

THE PREPARATORY STAGE OF THE 5TH SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF TARNÓW – STRUCTURE AND TASKS

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Summary. A diocesan synod is necessary so that it could express the common concern for being the Church and being in the Church, the key manifestation of which is the concern for identification with it. And this can be reached only by communal reflection about who we are as the Church and what our tasks in this field are. In December 2016, the Bishop of Tarnów decided to convoke the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów. Before this Synod was inaugurated, it was preceded by a preparatory stage. Therefore, this article presents the following issues connected with this important synodal stage in the Diocese of Tarnów: the announcement of synod convocation, the aims of synod preparatory stage, the establishment of the Preparatory Commission and its tasks and, finally, the results of works performed during the pre-synodal stage will be presented.

Key words: the Diocese of Tarnów, synodal structure, pre-synodal stage, diocesan synod

The Code of John Paul II defines a synod as a group of “of selected priests and other members of the Christian faithful of a particular church who offer assistance to the diocesan bishop for the good of the whole diocesan community”¹. A synod is therefore a gathering at which the bishop solemnly exercises the office and ministry of shepherding the faithful. Apart from the adaptation of the universal law to the conditions of the particular Church, the tasks of a synod include the development of ministry, giving recommendations and removal of negative effects from church life².

¹ *Codex Iuris Canonici auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus* (25.01.1983), AAS 75 (1983), pars II, pp. 1–317 [henceforth quoted as: CIC/83], can. 460.

² There is a rich literature on synods. Among others: T. Pawluk, *Prawo kanoniczne według Kodeksu Jana Pawła II. Zagadnienia wstępne i normy ogólne*, vol. I, Warmińskie Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne, Olsztyn 2002; R. Kantor, *The Synods of the Diocese of Tarnów as a tool*

As noted by Prof. Mirosław Sitarz “The diocesan synod cannot deal with the problems referring to the Catholic Church or interfere in matters reserved for the bishop. To perform these tasks, the synod should engage all the faithful in the diocese and strive for the renewal of religious and moral life”³.

So far, four synods were held in the Diocese of Tarnów⁴. In December 2016, the Bishop of Tarnów decided to convoke the 5th Synod of the Diocese

for the renewal of the particular Church, “The Person and the Challenges” 7 (2017), no. 2, pp. 181–195; G. Corbellini, *De synodo dioecesano*, in: *Comentario exegetico al Código de Derecho Canónico*, ed. A. Marzoa, J. Miras, R. Rodríguez-Ocaña, vol. II/2, Eunsa. Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, S.A., Pamplona 2002, pp. 992–1029; J. Dudziak, *Synod diecezjalny, jego struktura i rola w Kościele partykularnym*, “Colloquium Salutis” 16 (1984), pp. 47–79; T. Rozkrut, *Synod diecezjalny w Kościele*, Wydawnictwo Diecezji Tarnowskiej Biblios, Tarnów 2002; Idem, *Synod diecezjalny w życiu Kościoła partykularnego na początku trzeciego tysiąclecia Kościoła*, in: *II Synod Diecezji Radomskiej, Biuletyn I, Czynić diecezję domem i szkołą komunii*, ed. S. Łabędowicz, Wydawnictwo Diecezji Radomskiej Ave, Radom 2008, pp. 79–111.

³ M. Sitarz, *Synod diecezjalny w Kodeksie Prawa Kanonicznego z 1983 roku. Zarys problematyki*, “Biuletyn Stowarzyszenia Kanonistów Polskich” 24 (2014), no. 27, p. 95. See also: Idem, *Synod diecezjalny*, in: *Komentarz do Kodeksu Prawa Kanonicznego*, vol. II/1: *Księga II. Lud Boży. Część I. Wierni chrześcijanie. Część II. Ustrój hierarchiczny Kościoła*, ed. J. Krukowski, Pallottinum, Poznań 2005, pp. 333–344; Idem, *Synod diecezjalny jako uroczysty sposób sprawowania władzy ustawodawczej biskupa diecezjalnego. Zarys problematyki*, “Wiadomości Diecezji Gliwickiej. Pismo urzędowe” 3 (98) 2016, pp. 333–349.

⁴ On 4th April 1927, bishop Leon Wałęga announced the convocation of a diocesan synod and he appointed father Władysław Mysor as its promoter. As synod aims, the Bishop indicated the adjustment of the diocesan law in force to the new Code of Canon Law and adding new provisions to the diocesan law. On the basis of a decree dated 20th June 1928, bishop Wałęga convoked the first diocesan synod, scheduled to take place in the cathedral on 21st–23rd August 1928, and ordered appropriate prayers and services in this regard. B. Kumor, *Diecezja tarnowska. Dzieje ustroju i organizacji 1786-1985*, Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, Kraków 1985, pp. 366–369. The plenary synod of 1936 became one of the main reasons for the convocation of the second synod of the Diocese of Tarnów. On 25th March 1938, in his letter to the clergy, bishop Franciszek Lisowski reminded that as of 16th June 1938 the plenary synod would come into force and that it had been 10 years since the previous diocesan synod. In connection with the above, he decided to convoke the 2nd diocesan synod, scheduled to take place at the beginning of July 1938. F. Lisowski, *Pismo do wiernych*, “Currenda” 6 (1938), p. 97; R. Kantor, *Synod w przededniu wojny. II Synod Diecezji Tarnowskiej – historia i rekonstrukcja statutów*, Wydawnictwo Diecezji Tarnowskiej Biblios, Tarnów 2016. On 27th November 1947, during the annual congregation of deans, bishop Jan Stepa announced the convocation of the 3rd Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów. On 2nd February 1948, in his pastoral letter to the clergy, the Bishop of Tarnów decided that the aims of the third diocesan synod would be: 1) the election of judges, synodal examiners, parish priests – consultors; 2) the establishment of boundaries of new deaneries and dealing with the issue of old deaneries; 3) the issues of parish and diocesan liturgy; 4) the issues of pastoral work in the Church. *Trzeci Synod Diecezji Tarnowskiej 1948*, Tarnów 1957; B. Kumor, *Diecezja tarnowska*, pp. 371–373. Thirty-

of Tarnów. Before this Synod was inaugurated, it was preceded by a preparatory stage. Therefore, this article presents the following themes connected with this important synodal stage: the announcement of synod convocation, the aims of synod preparatory stage, the establishment of the Preparatory Commission and its tasks and, finally, the results of works performed during the pre-synodal stage will be presented. The basic source of information for this article will be materials gathered in the archives of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów and legal texts, such as CIC/83 and the Instruction *De synodis dioecesanis agendis*⁵.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SYNOD

The legislator resigns from the rule established in the Code of Canon Law of 1917 regarding the convocation of a synod at least every ten years, leaving the need for convoking a synod to the opinion of a diocesan bishop⁶. In the Instruction on Diocesan Synods, the legislator decided that the bishop should – when convoking a synod – take into account various circumstances, such as the need for overall diocesan pastoral plan; the need for the application of norms and other directives of the Holy See at a local level; the need for the church community to be more active (DSDA, III.A.1). When taking a decision to convoke a synod, the bishop should listen to the opinion of the Presbyteral Council acting collegially; however, its opinion – even expressed unanimously – is not binding for the bishop (CIC/83, can. 127 § 2). In order to assess the situation in his diocese, the bishop may also consult the diocesan Pastoral Council (CIC/83, can. 511).

three years after the previous diocesan synod, bishop Jerzy Ablewicz decided to convoke the fourth diocesan synod. On 3rd November 1980, during the congregation of deans and vice-deans, the bishop announced the convocation of the synod and on 8th May 1981, he issued a decree on the establishment of the Main Commission of the 4th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów. After several years of “synoding”, in 1986, a new diocesan law was established. This law was contained in 747 statutes, 12 instructions and 7 statutes of religious institutions. B. Kumor, *Diecezja tarnowska*, pp. 373–377; B. Olejnik, *Analiza historyczno-prawna struktury i organizacji IV Synodu Diecezji Tarnowskiej w trzydziestolecie zakończenia*, Wydawnictwo Regis, Tarnów 2016.

⁵ Congregatio pro Episcopis, Congregatio pro Gentium Evangelizatione, Instructio *De synodis dioecesanis agendis* (19.03.1997), AAS 89 (1997), pp. 706–727 [henceforth quoted as: DSDA]. This Instruction was also commented by: T. Rozkrut, *Nowa instrukcja o synodach diecezjalnych*, “Prawo Kanoniczne” 42 (1999), no. 1–2, pp. 145–156.

⁶ *Codex Iuris Canonici Pii X Pontificis Maximi iussu digestus Benedicti Papae XV auctoritate promulgatus* (27.05.1917), AAS 9 (1917), pars II, s. 1–593, can. 365 § 1.

In December 2016, the Bishop of Tarnów convoked the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów in order to reflect upon the existing situation of the diocese and the condition of the ministry. “The Synod gives us opportunity for certain and global overview of current condition of our diocese. It allows us to make a general diagnosis, based on which we will be able to determine further directions of our ministerial work”⁷.

In his letter announcing the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów, the Bishop of Tarnów outlined the situation of the Diocese of Tarnów. He mentioned the impact of destructive ideologies on the lives of the faithful, increasing number of marriages falling apart, crises suffered by the youth, enormous role of the media which can be used in evangelisation with positive effects. Finally, he mentioned about reforming ourselves⁸.

The main objective of the Synod – in the opinion of the Bishop of Tarnów – is to demonstrate the spiritual, pastoral and material heritage of the Christ’s Church in the Diocese of Tarnów; revival of faith, hope and love in personal and communal relationship with Christ in the Church; and to indicate new pastoral ways in the changeability of the world towards the unchangeability of Christ. This general objective includes the area of catechesis, so important and requiring deep reflection⁹.

The course of works of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów was planned for three subsequent years. Each year will be focused particularly on one field of the life of the Church. “Therefore – as stated by the Bishop of Tarnów – the first synodal year (2018/2019 will be devoted to a family as

⁷ A. Jeż, *Kościół na wzór Chrystusa. List pasterski zapowiadający V Synod Diecezji Tarnowskiej*, “Biuletyn V Synodu Diecezji Tarnowskiej” 1 (2017), p. 10.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 9. “The renewal of life of our diocesan community should be expressed by, first of all, a deep reform of ourselves, organisation of issues of our own conscience, getting closer to Christ by continuous formation and deepening of sacramental life because, presently, faith is not enough, it is only heritage obtained through the chain of generations. The contemporary realities of life and of the mission of the Church require a convincing justification of faith which is inside us as well as readiness to defend it when it is questioned or attacked. Our renewal will be based on great treasures of the Church: life according to the word of God and the strength of the sacraments, which will allow us to always remain in the mystery of the Holy Trinity’s love. We want to maintain, strengthen and develop traditional ministry which is the basis of spirituality of our diocese so that the forms of devotion established over the years could be continued by future generations. The Synod gives us opportunity for certain and global overview of current condition of our diocese. It allows us to make a general diagnosis, based on which we will be able to determine further directions of our pastoral work”. Ibidem, p. 10.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 11.

a whole. During the second synodal year (2019/2020), we will concentrate on the problems connected with the life and functioning of a parish community and during the third synodal year (2020/2021), we will discuss the subject of broadly understood evangelisation”¹⁰.

AIMS OF PREPARATORY STAGE

The objective of a diocesan synod is to help the bishop for the good of the entire diocese and support him in exercising his office (CIC/83, can. 460; DSDA, I.1). The synod’s task is, first of all, the adaptation of universal law to the conditions of particular Churches (dioceses) and making it more specified as well as development of ministry, initiation of new actions, giving recommendations and removal of negative effects in church life. The diocesan synod cannot deal with the problems referring to the Catholic Church or interfere in matters reserved for the bishop. To perform these tasks, the synod should engage all the faithful in the diocese and strive for the renewal of religious and moral life.

According to the DSDA, the preparation of a synod should commence with a prayer. Both the laity and clergy should participate in such prayer for the synod. Also religious congregations existing in the area of the diocese, in particular contemplative orders, should participate in such prayer (DSDA, III.C.1). A diocesan synod is not only a body of legal nature and its individual sessions do not focus only on subjects for which it was convoked. Although the legislator did not equip a diocesan synod with liturgical competences, the Church documents emphasise the importance of celebrations of the Mass at the beginning, during and at the end of a synod¹¹.

The following words became the motto of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów: “The Church follows the example of Christ”. The synod’s aim, even if not expressly determined, is the renewal of the Church. So, what is the renewal of the Church about? It may happen that everybody understands it in a different way. What do the following words mean “The Church follows the example of Christ”? They mean that Christ sets an example to the Church. And if Jesus Christ sets an example to the Church, it is necessary for

¹⁰ Minutes of the meeting held by the Preparatory Commission, in: “Acts of V Synods Diocese of Tarnów” [henceforth quoted as: AVSDT], VSDT-V/2016.

¹¹ Sacra Congregatio pro Episcopis, Directorium de pastoralis ministerio Episcoporum *Ecclesiae imago* (22.02.1973), Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, Romae 1973 [henceforth quoted as: EI], no. 165.

the Church to look at Christ and learn from Christ. This looking at Christ includes, first of all, two basic truths/mysteries/events of Jesus Christ: his incarnation and pascha. So, if Jesus sets an example and the path to the Church, two paths open for the Church: the path of incarnation and the path of pascha¹².

In connection with the path of incarnation, it is possible to speak about the incarnative nature of the mission of the Church. It will be expressed in learning about the world because Jesus grew and the grace of God and people was upon Him, in proclaiming of Gospel, as Jesus did, who was a Teacher and a Prophet and, finally, in administration of the sacraments because Jesus was the Healer of souls and bodies. On the other hand, the path of pascha, to which the Church is invited, will be expressed in undertaking the mission of substitution (substitute character of the mission of the Church). The Church undertakes the mission of substitution because Jesus is sent so that in Him people reconcile to God. The Church seeks the sinner and with merciful love returns the sinner to Christ because Christ is the image of Merciful Father. The Church sacrifices itself for the life of the world because Jesus was the first to sacrifice himself, becoming the Salvation Sacrifice¹³. To conclude, father Andrzej Michalik stated that: "The Church will become more of "an example of Christ" if each of us becomes more of "an example of Christ", not individually and without communal relations, but in the community of the Church and by the community of the Church. So that more and more Christians would love Jesus in the Church and love the Church in Jesus. Then – I believe – the first and the most important aim of the 5th Synod will be accomplished i.e. we will enjoy the Church that has been and is formed according to the example of Christ"¹⁴.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PREPARATORY COMMISSION AND ITS TASKS

At the beginning of a synod, the bishop is obliged to establish a preparatory commission. EI 164 indicated the necessity of establishing a number of preparatory commissions. After years of experience, in the DSDA, it was

¹² A. Michalik, *Kościół na wzór Chrystusa*, IX Diecezjalne Forum Ruchów i Stowarzyszeń Katolickich, Tarnów, 30th September 2017, in: <https://synodtarnow.pl/pobierz/> [accessed: 10.09.2018].

¹³ Ibidem.

¹⁴ Ibidem.

stated however that a better solution would involve the existence of only one commission composed of representatives of the clergy, the consecrated and the laity. All of them should be distinguished by their pastoral prudence and by their professional competence. Such preparatory commission should be also composed of experts in the disciplines of Canon Law, theology, Sacred Liturgy and persons with pastoral experience. This preparatory commission assists the Bishop in matters pertaining to the organisation and preparation of a synod, in the designation of the synodal members and in the determination of questions to be deliberated upon during the second stage i.e. synodal sessions. This commission also participates in the preparation by the diocesan bishop of the synodal directory, where, according to the DSDA, among others the following should be stated in detail: the number of the laity and the consecrated that the synod should be composed of, the norms by which elections of synodal members are to be conducted, the norms by which synodal structures are to be constituted, procedural norms during synodal sessions, manner of expression (oral or written) and voting (DSDA, III.B.2).

As noted by bishop Artur Miziński in his lecture during the 9th Diocesan Forum of Movements and Associations in Tarnów on 30th September 2017 “in connection with the fact that informing not only those who are directly engaged but also all people in the Diocese about the importance of a synod and the progress of its works is a matter of utmost importance, the establishment of a press office is justified for this purpose. In this era of mass media, especially the Internet, they seem to be an efficient tool not only for conveying information about synodal works but also for the participation of as many people as possible by joining the discussions and searching for the right solutions. Those responsible for conveying information should be also attentive to false opinions that may occur, so that education regarding synodal matters could contribute to building genuine unity between individual members of the diocesan community. The dissemination of information about synodal works will certainly result in increased interest in this event and will increase the opportunity for active engagement by as many people as possible”¹⁵.

The synodal preparatory stage is also an occasion for conducting catechesis as regards issues relating not only to the synod itself but also, in a broad-

¹⁵ A. Miziński, *Rola i znaczenie synodu diecezjalnego – aspekty prawno-duszpasterskie*, IX Diecezjalne Forum Ruchów i Stowarzyszeń Katolickich, Tarnów, 30th September 2017, in: <https://synodtarnow.pl/pobierz/> [accessed: 10.09.2018].

er sense, to issues connected with the life of the Church and participation of the laity in building the Church. The entire duration of the synod should be also supported by individual as well as communal prayer. In the Diocese of Tarnów, since the time when the synod convocation was announced, parishes have started to pray for the synod.

In the decree establishing the Preparatory Commission, the Bishop of Tarnów emphasised that the aim of this Commission was to “prepare the proper works of the synod, develop pastoral aids connected with the Synod for the faithful, develop synodal Directory, anthem and logo as well to specify issues that will become the subject of synodal deliberations”¹⁶.

In order to prepare the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów, in accordance with the DSDA III.B.1, the Bishop of Tarnów established the Preparatory Commission composed of: bishop Leszek Leszkiewicz – the chairman, father Marcin Baran – secretariat, father Krzysztof Bułat, father Piotr Cebula – secretariat, father Krzysztof Czermak, father Andrzej Dudek – secretariat, father Paweł Górski, father Robert Kantor, father Wojciech Karpiel, father Janusz Królikowski, father Andrzej Michalik, father Jacek Nowak, father Zbigniew Pietruszka, father Bogusław Połęcz, father Józef Wałaszek. Later, the following persons joined the Commission: father Tomasz Lelito, father Andrzej Turek – secretariat, Ms Joanna Sadowska – secretariat, Ms Agnieszka Juszczyk – secretariat.

RESULTS OF WORKS

The Preparatory Commission of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów implemented the tasks indicated by the Bishop of Tarnów. They may be summarised as follows:

1) the Synod’s logo was developed. After consultation with the Preparatory Commission, at the end of March 2017, bishop Jeż selected a symbol that will accompany all synodal initiatives in the diocese. Then, certain final adjustments were made and on 8th May 2017, a decree approving the official version of the logo was signed. It was publicly presented for the first time on 29th May 2017 at a press conference organised in the building of the Higher Theological Seminary in Tarnów. In the middle of the Logo, there is a Christogram, one of the oldest symbols that form an abbreviation for the name of

¹⁶ A. Jeż, *Dekret powołujący Komisję Przygotowawczą* (16.12.2016), in: AVSDT, VSDT-V/2016.

Jesus Christ. It is a combination of two Greek letters X (Chi) and P (Rho) which are an abbreviation of the word Χριστός (Christós) – Christ. The central position of this Christogram reflects the truth that Christ is an unchangeable example for the Church. This Christogram is surrounded by a community of people – the Church that should be always built according to the example of Christ. This circle of people surrounding the Christogram is open, inviting the community of the disciples of Jesus to enter. With its shape, it refers to the Bernini's colonnade that surrounds the St. Peter's Square in the Vatican City and depicts the hands of the Church, reaching out in the desire to embrace all people. Such a shape of this circle expresses the universality of the Church, its catholicity. Additionally, the community of the faithful presented in the Logo is not homogeneous, but distinctively differentiated. It illustrates the richness of forms of the Christian vocation fulfilment. The crosier located among the community of the faithful emphasises that the diocesan bishop is, paraphrasing the words of St. Augustine, "a Christian with the faithful and bishop for the faithful". The placement of the crosier in the axis of the Christogram means that the diocesan bishop represents the mission of Christ (pastoral, prophetic, priestly) to the fullest extent in the diocese entrusted to him. Therefore, it is the diocesan bishop who convokes a synod and is its sole legislator¹⁷.

2) the Synod's anthem was developed. The decree announcing the official anthem of the 5th Synod was signed by bishop Jeż on 28th November 2017 and its premiere took place on Saturday, 9th December 2017 (after 4:00 pm), when it was broadcast by RDN Małopolska and RDN Nowy Sącz as part of a synodal radio programme. The lyrics for the anthem were written by a Poor Clare from Stary Sącz, sister Teresa Anna Izworska OSC. She also proposed its title: "Following Christ" (pl. "Za Chrystusem"). These words are the fruit of prayer, meditation and contemplation over the content of the Letter of bishop Jeż from the 1st Sunday of Advent in 2016, where he announced this great event in the Church in Tarnów. They also refer to the official prayer prepared by the Bishop and which, at his request, is said in the diocese on various occasions. The anthem is composed of five verses and a chorus. It is of intercessory nature i.e. it is a prayer addressed to the Triune God. Basically, it opens with the adoration of the Holy Trinity because the work of our salvation is the fruit of cooperation between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and our entire life and our prayer should praise God. The

¹⁷ AVSDT, VSDT-V/2017.

composition by Mr Sebastian Szymański is considered to be the official melody which is of majestic and solemn nature. An alternative melody was also allowed, composed by Mr Piotr Pałka, referring in its convention to Gregorian chants¹⁸.

3) the Synod's Directory was developed. On the basis of a decree of the Bishop of Tarnów dated 21st April 2018, the Directory of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów was promulgated. The following can be found in the introduction to this document: "The dynamically changing social and cultural situation in which the religious community in Tarnów lives and operates, practising its faith and building the living organism of Christ's Church, requires a new and thorough review, assessment and reflection in order to look in the future and determine the most appropriate path of pastoral actions. This is the aim of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów"¹⁹. The Directory consists of nine parts: general provisions; aims of the synod; the Main Commission of the Synod; the Secretariat of the Synod; Synodal Commissions; Synodal Teams; Synodal Speaker; plenary sessions, final provisions²⁰.

4) synodal commissions were proposed. During the last – eleventh – session of the Preparatory Commission, the number and chairmen of those Commissions were proposed. On the basis of a decree of 21st April 2018, the Bishop of Tarnów, in accordance with the Directory of the Synod, established the Main Commission of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów and Thematic Commissions. The Main Commission was composed of: bishop Andrzej Jeż, the diocesan bishop – chairman; bishop Wiesław Lechowicz, the vicar general – deputy chairman; bishop Stanisław Salaterski, the vicar general – deputy chairman; bishop Leszek Leszkiewicz, the vicar general – deputy chairman; father Andrzej Dudek, Ph.D. – chairman of the Commission for Divine Worship and Sacramental Life; father Krzysztof Bułat, Ph.D. – chairman of the Clergy Commission; Father Piotr Cebula, Ph.D. – chairman of the Marriage and Family Commission; father Marcin Baran, M.A. – chairman of the Children and Youth Commission; father Michał Dąbrówka, Ph.D. – chairman of the Evangelisation Commission; father Jacek Nowak, Ph.D. – chairman of the Commission for Heritage of the Diocese of Tarnów; father Robert Kantor, Prof. – chairman of the Church Administration Commission; father Zbigniew Krzyszowski, Ph.D. – chairman of the Consecrated

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ *Directory of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów*, in: AVSDT, VSDT-V/2018.

²⁰ AVSDT, VSDT-V/2018.

Life Commission; father Zbigniew Pietruszka, M.A. – chairman of the Church Charitable Ministry Commission; father Andrzej Turek, Ph.D. – chairman of the Media Commission; father Rafał Wierzchanowski, Ph.D. – chairman of the Legal Commission; father Andrzej Michalik, Prof. – chairman of the Theological Commission. Composition of the Secretariat of the 5th Synod: the secretary general: father Piotr Cebula, Ph.D.; assistant secretaries: father Andrzej Dudek, Ph.D., father Andrzej Turek, Ph.D., father Marcin Baran, M.A., Joanna Sadowska, M.A.; member of the Secretariat: Agnieszka Juszczak, M.Sc., Eng.²¹.

On 21st April 2018, the official inauguration of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów took place. It is the date when the Preparatory Commission completed its works and the preparatory stage ended. The Preparatory Commission in the Diocese of Tarnów successfully completed its tasks: it prepared the directory, proposals of subjects, during the diocesan consultations the faithful submitted their postulates, needs and wishes, a working document of the 5th Synod was prepared, a prayer for good results of the synod was of dominant significance, finally, proposals relating to the composition of individual Synodal Commissions were presented.

On behalf of and at the request of Pope Francis, during the official inauguration of the 5th Synod of the Diocese of Tarnów, a letter written by archbishop Angelo Becciu was read. It might be worthwhile to quote a part of that letter: “Thirty years that elapsed from the previous diocesan Synod certainly generate the need for assessment of, reflection and retrospective view on the existing directions of pastoral work, conducted works and efficiency of undertaken actions. They also generated the need for looking into the future in order to indicate new paths of apostolic mission of the local Church in the context of dynamically changing and contemporary social, cultural and religious situation”. Furthermore, Pope Francis imparted his apostolic blessing to the Bishop of Tarnów, Andrzej Jeż, his colleagues, members of synodal commissions and participants in the inauguration of the 5th Synod, expressing his hope that “the expected renewal will deepen the bonds of union between the Diocesan Shepherd and priests as well as the faithful, strengthen families, activate the life of our parish and disseminate the work

²¹ Ibidem.

of evangelisation. Let it reassure everybody in the spirit of faith, wake the desire to strive for holiness and raise the awareness of belonging to the universal Church and connection with the Successor of St. Peter”²².

One of many aims that guided the Bishop of Tarnów when he was convoking the 5th Synod was that a diocesan synod is necessary so that it could express the common concern for being the Church and being in the Church, the key manifestation of which is the concern for identification with it. And this can be reached only by communal reflection about who we are as the Church and what our tasks in this field are. One should hope that the preparatory stage largely contributed to such communal reflection.

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²² Ibidem.

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ETAP PRZYGOTOWAWCZY V SYNODU DIECEZJI TARNOWSKIEJ
– STRUKTURA I ZADANIA

Streszczenie. Synod diecezjalny jest potrzebny po to, aby wyraziła się w nim wspólna troska o bycie Kościołem i bycie w Kościele, którego kluczowym przejawem jest troska o utożsamienie się z nim. Do tego można dojść jedynie dokonując wspólnotowego namysłu, kim jesteśmy jako Kościół i jakie są nasze zadania w tej dziedzinie. W grudniu 2016 r. Biskup Tarnowski postanowił zwołać V Synod Diecezji Tarnowskiej. Zanim zainaugurowano Synod, wcześniej poprzedził go etap przygotowawczy. Stąd w artykule zostaną przedstawione następujące tematy związane z tym ważnym etapem synodalnym w diecezji tarnowskiej: zapowiedź zwołania synodu, cele fazy przygotowawczej synodu, powołanie Komisji Przygotowawczej i jej zadania oraz finalnie zostaną zaprezentowane wyniki prac etapu presynodalnego.

Słowa kluczowe: diecezja tarnowska, struktura synodu, etap presynodalny, synod diecezjalny