



NEW ENGLAND PROVINCE OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

Provincial's Newsletter

Volume 2024/ January

FROM THE PROVINCIAL

Dear Confreres!

Happy and Blessed New Year!

We, Vincentians, will be preparing to celebrate the 400th anniversary of our founding on January 25, 2025, by St. Vincent DePaul in France on January 25, 1625.

Our Superior General, Father Tomáš Mavrič, C.M., has called us to be revitalized in our Vincentian identity.

We are revitalized in our Vincentian missionary vocation through prayer, common life, service to the poor, and the proclamation of the gospel. Allow new people, new experiences, and new ideas into your life to enkindle the missionary spirit in your heart.

I pray that God will bless us with His Wisdom and strength so that we will continue our apostolic activities with faith to lead people on the journey of faith to the Kingdom of Heaven.

As we begin a new year, we are full of hope and anticipation for things to come. We put our trust in Mary, the Mother of God, who ushers us into the new year and the Most High God.

I thank you for your cooperation and involvement in all you do for the Church and the Congregation. I look forward to this in the coming year as well.

May the New Year bring us all good health, happiness, and peace, God's Wisdom, and the zeal with which St. Vincent's life was characterized.

Sincerely yours in St. Vincent de Paul,
Marek Sobczak CM

THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

The Provincial Council meeting was held on 11/29/23 in Manchester.

During the meeting, the confreres shared their experiences and personal reflections from the North American Provincial Councils gathering with the Superior General and Curia in Philadelphia.

Also, the men shared that the Curia's visit to our houses was very positive.

We agreed that the members of the Curia were very grateful for the opportunity to see the Province and where we live and work. The Provincial thanked Father Anthony and other Superiors for their incredible hospitality.

The Council decided that the Provincial Assembly will take place from the evening of September 24th through September 26th, 2024. The Preparatory Commission consists of Tadeusz Maciejewski, Marek Sadowski and Marek Sobczak. The Provincial has appointed Joseph Szpilski, Joseph Wisniewski, and Jan Szylar to serve on the Board of Electors for the Provincial Assembly.

Father Tadeusz Maciejewski, the provincial treasurer, submitted a budget for 2024 for our review. Good news. According to the report, we are in black for a moment.

Father Anthony informed the Council that one of our older cars has been sold, and the Brooklyn house (St. Stanislaus Kostka) has purchased a new car. The car that it replaced was transferred from St. Stanislaus Kostka to the provincial house in Manchester as a spare vehicle.

A discussion followed regarding how much our Province should compensate the Polish Province for Father Jan's care. The decision was unanimous. The Province will still cover Fr. Jan's Medicare coverage.

Father Anthony Kuzia informed the Council that the repairs to the garage and house have been completed. All the proper documents were sent to the insurance, and we are waiting for the reimbursement check.

Father Anthony reviewed the repair to the roof of the Provincial House. The work was satisfactory.

NEW SUPERIOR

With the consent of the council, Father Marek Sadowski was made superior of the Derby House as of November 29th, 2023.

ADVENT RETREAT PROGRAM

Both parishes in Brooklyn, New York, organized Advent retreats for the faithful to prepare spiritually for Christmas. Our confrere from the Polish Province of the Congregation of Mission, Father Maciej Musielak, led the retreat program in Polish from Sunday to Wednesday.

On the other hand, our confrere, Father Mitchell Wanat from St. Joseph parish in Ansonia, led the Advent Retreat program in the English language at St. Stanislaus Kostka parish. The Retreats lasted through the weekend and on Monday night. We are grateful to Father Mitch for undertaking this effort for the spiritual benefit of English-speaking parishioners of St. Stan's Kostka.

OPLATEK

One of the beautiful Polish traditions of the Christmas season is sharing the wafer (opłatek) at the Christmas Eve supper and making Christmas wishes to each other, which express our love for each other - that

love which is born into the world in the person of the baby Jesus.

To keep this beautiful Polish tradition alive, the Provincial visited both parishes in Brooklyn, NY, where he shared the wafer with the priests of both parishes, making Christmas wishes on the Friday before Christmas.

The next day, confreres from the Derby and Ansonia parishes were at the Provincial House in Manchester for a "Christmas Eve" lunch. Father Anthony set up tables ahead of time. Before the meal, the Provincial and the Superior of the House offered their best wishes to all the confreres. We all shared "opłatek." The lunch was also in Polish tradition, of course, red borscht and croquettes with mushrooms, Greek-style fish, fried cod, herrings, dumplings, meatless cabbage, and salads. It was a very friendly celebration.

We also sang STO LAT to Father Stanley "Stasiu" Miekina on his 92nd birthday, which he celebrated on December 21. Plurimos annos, Father Stasiu.

NEWS FROM POLAND

Rev. Artur Pajak, CM, expressed his desire to come to the New England Province. The provincial has spoken to the provincial of the Polish Province to advise him that the process has begun.

MIDNIGHT MASSES ON CHRISTMAS

To keep alive the beautiful Polish traditions associated with Christmas, all of the parishes served by our priests in Connecticut and New York held Masses on Christmas night (the so-called "Pasterki"), which began at midnight. In every parish, the parishioners and guests filled the churches. They come even from distant areas to attend this solemn Mass to honor and glorify God born in human flesh. The midnight masses had a beautiful musical

setting combined with the singing of carols and an occasional sermon. After Mass, it is "obligatory" to visit the nativity scene or decoration, the central part of which is the Bethlehem stable, and laid on the hay the statue of the Lord Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary.



DONATION FROM BROOKLYN HOUSE

Father Superior of the Brooklyn1 House, Father Grzegorz Markulak, recently sent a \$10,000 check to our Province. It was a profit from the "Andrzejki Dance" organized by the St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish on the last night before Advent.

During the ball, filled with great music, dances, and delicious food, the people had a chance to win prizes donated by the Provincial and the Superiors of the Brooklyn Houses (Thermomix from the Provincial House and iPad from the SS. Cyril and Methodius House were the most valuable items). We are grateful to Fr. Markulak for such a great initiative to support the Province.

REST IN PEACE, MR. LAWRENZ

On December 26, 2023, Norbert Anthony Lawrenz, the father of our confrere, Fr. Jaroslaw Lawrenz, who worked for several years in our Province, passed away. The funeral of Mr. Lawrenz took place on Saturday, December 30, 2023, at St. Maximilian Kolbe Church in Bydgoszcz. Unfortunately, we could not attend the funeral, but our Province bought a beautiful funeral wreath with the inscription "Eternal rest deign to give him Lord" - "Priests of the New England Province." Three Masses for the soul of the late Norbert Lawrenz will be

celebrated in our Basilica in Bydgoszcz on January 11, 12, and 26, 2024. Our Province has ordered these Masses. I believe that in our Houses, the priests also prayed for the intention of the deceased's soul. May he rest in the Lord. We wish Father Jarek and the entire Family of Norbert peace and strength from the Lord so that they can prayerfully experience the passing of their loved one.



CONCERTS OF CAROLS IN BROOKLYN

The parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Brooklyn, NY, organized a concert of Polish carols performed by the best artists of the Polish music scene. Not surprisingly, the concert ran out of tickets in the first days of their sale. The organizers took a risk and organized a second concert on the same day. At both concerts, the Stanislaw Kostka church was filled to the brim - as they say, "bursting at the seams." The magnificent

artistic and visual setting only added to the charm. The events kept alive the beautiful Polish tradition of singing Christmas carols during the Christmas season. Other artists from Poland and New York will also perform concerts in January. Such musical events with religious content indeed spread the name of our parish, which rose to the occasion to host the artists, guests, and listeners.

