



NEW ENGLAND PROVINCE OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

Provincial's Newsletter

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FATHER WACLAW HLOND CM

Rev. Waclaw Hlond, CM, died at the age of 94 and in the 70th year of his priesthood on June 4, 2024

Rev. Waclaw Hlond was born in Brzózka, Poland, on July 12, 1929. He was the son of Stanislaw Hlond and Genowefa Matuszewska Hlond.

Father Hlond received his priestly ordination on May 15, 1955, at the Conversion of St. Paul Seminary Church in Cracow (Kraków-Stradom), Poland.

His assignments since ordination were as follows:

1955-58 Pabianice, Poland,

1958-61 New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission - Mission group,

1961-64 St. Joseph, Ansonia, Vicar,

1964-67 Mission House, Whitestone, NY;

1967-74 Mission House, Utica, NY, Superior;

1974-81 St. Stanislaus B&M, New Haven, CT, Pastor and Superior;

1981-87, West Hartford, CT, Provincial of the New England Province of the Congregation of the Mission;

1987-88 Sacred Heart, New Britain, CT, in residence;

1988-96 St. Joseph, Ansonia, CT, Superior;

1996-2006 St. Stanislaus B&M, New Haven, CT Pastor and Superior;

2006-2024 St. Joseph, Ansonia, CT, in residence.

The Funeral Mass, a celebration of his life and service, took place at St. Joseph Church in Ansonia, on Friday, June 7, 2024 at 12 noon followed by burial at St. Michael's Cemetery in Ansonia.

HOMILY - PROVINCIAL MAREK SOBCZAK CM

In Psalm 110, we read: "*You are a priest forever in the image of Melchizedek.*" These words apply to all ordained priests, who are forever considered priests. However, they hold a special significance for you, Father Waclaw. From a human perspective, your life and your priesthood were both long. It is remarkable to think that you have been a priest for longer than my entire life, having been ordained three months before I was born. You recently marked the beginning of your 70th year as a priest. We thank Almighty God for the life of Waclaw.



Father Waclaw came from a religious and loving family, and he cherished those values throughout his life. As a child, he had to leave school and work on building German fortifications. After the war, he graduated from Henryk Sienkiewicz High School in Czestochowa. Following

high school, he pursued studies at Jagiellonian University in Cracow as a seminarian of the Czestochowa diocese. A year later, he joined the Congregation of the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul to continue preparing for the priesthood. He was ordained on May 15, 1955, by Bishop Stanislaw Rospond.

His first parish was the 30,000-strong parish of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Rosary in Pabianice, where he worked as a curate and grammar school teacher for three years. In 1958, Fr. Waclaw was sent to the Province in the United States, where Polish Vincentians had been working since 1901.

Fr. Waclaw was part of the Mission Group in Whitestone and Utica, NY, preaching retreats, missions, and Eucharistic services for many years. He was vicar at the parishes of St. Stanislaus in New Haven and St. Joseph in Ansonia. He was also a pastor in New Haven twice. Additionally, he gave radio religious talks for two years. In 1981, he was elected Provincial Superior, or Visitor of New England, of our congregation.

Since 2006, he has been a very active and helpful resident at St. Joseph Parish in Ansonia. He stayed at the Hewitt Apple Nursing Home in Shelton for two years but did not like the place. Therefore, I extend a heartfelt thanks to all who visited Fr. Waclaw at that place and for bringing a little smile and joy into his life. I give special thanks to Fr. Mitchell Wanat CM for his dedication and care for Fr. Waclaw, for

visiting him every day, bringing him Holy Communion, taking Fr. Waclaw on trips, and sharing ice cream and Chinese food, which Fr. Waclaw loved.

Father Waclaw, you have reached the end of your earthly journey. Your life was deeply rooted in Christ's teachings. You demonstrated solid yet simple faith, filled with prayer and a close connection to our loving God. Your sermons beautifully emphasize sincere, heartfelt, and constant prayer integrated into daily life.

You lived by the words of the prophet Isaiah, *"The grass withers, the flower falls, but the word of God endures forever"* (Isaiah 40:8). You deeply embraced the word of God as a source of hope and love. Your entire life was a testimony to the word of God, filled with love and hope.

In the Acts of the Apostles, we read: *"he went through life doing good"* (Acts 10:38). These words capture the truth about your life. You did good to every person. You approached priests and parishioners with a playful smile on your lips and a heart filled with kindness. You tried to understand and help. Even that wave of the hand and the words *"that's silly"* (*glupstwo*) were a sign that you needed to look at problems and troubles differently, reassuring us. In this way, you taught us to trust in God and not to worry about trifles.

I remember my arrival day in the United States. Here are two young priests from Poland, with no knowledge of the language, standing in the center of the airport terminal, helplessly looking around for the person who was supposed to pick us up from the airport. One hour passes and another. The heat is pouring from the sky, the spirit of an August afternoon. All around us, strangers. Our eyes are showing more and more fear and stress. We try to get 10 cents for the phone, but no one wants to change the \$10 brought from the communist country. Finally, our waving hands, facial expressions, and the tragedy in our eyes were understood by a "local" who showed us how to use the phone and gave us a dime, adding that calling Brooklyn was necessary to add 1 in front.

We managed to call the rectory of St. Stanislaus Kosta. Somebody told us to stay where you are, and we would pick you up. Another hour and a half passed, and finally, we heard in Polish—come here! Fr. Waclaw, seeing us melting from the heat and fear, with a disarming smile on his provincial lips, pronounced—*after all, it was tomorrow you were supposed to arrive! Was it supposed to be today?*

Guys, nothing happened! This is a silly thing - "glupstwo"! Welcome!

That was the moment when I learned about Fr. Waclaw's amiable humor and his friendly, or fatherly, caring smile, word, and gesture of concern.

History has come full circle generationally, which I would not even have thought of in my fondest dreams. Forty-one years ago, Fr. Provincial Waclaw Hlond said, *"Welcome to American soil, Mark"*. Today, I, as Provincial, say *"farewell forever, Father Waclaw"*.

Dear Father Waclaw. We say goodbye to you with deep love and sorrow. Your passing brings us sadness but also hope and faith. You had been preparing for this moment for a long time. When you could no longer preach or do good, you waited for the coming of Christ to take your hand and lead you into the Kingdom of priests and saints, the Kingdom of God.

We believe that your sudden passing was peaceful, with the "sister death" guiding you into the embrace of Christ, the Master and Spouse of our souls. *"The hour is coming when all who rest in their graves will hear His voice, and those who have done good deeds will go to the resurrection of life."*

You are now at the threshold of home, with the Father of all people, united with the Divine Master whom you faithfully served and Mary whom you loved like a mother. Experience the joy of being with God, see Him, rejoice in the resurrection, and rest in eternal peace. Amen.







Father Provincial Marek Sobczak was the principal celebrant and preacher of the funeral Mass. Concelebrating priests were - Assistant Provincial Father Tony Kuzia, confreres from Brooklyn - Fathers Eugeniusz Kotlinski, Grzegorz Markulak, Slawomir Szucki, Jan Szylar, as well as Fathers Mitchell Wanat, Marek Sadowski, Tadeusz Maciejewski. Msgr. Jim Shanley from the Chancery and Rev. Dariusz Gosciniak, pastor of Holy Cross parish in New Britain, Ct, joined us in prayers. Fr. Mitch also preached in the English language.

Parishioners from St. Stanislaus in New Haven, St. Michael in Derby, and St. Joseph in Ansonia attended the funeral Mass in good numbers. ***May Fr. Wacław rest in peace.***