

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

This year, Fr. Prof. dr hab. Jan Kopiec, Shepherd of the Gliwice Diocese celebrated 50th anniversary of priestly ordination, 25th anniversary of the episcopal ordination and his 75th birthday. The editorial team of “Nasza Przeszłość” would like to join in wishes given to the Venerable Jubilarian, thanking him for long-term support lent to the successive editors of the journal, particularly through his active participation in the Scientific Council of “Nasza Przeszłość”, to which he was appointed in 2000.

In honour of the dear Jubilarian, the editorial team of “Nasza Przeszłość” wishes to remind the readers of the selected articles published by Fr. Bishop Jan Kopiec in this periodical, dedicating to him at the same time the following volume. It is also worth adding that the Archives of the Publishing Institute of the Missionary Priests “Nasza Przeszłość” hold archival records donated by the Honourable Jubilarian.

Bishop Jan Kopiec was born on 18th December 1947 in Zabrze. He received baccalaureate certificate in III Secondary School in Bytom in 1965. After taking holy orders on 30 April 1972, he worked as a vicar in St Francis parish church in Zabrze (1972-1974) and Zabrze-Rokitnica (1974-1978).

In the years 1978-1982, he studied in the Institute of the History of Church at the John Paul II Catholic University in Lublin (KUL), which was crowned with a doctoral degree in theology in the field of the History of Church based on the work entitled “Historiography of the Wrocław Diocese until 1821”. In the 1984/1985 academic year he deepened his studies in ecclesiastical archives in Scuola Vaticana di Paleografica, Diplomatica ed Archivistica, culminating them with a diploma from this university. In 1998, he was awarded a post-doctoral degree at the Faculty of Theology at KUL following his scientific achievements and the presented dissertation entitled “Between Altranstädt

and Poltava. The Holy See on the nomination for the Polish throne in the years 1706-1709". In 2000, he was awarded a degree of associate professor and in 2008 of full professor at the Faculty of Theology at the University of Opole.

He performed a post of Prefect in the Theological Seminary in Śląsk Opolski in Nysa (1982-1984), Vice-Rector of the above Seminary (1985-1986) and Director of the Diocesan Archives (1986-1993). He conducted lectures from the History of Church in the Theological Seminary in Śląsk Opolski, in the Diocesan Theological and Pastoral Institute in Opole and the Missionary Theological Seminary of the Society of the Divine Word in Nysa.

Since 1994 he has been an employee of the Theological Faculty of the University in Opole. Since 1 October 2006 he has been head of the Chair of Church History and Patrology.

On 5 December 1992, Pope John Paul II appointed him Auxiliary Bishop of the Opole Diocese. He received the episcopal sacra on 6 January 1993 in St Peter's Basilica in Rome from the Holy Father John Paul II. On 29 December 2011 Pope Benedict XVI appointed him Diocesan Bishop of the Gliwice Diocese. He is a member of the Scientific Board of the Episcopate, a delegate of the Conference of the Polish Episcopate for the Society of Church Archivists and Chairman of the Historical Expert Group of the Church Concordat Commission.

The research interests of Bishop Jan Kopiec centre around three areas: the Catholic reform in the Diocese of Wrocław in the 17th century, the history of the Catholic Church in Śląsk Opolski and in the Diocese of Opole and the history of the Apostolic Nunciature along with source editing.

In hope for the future cooperation with "Nasza Przeszłość", we wish the Venerable Jubilarian the abundance of God's grace, the protection of our Patron Saint and the strength to continue his work for the Church and for the Homeland.

Fr. dr Waclaw Umiński CM
Editor-in-chief