

THE SYNOD OF BISHOP LEON WAŁĘGA. PREPARATION AND PROCEEDINGS

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Summary. In the 27th year of Bp. Leon Wałęga's office in the Diocese of Tarnów, he held the first diocesan synod in the history of the diocese. According to CIC/17, a synod should be convoked every ten years. Such a synod should be convoked by the bishop to the cathedral church and only he can preside over it. At the same time, the law designated the participants of the synod and its proceedings. This study presents the preparatory stage and the proceedings of the synod which took place on 21st, 22nd and 23rd August 1928. The content of this article covers the following: the decree convoking the synod and the composition of the first synod of the Diocese of Tarnów, synodal offices, rules of procedure of the synod and the scope of works of synodal committees. The synod of Bp. Wałęga, the first one in the history of the diocese, was very well prepared and set out certain directions of works for the future

Key words: Bishop of Tarnów, Diocese of Tarnów, particular Church, diocesan bishop, clergy

INTRODUCTION

The 1917 Code of Canon Law contained a principle that “in every diocese, a diocesan synod should be held at least every 10 years to discuss the needs of the clergy and the faithful” (can. 323 § 1).¹ Such a synod should be convoked by the bishop to the cathedral church and only he can preside over it (can. 357). At the same time the law designated the participants of the synod (can. 358) and its proceedings.² Following these recommendations, such a strong synod movement began in Poland that during 19 years (1920–1939) 14 diocesan synods were held. This undoubtedly encouraged Bp. Leon Wałęga³ to do the same. Bp. Wałęga him-

¹ *Codex Iuris Canonici Pii X Pontificis Maximi iussu digestus Benedicti Papae XV auctoritate promulgatus* (27.05.1917), AAS 9 (1917), pars II, p. 1–593 [henceforth cited as: CIC/17].

² The following studies can be consulted as regards the synods before the 1983 Code of Canon Law: Bączkiewicz, Baron, and Stawinoga 1957; Dudziak 1986, 40–90; Kantor 2017, 181–95; Idem 2019, 231–44; Morawski 1937, 223–49, 355–74; Rozkrut 1998, 101–18; Sitarz 2014, 231–32; Idem 2019, 2711–714; Sztáfrowski 1988, 21–33; Wójcik 1982.

³ Bp. Leon Wałęga, son of Józef and Katarzyna, was born on 25th March 1859 in Moszczenica in Gorlice Poviát. He graduated from the primary school in Gorlice, but he attended lower secondary school in Tarnów. He passed his final exam in the secondary school in Jasło. Then he went to the seminar in Lviv. As a cleric, he was sent to Rome to study theology at the Gregorian University. In Rome, he was ordained as a priest on 24th March 1883 and in the same year he obtained a PhD degree in theology. From Rome, he returned to Lviv where he was successively a vicar, prefect of a small seminary, lecturer of dogma at the University of Lviv and served as a parish priest at the

self stated the following about the synod: “I would compare the synod with confirmation. Just as confirmation gives the Christian the strength and fullness of supernatural life, so the Synod gives the diocese a kind of strengthening and fullness of being. I must admit that I have seen this shortcoming from the beginning, but not feeling able to carry out such a great work, I have always put this thought aside and now, already in my old age, I have finally decided to proceed with it, mainly at the request of Rome [...]. We are therefore starting, in God’s name, the first diocesan Synod, and if God blesses it, it will be an epoch in the history of our diocese.”⁴

In the 27th year of Bp. Leon Wałęga’s office in the Diocese of Tarnów, he held the first diocesan synod in the history of the Diocese. We do not have many studies on the preparation and proceedings of the first diocesan synod of the Diocese of Tarnów in 1928. Those events are described by B. Kumor [Kumor 1985, 366–69] and B. Plewa [Plewa 2014, 122–34]. This article is an extension of the above mentioned studies, including a list of all members of the synod and a detailed description of the synod rules of procedure. The content of this article covers the following: the decree convoking the synod and the composition of the first synod of the Diocese of Tarnów, synod offices, synod rules of procedure and the scope of works of synod committees.

1. THE DECREE CONVOKING THE SYNOD AND THE COMPOSITION OF THE FIRST SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF TARNÓW

By the decree of 20th June 1928, Bp. Leon Wałęga convoked the first synod of the Diocese of Tarnów for 21st, 22nd and 23rd August 1928. Asking for the intercession of the patrons of the diocese, Bp. Leon requested the priests to say the prayer *De Spiritu Sancto* from the day of receiving the decree convoking the synod until 23rd August at the Mass instead of the usual *oratio imperata*. At the same time, the Bishop of Tarnów requested the priests to instruct the faithful, on three consecutive Sundays preceding the synod, what benefits the synod had for the religious life of the diocese. He encouraged people to pray for the synod and requested that on 23rd August at 8 am bells should ring in all churches of the diocese for a quarter of an hour.⁵

The decree convoking the synod contained the composition of the synod. Apart from the suffragan bishop, the following priests were appointed (alphabetical list; the place of residence of priests from outside Tarnów is given in brackets: SW – Great Seminary, SM – Small Seminary, B – Saint Casimir’s Dormitory, I

Metropolitan Basilica in Lviv. With a bull of 15th April 1901, L. Wałęga was appointed Bishop of Tarnów. He took possession of the Episcopal See on 12th May 1901. The consecration was performed by Card. Jan Puzyna assisted by Abp. Józef Bilczewski and Abp. Józef Weber [Sitko 1933, 34].

⁴ *Pierwszy Synod Diecezji Tarnowskiej 1928*, Nakładem Kleru Diecezjalnego – Drukiem Zygmunta Jelenia w Tarnowie, Tarnów 1928, p. 22.

⁵ L. Wałęga, *Dekret o zwołaniu synodu diecezjalnego*, “*Currendae Curiae Diocesanae Tarnoviensis*” 7 (1928), p. 48.

– Saint Joseph’s Dormitory, Ber – Bernardine Fathers, M – Missionary Fathers, F – Filipino Fathers): Albin Adolf (SW), Bach Jan (SW), Bałut Roman (Ber), Barszcz Józef, Basta Stanisław, Bąba Józef, Białas Wojciech (B), Biliński Andrzej (SW), Bizsak Franciszek (Ber), Bochenek Jan, Bogacz Andrzej (I), Borowiecki Franciszek (SW), Buchhorn Franciszek, Bulanda Stanisław, Christ Ernest (SW), Chrobak Walenty, Chrząszcz Józef, Cierniak Andrzej (B), Cwynar Józef (SW), Czuj Jan (I), Dagnan Jan (SW), Drożdż Jan (B), Dudziak Wawrzyniec (B), Dunajewski Antoni (I), Dutkowski Wojciech (SW), Działo Antoni (SW), Florek Marcin (SW), Gadowski Walenty (SW), Gawor Józef (SW), Gawroński Antoni (SW), Goc Franciszek, Gołąb Antoni (B), Gorczyca Antoni (SW), Góra Jan (SM), Grabowski Jan Kanty (Ber), Granicki Jan (B), Grodniewski Stanisław (I), Habas Franciszek (B), Halak Piotr (SW), Harbut Bartłomiej (SW), Heller Adam, Horowicz Stanisław (SW), Jagielka Apolinary (M), Jagielka Jan (M), Jakus Zygmunt (B), Janisz Karol (M), Jasiak Jan (SW), Kapłański Władysław (I), Kilian Józef (M), Klamut Michał (SW), Kocańda Hilary (SW), Kocjan Stanisław, Kokoszka Feliks (SM), Kopernicki Władysław (SM), Kossecki Szczepan (SW), Kotfis Błażej (SW), Krośniński Józef (SW), Król Stanisław, Kuc Władysław (I), Lasak Józef (SW), Lepiarz Roman (SW), Ligęza Jan (B), Lipień Jan (SM), Litwin Kazimierz (B), Lubelski Józef, Łazarski Kazimierz (SW), Łukasiński Franciszek (SW), Magiera Teodor (SW), Magiera Justyn (B), Majewicz Adolf (SW), Marcin Franciszek (F), Maryniarczyk Maciej (SW), Mazur Kasper, Mazur Roman (B), Michalik Jacek (SW), Mikłasiński Franciszek (F), Młodochowski Józef, Młyniec Wojciech (SW), Moryl Florian (SW), Mróz Franciszek, Mucha Andrzej (SW), Mysor Władysław, Nagórzański Jan (I), Nawalny Michał (B), Nikodem Marcin (SW), Niwa Andrzej (I), Odziomek Antoni (SM), Opoka Jakub (I), Orzech Wojciech, Ostrowieński Wilhelm (M), Pabjan Jan (B), Paciorek Jan, Pacocha Adolf (I), Paczyński Michał (SW), Padykuła Józef (SW), Palka Jan (SW), Palka Franciszek, Paryło Franciszek, Pawlikowski Franciszek (SW), Pawlus Michał (B), Pechik Aleksander, Pendracki Ludwik (SM), Piątek Franciszek (F), Pięta Jan (SM), Pilch Jan (SW), Piotrowski Marcelli (SW), Piskorz Julian, Piszczkiewicz Szymon (B), Przywara Michał (B), Pyzikiewicz Jan (I), Rec Michał, Rejowski Andrzej (I), Rodak Stanisław (I), Rogóż Aleksander, Rojek Józef (I), Rojek Marcin (I), Rosiek Jan (SW), Rusin Aleksander, Rzepka Jan (I), Sapecki Paweł (SW), Sękowski Andrzej (SW), Sidor Michał (SW), Siemieński Aleksander (SW), Sitko Franciszek, Sitko Roman, Skopiński Wilhelm (SW), Smagała Stanisław (I), Solak Jan (SM), Sora Jakub (I), Stach Piotr (I), Stanczykiewicz Jakub, Stary Piotr (SM), Starzak Jan (I), Starzec Stanisław (SW), Staszalek Franciszek (SW), Strzępek Władysław (B), Sulma Franciszek (I), Superson Jan (B), Szafranski Stanisław (M), Szewczyk Józef (B), Szurmiak Franciszek (SW), Ślęzyk Józef (SW), Świeykowski Bronisław (SW), Tatka Marek, Wachowicz Ludwik (SW), Walczyński Franciszek, Wałęcki Jan (SW), Warchałowski Stanisław (F), Wąsowicz Franciszek (SW), Wątorzek Józef, Wcisło Jan (SW), Wcisło Walenty (F), Wieliński Michał (SW), Wilczkiewicz Antoni (SW), Wirmański Józef (SW), Wi-

ślicki Jan (B), Włoch Tomasz, Wnęk Adam (SW), Wnękowicz Jan (SW), Wróbel Stanisław, Wszolek Jan (SW), Wyrwa Jakub (SW), Zabawiński Wojciech (SW), Zalesiński Stefan, Zapała Melchior (SW), Zaskalski Jan (SM).⁶

2. SYNOD OFFICES

In the decree on synod offices of 20th June 1928, Bp. Wałęga established eight offices:

- 1) Bp. Edward Komar was appointed Deputy President;
- 2) Rev. W. Mysor became the Synod Promoter and Rev. S. Bulanda became his deputy. The Promoter's task was to ensure that all synod activities took place in due order, in accordance with the canonical law and regulations of the Bishop of Tarnów. His and the synodal judges' task was also to resolve any disputes that might arise between the members of the synod and to confirm the legitimacy of the reasons for absence given by those absent;
- 3) Rev. R. Sitko was appointed to the office of the Synod Secretary. His duties included reading out the proposed decrees, statutes and synodal instructions at formal plenary sessions, asking the members for their consent, requesting the members to confess their faith and oath, writing down all resolutions, provisions, demands and proposals;
- 4) Rev. M. Rec was appointed to the office of the Synod Notary, whose assistants were Rev. F. Pawlikowski and Rev. J. Paciorek. The task of the Synod Notary was to draw up reports and take minutes of synod activities. The tasks of this office included preparation of all synodal documents;
- 5) The office of Synodal Judges was entrusted to Rev. F. Walczyński, Rev. R. Sitko, Rev. A. Albin and Rev. F. Mikłasiński. Their task was to resolve any disputes that might arise between the members of the synod. The judges' decisions could be appealed to the Ordinary;
- 6) The office of the Prefect of Hospices was entrusted to Rev. J. Lubelski. His assistants were as follows: Rev. J. Młodochowski, Rev. J. Barszcz, Rev. F. Mróz, Rev. F. Buchhorn and Rev. M. Tatka. Their task was to prepare and designate flats for the members of the synod and provide them with food for the entire duration of the synod;
- 7) The organisation of the synod liturgy was the responsibility of the Master of Ceremonies. Rev. K. Mazur became the Master of Ceremonies and his assistants were Rev. J. Bochenek, Rev. W. Chrobak, Rev. A. Rusin and Rev. F. Sitko. Their main task was to watch over the ceremony of the pontifical mass, processions and services that were celebrated during the synod. The tasks of this office also included indicating the place in the cathedral church to the members;
- 8) The last office established by the synod legislator was the office of the Clergy Prosecutor. Rev. A. Wilczkiewicz was appointed to this office and Rev. J. Mi-

⁶ Ibid., p. 48–49.

chalik, Rev. T. Włoch, Rev. J. Stanczykiewicz and Rev. W. Wcisło were appointed to assist him. Their task was to accept all written objections to the issued decrees, to demand their change or amendment and to register requests in the area of diocesan legislation. The Prosecutor, through an intermediary i.e. the Synod Promoter, forwarded all applications, requests or demands of synod members to the President.⁷

3. SYNOD RULES OF PROCEDURE

Similarly to the decree on synod offices, on 20th June 1928, the Bishop of Tarnów approved the synod rules of procedure which in a detailed manner regulated the rules to be followed by the members of the synod. All members called to the synod were to become familiar with these rules. These rules of procedure consist of sixteen sections (in fact, there are seventeen, as the decree repeats section eight twice) and can be divided into two parts. The first part is of general nature and the second part concerns the details of the synod proceedings.

Bp. Wałęga reminds that it is the duty of each member to take part in all acts of the synod in person, from its opening to its closing.⁸ In the event that one of the members was unable to attend the synod due to illness or any other obstacle, he was obliged to inform the Synod Promoter in writing, one week before its beginning, presenting the reasons for his inability to attend the synod. A similar situation was to occur if one of the members wanted to leave the synod before its solemn closing.⁹

In a public session in the cathedral, all members should wear a biretta and choir dress (this referred to the Cathedral Chapter and the Protonotaries Apostolic), the others should wear a surplice. The monks, on the other hand, should wear their choir clothes provided for in their law.¹⁰

The rules of procedure also regulate situations when one of the members would like to live outside the designated place or dine outside the seminary. Then such priests should, a week before the beginning of the synod, inform the Prefect of the Hospice about such a fact. "The designated dwelling must not be changed without the knowledge of the Prefect of the Hospice."¹¹

Section eight of the rules of procedure contains the agenda for non-local members of the synod. "I will get up at 6.00 am; at 7.00 am breakfast in the seminary refectory; at 7.45 am exit to the cathedral (without procession); at 8.00 am all members of the synod in choir clothes will go from the sacristy to the great door to

⁷ Idem, *Dekret o urządach synodalnych*, "Currendae Curiae Diocesanae Tarnoviensis" 7 (1928), p. 49–50.

⁸ Idem, *Regulamin Synodu*, "Currendae Curiae Diocesanae Tarnoviensis" 7 (1928), p. 51, sect. 1.

⁹ Ibid., sect. 3.

¹⁰ Ibid., sect. 5.

¹¹ Ibid., sect. 6.

receive the Most Honourable Bishop Ordinary; further agenda includes separate rules of procedure for the synodal services and proceedings.”¹²

Then, the rules of procedure give specific recommendations regarding the duration of the synod itself. The rules of procedure reminded once again that only the Bishop Ordinary is the President and the Legislator of the synod. He may, however, instruct his deputy to preside. Furthermore, only the President has the right to speak at formal meetings in the cathedral. As we read in the rules of procedure, members of the synod were not allowed to speak at formal meetings. They had this right only with the consent of the Ordinary at non-formal meetings which were held in the auditorium of the Higher Seminary.¹³ A member who spoke in a discussion could not speak for more than 10 minutes, when that time was exceeded, he was deprived of his right to speak. The speaker was also deprived of his right to speak when he deviated from the subject or when the tone of his speech was not serious.¹⁴ The rules of procedure obliged the members of the synod to keep the proceedings secret until the promulgation of the synod decrees.¹⁵

4. SCOPE OF WORKS OF SYNOD COMMITTEES

On 4th April 1927, Bp. L. Wałęga announced the convocation of a diocesan synod and he appointed Rev. W. Mysor as the promoter. As synod aims, the Bishop indicated the adjustment of the diocesan law in force to CIC/17 and supplementing the diocesan law with new provisions. At the same time, the Bishop established 8 synodal committees, setting out the scope of topics to be dealt with by them:

1) The Legal and Codification Committee, chaired by Rev. S. Bulanda, was to edit the synodal resolutions into the statutes in accordance with the law of the universal Church, taking into account diocesan customs;

2) The Committee on Pastoral Care in the Church, chaired by Rev. T. Włoch, was to deal with the problems of parish preaching, catechetical teaching, the problems of contemporary errors in faith and morality, methods of counteracting them, the sacraments, the Catholic press, fraternities and church associations, as well as the issue of missions and spiritual retreats;

3) The Committee on Out-Of-Church Pastoral Care, chaired by Rev. J. Lubelski, was to discuss forms of out-of-church pastoral care, i.e. parish unions and associations, forms of charity campaigns, problems of emigration, the Catholic league, out-of-school youth unions and the issues of workers' and professional organisations;

4) The Liturgical Committee, chaired by Rev. K. Mazur, took care of the order of parish services, the cult of the Eucharist, church decoration, church singing

¹² *Ibid.*, sect. 8.

¹³ *Ibid.*, sect. 9.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, sect. 12.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, sect. 13.

and choirs, parish ritual, artistic form of building churches and chapels, arranging parish cemeteries, church service;

5) The Committee on Church Assets, chaired by Rev. R. Sitko, discussed the problems of the management and surveys of church assets, various fees, mass scholarships, alienation of church assets, legates and pious foundations;

6) The School Committee, chaired by Rev. F. Walczyński, dealt with textbooks for teaching religion in schools of various types, prayer books, pastoral care of school children, various aspects of catechetical work, church organisations among youth;

7) The Management and Administration Committee, chaired by Rev. W. Mysor, was to discuss the role and powers of the dean, the form of dean's visit and the structure of decanal congregations, as well as the jurisdictional powers of the deans' visitor. It also discussed the parish priest's relation towards the vicar, the catechist and the patron;

8) The Organisational Committee, chaired by Rev. W. Mysor, took care of the preparation and editing of the synod writings, decrees, acts and the synod ceremony, its technical procedure, printing of its resolutions, materials and lectures.¹⁶

The synodal committees held their meetings from 4th to 25th July 1927. The subject of those meetings was to get familiar with the content of previously prepared lectures as well as to adopt appropriate resolutions. The works of the synodal committees was governed by the committees' rules of procedure. According to the rules of procedure, committees' meetings were held in the bishop's residence, although with the bishop's consent they could be held in another place. The convening of those committees was the responsibility of their chairman who presided over the proceedings and discussion, summarising its results.¹⁷ The committee was also composed of a deputy chairman and a secretary. The deputy chairman had the same functions as the chairman while the secretary, in accordance with the rules of procedure, kept a record of discussions and minutes of committee meetings.¹⁸

During the committee meeting, a lecture was delivered and it was immediately followed by a discussion. The rules of procedure prohibited discussion at a separate committee meeting. After the meeting, the lecture was archived in written form in the committee's records.¹⁹

The presence of committee members during meetings was obligatory. Only the Ordinary could, in exceptional circumstances, justify the absence of a member at a meeting.²⁰

¹⁶ Idem, *Dekret zwołujący Synod z 4 kwietnia 1927 roku*, "Currendae Curiae Diocesanae Tarnoviensis" 4 (1927), p. 24–26.

¹⁷ Idem, *Regulamin komisji*, "Currendae Curiae Diocesanae Tarnoviensis" 4 (1927), p. 26, sect. 2–3.

¹⁸ Ibid., sect. 4–5.

¹⁹ Ibid., sect. 10–13.

²⁰ Ibid., sect. 14.

CONCLUSIONS

On the last day of the synod – 23rd August 1928 – Bp. L. Wałęga in his speech in the cathedral thanked God for the whole work of the diocesan synod. Then he thanked all priests for their contribution to all synodal works, emphasising the special commitment of the Synod Promoter and his deputy. In the further part of his speech, the shepherd of the Church of Tarnów appealed to the priests to obey the resolutions of the synod, because its value would depend on what the future brought. He requested the priests to maintain discipline which should manifest itself not only in the external obedience to the Church authority, but also in the internal conviction that it is right.²¹

Owing to the smooth running of the synod, it has fulfilled its aims: to adjust the diocesan law in force in the diocese to CIC/17 and to supplement the diocesan law with new provisions, especially those concerning the maintenance of discipline among the clergy. Having analysed the decrees of Bp. Wałęga establishing the commissions and their composition as well as having reviewed the synodal rules of procedure, it can be stated that they reflected the provisions of common law contained in CIC/17.

Undoubtedly, the Synod of Bp. Wałęga, the first in the history of the diocese, was very well prepared and set out certain directions of works for the future. Ten years later, the second synod, the statutes of which were not promulgated, was a “copy” of the one in 1928.

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²¹ Idem, *Mowa Księdza Ordynariusza przy zamknięciu synodu*, in: *Pierwszy Synod Diecezji Tarnowskiej 1928*, p. 41.

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SYNOD BISKUPA LEONA WAŁĘGI. PRZYGOTOWANIE I PRZEBIEG

Streszczenie. W 27. roku sprawowania urzędu w diecezji tarnowskiej bp Leon Wałęga przeprowadził pierwszy w historii diecezji synod diecezjalny. Zgodnie z Kodeksem Prawa Kanonicznego z 1917 r. synod powinien być zwoływany co dziesięć lat przez biskupa do kościoła katedralnego. Tylko biskup diecezjalny może mu przewodniczyć. Jednocześnie prawo wskazywało uczestników synodu i jego przebieg. W niniejszym opracowaniu przedstawiono etap przygotowawczy i przebieg synodu, który odbył się w dniach 21, 22 i 23 sierpnia 1928 r. Treść artykułu obejmuje: dekret zwołujący synod oraz skład I Synodu Diecezji Tarnowskiej, urzędy synodalne, regulamin synodu i zakres pracy komisji synodalnych. Synod bp. Wałęgi, pierwszy w historii diecezji, był bardzo dobrze przygotowany i wytyczył kierunki pracy na przyszłość.

Słowa kluczowe: Biskup Tarnowski, Diecezja Tarnowska, Kościół partykularny, biskup diecezjalny, duchowieństwo

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