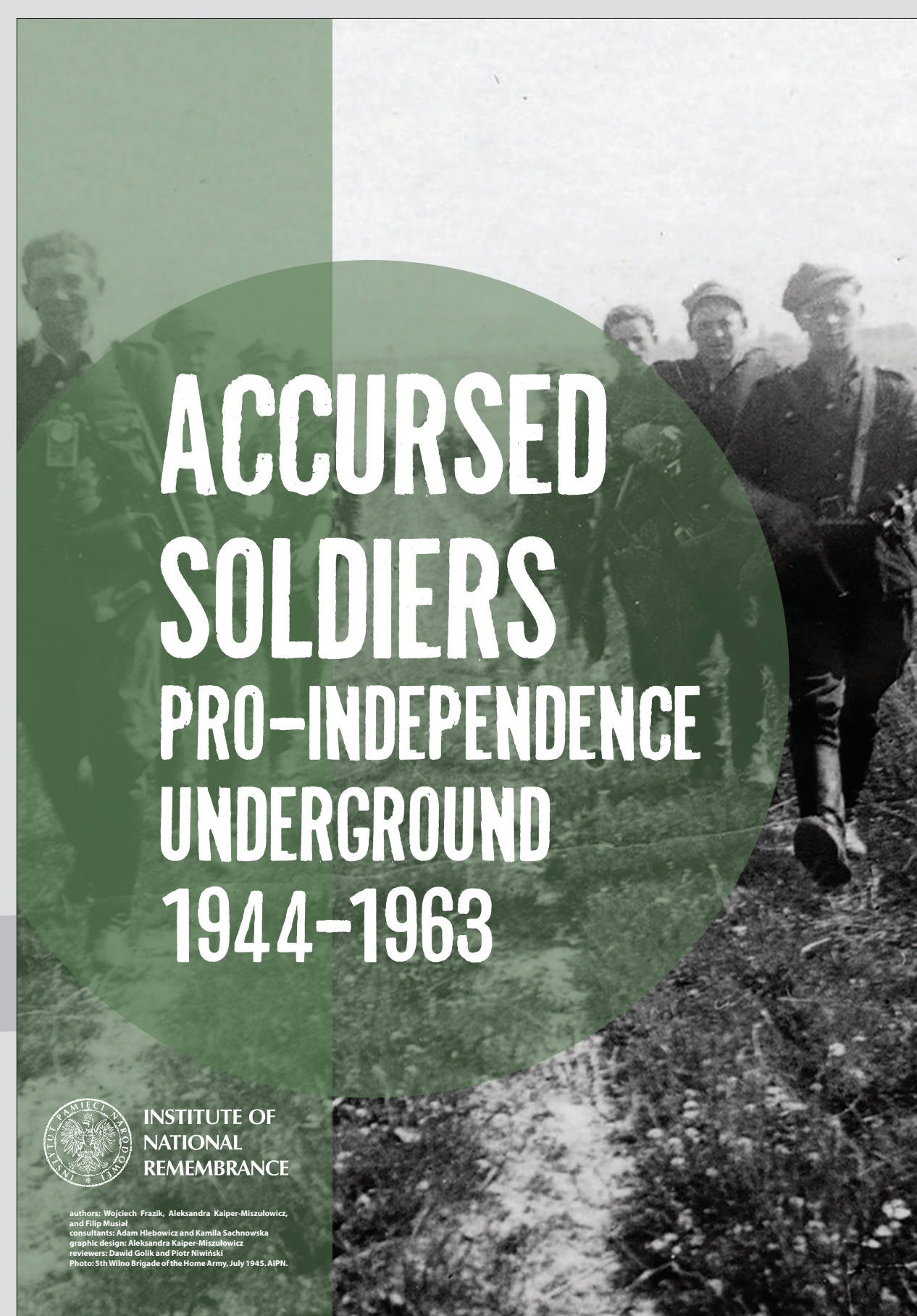
A close-up portrait of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate of Poland. He is wearing a red zucchetto and a black cassock with a red sash. His hands are clasped in prayer, and he is wearing a large, ornate ring on his left hand. The background is dark and textured.

Towards my Fatherland I retain full reverence and love. I considered it my duty to defend its Christian culture against the illusions of internationalism, its moral health and the integrity of its borders, as far as it lay within my power.

*Testament warszawski prymasa Polski [Warsaw Testimony of the Primate of Poland]
(fragment).*

← Primate Stefan Wyszyński.
Gniezno, 1981.
📷 AIPSKW

See more exhibitions at www.edukacja.ipn.gov.pl



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