



# NEW ENGLAND PROVINCE OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

Provincial's Newsletter

Volume 2023 / October

## FROM THE PROVINCIAL

The summer of 2023 has come to an end. We hope that all of our confreres had a restful vacation. My vacation this year was short, heavily divided, and chaotic. Still, I am grateful to God for being able to go to Poland for two weeks to visit my brother and his family. Unfortunately, arthritis in my knees prevented me from moving around as freely as I would like. I sat at home and in a hyperbaric chamber. But it was still worth it.

During the summer, I had more responsibilities at the parishes in Derby and in Ansonia. I saw to some administrative duties at the Provincial House and I also had the opportunity to be in Brooklyn and New Haven to visit the sick and attend funerals.

## SUPERIOR IN MANCHESTER



Effective September 1, 2023, Rev. Anthony Kuzia took office as Superior of the Manchester House. Fr. Anthony has been assisting the

confreres who call the Provincial house their home. This includes attending to their spiritual and physical needs. Father Anthony has also been overseeing some maintenance and renovation projects at the provincial house. We are grateful to Father Anthony for his dedication and commitment to this ministry.

## LABOR DAY



Monday, September 4, 2023 was an excellent opportunity to have a barbecue together. We met at the "Kostka" house in Brooklyn. Fathers - Markulak, Szucki, Szpilski, Kotlinski, Wisniewski, Szylar, Wanat, Sobczak, and Chorągwicki participated. The confreres of the Kostka House did a tremendous job preparing food and drinks. It was a pleasant and relaxing afternoon on the parsonage roof.

## BEATIFICATION MASS

On Sunday, September 10, the beatification ceremony of the Ulma family took place in Poland. The entire family, the parents and seven children, were executed by the Germans during World War II for helping and hiding a Jewish family on their farm. Our province was represented at the ceremony in Poland by Fr. A. Rafal Kopystynski and Fr. Jan Szylar. Fr. Jan has a special connection to the family as he grew up in the same town. A special beatification Mass was offered both at St. Michael's in Derby and at St. Stanislaus Kostka in Brooklyn. Many parishioners attended.



## THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY

The 25th anniversary of the ordination of Father Gregory Markulak, pastor of St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Greenpoint took place on Sunday, September 17, 2023 at 1 PM.



Parishioners and guests crowded the sanctuary to celebrate with Father Gregory. Delegations from Polish organizations, St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Academy, students from local schools, Polish choirs, and parishioners came. I had the honor of delivering a sermon on the priesthood. In their speeches, everyone stressed that Father Gregory was a great gift from God to Greenpoint. It was impossible not to notice that the Greenpoint community sincerely loves its priest. We congratulate Father Gregory. Those interested can watch the anniversary mass at

[https://fb.watch/n8iBZUu4\\_a/](https://fb.watch/n8iBZUu4_a/)

## ANNIVERSARY MASS IN MANCHESTER

This year's Jubilarians celebrated with an anniversary Mass at the Provincial House on September 28, 2023 in Manchester. Fr. Markulak celebrated his 25<sup>th</sup> year of priesthood. Fr. Maciejewski, and Fr. Kotlinski celebrated their 35<sup>th</sup> year of priesthood. Mass was followed by a simple Eucharistic Service in anticipation of the beginning of the fifth century of the Congregation of the Mission. We then enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared by the confreres from the Kostka House.



## PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

Later that same day, September 28, 2023, the Provincial Council held a meeting. At the meeting, we expressed our gratitude to Attorney Karen Casey for her assistance in obtaining reimbursement for Father Staniszewski's funeral expenses. At the meeting, we continued to exchange thoughts on the future of the property in Navarre and Manchester House. We also received information about a priest from the Polish Province who expressed interest in coming to our Province next year. During the meeting, it was also mentioned that a Gregorian Mass was celebrated at the Provincial House for the intention of Fr. Roman Kmiec.

The Provincial Procurator informed the Council about financial matters including proceeds from insurance policies and a gift from the Archdiocese of Hartford in recognition of the 120 years of service to St. Stanislaus Parish in New Haven by the Vincentian Community.

It was also mentioned that eight confreres from the province are receiving full or partial salaries. Some of the cash savings have been placed in the Investment Plan to generate income.

The request of Father Jan Urbaniak was discussed. He has received permission to stay in Poland for one year away from the Congregation and the Province due to his health. We ask for your prayerful support for him.

## ANNUAL RETREAT

Our annual retreat for priests was held at St. Vincent Villa in Cape May, NJ, from October 9-13. The retreat was attended by 8 of our confreres. We are very grateful to the Eastern Province for hosting us in their home. We thank Br. Peter Campbel and Fr. John Holliday for their care, support, and service. We thank Sarah and Moses for preparing daily meals for us. But most of all, we thank God for the opportunity to grow in our spirituality, to rest with Him, to enjoy the fellowship of brother priests, and for the wonderful "summer" weather during our stay.

## NEW COADJUTOR BISHOP



On the day we traveled to the retreat (October 9, 2023), a Mass was held to welcome our new coadjutor bishop, Bishop Christopher Coyne. The Mass was held at St. Joseph's Cathedral in Hartford, CT.

Bp. Christopher J. Coyne, 65, who served as bishop of Burlington, Vt., was appointed by Pope Francis to serve as coadjutor archbishop until Archbishop Leonard Blair submits his resignation after turning 75 in 2024 in keeping with church law.

Father Rafal Kopystynski, who had just arrived from Rome, could attend the ceremony to represent us.

## MEETING IN PHILADELPHIA

Members of the three Provincial Councils in the USA (NCVP - National Conference of Vincentian Provinces): Eastern Province,

Western Province and New England Province (Frs. Sobczak, Kuzia, Kotlinski, Markulak, Szucki, Maciejewski) gathered in the St. Vincent Seminary - SVS in Philadelphia, PA to meet with Fr. Tomaž Mavrič, C.M., Superior General and the General Council (Fr. Greg Bañga, C.M., Vicar General, Fr. Rafal Kopystynski, C.M., Fr. Nelio Pita, C.M., Fr. Aarón Gutiérrez, C.M., Dominique Iyombe, C.M., Assistants General, Fr. Paul Parackal, C.M., Econome General and Fr. Giuseppe Turati, C.M., Secretary General).

The Eastern Province hosted the meeting (October 16-20, 2023), and Fr. Steve Grozio, CM, Provincial, was our host. We all stayed at the Seminary House of the Eastern Province in Philadelphia, where we also met many confreres from the Eastern Province working and living there.

The Superior General and his Council wanted to get acquainted with the work, missions, and apostolates carried out by our Provinces. We reflected on what we consider to be the joys and achievements of the Congregation of Missions, as well as the new challenges and difficulties we face. We sought answers to a question of this type - what contribution do Vincentians make to the Church in the USA, and what do they give to believers or those seeking God, especially the poor and needy?

Each Province had the opportunity to present itself and present its vision for the future. The Eastern and Western Provinces devote themselves to the works of the poor to a more excellent degree than our New England Province. One of the topics was the search for common ground for future





cooperation between the Provinces on a Partnership basis.

Within the framework of the meetings, our Province had the opportunity to meet with Father General to present the reality of our Province and mention the necessary changes that must inevitably come. Fr. General took note of the information about Fr. Urbaniak and asked for an update on his status for the year.

At the end of our Province's participation in the meetings, Fr. Maciejewski participated in a meeting with the Treasurer General, and I with the Secretary General of the Congregation.

We thank all the confreres for the moments spent together, for the opportunities for conversation, for the fraternal reception, for the nourishment for the soul and body. Special thanks to the priests of the house in Philadelphia for their care for us!



### **CURIA IN OUR HOUSES**

Six of our Roman guests (except Father General and Fr. Aaron) came with Fr. Kopystynski, first to Brooklyn and then to our homes in Connecticut. It so happened that Sunday, October 22, was Mission Sunday. That day was also the monthly "family mass" for the students of St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Academy. Imagine the joy of the students attending Mass on Mission Sunday when a group of 6 priests, each from a different country - Poland, Italy, Portugal, Congo, the Philippines, and India - appeared at the altar. The students invited the priests for a school breakfast and a moment of conversation.

The next day, the "Curia" arrived at our Provincial House in Manchester, where we prayed together and ate a meal prepared by the Superior of the House, Fr. Anthony Kuzia, with the help of Mrs. Marian O'Brien. After a moment of touring the house and resting, everyone, local priests and guests, celebrated Mass in the chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. After a heartfelt farewell, the guests went on a tour of homes in Derby and Ansonia. They also visited Fr. Wacław Hlond CM at Apple Hewitt Rehab in Shelton.



Guests from our Curia in Rome, Italy at the Manchester House on October 23, 2023





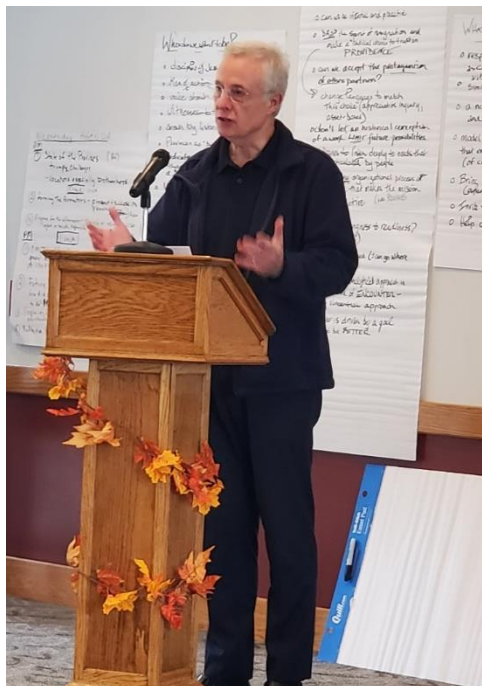








# NCVP Meeting with Superior General and His Council – Philadelphia, PA, October 16-21, 23

















Guests from Rome at St. Stanislaus Kostka, Brooklyn, NY  
with students of SSK Catholic Academy On Mission Sunday, October 22, 2023





















25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Priesthood of Fr. Grzegorz Markulak, CM  
St. Stanislaus Kostka Church, Brooklyn, NY, September 17, 2023









Cape May – Retreat October 9-13, 2023







September 10, 2023. The day dawned warm as the sun arose. It was the day we had come to Poland to experience. Buses lined the one street in the village of Markowa – the street that traversed the length of the entire village. Worshippers poured into the street and walked towards St. Dorota’s Church and cemetery to the newly created stadium. 37,000 worshippers and 1,000 priests walked the street to the stadium to participate in the Beatification Mass of the Ulma Family.



*Fr. Jan Szylar, CM and Fr. Rafal Kopystynski, CM*

Why did they come? Why were there so many young people? Why would the President of Poland, his wife and most of his cabinet go to this village of 4,000 people on this day? Why was this Mass so important?

Because, in this time of war and fear and a loss of belief, the Ulma family was honored and acknowledged as Blessed as a gift to all of us for being the beacon of good in a time of unimaginable horror.





*Official picture of the Beatified Family*

Jozef and Witoria Ulma and their seven children – one unborn until the time of his martyrdom – lived in Markowa during World War II. They were simple farmers who opened their home to eight of their Jewish neighbors when doing so meant death if they were caught. Yet, the Ulma family sheltered, fed, hid and protected the Jewish families for almost two years

until the Nazi Germans found them. The Nazi Germans gunned them all down -- all of them, including the child still in the womb – covered them with dirt and left them there until the villagers recovered their bodies and kept them until they could be properly buried.



Fr. Jan Szylar, CM, Vincentian of the New England Province grew up in Markowa. He, and Fr. Rafal Kopystynski, CM, who is also a Vincentian of the New England Province (though he currently serves in the Vincentian Curia in Rome), were invited to concelebrate the Mass of the Ulma family's Beatification.

Fr. Jan had never been to the actual location where the Ulma Family and their neighbors had been slaughtered but he found it the day before the Mass. It was on an unmarked dirt road that climbed a hill between farm fields.

The dirt road ended at a house. The woman of the house put on her shoes, left her children on the porch and her husband in the house and walked to the spot where the murders were committed. She created and tends to a garden memorial for those killed – The Ulma, Szallow and the Goldman families.





*The Memorial Chapel for the Rodzina Ulmow, Szallow, Godmanow*

Fr. Jan told us about this Mass – this celebration of the lives of a family who gave everything for their neighbors. We were drawn to Markowa and to the experience but we were not prepared for the emotions. We were not prepared for this experience at all.

Before the Mass, the 37,000 people in attendance prayed the Divine Mercy Chaplet in unison and in reverence. There was no chatter. There was no one moving. The lines to the rest rooms stopped. The lines to the water stopped. They just prayed. They prayed with the Roman Cardinal. They prayed with the Pastor of St. Dorota's Church, the Church to which the Ulma family belonged.

They prayed with the Bishops. They prayed with the President of Poland and his wife. They prayed with the 1,000 priests who came from throughout Poland and the rest of the world.





The Mass was a celebration. It was a celebration of the Ulma Family, of course. But it was also a celebration of the town from which they came. It was a celebration of love and of victory over evil.

It was an honor, a privilege and a blessing to attend this Mass and to see, feel and experience the pure joy.

And at the end, everyone prayed the Angelus with the POPE (through a satellite link to Rome from the Village of Markowa).

