

CENTER FOR DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH OF THE PONTIFICATE

A COOPERATION- *picking up the speed*

**Dear Friends of the John Paul II Foundation
and of the Center of the Pontificate!**

Celebrations of the 35th anniversary of the John Paul II Foundation have come to an end. Enriched by the memories of the Foundation's beautiful history, we are moving forward with new projects for the future. We are in the process of making some of them happen. Therefore, we have asked a few people to speak about partnership with us. We also have asked visiting doctoral students to give us a new ideas for joint action. We are convinced that, thanks to the cooperation with others, the Center will become what it should be: a place of deep reflection and the formation of the new initiatives, a meeting place for Foundation's

communities, the Circles of Friends, related institutions and the people sharing with us the the admiration for life and teachings of John Paul II. We don't want to be a warehouse of books, of museum exhibits and materials, but we want to be a Center pulsating with life, a "gear" that sets in motion larger mechanisms: the Foundation itself, the people and institutions. The E-Bulletin that we put in your hands should serve this purpose to "pick up speed" and increase the impact of the good that was born thanks to John Paul II, the good that can emerge in us and wherever we live.



„John Paul II, a philosopher and theologian and a great Pastor of the Church, has bequeathed to us a wealth of writings and actions [...]. These precious gifts cannot be forgotten. Today, dear members and friends of the John Paul II Foundation, I entrust to you the task of examining the richness of his message more deeply and revealing it to the generations to come”.



COMMENTS FROM THE FOUNDATION



Bożena Pawłowska-Kilanowski – president of the Circle of Friends of the John Paul II Foundation in Saskatchewan, Canada; member of the Union of Polish Writers Abroad in London and the John Paul II Association of Polish Writers in Chicago.



A GOOD PLACE TO IMPLEMENT YOUR IDEAS

The 35th anniversary of the John Paul II Foundation, celebrated in October 2016 in Rome, was not only an occasion to thanksgiving celebrations but also an opportunity to meet with friends and strengthen mutual relations. The celebrations came with other interesting initiatives as, for example, publication of the articles, prepared by the Center for Documentation and Research of the Pontificate of John Paul II. I had an opportunity to coedit one of them. The idea of publishing the volume entitled *Pisane sercem. Poetycki dyptyk dla św. Jana Pawła II (Written with a Heart: A Poetical Diptych for Saint John Paul II)* was launched during the meeting of leaders of the Friends of the John Paul II Foundation at the first anniversary of the canonization of our Patron. It was a grassroots initiative, born from the wishes of the community connected with the Foundation, in which the Center played the key role. I would like to thank the editorial staff (Father Director Andrzej Dobrzyński, Justyna Staroń, Ph.D. student from the Catholic University in Lublin, Sr. Remigia Sawicka and Sr. Julia Knurek) for this partnership. This connection brought more results.; for example, by popularization of the Center's activities, among others, on-line via Facebook.

It is advisable to launch new projects and to consult new ideas with the Foundation so with this partnership we'll "not cease this good work", as asked by the creator of the Foundation, John Paul II. It ought to be done because "Polish thought and culture should be present in the world", as Cardinal Stanisław Dziwisz reminded us in his speech published lately on the Facebook profile of the Center.



TREASURE OF INSPIRATIONS

In my memories I often return to the 35th Anniversary of the John Paul II Foundation, celebrated last October in Rome. I marvel how well it was done; it connected nicely all parts of the program, the religious part, the remembrance part and the social part ! The atmosphere of the Polish House is wonderful and these were great days for us. We experienced unity with Poles from different continents and we felt like we were all at home there.

It is very important that Poles have in Rome their own place. We are closely



united by our pride in the still alive testimony of the Polish Pope's sainthood. Today, John Paul II unites and inspires us to work together. I trust that the John Paul II Foundation will still grow with the Center's help. The importance of the Center's activities has been shown, among others, by the anniversary celebrations, especially by the commemorative gathering organized by the Center, and the publications such as the edition of the *Przemówienia papieskie do Fundacji Jana Pawła II. Nie ustawajcie w dobrym dziele (Do Not Cease This Good Work. Papal Addresses to the John Paul II Foundation)* and a book of poems for John Paul II, beautifully presented during a poetic evening. I was especially interested in an unusual story about the history of gifts offered to the Pope and exhibited in the Polish House (a publication on this subject is advisable!).



Barbara Skowrońska – historian, publisher, editor; in 1990-1998 main editor of the Encyclopedia PWN, author of many articles and radio programs.

All of this reassured me that the Center of the Pontificate is not only a rich source of documents, memorabilia and academic literature but also a place where projects addressed to members of the Foundation, as well as to the people sharing faith in human, universal values, are launched and run. The collections themselves are a treasure of inspirations! It seems to me that today the most important matter is the awakening of the interest in the activities of the Center in the young generations, especially fellowship students of the Foundation.





WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD FOR
WORKING TOGETHER WITH YOU

VOLUNTEERING – AN IMPORTANT ISSUE!

I am a lecturer of classical subjects at a Canadian university. My first contact with the Center for Documentation and Research of the Pontificate took place in 2007, when I came to Rome to prepare a series of lectures on the ancient art and architecture for the students of Mac Ewan University in Edmonton. I was so impressed with the variety of all these collections of documents, memorabilia, souvenirs, gifts, with all the aspects of the pontificate of Saint John Paul II, the Pope so venerated by most of Polish people. Several years of work in the National Museum in Warsaw before my immigration to Canada helped me to understand what an enormous amount of work went to the preparation and

compilation of the collections. During the

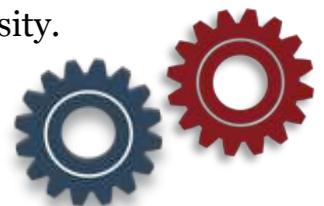
following years, I observed with admiration the fast growth of publications and studies on the contemplative thoughts of our great Compatriot.

Every two years since 2008, I come with a group of Canadian students for three weeks stay in the House at via Cassia. Thanks to the stay in the Polish House my students not only acquire knowledge about the ancient Roman art but also learn about the Christian heritage and most of all about the Polish Pope. Many of my students had no idea that John Paul II was a Pole. I have to admit that when I noticed how often the name of the Pope means nothing to the young people in Canada, I was ashamed, because it was our fault, mine and our Polish diaspora community's fault.



Maria Kozakiewicz – professor of the classical studies at Mac Ewan University in Edmonton, in Canada.

For the last few months, I have been more involved in the works of the Center. Once a week I write a blog for the website of the Center. I know it is not a lot but if everyone could share his or her knowledge of the community or fluency of the language then a testimony of the faith and love of John Paul II will reach a larger group of people. The evangelization in the modern world has become a necessity.





The Polish Pope came to Radzymin - “The Town of the Miracle on the Vistula River” in 1999 to thank those, still living veterans of the Battle of 1920, for the independence of Poland. For several years, a sanctuary – a votive offering for the life and the pontificate of John Paul II – is being built in Radzymin. Building the walls of the temple, although very important, is not the sole purpose of our activities. In 2014, the Foundation “John Paul II, Our Pope” was created, as a homage to God for the life and the pontificate of Saint John Paul II. The Foundation started its activity in a response to the canonization of the Polish Pope. Saints are a gift for the whole Church, an universal gift, but also they are a challenge and a source of inspirations for the tasks we are called for by the contemporary world. The poignant testimony of John Paul II helped to initiate many works, the priorities of which, although similar, are realized by different



WHAT UNITES US? OUR COMMON GOALS

Katarzyna Figura – vice-president of the “John Paul II, Our Pope” Foundation in Radzymin.



methods. The same happens with our institution and the John Paul II Foundation in Rome, especially with the Center of the Pontificate within it. The path of joint activities, undertaken in the field of education, was directed by the objectives written in the statute.

Together with the Center we organized three popular-science sessions addressed to all who want to live in accordance with the teaching of John Paul II, especially to young people who, when making choices, want to follow the examples of their spiritual leaders. The meetings organized in junior and high schools are accompanied with inter-

school contests (artistic, historical, multimedia, literary) on great Poles. Among invited lecturers there are academics, writers, scholars and educators. Also Fr. Andrzej Dobrzyński, director of the Center, always takes part in our sessions.

Since the beginning of its activity, the Foundation “John Paul II, Our Pope” supports publishing projects of the Center through promotion and disseminating of its publications. I am sure that the future will show new forms of cooperation. In our planning of activities and events we are counting on the participation of the Center of the Pontificate.



WITH A SCHOLARLY POINT OF VIEW

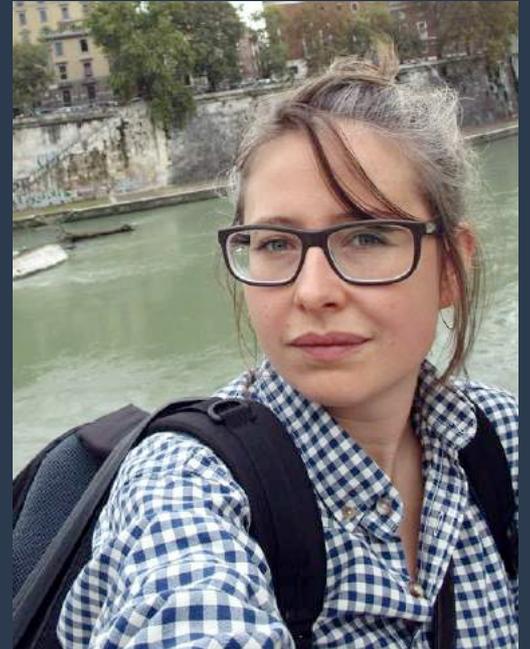
EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES

I will remember the Polish House as a place where roads are not only crossing but also where new paths appear, which were previously completely unnoticeable. This House is opened to people, to faith and to the community. The collections of the Center for Documentation and Research of the Pontificate left me with an overwhelming impression. Especially touching were the gifts that evoked the memory of painful, even frightening experience: mementos from concentration camps, from Nazi prisons and from communist gulags. These gifts, so to speak, are burdens offered to John Paul II and they speak of superhuman suffering that was conquered. They are a moving testimony of faith and devotion to the Pope. It is easier to share

joy than suffering. The latter could only be shared with our loved ones. Through such gifts a receiver shares the burden with a giver.

The richness of the collections of the Center's collections filled me with a deep peace. Why? Because of the fact that all the gifts, though so different, are treated with equal respect. There is a place, among the collections, even for the most modest offerings. This is a great lesson of Christian openness that nothing and nobody is excluded. In addition, it is also a testimony to Christian universalism which, on the common foundation of faith, cherishes differences.

Undoubtedly, the documentation of the pontificate of John Paul II is the greatest treasure of the Center. However, the



Ewa Chudyba – historian of philosophy, educator, Ph.D. student at the Institute of Cultural Studies at the Ignatianum Academy in Krakow.

just mentioned diversity is the key, one of many, and in connection with the collections could be used to interpret the pontificate. I see a vast field of action for the Center, both in the educational and promotional areas, based on this idea of respect for diversity which grows out of Christian love that accepts everyone.

Today, much is said about diversity and tolerance. Unfortunately, these concepts are often used as premises of



axiological relativism that promotes relativity of all values. This is one of the living aspects of offensive efforts aiming at the secularization or even atheization of society. The diversity, understood as a premise of relativism by the currently dominant trend of thought, i.e. by the post-modernism, is treated as conflicted with the universalism. Moreover, the postmodernism, proclaiming the end of meta-narratives, equates universalism with totalitarianism and identifies unity with unification.

Therefore, I think that the education about universalism, which does not exclude diversity, and in its striving to keep the unity does not require standardization from a person but allows him or her to discover and preserve the fullness of self, would be very much needed. In this, I see the essence of Christian personalism, so much present in the teaching of John Paul II.

In my opinion, openness to the diversity in a climate of respect and kindness and also to paths

leading to God and experiencing transcendence, was one of the most dominant aspects of the pontificate of John Paul II. The openness of this Pope always powerfully impressed me.

The rich collections of the Center tell about it. The educational project on “the diversity of Christian universalism” could have the title “Many Stories – One History: The History of Salvation”. The project opens up a huge field of possibilities.



Dorota Beltkiewicz – teacher of the Polish language, speech therapists, bibliotherapist and fable therapist, author of books for children, graduate of the University of Education in Krakow, Ph.D. student at the Ignatianum Academy in Krakow.

COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN



Presenting John Paul II to younger youth and to children who, because of their date of birth personally and consciously have not experienced the pontificate of the Polish Pope, is very important. The youth and children should be supported in their discovery of the Holy Father. Family, school, parish church, media and cultural and

educational institutions should play an important role in this process.

One of the institution with the mission of spreading the knowledge about life, person and the teaching of the Polish Pope is the Center for Documentation and Research of the

JOHN PAUL II FOUNDATION

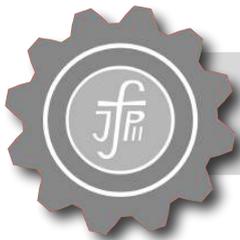
Pontificate of John Paul II in Rome. Its rich museum collections that include gifts received by the Pope and his personal souvenirs make the history of his life more clear for visitors.

A contact with these precious things is possible not only during pilgrimages and retreats, organized by parishes or schools, but also during family and individual visits to the Polish House. The exhibits, catalogued and photographed, can also be seen on the web site of the Center. One can find interesting materials in the Library which includes: the reading room, personal papal library, research papers, books with dedications, magazines

and press documentation in many languages. This is an excellent source of knowledge about the Pope for educators, teachers, catechists, parents and youth itself. Symposiums, academic conferences and seminars, organized by the Center, help to deepen adults' knowledge about John Paul II, which, in turn, can be transferred to the next generations. The Center is active on the Internet and available to people who cannot visit Rome. Spreading the knowledge about John Paul II and keeping memory of him, also among those who cannot remember him, is possible due to the following: comprehensive and interesting web site of

the Center, activities in the social media through publishing thoughts of John Paul II, video series "Prominent People about Us", Gospel video commentary by Fr. Andrzej Dobrzyński, director of the Center, possibility of searching the collections of the Center via a web browser and regular contact with readers by messages and greetings.

It is important to do everything possible in order to inspire children and youth with the Polish Pope not only as a great authority and an exemplary person but also a personal guide on the way of life.



NEWS



November 3, 2016. At the C. K. Norwid High School in Radzymin, a popular science session took place. It was organized under the title "Freedom or Slavery: Paradoxes of the 21st Century" and it was patronized by the Center for Documentation and Research of the Pontificate. During the first, scholarly part, the participants attended the lectures on freedom in the context of the pontificate and work of John Paul II presented by invited guests, among them by Fr. Andrzej Dobrzyński. In the second part, the results of a contest "Great Poles: Cyprian Kamil Norwid and Saint John Paul II" were announced. Our Center was one of the co-organizers of the contest, in addition to

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the John Paul II Our Pope Foundation at the Saint John Paul II Parish in Radzymin and the Schools of Secondary Education in Radzymin. An interview with Fr. Andrzej Dobrzyński, led by students from a school newspaper “One’s Wings”, concluded the meeting with the youth from Radzymin. The young reporters asked about works of the Center, its publications and about the pontificate of John Paul II. The interview was published in the November issue of the magazine.

November 14, 2016. At the Polish House of John Paul II, a meeting with doctoral students from the Institute of Cultural Studies of the Ignatianum Academy in Krakow, took place. Their one-week’s stay in Rome, combined with an educational project they are engaged in, became an opportunity for us to tell them about activities of the Foundation and to show them the Center as a place of inspirational academic research. The meeting have brought mutual benefits as testified by their writings included in this newsletter (cf. p. 6-8), in which doctoral students not only share their observations about the Center but also propose their creative ideas for new ventures.



December 29, 2016. TV program “Hello Polonia”, made by TV Polonia, an episode about the Polish House of John Paul II in Rome was shown. Ewa Bednarkiewicz, president of the Society of Friends of the John Paul II Foundation talked about our institution and works carried out by it from the TV studio in Warsaw. Using a live webcast, Fr. Andrzej Dobrzyński also took part in the program. He told the viewers about the activities of the Center of the Pontificate. The program was titled “Hello Polonia –the Polish House of John Paul II in Rome”.



FACEBOOK INITIATIVES



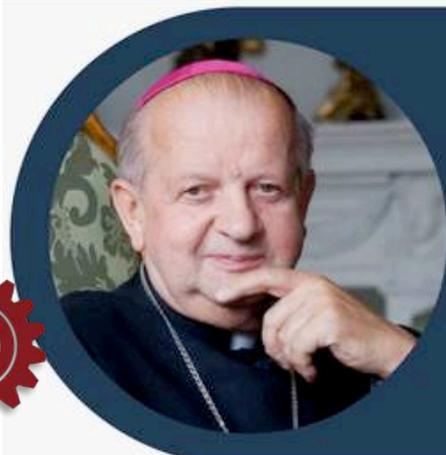
Because the Center of the Pontificate of John Paul II is located in Rome, it is often visited by noted artists, people of culture, scholars and clergy. During the meetings we asked our guests about their opinions about the work of the Center and about the collections assembled there. In effect, a cycle “Prominent People about Us...” was created. We regularly post films with

statements of our visitors on social media profiles of the Center of the Pontificate (You Tube, Facebook). These opinions are for us the source of inspirations to find new ways to achieve our objectives and also provide us with the new incentives to take better care of the work entrusted to us. Below, please find some excerpts. We invite you to watch the whole cycle!



Dr Ewa Czaczkowska – “I think that activities of the Center today are more important [than in the past]. The more time passes from the death of John Paul II, the more important is remembering not only about him but also about his teachings. The environment should be created for younger generations, for scholars [...] to learn about achievements of John Paul II. It is our task”.

Dr Andrzej Grajewski – “The Center has an invaluable significance for everyone who is fascinated by the pontificate of John Paul II, for everyone who tries to research and study it, not only because of the place but also because of its unique collections. [...] I was pleased to see them. The Center is also planning the research about the world’s reactions to the assassination attempt on John Paul II. The paths of everyone who wants to study this Pontificate should lead to the Center”.



Cardinal Stanisław Dziwisz – “We are enjoying the accomplishments of the Center of the Pontificate. Publications, contacts, conferences– these are the things that mattered to John Paul II; He wanted the Polish thought and culture to be present in the world”.

Intentions' Box. This is an initiative which has grown from the opinion that people gathered around the Center should be connected not only by a passion of learning about John Paul II and of deepening the knowledge about his teachings but also by a mutual interest expressed by the common prayer. That's why, here in Rome, at the relics of John Paul II and by his intercession, we would like to forward to Our Lord the intentions that were sent to the Center's email address (<mailto:info@jp2doc.org>) or to the Center's FB site. The Intentions' Box of the Center has been slowly filling with requests from different parts of the world. We invite you to take this offer!



Attention! We are rebuilding our website. It is changing not only the look but also its functions. The modifications will allow the users of the mobile devices easily access the service. In addition to the Polish, Italian and English versions, we'll introduce the new ones: Spanish and French.

KONTAKT

The Center for Documentation and Research of the Pontificate of John Paul II

**Via Cassia, 1200
00189 ROMA
ITALY**

Operator: (+39) 06 303 65 181

Fax: (+39) 06 303 103 99

Email: <mailto:info@jp2doc.org>

Web <http://www.jp2doc.pl/index.php/en/news>