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A Brief Historical Study



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Translation from Polish:

Marina Batiuk

Editing:

Robert Stackpole, STD

Thaddaeus Lancton, MIC, STD

Page design:

Marina Batiuk

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Ad usum sodalium. Cum permissu superiorum.

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The Marian Habit as Envisioned by Fr. Founder

“... by divine inspiration, with the counsel of the most distinguished theologians, and with the consent of the Ordinary see of Krakow and Poznan, I assumed the white habit in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, and, wearing it, I presented myself without delay to the very Illustrious and very Reverend Lord [Bishop] Ranucci, the Apostolic Nuncio in Poland, to express my obedience and submission; I received a blessing and a strong praise and encouragement for my intention to found this tiny Congregation.”¹

This is how Saint Stanislaus describes the circumstances of his investiture with the white habit in his testament of 1701. As to the event’s time, the Founder says the following in his *Fundatio Domus Recollectionis* of 1695: “... having been requested, I went to the court of a certain nobleman James Karski, a very good man. [...] And within the octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I, already in **the white colored habit, devoted myself as a new candidate to this Mother for everlasting service.**”² Father Casimir Krzyzanowski, MIC, an expert on Fr. Papczyński, provides further details, stating that the ceremony took place before the miraculous image of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Karski family’s chapel in Lubocza, probably on Sept. 15, 1671.³

People reacted differently to St. Stanislaus changing his habit. Some of their responses caused the Founder much pain. He thus recorded in *Fundatio Domus Recollectionis*: “At that time all these matters turned out favorably for me. For although admiration seized many when they saw me change the color from black to white, they even sang this from the Poet: ‘So suddenly the Swan who was just a raven.’ However they were so animated by the Divine Majesty, that they even applauded this change: They highly praised [my] plan, and wished me a most hallowed success; among these were the Apostolic Nuncio himself, a certain Bishop, [some] well known Religious, although [there were] some [who] perceived [me] as crazy, and some even persecuted [me], because it was necessary that these beginnings had to be founded on some suffering.”⁴

Paragraphs 4 and 5 of Chapter IV of the Marian Founder’s *Rule of Life (Norma vitae)* completed in 1672,⁵ give details of the garb that he chose for members of his Institute:

4. Because softness of garment incites not only pride, but also lust, you, as hermits, will wear clothing from the most simple, rougher, and thicker material: you will wear a habit stretching to the ankles – not one which trails on the ground or shows the ankles too much – and a short

¹ Saint Papczyński, *Another Testament [Last Will]*, in: *Historical Writings of Blessed Stanislaus Papczyński*, p. 105, Stockbridge, MA, 2007.

² Saint Papczyński, *Foundation of the House of Recollection* in: *Historical Writings of Blessed Stanislaus Papczyński*, pp. 63-64, Stockbridge, MA, 2007.

³ Ibid, footnote 185.

⁴ Ibid, p. 64.

⁵ St. Papczyński, *Foundation of the House of Recollection* in: *Historical Writings of Blessed Stanislaus Papczyński*, Stockbridge, MA, 2007, p. 64.

mantle reaching to the knees, and a shirt from coarse linen or some other stinging material. **All of these will be white in color, in honor of the pure Conception of our Lady, and the greatest cleanliness of them should be observed**, because dirty poverty can please no one.

5. At least when inside the house in summer, wooden sandals will be worn with bare feet. Outdoors, for the sake of propriety, and in the winter in cold regions for reasons of health, simple, uniform but not extravagant shoes are permitted. Hats lined with sheep's wool are not forbidden to be used to protect the body in a cold climate, after the Superior General of the Congregation has been consulted. The brother-workers will have to wear a different habit from the priests: a habit reaching to the ankles, of grey color, and a mantle without a collar. (By worker are understood those who in choir cannot perform the Office of the Dead and devotions with the others in the Latin language.)⁶

It is impossible to determine today how the habit worn by Fr. Papczyński and his first companions exactly looked. All we know is that – aside from its white color – there was nearly nothing different⁷ between that habit and the one worn by the Piarists.⁸ In the words of Fr. Tadeusz Rogalewski, MIC, a contemporary biographer of Blessed Stanislaus: “While the Piarists wore a black habit, Fr. Stanislaus chose a white one. He believed that this color would be the most appropriate for members of the “Society of the Immaculate Conception” as no other color expressed the spotlessness of Mary’s Conception so well. In Fr. Papczynski’s understanding, such a habit worn by the Marians was to be a natural aid in spreading the cult of the Immaculate Conception as the principal goal of the new Congregation.”⁹ In the time preceding the beatification of Fr. Stanislaus, the Piarists in Rome were approached with an inquiry as to whether they had any surviving descriptions or iconographic representations of their habit from the 17th century. The Piarists indicated two possible sources: a fairly precise description of the habit contained in their first constitutions, as well as the old portraits of their Founder, St. Joseph Calasanz, and of the Venerable Glycerius Landriani,¹⁰ a Piarists’ candidate to the altars who died in 1612. The only indication might be provided by the oldest – as it is commonly believed – portrait of the Father Founder painted during his lifetime and now located in the monastery in Skórzec. Father Napoleon Lubowicki, a member of the Marian Order from 1858-1864, and a resident of the monastery in Raśna, gave this painting to the Marians in 1921. Being a deacon, after the dissolution of the Order, he was compelled to enter the Seminary of Vilnius.¹¹ The comparison of the two paintings demonstrates many similarities between the

⁶ St. Papczyński, *The Rule of Life*, Stockbridge, MA, 1980, pp. 17-18.

⁷ In all probability, the only small difference between the habit of the Marian Fathers and the one worn by the Piarists was the lack of wooden buttons with which the Piarists fastened the short opening on the chest of their habits. Close examination of the old Marian Fathers’ iconography clearly demonstrates the absence of whatever external buttons on the Marian Fathers’ habits. Also, the Congregation’s by-laws say nothing on that subject. Cf. *Costituzioni della Congregazione Paolina dei Poveri della Madre di Dio delle Scuole Pie scritte da San Guiseppe Calasanzio*, in: *Costituzioni dell’Ordine delle Scuole Pie*, Roma 2004, p. 68, § 155.

⁸ The Piarists’ habit was inspired by the garb used by the Jesuits and other religious orders of so-called Clerics Regular emerging in the 16th century, such as the Theatines (1524), the Barnabites (1530), the Somascans (1534), Clerics Regular of the Mother of God (1574), the Camillians (1584), and the Clerics Regular Minor/Padri Caracciolini (1588). Members of these orders did not wear any kind of a special habit of sophisticated cut, rather they wore the garb modeled after the clothing of the diocesan clergy.

⁹ T. Rogalewski, *Stanislaus Papczyński (1631-1701), Founder of the Congregation of Marian Fathers and Inspirer of the Marian School of Spirituality*, Stockbridge, MA, 2012, p. 249.

¹⁰ The photo of this 17th-century portrait is included in the Appendix.

¹¹ See *The Album of the Deceased Members of the Congregation of Marian Fathers*, Stockbridge, 2013, p. 89.

garments of the two religious. It is necessary to remember while researching the cut of our first religious garb that it had its distinct shape already from the start, which distinguished it from other such religious clothes. This is supported by Fr. Papczyński's brief statement made in the above-mentioned *Fundatio Domus Recollectinis*:

Therefore, I permitted this Hermit [John of the Immaculate Conception, secular name Stanislaus Krajewski – note of the Author] to assume the **habit of my pattern (which I had accepted by Divine inspiration)**, and I declared him as my Companion in the Sacred Nunciature, previously however having accepted from him the oblation to the Society of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M.¹²

The color of the habit was of extreme importance to Fr. Papczyński. One can easily come to that conclusion after carefully reading the final version of his will, where he writes:

And if Father Joachim [Kozłowski] by consent of the Fathers should again be confirmed as a Coadjutor, then **I oblige him [by the terrible judgment of God], that – with regard to what has been prescribed by me – he does not introduce any innovations in the habit**, in the title of the Order, nor that he dare to impiously abolish the veneration of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary (...).¹³

The account, which Venerable Fr. Casimir Wyszyński included in his biography of Father Founder, seems to support the notion:

When the Venerable Servant of God Fr. Stanislaus of Jesus Mary noticed that Fr. Joachim of St. Ann and Br. Anthony wore white hats, brought over from Rome, while the entire Congregation was using the black ones, he asked about the cause of that novelty. Father Joachim replied that white hat was better suited to the white habit. **The Servant of God countered that the hat had nothing to do with the habit. For it is important that the habit be clean and white to thus reflect the inner innocence of the Immaculate Conception.** While the hat is an accessory that one choose to use or not. And then he added, «Father Joachim, I ask you as I have already asked you so many times before, do not change anything in the Congregation of the Immaculate Conception. I'm telling you this because it is not I, but God Himself raised it in His Church, and so it should stay forever without any innovations.» He ordered to cut into small pieces these white hats, because – enlightened perhaps by a prophetic spirit – he foresaw something worse associated with these white hats in the future.¹⁴

And finally in his letter of 1691 addressed to the Franciscan Order, in which he asks to incorporate the Marians into the Holy Order of Nuns of the Immaculate Conception, Fr. Stanislaus himself notes that he wants the Marians to retain their habit and the purpose of saving the souls of the dead.¹⁵

¹² St. Papczyński, *Foundation of the House of Recollection* in: *Historical Writings of Blessed Stanislaus Papczyński*, Stockbridge, MA, 2007, p. 67.

¹³ St. Papczyński, *Another Testament*, in: *Historical Writings of Blessed Stanislaus Papczyński*, Stockbridge, MA, 2007, p. 110.

¹⁴ Z. Proczek MIC, *Stróż duchowego dziedzictwa marianów. Wybór pism o. Kazimierza Wyszyńskiego*, Warszawa – Stockbridge 2004, pp. 125-126.

¹⁵ See *A Letter of Entreaty to the Order of the Friars Minor*, in *Historical Writings of Blessed Stanislaus Papczyński*, Stockbridge, MA, 2007, p. 89.

The “Rule of the Ten Virtues” About the Habit

In 1699, the Marians accepted the *Rule of the Ten Virtues of the B.V.M.* Chapter 10 of this Rule specifies the manner of dress for the persons abiding by that Rule:

Regarding the habit, which ought to be simple and austere, the following dispositions shall be observed, namely: they shall be clothed after the profession of vows in the same way and manner as were Jesus and His Mother. Since the souls devoted to God shall conform, both in their actions and in their garb, to their Spouse, Christ, and His Virgin Mother, so that both Mother and Son may radiate through their clothing and habit, namely: by the gray color in their inner garb and the white in their outer one; by the black of the rosary beads and the red of the bands of the scapular of the Immaculate Conception. To this scapular, worn beneath the outer garment, shall be attached an image of the Mother of God, adorned in sky-blue. They shall wear openly on the outside, hanging from the St. Francis’ cincture, the 10 black prayer beads, i.e., 10 *Hail Marys* in memory of the 10 virtues of the most pure Virgin.¹⁶

Therefore, we see that the newly accepted Rule also obliged the Marians to wear the white habit. What is more, the Rule added two new elements: St. Francis’ cincture and the prayer beads of the 10 virtues of the B.V.M. However, while professing his vows on that Rule, Fr. Founder added the following reservation to his written act of profession which he himself wrote:

I, Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary, unworthy superior of the Order of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, a Polish Congregation aiding the deceased and the pastors, promise and vow to God, as well as to the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the Saints ... that all through my lifetime I shall observe the Rule of Imitation of the Ten Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary **in everything that is not contrary to the regulations of our religious Institute**, and I shall live in chastity, obedience, and holy poverty, adjusting my conduct to the requirements of the said Rule – which it either stipulates or implies – and which obligate all those who profess vows upon this Rule.¹⁷

It seems that the above disclaimer is a reason why the direct successors of Fr. Papczyński’s work did not feel obliged to comply strictly and immediately with all the norms for the Marian habit stipulated by the Rule. It was particularly true for the modifications in garb that St. Stanislaus chose for the Marian religious brothers. It is worth remembering that – along with granting the Marians permission to profess vows upon the Rule of the Ten Virtues – the General Superior of the Franciscans also granted them the right to retain their original habit.¹⁸ It was not until the General Chapter of 1722 in Goźlin that the following was decreed: in **art. 25**: The habit of all members must be the same, as well as all other items of clothing; in **art. 26**: Every member must wear the Franciscan rope as the cincture.¹⁹ The Marian legislation will follow these two decrees. Let us quote here the *Statuta Patrum Marianorum* of 1723 that states in Ch. III, art. 6:

¹⁶ *Regula Ordinis B.V. Mariae* in: *Regra dos Religiosos Marianos*, Lisboa 1757, p. 226 (this excerpt was translated from Latin into Polish by Fr. S. Michalenko, MIC).

¹⁷ Cf. St. Papczyński, *The Profession of Solemn Vows*, in: *Historical Writings of Blessed Stanislaus Papczyński*, Stockbridge, MA, 2007, pp. 114-115.

¹⁸ Cf. *Przyłączenie marianów do Zakonu Serafickiego pod Regułą dziesięciu cnót NMP z dnia 21 września 1699 r.* in: *Regula Ordinis Beatae Virginis Mariae*, Varsaviae 1723, pp. 36-40, in: *Positio super introductione Causae et super virtutibus ex officio concinnata (Servi Dei Stanislai a Iesu Maria Papczyński)*, Romae 1977, p. 542.

¹⁹ *Postanowienia kapitulne uchwalone w konwencie goźlińskim dnia 31 sierpnia roku 1722* in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum Congregationumque Generalium M.I.C. 1702-1999*, ed. W. Makoś MIC, Puszcza Mariańska 2001, p. 53. To facilitate reading, [for the original text of this article] the titles of quoted documents from the 18th-century Marian legislation were translated into

To give witness to the spiritual radiance of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God all your clothes shall be made out of simple cloth of white color, and you have to conscientiously strive to keep them clean, as filthy poverty pleases no one. The uniformity and quality of the cloth should be preserved by all. Everyone shall wear the Franciscan rope in place of a belt. If necessary during travels, a gray raincoat may be worn over the habit. Everyone has to take great care not to appear to choir or to be seen without the prescribed habit anywhere outside of one's cell, especially if guests are present; superiors shall severely reprove and punish the offenders. Religious tonsure shall be uniform for all and no one shall venture to grow a beard or long hair.²⁰

Marian Legislation About the Habit

In following the example of their Founder, subsequent generations of Marians held the white Marian habit in great respect. Measures were taken to ensure its uniformity and adherence to the original model, as well as to have all the elements of the Marian garb always conform to the rule of simplicity and religious poverty. All this has been documented by the Marian legislation of the entire 18th century:

The esteemed General Council eliminates the type of clothing called 'rokolory',²¹ the use of which on the road is forbidden; instead, let them wear, according to the Rule, the universally accepted cloak, which must be of no other color than gray. Shoe buckles made of brass or whitewashed iron are also forbidden; instead, let them use plain iron buckles.²²

Let everyone without exception have the prayer beads or the 'decade' of shortened links [of the ordinary rosaries] in the form of a 10-bead rosary attached to their cincture.²³

A ban is placed on the excess that some of the members demonstrated by wearing raincoats (cloaks) of a totally secular style. They go to church, to a monastery of another Order, or to the houses of our benefactors dressed in this manner. Therefore, the General Superior is being specifically advised to command the alteration of this kind of clothing according to standard of the religious regulations. The Fathers of the Order are advised to use this clothing only in case of rain. Similarly, when walking together, let the brethren always wear cloaks. However, if travelling without a companion, they may use a 'pallandran',²⁴ but they may never wear it to the choir, they are to use a usual cloak instead.²⁵

Polish. The translation from Latin of almost all excerpts and footnotes included in the article was made by Fr. C. Krzyzanowski, MIC, to whom the Author of this essay wishes to express his sincere thanks. Words of gratitude also go to Frs. S. Michalenko, MIC, M. Pisarszak MIC, and W. Makoś, MIC, who translated selected excerpts, which have been specifically mentioned in the relevant footnotes.

²⁰ *Statuta Patrum Marianorum Ordinis B.V.Mariæ*, in: *Regra dos Religiosos Marianos*, Lisboa 1757, p. 264.

²¹ Probably, this is the name for an extravagantly designed travelling cloak.

²² *Postanowienia kapitulne uchwalone w konwencie skórzeckim dnia 3 listopada roku 1744*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulorum...*, p. 164, art. 6.

²³ *Postanowienia kapitulne uchwalone w konwencie korabiewskim dnia 19 czerwca roku 1747*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulorum...*, p. 192, art. 20.

²⁴ *Pallandran* or *palendra* is a kind of flared and hooded rain cloak.

²⁵ *Postanowienia kapitulne uchwalone w konwencie korabiewskim dnia 19 czerwca roku 1747*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulorum...*, p. 196, art. 26.

All members, priests and brothers alike, must inviolably keep the cut of their habits as per the ancient custom; it is strictly forbidden under the punishment reserved for the disobedient to introduce any sort of innovation.²⁶

Since Chapter 10 of our Rule states that religious habit should be inexpensive and of modest cloth, and Chapter 3, art. 6 of the Statutes instructs that all garments for our Order members be made out of plain cloth, and that the necessary clothing and furnishings of the brethren's cells be uniform in accordance with the Constitution of Clement VIII and [instructions] of all superiors: Great variety in garb and bed coverings is therefore prohibited, while their inexpensiveness is a must. Also, let no one use extravagant cloth for cloaks, or sophisticated silk stockings, coverings for either feet or beds, so that, in the end, no professed member may be seen wearing elegant secular shoes contrary to poverty, which was relished by the poor Queen of Heaven and Mother of Christ.²⁷

Let them not purchase unusual secular hats and let them use hats of the uniform cloth while in travelling.²⁸

Since communal life is the soul of the religious spirit, therefore – in order to avoid individual acquisitions, the laity's scornful remarks in that regard, or some legitimate allegations under the law – it is proper to annually supply the religious, especially the seminarians and young brothers—converts, with a habit made out of cloth no more expensive than five Polish florins per cubit, nor should they be denied a shirt, stockings, and shoes, instead of disbursing annually 30 Polish florins for the purpose of buying cloths. In this way honesty and uniformity will be preserved. For this same reason, it is forbidden to have walking sticks with gold ironwork or elaborate cinctures. Therefore, let them not have canes with any other kind of ironwork than brass or something even cheaper. As for the cinctures, let them also observe uniformity, according to which – according to the custom of the Seraphic Order – the ropes are tied with three knots.²⁹

The General Council ruled that all Order members are to use gray cloaks, while the use of a 'kapota' [or a coat similar in shape to frock coats] shall cease and will be outlawed; however, previously purchased coats may still be used until such time when they are worn out totally.³⁰

Also, the General Council strictly forbade the wear of a *decade* of the Ten Virtues of the B.V.M. that had blue-colored strings, as brethren used to do beforehand. The General Council abolished the improper *decade* and ruled uncompromisingly that no Order member should ever be seen again carrying the incorrect *decade*.³¹

Although the coat called 'kapota' has been outlawed and banished back in 1777, no one complied; therefore, the permission to wear them has been reinstated under condition that

²⁶ *Postanowienia kapitulne uchwalone w konwencie raśniańskim dnia 11 września roku 1757*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum...*, p. 281, art. 19.

²⁷ *Postanowienia kapitulne [...] uchwalone na naszej kapitule, która odbyła się w konwencie raśniańskim św. Anny [...]*, **dnia 24 sierpnia 1766 r.**, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum...*, p. 337, art. 32.

²⁸ *Postanowienia kapitulne uchwalone w konwencie korabiewskim [...] dnia 6 czerwca 1770 r.*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum...*, p. 352, art. 16.

²⁹ *Postanowienia kapitulne uchwalone w konwencie mariampolskim [...] dnia 9 czerwca 1776 r.*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum...*, p. 395, art. Decimo.

³⁰ *Dekrety rady generalnej, pod przewodnictwem Przewielebnego w Chrystusie o. Raymunda Nowickiego STL, Prepozyta i Wizytatora Generalnego Zakonu Kleryków Regularnych Marianów pod tytułem Niepokalanego Poczęcia N.M.P., w konwencie korabiewskim św. Michała Archanioła. Dnia 29 i 30 września 1780 r., i 1 października uchwalone i wyjęte z akt do wiadomości szczególnej wszystkich Braci i konwentów [...]*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum...*, p. 424, art. 11.

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 424 art. 18 (this Latin excerpt was translated into Polish by Frs. C. Krzyżanowski, MIC and S. Michalenko, MIC).

they should be modest-looking, uniform, gray in color; if contrary to the above, they should be forbidden. Also, they could not have clasps of a different color. As to the *decades*, they should not be made with silk strings; instead they must preserve the ancient, customary form.³²

Strongly recommending uniformity of our garb, both outer and inner, and anxious to have it preserved, we decide that (...) all religious of whatever status should wear – as true Marians – either gray or white inner garments, a black and not white hat of modest and unelaborate shape. On the other hand, secular hats as well as all sophisticated hats, decked according to lay people's custom are strictly prohibited. If someone wears a sophisticated outfit, let his Superior immediately admonish him. Should this person continue showing obstinacy and contempt for the law regulating the issues that address and command uniformity, he is to be punished by the strict judgment of the Reverend General Superior, at the request of the Local Superior on account of having committed a crime.³³

The decision of the last General Chapter, which entirely prohibited the use of all secular hats or winter caps made according to the secular fashion and acquired by our brethren without regard to expense, was renewed. Therefore, in view of the fact that this resolution was not brought into effect, the Congregation decided: That should our brethren be seen wearing these hats or caps, the Reverend Father General, as well as local superiors have the power to seize and sell [these headgears], consequently applying the proceeds to some good use at their discretion.³⁴

The Chapter decreed and ordered to have our religious habits crafted in a simple and elegant form, without folded back sleeves, but in the old form. Everyone defying this decree is subject to penalties imposed by the Reverend Father General.³⁵

So that the vow of poverty might be visible by our garb, the Chapter decided and strictly ordered that the cost of a cubit of cloth used for priests' habits should not exceed eight Polish florins, or six florins in case of clerics and religious brothers. It was additionally commanded to maintain the uniform dark-gray color for raincoats. For this reason, the Reverend General Superior shall show the color of the cloth to each convent.³⁶

Father Casimir Wyszyński's Concern About the Marian Habit

The Venerable Servant of God, Fr. Casimir of St. Joseph Wyszyński (1700-1755) demonstrated an exceptional reverence for the Marian habit. For this reason he deserves to be given special attention here. Father Casimir greatly cherished the white habit and wished to

³² *Uchwały w czasie Pośredniej Kapituły Generalnej pod przewodnictwem Przewielebnego o. Raymunda Nowickiego S.T.M., Prepozyta i Wizytatora Generalnego, która odbyła się w konwencie korabiewskim w dniach 7-12 lipca 1785 r. [...], in: Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum..., p. 458, art. 19.*

³³ *Postanowienia kapituły generalnej, [która odbyła się w konwencie] raśniańskim św. Anny w dniach 12-19 września 1788 r., pod przewodnictwem Przewielebnego w Chrystusie o. Stanisława Mogienia S.T.L., Prepozyta Generalnego, przepisane do przestrzegania Klerykom Regularnym Marianom pod tytułem Niepokalanego Poczęcia N.M.P. w: Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum..., p. 473, art. 19.*

³⁴ *Postanowienia kapituły uchwalone w czasie kapituły generalnej w konwencie raśniańskim w dniach 20-27 października 1793 r. pod przewodnictwem Przewielebnego o. Tadeusza Białowieskiego S.T.L., Prepozyta i Wizytatora Generalnego, przepisane do przestrzegania Klerykom Regularnym Marianom in: Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum..., p. 496, art. 17.*

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 496, art. 19 (this Latin excerpt was translated into Polish by Frs. C. Krzyżanowski, MIC and S. Michalenko, MIC).

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 497, art. 23.

emphasize the Blessed Virgin's unblemished purity and holiness – in addition to imitating her life – by that external sign as well did he stop at this external sign only. In fulfilling his religious duties, especially those of General Superior, he stimulated his brethren to imitate – just as he himself personally imitated Mary – which was an obligation also imposed by the Rule of the Ten Virtues.³⁷ He thus wrote in the Foreword to *Morning Star*, informing the reader, among other things, of the history of the Marian Order:

...wanting to emphasize external devotion to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, [the Order] chose a white religious habit. Underneath the habit, the Order members wear a white scapular with an embroidered or imprinted picture of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, embellished in blue. The *Decade* – ten black rosary beads – hangs from the cincture, symbolizing the 10 evangelical virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Marians are obliged to recite daily this chaplet, which consists of the *Our Father* and 10 *Hail Marys* in remembrance of the ten virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary.³⁸

In 1750, the General Chapter dispatched Fr. Wyszyński to Rome to arrange some urgent matters of the Order. One of them was to defend the Marian Order's title and habit (which undoubtedly had a specific shape already then) before the attacks of Fr. Joseph Turczynowicz, who made an attempt to found in Vilnius an Order of "pseudo-Marians," to which he planned to recruit members from neophytes – more precisely from among the Jews converted to Catholicism. Father Casimir thoroughly described his efforts in his *Dziennik czynności* [*Daily Record of Activities*] as well as in his letters to the General Superior, Fr. Kajetan Wetycki.³⁹ These texts speak of an authentic and profound concern for the name and habit of the Marian community – the essential elements that signify the distinctive elements of a religious Institute.⁴⁰ Being sent to Portugal with the goal to transplant the Marian Order there, he entered into his *Dziennik* an interesting note that testifies to his great sensitivity to the question of Marian habit's color and especially the theological message it conveyed:

After we arrived in Lisbon, we had first a great debate about the habit. The monks of the Immaculate Conception, who were established there before us, accepted a white robe and a blue cloak. Holding this great discussion, **we managed to convince everyone that the white habit and white cloak would be more appropriate (...).** **In the example of our white habit,** they started adorning the statues of the Immaculate Virgin in local churches with a white, rather than a blue cloak. During public processions on Corpus Christi, one could see the figure of the Virgin Mary clad in white, when previously her statues had a blue cloak.⁴¹

Even more light was shed on Father Wyszyński's position by his disciple Fr. Alexis Fischer, the witness of his life and a successor of his work in Portugal, who gave the following account in his written Testimony of 1757:

³⁷ See Z. Proczek MIC, *Śladami Założyciela Zgromadzenia Księży Marianów*, Licheń Stary 2007, pp. 169-170.

³⁸ Z. Proczek MIC, *Stróż duchowego dziedzictwa marianów. Wybór pism o. Kazimierza Wyszyńskiego*, Warszawa – Stockbridge 2004, p. 35. See also *Objaśnienie z Informacją o zakonie OO. Maryanów, Zebrania Niepokalanego Poczęcia Maryi*, in: *Uwiedomienie o sukience albo szkaplerzu Niepokalanego Poczęcia Najświętszej Maryi Panny, który się rozdaje wszelkiego stanu ludziom przez WW. OO. Maryanów*, Berdyczów 1773, (reprint in 1998), p. 22.

³⁹ See Z. Proczek MIC, *O. Kazimierz Wyszyński jako animator życia mariańskiego*, in: K. Pek MIC (Ed.), *Patrimonium Marianorum; ojciec Kazimierz Wyszyński (1700-1755) w kontekście swej epoki*, Warszawa – Lublin 2003, p. 119.

⁴⁰ See J. Kałowski MIC, *Działalność zakonodawcza Księdza Józefa Turczynowicza; studium prawno-historyczne*, Warszawa 1982, p. 64.

⁴¹ Z. Proczek MIC, *Stróż duchowego dziedzictwa marianów. Wybór pism o. Kazimierza Wyszyńskiego*, Warszawa – Stockbridge 2004, p. 410.

(...) When it was already clear that Father's life was nearing its end, his [spiritual] sons sorely lamented his leaving this still not fully stabilized new religious Institute. [Father Casimir] called them to himself and urged them not to lose heart, but **to devote themselves to the accepted habit** and religious observances. The Virgin [Mary] herself was the Foundress of this work [the Institute]. Therefore, she would not abandon everyone **who would piously and perseveringly wear the habit of her Immaculate Conception.**"⁴²

On the other hand, another student of Fr. Casimir Wyszyński – Fr. Jacek Wasilewski (1717-1777), while being in the office of General Superior of the Order, added to his letter of June 6, 1756, which announced his visitation of Marian monasteries, a profound theological interpretation of the special bonds uniting the Marian Order with the Virgin Mary. One of the elements emphasizing this bond was white color of the habit worn by the Marians:

Thanks to the kindness of God Most High and the intervention of the Virgin Mother that this everlasting token would remain in heaven and on earth: Namely, it was **only our white, lily-adorned Marian Order** that received the Immaculate Virgin Mary for its particular Foundress and Patroness. It has so happened that witness be given to the Body of the Virgin Mother of Christ, mystically represented by our Order as a perpetual keepsake. Who would cause annoyance to the beloved, who would wrongly say that we unjustly call ourselves the Body of the Great Mother? Although unworthy, we give witness to being her sons: she gave us our laws, she calls us to imitate her virtues, she walks before us as a model, she – I say – defends us in all matters.⁴³

Reforms of Fr. General Raymond Nowicki

When speaking about the history of the Marian habit and changes it sustained, it is impossible to omit Fr. John Raymond Nowicki, Superior General of the Order from 1776-1788, the greatest 18th-century reformer of the Marians alongside Fr. C. Wyszyński. Under his leadership, the Marians not only reached the zenith of their development, but also initiated their internal reform and undertook the work of education at monastery schools and popular missions. One of the important fruits of this Institute's internal reform was being relieved from the debilitating legal dependency upon the Franciscans. This, in turn, brought the need for revising religious laws and to purge from them those elements that emphasis such dependency. One of those elements was the requirement of wearing the rope of St. Francis. Following the General Council's decree of Oct. 1, 1780, Fr. General Nowicki issued a special letter to all brethren, in which he stated the changes made to Marian religious attire:

Br. Raymond Nowicki S.T.L., General Superior, Visitor and servant in the Lord, of the Order of Clerics Regular Marians of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, sends his greetings and blessings to the Beloved in Christ, to the Reverend, Venerable, and Very Venerable Fathers and Brothers in Christ, and our great mother [Mary].

⁴² Z. Proczek MIC, *Najstarsze świadectwa o Słudze Bożym o. Kazimierzu Wyszyńskim*, Warszawa – Stockbridge 2005, pp. 73-74.

⁴³ *Kongregacja Generalna w konwencie górskim roku 1765, List powiadamiający z 6 czerwca 1765 r.*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulum...*, p. 324 (this excerpt was translated from Latin into Polish by Fr. W. Mako, MIC).

*I remind [you] of the the first article of the decrees enacted on Oct. 1, 1780, during the General Council's session, held at the St. Michael monastery in the Korabiew [Forest], which states, referring to the original constitution, that the **confreres [religiosi] of our Order are not to wear a rope [horde], but a sash of woolen fabric [cingulo ex lana aut filis], but not of silk [ex serico].** For some reason, this article was not observed last year on the feast of the Immaculate Conception (according to the plan of the General Council).*

In reference to our Pastoral Letter, which speaks for the unification of our habits, we want to make a remark about the said sash. Let everybody remember [that article] and take it to heart, so that there won't be abuse or neglect of the vow of poverty at the introduction of the sash. And this can happen, and indeed has happened in the case of using a sash made out of highly adorned silk, e.g. with flowers or other symbols (which smacks of secularism).

*To assure that **everyone maintains the uniformity [uniformitas] and does not violate holy poverty, let them wear a sash of three or about three fingers [semitrium] wide and six or five cubits [ulnarum] long, without any ornaments, be it flowers or any other symbols. It shall be well and smoothly woven [in a checkerboard pattern, alearum], and have at each end small [short] tassels of no excessive length or outlandish shape (as it has already happened). The sash runs from right to left. The chaplet of the Ten Virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary [beneplacitorum BVM] shall be hanging down from the sash [appensa].** We strictly order everyone to abide by this instruction. The confreres shall not seek the ornaments of this world [ornamentum saeculi], because they already renounced them by religious profession, as Saint Paul says: 'Do not try to please the world, people or yourself.' Instead, follow the words of St. Gregory (...): 'Gird your loins to resist the lust of the flesh (...). So that you may be pure of body and soul.' Composed and united on the outside, you shall be strong on the inside in everything that is important for religious life.*

Therefore, let the local superiors ensure uniformity of attire, so that all religious entrusted to their care and responsibility be girded in the above-described manner and not according to everyone's own whim. Everyone shall appear in the same garb before the outsiders [pari modo].

This letter is to be made known to everyone, it is to be read at communal meal, explained, entered into the book of minutes, and passed on 'via cursoria.'

Given in our Marijampole monastery of the Holy Cross, on Dec. 12, A.D. 1781.⁴⁴

Consequently, the remark about the rope of St. Francis, previously prescribed to the Marians, vanishes from the *Rule of the Ten Virtues*, which was released in Polish in Vilnius 1791, together with the new edition of the Marian Constitution.⁴⁵ "Moreover, let them wear, hanging visibly from their sashes, 10 black prayer beads for 10 *Hail Marys* to commemorate the 10 virtues of the Immaculate Virgin."⁴⁶ Another important detail formally introduced during the generalate of Fr. R. Nowicki into the Marians' garb as one of its indispensable parts, was white

⁴⁴ List pasterski II, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulorum...*, p. 427 (this letter was translated from Latin into Polish by Frs. M. Pisarzak, MIC, and S. Michalenko, MIC).

⁴⁵ See *Reguła Zakonu Księży Marianów pod tytułem Niepokalanego Poczęcia Błogosławionej Panny Maryi o naśladowaniu dziesięciu cnót Jey upodobanych; Konstytucje Apostolskie dla Zakonu Niepokalanego Poczęcia Najsławniejszej Maryi Panny Kleryków Regularnych Marianów pod Regułą Dziesięciu Cnót Teyże Maryi*, Wilno 1791.

⁴⁶ Bł. Stanisław Papczyński, *Pisma zebrane*, Warszawa 2007, p. 1542.

coat, which the Founder already wore and which was also worn later, but not always and not by everyone⁴⁷:

The same General Council, eager to keep this ancient and commendable custom of wearing the white cloak, introduced by the Venerable Founder, **decided and decreed that [this white cloak] be purchased and worn by all our confreres and that no religious dare to think of appearing or venture to be seen without this white cloak, especially among the more distinguished people and in towns.** The Council also decided that the novice brothers shall endeavor to acquire this white cloak, otherwise they may not be allowed to make their profession.⁴⁸

Strongly commanding to make sure that strict uniformity is apparent in both our internal as well as external garb and anxious to have it preserved, the **Council orders white cloaks be shorter by a half-cubit** [i.e. approx. 29.5 cm – note of the Author] **than the religious habit** (...).⁴⁹

It has been determined that novices aspiring to the priesthood or brotherhood shall not be admitted to the profession, unless they acquire for themselves a knee-long religious cloak.⁵⁰

An attentive reader would note at once the lack of consistency in the above documents in defining the length of that cloak: Once, they want it to be a half-cubit shorter than the habit; while on another occasion it has to be of the knee-length. It is difficult today to discover today the reason for this discrepancy. The iconographic sources of the “white” Marian religious from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries may provide some help in this matter. We know of 19⁵¹ sources that survived to our times: in Poland, in the General Archives in Rome, in the monastery on Mount Balsamão in Portugal, and in the archbishop’s palace in Lisbon. On the three images from Poland the cloak clearly extends to the knee, while on the other five – the ones from Balsamão and Rome – it is only slightly shorter than the habit. It seems that the latter length of the cloak is also confirmed by a letter of Sept. 25, 1751, that Michael Zienkowicz, the Ordinary Bishop of Vilnius sent to the Congregation for Bishops and Religious in regards to the aforementioned Fr. J. Turczynowicz. (...) According to the bishop’s account, Fr. Turczynowicz, who was a diocesan priest, replaced his priestly attire which he

⁴⁷ See S. Sydry MIC, *Organizacja Zgromadzenia Księżąt Marianów w XVIII wieku*, Warszawa 1930, p. 80.

⁴⁸ *Dekrety rady generalnej, pod przewodnictwem Przewielebnego w Chrystusie o. Raymunda Nowickiego STL, Prepozyta i Wizytatora Generalnego Zakonu Kleryków Regularnych Marianów pod tytułem Niepokalanego Poczęcia N.M.P., w konwencie korabiewskim św. Michała Archaniola. Dnia 29 i 30 września 1780 r., i 1 października uchwalone i wyjęte z akt do wiadomości szczególnej wszystkich Braci i konwentów [...]*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulorum...*, p. 424, art. 14.

⁴⁹ *Postanowienia kapituły generalnej, [która odbyła się w konwencie] raśniańskim św. Anny w dniach 12-19 września 1788 r., pod przewodnictwem Przewielebnego w Chrystusie o. Stanisława Mogienia S.T.L., Prepozyta Generalnego, przepisane do przestrzegania Klerykom Regularnym Marianom pod tytułem Niepokalanego Poczęcia N.M.P.*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulorum...*, p. 473, art. 19.

⁵⁰ *Postanowienia kapituły generalnej, [która odbyła się w konwencie] raśniańskim św. Anny w dniach 12-19 września 1788 r., pod przewodnictwem Przewielebnego w Chrystusie o. Stanisława Mogienia S.T.L., Prepozyta Generalnego, przepisane do przestrzegania Klerykom Regularnym Marianom pod tytułem Niepokalanego Poczęcia N.M.P.*, in: *Decreta – Ordinationes Capitulorum...*, p. 473, art. 19.

⁵¹ They are: **Papczyński’s portraits** in: Skórzec, Puszcza Mariańska, Goźlin, at Marianki i Góra Kalwaria, in Mariampole, and in Balsamão, as well as the Portuguese drawing from the Marian Fathers’ General Archives in Rome, a copperplate at the Archdiocesan Archives in Poznań and a copperplate from the Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski’s Hall of Drawings at the Warsaw University Library; **Fr. Wyszynski’s portraits** in: Goźlin, two in Balsamão, at the Archbishop’s palace in Lisbon, and the copperplate from the Marian Fathers’ Provincial Archives in Warsaw; **Fr. R. Nowicki’s portrait** in Goźlin; a painting called “Fr. Founder’s Holy Mass” in Skórzec; a painting symbolically representing the transplant of the Marian Order to Portugal and another one that shows the Archangel Raphael leading Fr. Wyszynski on the road to Balsamão – both located in Balsamão; a color lithograph depicting a Marian religious from: *Rys Historyczny Zgromadzeń Zakonnych Obojch Płci wraz z Rycerskimi Zakonami i Orderami Państw*, t. I. Zakony męskie, Warszawa 1848, (from the collections of the National Library in Warsaw). Photographs of all above-mentioned pictures are included in the Appendix to that article.

did not want to mar by doing collection – as he claimed – with a habit, which – although similar to the habit worn by members of the Marian Order, yet different in color (his habit was not white) and in **cloak that was only reaching the knee**. (...) ⁵². Whereas in his *Opis obyczajów za panowania Augusta III* [Description of customs during the reign of Augustus III], Fr. Jędrzej Kitowicz (1728-1804) thus depicts the Marian garb, also giving a detail report about the cloak:

The cut of their [Marians'] garb is the same as was the Piarists' before, that is, a floor-length flowing robe of white color ⁵³ with a front seam, **a short, knee-length cloak**, and a hat called "wykrawanka."

It should be noted that the headgear that went together with the Marian habit consisted of a black biretta and a black skullcap (neither was white, as many would have liked to see). ⁵⁴

Father Nowicki's leadership was marked by a number of bold reforms. Father Jan Kosmowski, MIC, a researcher of that period of Marian history, writes about it in thus way:

In the second half of the 18th century a crisis, whose roots should be sought primarily in the earlier Saxon epoch, afflicted many religious Orders. They found themselves under the attack of certain representatives of the Enlightenment, who accused them of worthlessness. Encouragements to conduct reforms in accordance with the spirit of the times and to actively participate in the public cultural and moral renewal flowed to the Orders from bishops and some lay people. For the Marian Order the matter of reform became a task of highest importance. ⁵⁵

In this context, it is worth citing a little-known episode from the Congregation's history, which proves just how far the Marians were ready to go at that time with the reforms. Father Stefan Sydry, MIC a Marian historian working in the 1930s, describes it in the following manner:

The matter of changing the habit has been raised by the public. In 1782, the Marians celebrated a Chapter of major significance, which set the goal to conduct a thorough reform of the entire Order. The bishop of Livonia [Jozef Kazimierz Kossakowski (1738-1794)] delegated to this Chapter his representative – the Superior of the Janov residence, Fr. Thaddeus Białowieski – and instructed him to inform the Chapter of his request for the reorganization of the Order according to the new requirements. Moreover, the bishop sent the General Superior of the Order a letter strongly advocating that his counsels be taken seriously. In this letter he urged the Chapter to make changes in order to expand the Order's external ministry by working on behalf of the country, because they would face otherwise an irrevocable confiscation of the Order's property. Celebration of the church Offices and contemplation were no longer enough; it was necessary to give help to the Educational Committee [the National Education Commission], because it could not cope. It was necessary to set up schools at the monasteries so that all children of the gentry could study. Parish missions presented another enormous field of work. Should the Chapter decide to fulfill these desiderata, the bishop of Livonia was ready to offer the Order three rich foundations in his diocese. **Moreover, the bishop firmly requested to change the habit [from white] to black. The most they could do was to keep the white sash so that the**

⁵² J. Kałowski MIC, *Działalność zakonodawcza Księdza Józefa Turczynowicza; studium prawno-historyczne*, Warszawa, 1982, p. 56.

⁵³ J. Kitowicz, *Opis obyczajów za panowania Augusta III*, Warszawa 1985. The quoted excerpt was retrieved from the Virtual Library of Polish Literature; *Opis obyczajów...*, in the Chapter entitled: *O bernardynach i innych zakonach*.

⁵⁴ See S. Sydry MIC, *Organizacja Zgromadzenia Księży Marianów w XVIII wieku*, Warszawa, 1930, p. 80, as well as the 18th and 19th-century iconographical sources from Balsamão, Portugal, and from Poland.

⁵⁵ J. Kosmowski, MIC, *The Marians in 1787-1864*, Stockbridge, 2013, pp. 36-37.

religious Order members would not stand out too much from the diocesan clergy. This was particularly important in his diocese, because Catholics were scattered among the dissidents.

It would be my firm wish resulting from the carefully weighed circumstances, that – even if you keep all your rules and the cut of your religious garb – you do not differ by the color [of your garb] from the black of the clergy's garb, to which the public eye is already accustomed, and that you leave only your white sashes, if you see it fit, as a variance. Is it possible to realistically consider that the exterior color may influence the spirit of the law; I saw there no important motive, especially in case of my diocese, located among the dissidents, and therefore concluded that the garb itself would not make any special impression (...). I further understand that an economic factor might speak for this reform, as well as the fact of indulging in this respect the general opinion (...).’’⁵⁶

The above letter, written in a pithy, decisive style, strongly and convincingly advocated the need for changes in the existing form of religious service.

On Sept. 29, 1782, Fr. Nowicki wrote in response, that he was fully aware of the public opinion about the religious Order members and, therefore, he made it his cardinal duty to organize parish missions and schools. ***As to the color of the habit, he would wish to agree, should the matter be his to decide; however, he cannot make any such changes without permission from the Holy See.***⁵⁷

Regardless of readiness expressed by Fr. Nowicki, this idea – as we can assume on the base of the existing documents – was not entertained in the next century. Only sporadically and because of the difficult circumstances, the Superiors were forced to give certain dispensations from the standing rules. These incidents were very infrequent. Father S. Sydry mentioned one of them was:

The schismatic government of the part of Poland that was sequestered during the first partition forbade admission to religious Orders as early as 1832. For this reason, the General Superior Fr. Placide Czubernatowicz allowed Deacon Onufrius Szyrwid to wear the black cassock of the secular priests so as not betray the fact that he was a Religious.⁵⁸

Aside from the above-described incident, we should probably accept the hypothesis that the 19th–century Marians remained faithful to their religious garb, although sometimes some of them lived outside of their religious communities. This hypothesis is supported by 11 photographs⁵⁹ that survived to our times at the General Archives in Rome and at the Archives of our Congregation's Polish Province. One of these photographs is worthy of a special attention, because it shows Fr. Bernard Pielasiński in the time that followed the dissolution of the Order.

⁵⁶ The excerpt from J. K. Kossakowski's letter [in Polish] to the Marians in which he urges them to change the color of their habit is given verbatim in: S. Sydry, *Czcigodny Sługa Boży o. Stanisław od Jezusa Maryi Papczyński i jego dzieło w świetle dokumentów*, Warszawa 1937, p. 281.

⁵⁷ S. Sydry, MIC, *Organizacja Zgromadzenia Księżąt Marianów w XVIII wieku*, Warszawa 1930, p. 81.

⁵⁸ S. Sydry, *Czcigodny Sługa Boży o. Stanisław od Jezusa Maryi Papczyński i jego dzieło w świetle dokumentów*, Warszawa 1937, p. 287.

⁵⁹ They are: three photos of Fr. Wincenty Sękowski (1840-1911); two of Fr. Andrzej Jurewicz (1823-1908); two of Fr. Kazimierz Pestynek (1828-1893); one photo of Fr. Andrzej Strupiński (1829-1892); a photo of Fr. Jerzy Czesnas (1835-1892), incidentally, he was the one to baptize Jerzy Bolesławi Matulaitis, the future Renovator of the Marian Order, at the Marijampole church on April 13, 1871; a group picture taken during the bishop's visitation of the "old people's home" in Góra Kalwaria ca. 1900, that shows Fr. Bernard Pielasiński (1832-1914); a group picture that shows two Marian seminarians: Wincenty Sękowski and Szymon Szałaszewicz (1840-1878), then students at the Warsaw Spiritual Academy, from which they graduated in 1862. All these photographs are displayed in the Appendix.

The picture was taken ca. 1900 during the bishop's visitation at the "old people's home" in Góra Kalwaria, where Fr. Bernard served as a chaplain. In that picture, the former Marian is shown in his white habit that he used to wear until the end of his life, although he no longer was a member of the Order.⁶⁰ It is possible, on the base of these photographs, the 1848 drawing, the above-quoted J. Kotowicz's description, as well as other 18th-century iconographic sources showing the Marian habit, to reconstruct with great accuracy the specific shape of the habit at the time when it stopped having legal force. In addition, it is also possible to reconstruct the chaplet of the Ten Virtues of the Most B.V.M., which the Marians wore at their sashes. One of such chaplets⁶¹ was found⁶² during repairs at the church of Our Lord's Cenacle at Marianki in Góra Kalwaria in the spring of 1962.⁶³ There is a strong possibility that the chaplet belonged to the General, Fr. Thaddeus Białowieski (1750-1832), the only other Marian next to Fr. Founder, who was buried inside that church.⁶⁴ His tomb was discovered during the above-said repairs.⁶⁵

On the Threshold of the Renewal

It was September of 1908. Father Vincent Sękowski, the last "white Marian" as well as the Superior General of the Order is still alive and residing in the last Marian monastery in Marijampole. He was contacted through mail by a young priest, a professor of the Ecclesiastical Academy in St. Petersburg – Fr. George Matulaitis-Matulewicz, who asked to be admitted to the Order. On his own behalf as well as on that of his friend, Fr. George expressed in his letter a desire to put on the Marian habit:

Petersburg, Sept. 8-9,⁶⁶ 1908

Most Revered and Dear Father:

While staying in Marijampole, I begged you, Dear Father, not to stop trying to get permission from the authorities to open the monastery. I did it because of several of my friends and myself.

For quite some time, I felt the desire to lead a more perfect life. Yet, I felt badly about leaving the Church in our country where there is so much work to be done and so little workers, and to go somewhere else, to some foreign lands, so I stayed.

Now that there is more freedom in our country, when religious Orders are beginning to revive, I would like to put my desires into action, and I would like especially to join the Congregation of

⁶⁰ See J. Kałowski, MIC, *Kontrowersyjne problemy odnowy*, in: *Marianie*, Eds. J. Bukowicz, MIC, T. Górski, MIC, Rome, 1975.

⁶¹ Pictures of the chaplet of the Ten Virtues of the Most B.V.M. found during repair works at the church of our Lord's Cenacle are included in the Appendix.

⁶² According to Fr. J. Kosmowski, MIC verbal account.

⁶³ See E. Makulski, MIC, *Dziedzictwo; odbudowa kościoła Wieczerzy Pańskiej w Górze Kalwarii*, Wrocław 2001, p. 27.

⁶⁴ See *Album Zmarłych Ojców i Braci Zgromadzenia Księży Marianów*, red. J. Bukowicz MIC, Warszawa – Stockbridge 1997, p. 53.

⁶⁵ See E. Makulski, MIC, *Dziedzictwo; odbudowa kościoła Wieczerzy Pańskiej w Górze Kalwarii*, Wrocław 2001, pp. 33-34.

⁶⁶ The draft of that letter shows a later date of Oct. 7, 1908. However, the letter contents, as well as the reaction of its addressee, indicate the date of Sept. 8-9, 1908.

*Marian Fathers. I talked this over with one of my friends.⁶⁷ He is also willing to join right away, together with me. **We're almost certain that another two of our friends would also want to wear the Marian habit.**⁶⁸*

I am convinced that some of our pupils would later follow in our footsteps.⁶⁹

As we know, the external conditions soon forced Fr. Matulaitis-Matulewicz to elect the clandestine manner of fulfilling his religious vocation. Nevertheless, two years later, on Oct. 27, 1910, Blessed George recorded in his *Journal*:

May all our thoughts, desires, and longings be directed toward that one goal: to bring Christ everywhere, to restore all things in His Spirit, to glorify the name of the Catholic Church everywhere.

In order to achieve this, we should make use of any lawful and worthy means available to us: the cassock of the priest or the habit of the religious or, if need be, the clothes of the layman; we can use every trade, profession, every field of learning or labor – and even our own blood – everything that is good and created by God can be used, if need be, for the greater glory of God and for the good of the Church.⁷⁰

In his letter of July 20, 1909, Fr. General W. Sękowski wrote to Pope Pius X:

Since everyone believes that some centers of religious life are necessary for our parts [of the world], and seeing that there are candidates who have long wished to enter our Congregation, having conscientiously considered all this we arrived at the conclusion, that the Congregation of Marian Fathers be allowed with the consent of the Holy See to lead a life without any external signs of our vocation, **seeing that it cannot be otherwise helped due to the government prohibitions. Therefore, I petition the Holy See to grant us exemption from wearing the habit in consideration of the hindrances to the religious life, which we experience here.**⁷¹

Following this letter, on July 30, 1909, Fr. George Matulaitis-Matulewicz sent a letter to the Prefect of Congregation for Religious, Cardinal J. Vives y Tuto, in which he wrote:

⁶⁷ He means Buczyś (Bučys) Francis Peter (1872-1951), Fr. Matulaitis-Matulewicz's friend and co-worker. Having obtained his education at Sejny, Petersburg, and Fribourg, from 1902-1915 he served as a professor of rhetoric at the Spiritual Academy in St. Petersburg. On Aug. 29, 1909, he was admitted to the Congregation of Marian Fathers. Later, he became the University Rector in Kaunas and then the General Superior of the Marian Fathers, and a bishop of the Slavic-Byzantine Rite (*Encyklopedia Kościelna*, II, 1153-1154).

⁶⁸ He means: Antanas Cywiński and Jonas Totoraitis.

Cywiński (Civinskas) Antanas (1867-1913), received his Doctorate in Theology at the Gregorianum University in Rome; later he studied sociology and philosophy in Fribourg (1900-1902), where he became friends with Fr. Matulaitis-Matulewicz. Antanas joined the Marians on Jan. 9, 1910, however, he did not start his novitiate at once due to an illness (*Encyklopedia Litewska*, I, 550).

Jonas Totoraitis (1872-1941) studied at Sejny and Fribourg, where he received his Doctorate in Philosophy in 1904. On Jan. 9, 1910, Fr. General Wincenty Sękowski admitted him to the Congregation of Marian Fathers. Jonas made his vows on July 13, 1911. Later, he taught history at the University of Kaunas (1923-1937), and then became the first Provincial Superior in Lithuania (1930-1933). He is the author of many works on the history of Lithuania (*Encyklopedia Litewska*, V, 476).

⁶⁹ J. Bukowicz, MIC, T. Górski, MIC, *Odrodzenie Zgromadzenia Księżów Marianów w latach 1909-1910 (dokumenty)*, Warszawa 1995, pp. 51-52.

⁷⁰ George Matulaitis-Matulewicz, *Journal*, Stockbridge, 2003, p. 46.

⁷¹ J. Bukowicz, MIC, T. Górski, MIC, *Odrodzenie Zgromadzenia Księżów Marianów w latach 1909-1910 (dokumenty)*, Warszawa 1995, p. 68.

I. The State power suppressed all religious orders and congregations in the Russian empire.

Also, since 1864, the Congregation of Marian Fathers was prohibited (and still is) from accepting new candidates. In this way, the Congregation of Marians will soon cease to exist, unless – in spite of the imposed proscription of the State, it will continue to admit novices and lead religious life, without betraying this on the outside, as far as possible, before the State authorities. Other numerous congregations that thrive there and are of great help to the Church prove the possibility of leading this kind of religious life in Russia.

Wherefore, the Congregation of Marian Fathers humbly requests that it may be allowed also – in defiance of the shameful State laws, but in following only the laws of our Holy Mother Church – to continue its existence ***without outwardly showing to the authorities anything that would give away the fact of its being a religious Order.***

II. Next, it would be necessary to introduce certain changes into the Marian Constitutions, both because of the difficulties to which the religious life is exposed here, and because of the changed situation and presently undertaken works; for example, further wearing of the habit would be impossible.

Therefore we humbly ask that the Holy See graciously grant us dispensation from wearing the habit (...).⁷²

As we know, the Holy See agreed to these requests and on Nov. 28, 1910, and approved the reformed Congregation of Marian Fathers and its new Constitutions. The rest is now the history of the renewed Congregation.

⁷² J. Bukowicz MIC, T. Górski MIC, *Odrodzenie Zgromadzenia Księży Marianów w latach 1909-1910 (dokumenty)*, Warszawa 1995, p. 74.

APPENDIX⁷³

⁷³ The appendix completely omits the iconography of Fr. Papczyński and other “white” Marians’ portraits created after 1848. This was done for two reasons. First, the iconography of the said period is secondary; and second, many images of St. Stanislaus, especially these painted in the first half of the 20th century unfortunately contain historical distortions and fictitious elements, which obviously underrates the cognitive value of these images. Captions to the majority of Fr. Papczyński’s portraits are based on the work of J. Pietrusiński, *Servant of God Fr. Stanislaus as shown in paintings and monuments related to the places of his birth and death*, Warsaw 1965 (Book of photographs accompanied by typeset explanations, located at the Marian Fathers’ Provincial Archives in Warsaw).



Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński (1631–1701).

Painting by an unknown artist from
the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Marian Fathers' monastery in Skórzec, Poland.

This is the oldest surviving image of St. Stanislaus.



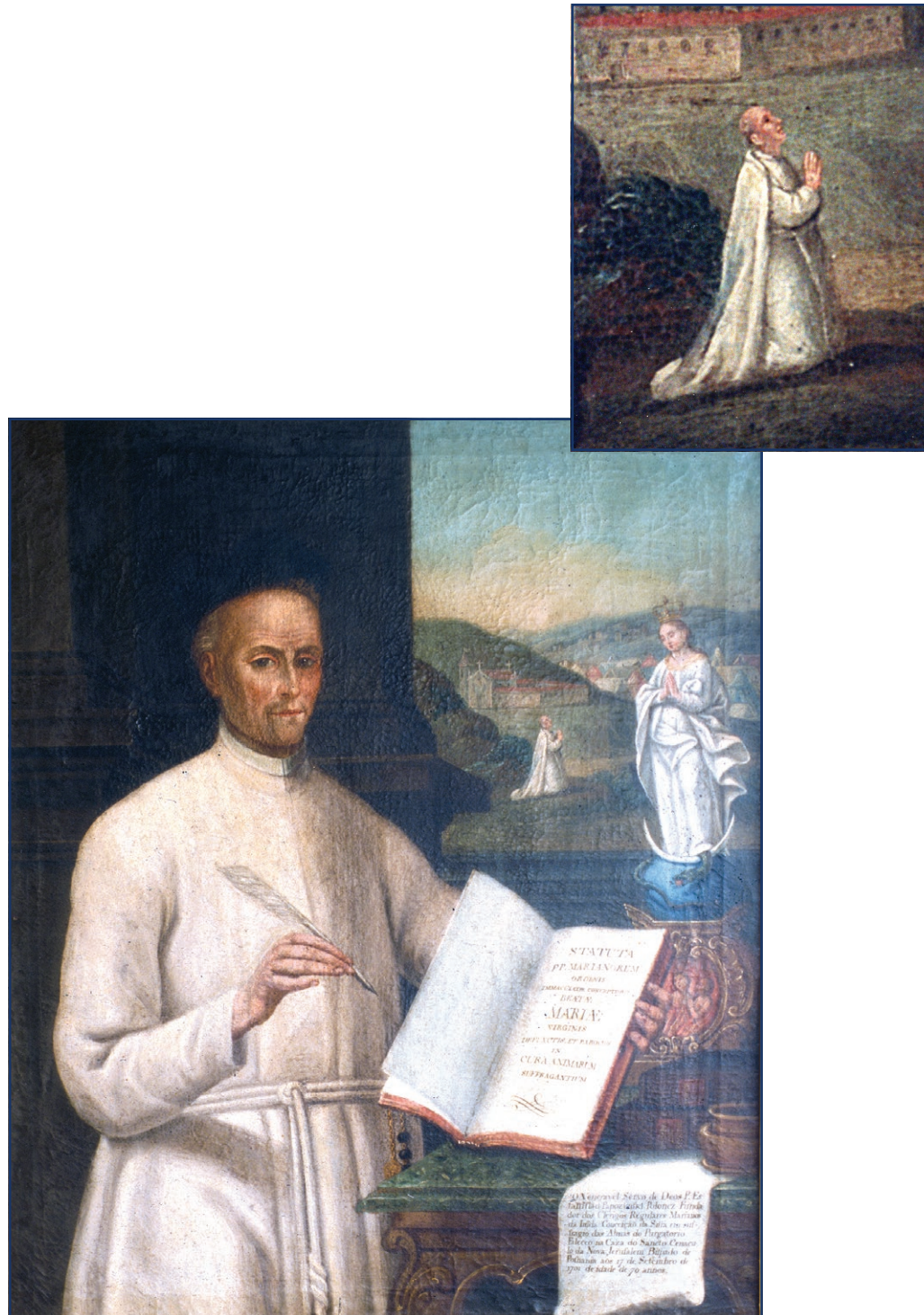
Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński.
 Painting by an unknown artist; first half of the 17th century.
 Marian Fathers' monastery in Puszcza Mariańska, Poland.



Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński.
 Painting from the second half of the 18th century
 whose author in all probability might have been
 Br. Francis Niemirowski, MIC (1735–1795).
 Marian Fathers' monastery in Marijampole, Lithuania.



Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński.
 Painting from the second half of the 18th century,
 attributed to Fr. John Niezabitowski, MIC (1744–1804).
 Marian Fathers' monastery in Goźlin, Poland.



Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński
as the Founder of the Order.
Painting from the mid-18th century, attributed to
Domingos Teirxeira Barreto
(top right corner: enlarged fragment of this painting).
Marian Fathers' monastery on Mount Balsamão, Portugal.



Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński
as the advocate of Poor Souls in Purgatory.
Painting by an unknown artist; end of the 18th century.
Marian Fathers' monastery in Góra Kalwaria – Marianki, Poland.



Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński.
Drawing by I.B. Dourneau,
possibly made in Portugal in mid-18th century.
Marian Fathers' General Archives in Rome, Italy.



Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński.
 Copperplate (14 cm x 10.2 cm) made ca. 1740.
 From the Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski Collection of Drawings
 "Polonorum Icones," 880, No. 136, which is part of
 special library collection of the Warsaw University.



Saint Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński.
 Print on paper; mid-18th century.
 Marian Fathers' General Archives in Rome, Italy.



Venerable Servant of God
Fr. Casimir of St. Joseph Wyszyński (1700–1755).
Painting by an unknown artist; second half of the 18th century.
Marian Fathers' monastery on Mount Balsamão, Portugal.



Venerable Servant of God
Fr. Casimir of St. Joseph Wyszyński (1700–1755).
Painting by an unknown artist; second half of the 18th century.
The Archbishop's palace in Lisbon, Portugal.



Venerable Servant of God
Fr. Casimir of St. Joseph Wyszyński (1700–1755).
Painting from the second half of the 18th century,
attributed to Fr. John Niezabitowski, MIC (1744–1804).
Marian Fathers' monastery in Goźlin, Poland.



Venerable Servant of God
 Fr. Casimir of St. Joseph Wyszyński (1700–1755).
 Painting from the second half of the 18th century, attributed to
 Domingos Teirxeira Barreto
 (top right corner: enlarged fragment of this painting).
 Marian Fathers' monastery on Mount Balsamão, Portugal.



The Archangel Raphael guides Fr. Wszyński on the road to Balsamão.
 Painting from the second half of the 18th century, attributed to
 Domingos Teirxeira Barreto
 (top right corner: enlarged fragment of this painting).
 Marian Fathers' monastery on Mount Balsamão, Portugal.



Venerable Servant of God
 Fr. Casimir of St. Joseph Wyszyński (1700–1755).
 Copperplate made in Vienna by J.C. Winkler;
 second half of the 18th century.
 Marian Fathers' General Archives in Rome, Italy.



The painting above symbolically depicts the establishing of the Marian Order in Portugal. The canvas is attributed to Domingos Teirxeira Barreto, second half of the 18th century.

Two side-by-side pictures are the enlarged fragments of the painting above. Marian Fathers' monastery on Mount Balsamão, Portugal.





This canvas, called *Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Founder*,
is either from the end of the 18th
or beginning of the 19th century.
The work is attributed to Fr. John Niezabitowski, MIC
(1744–1804).
Marian Fathers' monastery in Skórzec, Poland.



Father John Raymond Nowicki, MIC (1736–1806).
Painting from the second half of the 18th century,
attributed to Fr. John Niezabitowski, MIC (1744–1804).
Marian Fathers' monastery in Goźlin, Poland.



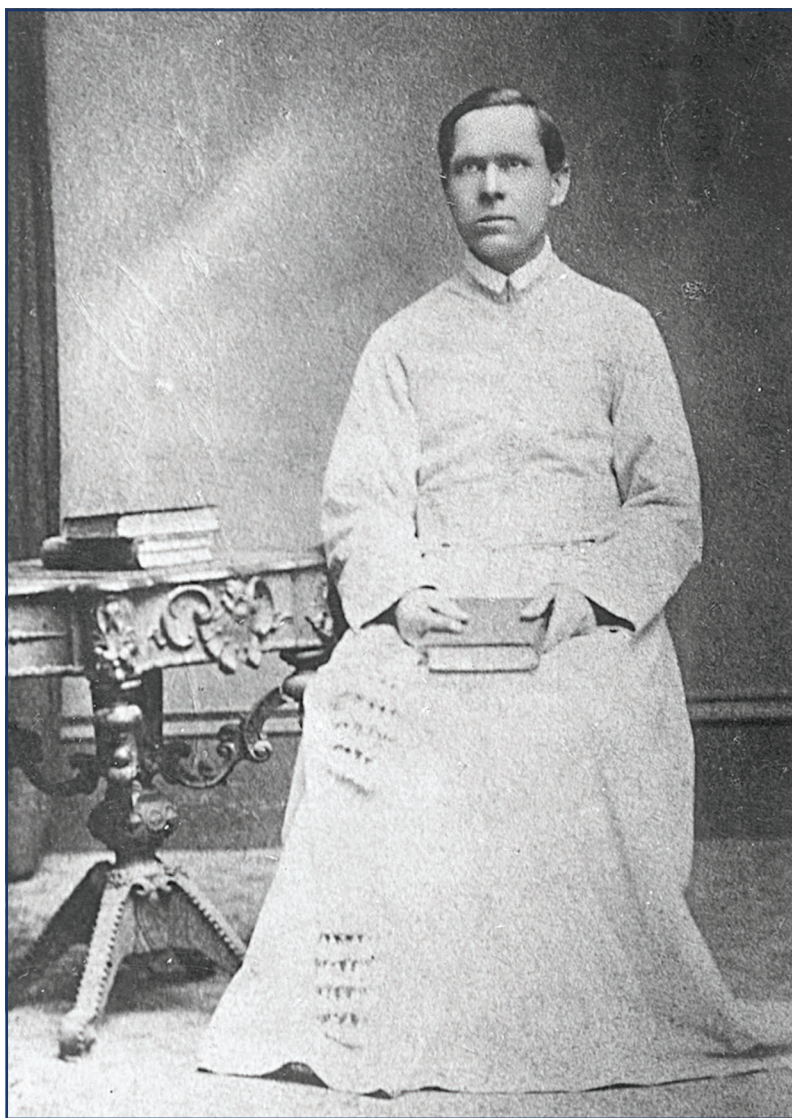
A Marian religious
depicted on a color lithograph found in the book
*Rys Historyczny Zgromadzeń Zakonnych Obojey Płci
wraz z Rycerskimi Zakonami i Orderami Państw,*
vol. I. Zakony męskie, Warsaw, 1848,
(from the collections of the National Library in Warsaw).



Father Casimir Pestynek, MIC (1828–1893).
Photo from the second half of the 19th century.
Marian Fathers' Provincial Archives in Warsaw.



Father Casimir Pestynek, MIC (1828–1893).
Photo from the second half of the 19th century.
Marian Fathers' Provincial Archives in Warsaw.



Father Andrew Strupiński, MIC (1829–1892).
Photo from the second half of the 19th century.
Marian Fathers' Provincial Archives in Warsaw.



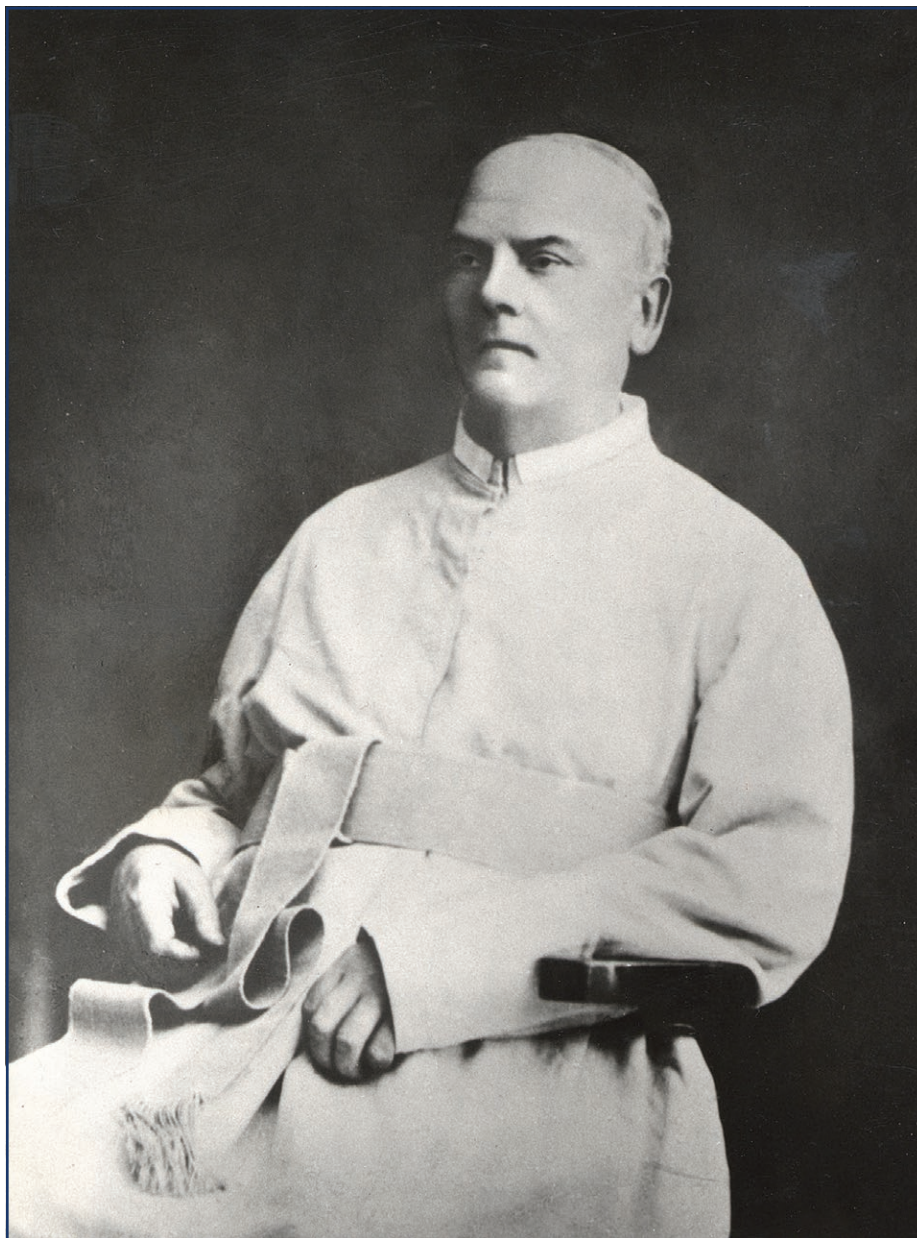
Father George Czesnas, MIC (1835–1892).
Photo from the second half of the 19th century.
Marian Fathers' Provincial Archives in Warsaw.



Father Andrew Jurewicz, MIC (1823–1908).
Photo from either the second half of the 19th
or the beginning of the 20th century.
Marian Fathers' Provincial Archives in Warsaw.



Father Andrew Jurewicz, MIC (1823–1908).
Photo from either the second half of the 19th
or the beginning of the 20th century.
Marian Fathers' Provincial Archives in Warsaw.



Father Vincent Sękowski, MIC (1840–1911).
Photo from the second half of the 19th century.
Marian Fathers' General Archives in Rome, Italy.



Father Vincent Sękowski, MIC (1840–1911).
Photo from either the second half of the 19th
or the beginning of the 20th century.
Marian Fathers' Provincial Archives in Warsaw.



Father Vincent Sękowski, MIC (1840–1911).
Photo from either the second half of the 19th
or the beginning of the 20th century.
Marian Fathers' General Archives in Rome, Italy.
The oval close-up in the right upper corner
comes from Fr. Vincent's tombstone
at the Marian cemetery in Marijampole, Lithuania.



Students of the Spiritual Academy in Warsaw.
Among them Marian students: Vincent Sękowski
(second from the right in the third row) and Simon Szalasiewicz
(third from the left in the second row).
Photo from the second half of the 19th century.



The bishop's visit at the "old people's home" in Góra Kalwaria ca. 1900. Sitting second from the left is the home's chaplain Fr. Bernard Pielasiński, MIC (1832–1914), still wearing his white Marian habit.



Picture of the unknown Marian priest from Marijampole monastery.





The chaplet of the ten virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary
from the end of the 18th or early 19th century.
In all probability it belonged to Fr. General Thaddaeus Białowieski (1750–1832),
who was the only one beside the Fr. Founder, to be buried in the Church of
Our Lord's Cenacle at Marianki in Góra Kalwaria. His tomb was discovered
during the renovation of the Cenacle in the spring of 1962.
Small side pictures show the obverse and reverse of the chaplet's medal.



The chaplet of the ten virtues of the Blessed Virgin Mary from the end of the 18th or early 19th century, which belonged in all probability to Fr. General Thaddaeus Białowieski (1750–1832). This chaplet was found during the renovation of the Cenacle Church in the spring of 1962.



Saint Stanislaus Papczyński's bones are covered with a white habit, that probably dates back to 1766 or the time when the coffin was re-opened, which was during Fr. Hyacinth Wasilewski's term in office of the General Superior, who also was the one who had built a sarcophagus which holds the coffin with St. Stanislaus' mortal remains until the present day.

There is some important presumptive evidence indicating that the habit found in Fr. Founder's coffin might have been from 1752, when Fr. General Cajetan Wetycki had a new coffin made (following the instructions of Fr. C. Wyszynski), into which Fr. Papczyński's bones were transferred. Featured photos were taken on Feb. 12, 2007, during the official exhumation of the Father Founder's remains in view of his forthcoming beatification.



EPILOGUE

ATTIRE OF THE CONFRERES

The white habit, which by divine inspiration our Holy Father Founder wore in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is the solemn garb of the confreres. Daily and in the usual way, clerics may wear ecclesiastical garb according to the norms issued by the Episcopal Conference of the country where they are present. Religious brothers may wear ecclesiastical garb in the manner of the clerics according to the norms of law. In keeping with the spirit of poverty, the attire of all the confreres should be simple and modest.

Constitutions of the Marian Fathers from 2023, §17

PRINCIPLES REGARDING THE SOLEMN GARB

The white habit, which our Holy Father Founder wore in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, belongs, among other things, to the inalienable spiritual patrimony of our Congregation. Normally, it is received during perpetual vows. It consists of a simple white cassock with a fascia. The design of the habit and the time and manner of its reception in particular jurisdictions is confirmed by the Superior General with the consent of his Council. The confreres are encouraged to wear it at least on the following days:

- 1) January 27, Feast of Blessed Abp. George, the Renovator;
- 2) May 18, Solemnity of St. Stanislaus of Jesus and Mary Papczyński, the Founder;
- 3) August 29, Anniversary of the Renovation of the Congregation;
- 4) September 17, Anniversary of the passing to eternal life of the holy Father Founder;
- 5) November 2, Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed;
- 6) November 5, Memorial of All the Deceased of our Congregation;
- 7) December 8, Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary;
- 8) December 11, Anniversary of the Founding of the Congregation.

Directory of the Marian Fathers from 2023, §8



