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THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN THE G.D.R.: A CHURCH IN SOCIALISM

by Martin N. Walton

Martin Walton (United Methodist and Netherlands Reformed) was born in 1953 and raised in Texas. Received his B.A. in 1975 from Colorado College and then spent two years as a "fraternal worker" in Berlin doing youth and ecumenical work in a Lutheran congregation. During that time travelled to the G.D.R., Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. Moved to the Netherlands in 1978 and received a theology degree from University of Leiden in 1983. He is currently continuing his graduate studies at the same institution.

When the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was created in 1949 it was the only socialist government in Eastern Europe confronted by a Protestant majority church. But it was not just any Protestant church. On the one hand there were the demoralized remains of the "German Christian" majority which had given unconditional support to Hitler and his diabolical endeavors. On the other hand there was the remnant of the Confessing Church which had sought to be faithful to the Biblical calling in the catastrophic years of national-socialism and which now sought to lay a new foundation for a regenerated church.

The obstacles, however, were great. To begin with there reigned a general uncertainty and mistrust on both sides. What could the church expect from the new communist, atheistic government? The prejudice against communism was much alive. On the other hand what should the government think of a Christian majority which had sold its soul to Nazism and which had historically identified itself with the status quo in the West? There had been, of course, the minority of the Confessing Church, but the vast majority of Christians had supported or accepted Hitler. The few Christians and few communists who had met each other in Nazi prisons were not enough to engender a conciliatory atmosphere.

The mistrust of the government was increased by the
insistence of the eight provincial churches in the GDR on maintaining institutional unity with the sister churches in West Germany. This refusal by the churches to conform to the new national boundaries helped keep the desire for a united Germany alive, a desire which the young socialist government viewed as a threat to its sovereignty. The tension reached a high point in 1957 when the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), officially representative of the Protestant provincial churches in both East and West, signed an agreement with the West German military to provide chaplains. To whom was the allegiance of the church in East Germany, to its own government or to West Germany? Was the EKD a NATO-church?

The fifties were thus marked by tensions between church and state. But although some laypersons and pastors were imprisoned, the confrontation never reached the Stalinist severity of most other East bloc countries. A critical issue in those years was the status of the church's youth and student groups. After the war the youth groups had enjoyed a new popularity without there having been, however, an adequate response either to the recent experiences under fascism or to the new challenge of socialism. In 1953 the symbol of the Christian youth, a world globe with a cross, was forbidden. The youth and student groups were accused of fascist ideas and Western loyalties.

The intensive campaign against Christian youth work subsided the same year, but basic problems remained. The state introduced a socialist youth initiation to rival church confirmation. The policy of the government became one not of persecuting the church but of fencing it in, of limiting the possibilities of the church and its members. The church was to restrict itself to cultic activities like worship and Bible study.

Another obstacle for the church in the GDR was its history as "Volkskirche," a church more or less identified with the people and society at large, a church conformed to the values
and expectations of that society. The results were a hierarchical structure, (too) large buildings requiring maintenance, and an outdated mentality, slow to respond to the new challenge of a socialist reality.

The relatively slow economic development in the GDR compared to the economic miracle ("Wirtschaftswunder") in West Germany caused many to emigrate to the West, especially the trained and educated. It was this economic drain, more than political reasons, which led to the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Among the emigrants were Christians as well. And if they had not actually departed for the West, inwardly they had often emigrated, hoping that the communist storm would blow over and all of Germany could be like the West.

In the meantime the church was decreasing both in membership and influence. Although approximately 55% of the populace of the GDR belongs to a church, only a small minority is active. (Approximate current figures are as follows: 8% Roman Catholic, 1% Free Churches, e.g. Methodists, Baptists, Adventists, Moravians, and 46% Evangelical, i.e. members of the eight provincial Protestant churches discussed here.) The decrease is not only and perhaps not primarily due to government pressure, but to the more general influence of industrialization and secularization, combined with the credibility crisis of the church under fascism and the bankruptcy of the Volkskirche mentality. Financially the church in the GDR is dependent on the church in West Germany, a disturbing fact for many East German Christians, but a further comparison is not unfavorable for the church in the East.

It was in this situation that Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the martyr of the Confessing Church, became of importance for the church in the GDR. His theological heritage helped the leaders of the Evangelical Churches in the GDR to avoid falling to a variety of temptations. Bonhoeffer had pointed out that the world had grown up and managed its own affairs without religion. There was no sense in the church competing for attention or
trying to be utilitarian. Nor would this have been possible in the new socialist setting. The task of the church would be to proclaim God's reality in a world that did not need God.

Certainly the church was not to seek to regain its former power or exploit whatever influence it might still possess. It must neither desire power for itself nor hope to undermine the existing power structures. The Lord of the church is the powerless, crucified Lord. And the powerlessness of the church, Bonhoeffer insisted, should be accepted as an aid in better representing the gospel. The church might again become a renewing force, not by means of political power or social clout, but by means of the Word of God and discipleship.

A rejection of popularity and power does not mean, however, that the church should withdraw into itself, seeking its own self-preservation and becoming a club of those who still believe. While in prison, Bonhoeffer had asserted that even the Confessing Church had been more concerned with its own self-preservation than with witness and service to the world. The church like its Lord is concerned for the redemption of the world. It is a church for others.

The theological impulse of Bonhoeffer helped the church to respond to the new and changing situation. It was furthered by such persons as the church superintendent of Cottbus, Günter Jakob, who spoke of a "post-Constantinian" situation (1956) in which Christians must nevertheless submit themselves to the governing authorities in the New Testament sense. Elisabeth Adler of the Evangelical Academy in East Berlin outlined a position not of resistance or co-existence, but of pro-existence (1960), following Jeremiah's advice to seek the welfare and peace of the city (Jer. 29:7).

It took some time before the church at large accepted the new situation and not without pressure from outside. After the Berlin Wall was erected in 1961 contacts between the eastern and western members of the EKD became increasingly difficult and thoroughly impractical. During the sixties the awareness grew
that the church in the GDR needed to recognize the political reality if it was to play an affirmative role in the developing society. In 1968 Bishop Mitzenheim of Thuringen introduced the formula "church in socialism."\(^4\) In the following year the eight provincial churches in the GDR took a decisive step. Affirming the spiritual fraternity but breaking the institutional unity with the churches in West Germany they created the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR. (It was not until 1972 that the provincial church of Berlin-Brandenburg was split into "west" and "east" regions.) In 1970 the Federation defined itself as a "community of witness and service of churches in the socialist society of the GDR,"\(^5\) i.e., "in this society, not beside it, not against it," as formulated in 1971.\(^6\)

Bishop Albrecht Schönherr of East Berlin (1972-1981), a former student of Bonhoeffer and for many years chairman of the Federation, put it as follows: "For God even a country which emphatically professes Marxist-Leninism is not a blank spot on the map of His earth."\(^7\) (Implicit in all this is the understanding that the nature of communism is not equivocal with national-socialism. There is a humanistic core to communism which can be appealed to, whatever the excesses of communist inspired governments.) The church is always called to practice its task and its responsibility for humankind in the place where it is to be found.

Again it must be emphasized that this response of the church was a slow and often painful process not shared by all. Anti-communism did not just disappear. It was kept alive by continuing incidents of discrimination and by government pressure and limitations. Among some there remained a continuing desire for reunification with the more affluent and more "successful" West Germany. And some still remain categorically opposed to an atheistic state. In response to this, however, it has been pointed out by such persons as Bishop Werner Krusche of Magdeburg that the opposition between Marxism and Christianity is not absolute, the ideology being only one factor in the
social reality. (For example, provisions for health care, the social insurance, and the absence of unemployment are social realities that are to be valued.) Furthermore, it is not so much the atheistic components of the ideology which are a problem for the church as it is its absolutistic character.

There are others who would favor a position of indifference regarding political affairs. The church has only to proclaim the gospel. In practice this attitude generally leads to a sort of double life, outward conformity in society strictly separated from one's private life as a Christian. Such a double life of outward conformity and privatization is characteristic of many non-Christian citizens of the GDR as well.

Besides opposition or indifference there is a third position which the church has refused to take, and that is one of conformity or corroboration. The East German Christian Democratic Union, one of the several smaller political parties subservient to the ruling Socialist Unity Party, sees the intentions of Christianity as being substantially realized in the social programs of communism. It seeks also to win Christians for active support of the socialist government. Christians perhaps draw upon their own motivation but should in practical matters accept the leadership of the socialist state.

There are some in the CDU who appeal in this to Luther's teaching on two kingdoms. The church's dominion is that of proclamation and salvation. The general welfare, on the other hand, falls under the dominion of the state. In the former faith is determinant; in the latter human understanding and ability. Formally speaking, this coincides with the position of those pious Christians who opt for political indifference. The twist given to this teaching by some CDU sympathizers is the resolute choice for socialism (and implicitly for the real existent socialism in the GDR) while reducing Christianity to a private affair.

The more reformed (Calvinist) emphasis on the Lordship of Christ such as advocated by Karl Barth in the Barmen Declaration
of the Confessing Church (1934) has served as a corrective in this matter.\textsuperscript{11} Christ is Lord even over the atheistic, socialist leaders of the GDR. This liberating insight allows the church to positively but critically practice its service and witness. It was Provost Heino Falcke who in 1972 stated that Christ liberates us from the alternatives of either rejection or conformity for the sake of specific, discerning cooperation. The title of his speech in Dresden was "Christ liberates--therefore, church for others."\textsuperscript{12}

It is a "critical solidarity" which Christians in the GDR practice, cooperating where they can for the sake of the common welfare, but discerning the incongruences and injustices of their society. It is neither political opposition nor political accommodation, for the church is not a political party. In respecting the sovereignty of their government church leaders choose to practice their social witness not in the limelight of the western, often anti-communist, media, but in direct contacts with their own members and with government officials. It is a matter of discerning when and how to say "Yes," and when and how to say "No."

This position of the church, although not desired by the state, has won its respect. On March 6, 1978, a delegation of church leaders headed by Bishop Schönherr met with the head of state and party in the GDR, Erich Honecker.\textsuperscript{13} In this historic meeting the state implicitly recognized the church as a significant social body of its own accord. In addition, various specific measures were agreed to. The church received limited access to the media as well as to prisons and state homes; permission to import certain theological materials; permission and support for construction and restoration of buildings (with financial support from the West German churches); and financial cooperation and support from the state in matters of church homes, lands and pensions.

The question arose if the church had acted wisely in so "collaborating" with the state and "insuring" its own position.
Was the state, realizing that it was losing influence and control over its populace, hoping to use the church as a stabilizing factor in society? Some were uncertain.

A fundamental ideological dialogue did not become possible, but, assert church leaders, that need not hinder agreement on practical matters. The March 6, 1978 meeting continues to provide the basis for church-state contacts (a policy of talks), even if specific conflicts remain, especially regarding the church's peace witness and activities. It is this which has drawn international attention in recent years and which is sometimes as complicated as it is important. For that reason it requires a separate, subsequent treatment.

It is important, however, to note one thing which Bishop Schönherr said at the March 6, 1978 meeting: The relation of church and state is as good as the individual Christian citizen experiences it in his or her local situation.\(^\text{14}\)

What then is the real situation of Christians in the GDR? It varies geographically and otherwise, but it cannot be denied that there are difficulties. Christians in the GDR can complain about their situation, often more to outsiders than to each other. Of course, like all their fellow citizens, they must accept limitations on information and on personal and social freedoms. They can suffer under the ambiguity and seeming arbitrariness of government actions and decisions. Despite the meeting of March 6, 1978, Christians can still be denied educational and vocational opportunities. Small in numbers and constantly confronted by the all-pervasive Marxist-Leninist ideology, they can feel isolated as if living in an "ideological diaspora."\(^\text{15}\) School children must learn to say and write what is expected of them ideologically and not what they honestly think.

Christians can also be disappointed in their own "Volkskirche" with its inflexible traditions, outdated structures, and theological and political differences. They can suffer under lack of insight into the ways of their own church leaders. They may be troubled about the growing materialism in
their society often catered to by the government. They may be concerned about the severe economic and environmental problems in their country or about the threats to peace, from their own government but also from the West. Christians may be frustrated by the general apathy even among church members. If officially the church in its relation to the state must avoid the extremes of rejection and conformity, then the individual Christian must be aware of the dangers of aversive resignation or opportunistic acceptance.

It is in this context that Christians in the GDR work and witness. It is in this context that many have affirmed their God-given situation and chosen to be a good neighbor. They become free when they assert that it is not so much the opportunities denied them that count as the opportunities they themselves fail to take advantage of and use.

In a society characterized by ideological monologue, churches become places of dialogue. In a society marked by mistrust, individual congregations create a place of trust and openness. This is especially important for young people, among whom there are many non-Christians who attend church youth meetings. They come seeking a place where they can speak openly and are listened to. They come asking questions about the meaning of life, about relationships, about peace, about prayer and faith in God.

Culturally, the churches also continue to play a role. Proportionately the GDR has more church musicians than any other country in the world. Not only are church concerts well visited, but many people attend who otherwise do not set foot in a church.

In a society where the church at the same time must be Biblical and theological if it is to have any justification at all, one is impressed by the depth of Bible study and theological reflection, not in the abstract but in response to specific challenges of life and witness.

In a society where work and productivity are the highest
proclaimed values, the church plays a leading role in caring for the sick, the handicapped and the old. Christian hospitals and homes, which are being subsidized by government funding, are known for the personal care one receives. A relatively large number of Christian young people, realizing that to be a Christian means a life of service, seek a vocation in the medical and nursing fields. They may prefer caring for handicapped children to a better-paying job elsewhere but with various political pressures. They develop a sensitivity to suffering and to the meaning of life.

In a society where economy has priority to ecology, Christians gather scarce information on environmental problems and initiate car-free Sundays and tree-planting activities.

In a society where military instruction, including learning to hate one's enemies, is part of the regular school curriculum, the church emphasizes peace education, creating trust in personal and international relationships, solving conflicts without violence, and loving one's enemies.

If travel to the West is severely restricted, then Christians in the GDR can visit fellow Christians in other Eastern European countries, even as far as Siberia. Whereas their fellow citizens may emphasize the relative poverty of the GDR in comparison to West Germany, Christians become aware of their relative affluence in comparison with the Third World. Relief actions have been undertaken for such varied countries as Tanzania, Viet Nam, and Poland.

In a country where apathy and privatization are widespread and the morale of workers is declining, Christians can simply do their best, demonstrate integrity, and contribute to a friendlier and more human working and living atmosphere. One sometimes hears the ironic comment that Christians are still the best citizens.

In a society where the public presence of the church is restricted, individual Christians can witness in their personal life and contacts, often more with their being and actions than
through their words. In a society, in a world, where it is the big things that count, Christians take up the challenge of the small modest steps.

We must exaggerate neither the problems nor the strengths of the church and of Christians in the GDR. Even in Eastern Europe life can be normal and trivial. But, according to Bishop Schönherr, the church in the GDR, like the church in the entire world, is at present engaged in one of the greatest learning processes of its history. The church is even to be seen as a learning community. Decisive in the present situation are the practical life and being of Christians and congregations. As Bonhoeffer put it, being a Christian today will consist of two things, praying and doing justice among the people.

FOOTNOTES

1 For a more thorough consideration of Bonhoeffer's significance see the several articles and speeches under the subtitle "Versuche über und mit Bonhoeffer", in Albrecht Schönherr, Horizont und Mitte, Aufsätze, Vorträge, Reden 1953-1977, (Berlin 1979).

2 Günter Jacob, "Der Raum für das Evangelium in Ost und West," in Kirchliches Jahrbuch für die Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland 1956, (Gütersloh, 1957), p. 11.


In an address upon receiving an honorary degree from the theological faculty of the University of Basel, November 25, 1977. Cited by J.A. Hebly, Kerk in het socialisme, (Baarn, The Netherlands, 1979), p. 44.

Cf. J.A. Hebly, p. 51ff, who refers to a party statement from October 8, 1952, and to a book published by the party in 1975 with the title Standortbestimmung (Berlin, GDR) in which thirty progressive theologians account for their support of the socialist order.


Cf. also Barth's Christengemeinde und Bürgergemeinde, (Gladbeck, 1946).

In Zum politischen Auftrag der christlichen Gemeinde, Barmen II, mit Beiträge von ..., ed. A. Burgsmüller, (Gütersloh, 1974), and "epd Dokumentation" 30/1972.


Monastic life started to develop in Poland upon introduction of Christianity to Poland by Duke Mieszko I in 966. The first missionaries working in the Polish lands were mostly monks. At the turn of the 11th century, groups of hermits appeared, whose life in the monastic community was based on the rule of St. Benedict. Five martyr Brethren, who perished in the Polish lands in 1003, were Benedictine monks. Alongside the formation of new monastic families in Western Europe, monasteries of those orders start to be founded also in Poland. The Camaldulites were brought in, in the 11th century. The mid-12th century marked the beginning of intensive development of new formations: Cistercians, Canons Regular, Premonstratensians. Then, in 1222, the Dominicans appeared, and the order of St. Francis ten years later. Over the one thousand years, some 150 male and female orders operated in the Polish lands. Some of them were orders founded in Poland or by Poles.

Bringing an already existing order to the country was a much easier task than founding a new institution from scratch. Until the 19th century, Church legislation did not favor formation of new orders. The Lateran Council IV in 1215 virtually banned the formation of new orders and recommended the candidates for monastic life to join the already recognized orders. However, the Council decisions did not fully come into operation and a certain number of new orders was formed over the next centuries. In Poland, for example, the Congregation of Marian Fathers was founded in the 17th century. The situation basically changed in the 19th century, when the Church consented to the formation of monastic congregations with simple vows. The 19th century also witnessed the ultimate shaping of the procedure of approving new orders: first the congregation gets legal status under a decree of the local ordinary bishop and exists as an institution under diocesan law, and then after a certain period, providing it receives a laudatory decree (decretum laudis) of the Holy See, it becomes a congregation under Papal law, and finally through ultimate recognition its existence in the Universal Church becomes consolidated.

Until the end of the 18th century no major initiatives for founding native orders were noted in Poland, so orders of Polish origin did not play any greater role and did not reach any major expansion. Out of the order founded in that period only the Marian Congregation has survived until our times, however in a different shape than that given to it by its founder. It was only the Polish monastic congregations founded in the 19th and 20th centuries that made a greater contribution to the life of the Church in Poland, and some of them extended their activities even outside of the country. At present there are eight monastic congregations of Polish origin operating within the Church.

Marian Fathers

The Congregation of Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Congregatio Clericorum Regularium Marianorum sub titulo Immaculatae conceptionis Beatiissimae Virginis Mariae, MIC).

The history of the Marian order can be divided into two visibly separate periods. The first one is from the foundation of the order in 1673 to its almost total disappearance at the turn of the 20th century. The second period encompasses the revival of the order through its transformation into a monastic congregation in 1909.

The order was founded by Father Stanisław Papczyński in 1673. Pope Innocent XII confirmed it in 1699 as an order with solemn vows, promoting the cult of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Jan Papczyński was born on May 18, 1631, in Podegrodzie near Nowy Sacz, to a peasant family. He entered the Piarist order in 1654. In 1656, he took the vows as the second Pole in this order assuming the name of Stanisław of Jesus Maria. In 1670, as an effect of a sharp conflict with the superiors, Papczyński left the Piarist order to found one of his own. In 1673, bishop of Poznań Stefan Wierzbowski canonically erected the monastic house of the new congregation in Puszcza Korabiewska in Mazovia. Papczyński engaged in writing; his chief religious literary work was a moral-ascetic treatise "Templum Dei Misticum", published in Cracow in 1675, considered to be one of the most outstanding works in Polish 17th-century ascetic literature. Papczyński also published passional deliberations "Orator crucifixus" (Cracow,
1670) and "Christus patiens" (Warsaw, 1690). He died on September 17, 1701, in Góra Kalwaria. His beatification process was started in 1767, then interrupted in 1775, to be resumed in 1953.

During the lifetime of the founder the Marian order had no more than 20 members in three houses. The congregation was made up of priests and friars. The first Marian monasteries were opened near Skierniewice, in Góra Kalwaria near Warsaw and in Goźlin in the Podlasie region. Under the Papal edict of 1699 the Marians became a strict order (ordo) with solemn vows. They were granted the privileges of mendicant orders and were incorporated into the order of St. Francis. That superior authority by no means hampered the activity of the order and was later eliminated. In 1753, Marians were called to Portugal. At the end of the 18th century they founded a house in Rome. At a time of its prime, around 1780, the order had 147 monks in 12 houses. Poland's partitions impeded the development of the order, while in the 19th century it gradually vanished. The houses abroad and in Poland ceased to exist one after another. After the fall of a Polish national rising against Russia in 1863/64, the Russian government disbanded all Marian monasteries save one in Mariampol, where Marians from the remaining monasteries were brought and the order was forbidden to run a novitiate. In 1908 only one Marian remained alive. At that critical moment, Rev. Jerzy Matulewicz, later on bishop of Wilno and papal legate for Lithuania, became a man of providence for the order.

Jerzy Matulewicz (Matulaitis, Matulevicius) was born on April 13, 1871 in Lugine near Mariampol in Southern Lithuania, to a family of a Lithuanian peasant. In 1891, he entered the Theological Seminary in Kielce. Then he studied at the Warsaw Seminary and the Theological Academy in Petersburg, where he was ordained priest in 1898. After graduating from the University in Fribourg in Switzerland he was conferred the title of Doctor of Theology. In 1906, he was appointed professor at the Theological Academy in Petersburg. In 1909, holding special warrants of Pope Pius X, he took the vows in the Marian order at the moment when only one Marian monk remained alive. Two years later Matulewicz became the General of the order. In 1918, he was nominated Bishop of Wilno. In 1925, upon his own request, relieved of this
function, he went to Rome to deal exclusively with the matters of the congregation. At the end of 1925, promoted to the rank of archbishop, he was sent to Lithuania as a Papal delegate. He died in 1927. The beatification process of Father Matulewicz has been underway since 1953, initiated through the efforts of the Congregation of Marian Fathers.

Father Matulewicz adjusted the constitution of the congregation to new conditions. He transformed it into a clerical congregation with simple vows, made up of priests and friars. In accordance with old traditions the congregation in a special way serves in honor of the Virgin Mary. The new constitution was approved by the Holy See in 1910.

The revived Marian order started to develop fast. In 1915, a monastic house and a shelter for 200 homeless children were opened in the Bielany district in Warsaw. In 1918, Matulewicz organized a monastic house in Mariampol for Lithuanian Marians. In 1927, the congregation had over 300 members in 13 houses, in 1937, 451 members in 24 houses situated in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, the United States, Italy, England and the Far East, in Kharbin. The Polish province has been in existence since 1930. The General of the congregation has his offices in Rome.

In 1982, the congregation of Marian Fathers had 510 members. The Congregation was made up of five provinces: in Poland, two in the United States, in England and in Brazil (under formation). The Polish province numbers 196 members in 19 houses.

Resurrectionists

The Congregation of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Congregatio a Resurrestione Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, CR).

After the fall of the 1830/31 Polish national rising against Russia, a considerable number of Poles was forced to leave the country. The idea of a new congregation, which was to ensure moral revival of the emigrant community through consolidation of Catholic faith and by the same token fight for independence of the homeland, was put forward by a great Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz. The congregation was founded in Paris in 1836 by Bogdan Jański and his disciples Piotr Semenenko and Hieronim Kajsiewicz; the last two for many years took turns as General of the Congregation of Resurrectionists.
Bogdan Jański was born in Pogorzelec near Ciechanów in 1807. In the years 1824-27, together with several Polish emigrants, Jański started community life in a rented house in Paris. Next year he sent Semenenko and Kajsiewicz to Rome. In order to finally organize the Congregation he went to Rome himself in 1840, where he died the same year.

The Congregation of Resurrectionists was formed slowly, in stages. In 1982, two years after Jański's death, thanks to the efforts of Kajsiewicz and Semenenko it started functioning as a private association seated in Rome. It had a rule and a superior, but it had no Church approval. The Congregation gained legal basis of existence and operation in the Church under the laudatory decree of the Holy See issued in 1860. The decree recognized the hitherto novitiate and private vows. The Congregation was ultimately approved by Pope Leo XIII in 1888. The constitution was approved in 1902.

In 1870, Resurrectionists had 78 members, including 36 priests. Since that time the order has been constantly growing in numbers. Thanks to the funds laid out by the Congregation in 1866 the Polish college was opened in Rome for candidates to become priests in Poland. In 1871, Resurrectionists started working among emigrants in the United States, mainly in Chicago. The first Resurrectionist outpost in the Polish land was established in 1880 in Lwów. In 1939, the number of members exceeded 400 (including 137 priests) in 37 houses. In 1982, the Congregation of Resurrectionists had 454 members (including 337 priests) in 53 houses. Resurrectionists are gradually losing their character as a purely Polish congregation since there are ever more members of other nationalities in their ranks.

The Congregation of Resurrectionists is a clerical monastic congregation with simple vows. It has a central board and is divided into provinces. Members of the Congregation work in parish houses. The General of the Congregation has his offices in Rome. The Congregation has three provinces: in Poland, in the United States and in Canada, as well as districts in Italy, Bulgaria and Austria. In 1982, the Polish Province of the Congregation of Resurrectionists had 203 members in 14 monastic houses.
Dolorists

The Congregation of the Brothers-Sons of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Seven Dolours (Congregation Fratrum Filii Matris Dei dolorosae).

In 1883, Capuchin monk Father Honorat Koźmiński founded in Zakroczym in Mazovia the first lay frockless monastic congregation of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary of St. Francis of Assisi, which until the moment of Poland's regaining independence in 1918 functioned as a secular charitable association. In 1893, the Congregation was divided into two groupings: the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Sons of the blessed Virgin Mary of the Seven Dolours, commonly known as Dolorists.

Father Honorat Koźmiński was born on October 16, 1829, in Biała Podlaska. He graduated from a secondary school in Płock and then enrolled in the Faculty of Architecture at the School of Fine Arts in Warsaw. In 1846, he was arrested by Tzarist authorities for membership in clandestine political organizations. Acquitted during the investigation and released in March 1847, he entered the Capuchin order in Lubartów. In 1852 he was ordained priest. In the years 1874-1895, Koźmiński founded a number of monastic associations based on the III Order of St. Francis. In 1895, Koźmiński was appointed general commissioner of the Polish Capuchin province. Koźmiński published over one hundred works, many of them translations. These were popular treatises on asceticism, hagiography, mariology, apologetics, Church history. He died in Nowe Miasto on the Pilica on December 16, 1916. In 1929, the idea of his beatification was conceived in the Capuchin order and the information process was started in 1949.

In 1893 the Congregation set up the Educational Society "Przyszłość" (Future). Dolorists set themselves as a goal Christian education of youth i.a. through running schools, educational institutions, handicraft workshops and economic entities, mainly in towns. In the Dolorist Congregation, like in other lay congregations, brothers not priests constitute the basic core of the congregation. It can have, however, a certain number of priests. Brothers wear ordinary clothes. They take simple vows of observing three evangelical counsels: poverty, obedience, chastity."
In 1924, the Congregation was granted the Vatican laudatory decree, and was ultimately approved in 1936. The seat of the general authorities of the Congregation was first situated in Łódź, then in Radzymin, and in 1954 it was moved to Warsaw. In the inter-war period (1918-1939) the Congregation had 9 monastic houses, it ran ten-odd schools, educational and charitable institutions. In 1936 it had nearly 180 members. During World War II it suffered considerable human and material losses. After the war, the Congregation was active until 1949, when the state authorities dissolved the "Przyszłość" Society and took over the institutions and property of the Society, and monks were replaced by secular staff. Since that time the Congregation has been experiencing an acute crisis and has been constantly shrinking. In the early 1950s it still had 70 members, while in the mid-1970s only 22 members, of whom 19 were brothers and 3 priests. As of December 31, 1982, the Congregation had 16 members, including 1 priest. The general house of the Congregation is situated in Warsaw.

Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Congregation of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Congregatio Fratrum Servorum Beatae Mariae Immaculatae).

The Congregation was formed in 1893 as an effect of the division of the Congregation of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary of St. Francis of Assisi, founded ten years earlier by Father Honorat Koźmiński (see above Dolorists). The Congregation dedicated itself to the care of rural youth. Until 1907, it had two categories of members: those living together (in 1906-326 brothers) and so-called associated members, that is, not connected with close community ties (in 1906-304 brothers). Members of the Congregation take simple vows of observing three evangelical counsels: poverty, obedience and chastity. In 1910, the Congregation was granted the laudatory decree of the Holy See. In the years 1922-1939, servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary ran vocational-artisanal schools and workshops (tailoring, shoemaking, bakery). After World War II the Congregation has been experiencing a crisis as a result of a drop in the number of vocations. In 1973, the Congregation had 45 brothers in 5 houses. As of December 31, 1982, the Congregation is situated in Nowe Miasto on the Pilica river.
Albertins

The Congregation of the Friars of the III Order of St. Francis "Serving the Poor" (Congregatio Fratrum III Ordinis S. Francisci "Pauperibum Servientium").

The Congregation of Albertin Friars was founded by Adam Chmielowski in 1888 in Cracow.

Adam Chmielowski was born on August 22, 1846 in Igołomia in the Cracow region. For one year he attended the military school in Petersburg then a private secondary school in Warsaw. After graduating he enrolled in the agricultural school in Puławy. After the outbreak of a national rising against Russia in 1863, Adam Chmielowski joined the ranks of insurgents. In one of the battles he lost a leg. After the fall of the uprising he dedicated himself to artistic studies in Paris, Gent and Munich. In 1884, he came to Cracow and there, apart from artistic work, he engaged in humanitarian and religious work. In 1888, he put on a frock made to his own design, similar to the Franciscan frock, assumed the name of Albert and took private vows accepted by Cardinal Albin Dunajewski. At the same time, he became manager of the so-called warming house for the poor in Cracow. Together with his fellow brethren he formed a germ of a new Congregation. He died in 1916 in Cracow. In 1983, during his second trip to Poland, Pope John Paul II beatified Brother Albert in Cracow.

The work of brother Albert soon started to expand in the Polish lands. Alms-houses run by Albertins are established in Tarnów, Lwów, Zakopane, Przemyśl, Stanisławów.

Organizationally, Albertins constituted themselves spontaneously. The life of people who joined brother Albert was regulated by "The guide to the III order," written by himself in 1888, and the common practice of austere living. The absence of own rule affected further development of the Congregation, however, especially after the death of the founder. The constitution was worked out after World War I, taking into account the guiding principles of brother Albert. In 1928, it was approved by archbishop of Cracow Adam Stefan Sapieha; at the same time Albertins were aggregated in the order of Conventual Franciscans.

The binding principle within the Congregation is common living on
the basis of the vows of obedience, poverty and chastity, which are taken by brothers after the novitiate, first as temporary and then as eternal ones. The Congregation is managed by "elder brother" elected by the general chapter for six years. Superiors of houses are directly subordinated to him. The Congregation of Albertins is a lay congregation; it can have, however, its own priests for carrying out ministry in the institutions they run.

The basis of subsistence of Albertins and their charges is work and charity. In the period of its prime (1939) the congregation had some 100 brothers, 15 houses, its own printing shop in Warsaw, and from 1932 published a monthly "Nasza Myśl", whose title was changed in 1937 to "Głos Brata Alberta".

Today, Albertin Friars are working in somewhat different conditions. They dedicate themselves to nursing the chronically sick, the disabled and old people in welfare houses. As of December 31, 1982 the Congregation had 38 brothers in 7 houses.

Michaelites

The Congregation of St. Michael Archangel (Congregatio Sancti Michaelis Archangeli, CSMA).

The Congregation of St. Michael Archangel was founded in 1897 in Miejsce Piastowe near Krosno by Bronisław Markiewicz. Since the Congregation was not immediately accepted by the Church as a monastic congregation, until 1921 it operated as a lay association called "Powściągliwość i praca" (Temperance and work).

Rev. Bronisław Markiewicz was born in Prudnik near Jarosław in 1842 to a Catholic middle-class family. He entered the theological seminary in Prudnik, where in 1867 he was ordained priest. As a priest he worked successively in several parishes in Przemyśl diocese. In the years 1873-1875, he studied philosophy at the Lwów and Cracow universities. In 1885, he went to Italy, where he entered the Salesian Congregation in Turin. His vows were accepted by St. John Bosco in 1887. In 1892, on the order of the superiors, he came to Miejsce (today Miejsce Piastoe). Five years later he left the Salesian Congregation and started efforts for the erection of new monastic orders, male and female, whose tasks would be to educate poor and desolate youth. Rev. Markiewicz died on January
29, 1912, in Miejsce Piastowe in the opinion of sainthood. The information process was started in 1958.

The Congregation of St. Michael was ecclesiastically erected in 1921. A year later the constitution of the Congregation was approved. The spirit, program and line of activity of the Congregation boil down to the motto "Temperance and work". Members of the Congregation are priests and brothers, both having a share in the management of the Congregation, though brothers cannot act as superiors. In 1966, the Congregation was given the laudatory decree of the Holy See.

The Constitution of the Congregation approved under the Roman decree did not provide for certain new elements introduced by Vatican II. General chapters of the Congregation re-edited the monastic regulations in the spirit of the Council. In the light of the re-edited regulations the Congregation of St. Michael Archangel is a monastic institute dedicated to apostolic mission. The Congregation deals with education of youth, especially the poor and desolate, does pastoral work, especially to religiously neglected people, popular missions, foreign missions, publishing activity as well as awakening and cultivating priestly and monastic vocations.

In 1939, the Congregation had 107 members in 8 houses. As of December 31, 1982, the Congregation of St. Michael had 235 members (including 84 priests) in 7 houses; 48 members of the Congregation stay abroad in 10 posts in Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, Paraguay, New Guinea, Italy, Zaire and Australia.

**Brothers of the Heart of Jesus**

The Congregation of the Brothers of the Heart of Jesus (Congregatio Fratrum Cordis Jesu).

The Congregation was founded in 1920 in Poznań by Rev. Kazimierz Maliński. Members of the Congregation include exclusively brothers, who work in parishes as organists and sacristians, as assistants in parish chancellories, they distribute Catholic papers, work as servants in episcopal residences and theological seminaries. The Congregation was approved in 1931 by August Cardinal Hlond. In 1936, the Congregation had 35 brothers in 5 posts; in 1982, 55 brothers in 8 houses. The Congregation has central administration, simple vows; it has remained
under the diocesan law until the present. Brothers wear a black frock tied with a leather belt.

**Christists**

The Society of Christ for Polish emigrants (Societas Christi pro emigrantibus Polonis, SChr).

The history of the Congregation is linked with the phenomenon of emigration caused by economic, social and political transformations in Europe at the turn of the 20th century.

The phenomenon of emigration made it necessary to establish special pastoral care. A manifestation of that was the approval of monastic congregations for emigrants by the Holy See. In 1887, the Italian "Association of Missionaries of St. Charles for Italian Emigrants" was established. In Germany, in 1926, the "Association of Guardian Angels" was formed, preparing ministers for German emigrants.

The monastic congregation for ministry to Polish emigrants was founded by August Cardinal Hlond, Primate of Poland (1926-1948). The formal erection of the new Congregation took place on September 8, 1932, when Rev. Ignacy Posadzy, co-founder of the Society of Christ, came to the cradle of the Congregation in Potulice near Nakło. By the end of 1932, the society had 40 members, and next year that number tripled. Already in 1937, the Society started to implement its mission abroad, that is, apostolate for compatriots living outside of the country and in case of need, also for emigrants of other nationalities. The first members of Christ Congregation went to work among Polonia in 1937 to Paris and London, and in 1938 to Estonia. In 1939, the Congregation had 184 members.

During World War II, members of the Congregation of Christ had to seek new forms of pastoral work. In Nazi-occupied Poland the Congregation openly worked in transit camps for Poles being deported to Germany. The war and the German occupation inflicted considerable losses in the ranks of the Congregation; 26 of its members perished.

After the war, due to the lack of priests in the western territories incorporated in Poland, the Society gave the majority of its members to ministry among settlers. In the post-war period, the number of Society's members was growing by the year, and its activity
was appreciated by the Holy See. In 1950, the Congregation was given the laudatory decree, and in 1964 the Congregation and its constitution were ultimately approved.

The Society of Christ has central administration with the general superior. It is a clerical congregation with simple vows, but it also has lay brothers who work in the houses of the Society as assistants or in foreign pastoral posts as catechists.

There are six foreign provinces subordinated to the general house in Poznań:

- in the United States, based in Isterling Heights (Michigan) USA;
- in Brazil, based in Curitiba;
- in Australia, based in Sydney;
- in England, based in London;
- in France, based in Hesdigneul-les-Bethune;
- for Italy and Germany, based in Essen.

In 1982, these provinces had altogether 130 members. In Poland the congregation had 321 members in 6 monastic houses.

At the Foreign Seminary of the Society of Christ in Poznań the seminarians, prospective ministers for emigrants, apart from the normal theological-philosophical curriculum, study a number of subjects connected with the problem of emigration. The Polonia center at the Seminary collects materials on the history of Polish emigration.

FOOTNOTES

1 Three territorial divisions of Poland combined with annexation carried out by Russia, Prussia and Austria in the years 1772-1795 until the total liquidation of the Polish state.

2 Entering the Theological Seminary Matulewicz changed his name from Matulaitis to Matulewicz. Writing in Lithuanian according to the spirit of this language he signed himself Matulevicius.

3 Colloquial term for the totality of Polish emigrants and their descendants.

4 Land regained by Poles in the wake of World War II, so-called Oder-Neisse Territories.