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Third anniversary of John Paul's death

Poland honors its greatest son By: Robert Strybel,

Our Warsaw Correspondent

WARSAW-Millions of people around the globe have marked the recent third anniversary of the death of Pope John Paul II, who had shepherded the Roman Catholic Chruch for nearly 27 years. During that period he set records, established precedents, initiated new pastoral projects, but above all touched the lives of millions of people of different nationalities and faiths. Thanks to a seemingly inexhaustible missionary spirit, he crisscrossed the globe on 104 foreign pastoral pilgrimages and met with more people than any of his predecessors

More than 17,600,000 pilgrims participated in his more than 1,160 regular Wednesday General Audiences, not counting special audiences and religious ceremonies. His reciprocated love for young people led to his World Youth Days which brought together millions of youths from all over the world on 19 different occasions. His devotion to the family prompted the Polish Pontiff to also initiate World Meetings of Families, which he first introduced in 1994.

A tireless apostle of love, peace and reconciliation, the traveled to places threatened by civil strife, brought together the world's religious leaders at Assisi, forgave his would-be assassin and appealed for world peace at the United Nations. The hard-working Vicar of Christ penned 14 Encyclicals, 15 Apostolic Exhortations, 11 Apostolic Constitutions and 45 Apostolic Letters in

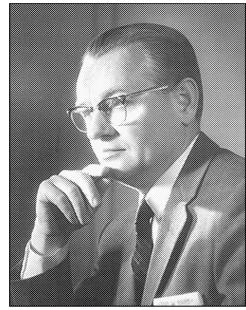
his native Polish, subsequently translated into Italian and other languages. He was also

Strybel - John Paul to page 15

Wiadomości Polonijne

Inglis - Potępia się Stalina	19
Wywłaszczeni Obywatele Polscy	18
Ks. Kamieński – Rozpoznali GO	17
Lustracja	18
Kerosky – Licenjonowanymi	18
Pogonowski – Globalna Korupcja	17
Tortury były od dawna	19
Na tropach tortur	20
Prof. Przystawa - JOW po rumuńsku	17
Skolimowski – Refleksje 11	19
Wildstein, Bronisław - Traktat	20
Wierzewski - Polskich sprawiedliwych	18
Dr. Stefan Wilk - Wspomnienie Ś.P	17
Wojciechowski z Kanady	19
Żurawicz - Co Polacy wysyłają z USA	20
ACPC - Youth Conference	4
Ball, Justyna - White trash don't travel	2
Calendar of SoCal	2
Chodakiewicz - Dialectics of pain	9
Film festival Schedule	6
Inglis—Kosmala interview	4
Investments - Qdot	3
Janek's Corner - EU Treaty	4
Laguna Woods Polish Club - Anniv	6
Legal - Construction Contracts	3
National Polish Center re-inventing self	f 4
Northern California	12
Orange County news	13
Polish American Congress - NoCal	13
Polish American Congress - N.Y.	5
Polish Corps in Britain	7
Polish Scouting—talent	7
Profiles - St. Stanislaw	2
Pułaski sub commemoration in Phila.	5
Taxes - Tax rebates	3
Toczek Eulogy	15
UB Among us	11
Wilk Eulogy	14
Ov	

IN MEMORIAM Dr. Stefan P. Wilk, M.D.



With great sadness we note the recent passing of Dr. Stefan P. Wilk, a prominent member of Polish community in Los Angeles, a distinguished physician, humanitarian, and philanthropist. He died on 25 March 2008 in Los Angeles after a long

Stefan Wilk was born in 1917 near the city of Lwów in southeastern Poland. Orphaned early in life, he was raised in several foster homes and, between the years 1931-1935 he studied at the Niepokalanów Seminary, an institution founded by the legendary Father Maximilian Kolbe, who was later canonized by Pope John Paul II. Dr. Wilk eventually returned to the city of Lwów, where he worked as private tutor and self-financed his studies. He obtained his high school diploma and enrolled in the Lwów Polytechnical Institute, concentrating in mathematics and engineering, but his education was interrupted by the outbreak of World War II.

In the early months of the war, Stefan Wilk escaped from occupied Poland to Yugoslavia and with other Polish refugees, made his way to France, where he joined a Polish Army battalion attached to the French Army. Fluent in French, German and Russian, he also served as a military interpreter. When the French capitulated to Hitler's June 1940 invasion, Stefan Wilk's unit retreated to neutral Switzerland, where he was interred for the duration of the war.

The plight of Polish soldiers in Switzerland was known to Ignacy Jan Paderewski, himself a resident of Switzerland, who became a refugee in the United States in late 1940. By appealing to Henry Noble MacCracken, President of the Kościuszko Foundation in New York, Paderewski secured funds for the 450 Polish soldiers interned in Switzerland, enabling them to continue their studies.

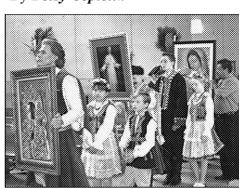
Along with his fellow soldiers, Stefan Wilk was able to study medicine first at the internment camp in Winterthur and later at the School of Medicine at the University of Zurich, graduating with a medical degree on January 29, 1949. Afterwards, he enrolled in an advanced degree program in the field of biochemistry, eventually receiving his diploma and further specializing in radiology at the University of Bern.

Dr. Wilk arrived in the United States in 1952. He settled in Los Angeles, where he obtained a medical license and a Radiology Board Certification. He joined the UCLA School of Medicine in 1954 as an Assistant Professor. Then, in 1959 he became Director of Radiology Department at the Queen of Angels Hospital, one of the most important

Dr. Stefan Wilk to page 14

Memorial Mass for Pope John Paul II in Los Angeles

By Betsy Cepielik



On April 13 a Memorial Mass for the third anniversary of the death of Pope John Paul II was celebrated at the Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral in Los Angeles. This is the third Polish-sponsored mass held at this cathedral. The mass was sponsored by the Polish American Congress of S.California and the Consul General of the Republic of Poland, Ms. Paulina Kapuścińska. The driving force behind this event has been Richard Wideryński, former President and now Vice President of the PAC - S. Cal. Various organizations and individuals also contributed to sponsoring the mass.

The chief celebrant was the most Reverend Bishop Edward Clark (Auxiliary Bishop of the Our Lady of the Angels Pastoral Region). Polish priests assisting included Father Kevin Kostelnik, (Pastor of Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral) Father Marek Ciesielski (Pastor of the Our Lady of the Bright Mount Church in Los Angeles) Father Henry Noga (newky appointed Pastor of the Pope John Paul II Center in Yorba Linda) and Father Damian Kabot (Saint John the Evangelist Catholic Church, Los Angeles). Reverend Tovia Lui, (Samoan Community), Sacred Heart Parish, Altadena also took part.

The music program was organized and directed by Mr. Szymon Grab, organist.

Cantor and soprano soloist Yola Tensor opened the mass with the oustanding singing of "Ave Maria." Readings were done by Jadwiga Narębska (Polish), and Michael Dutkowski (Spanish).

The Offertory "Verum Corpus" was beautifully performed by the quartet of Susan Montgomery, Nicole Baker, George Sterne, and Michael McCish. The quartet also sang Mozart's "Laudate Donimum" during Communion.

Bishop Clark delivered the homily. The first words of John Paul II when he became Pope were "Fear not. Be not afraid." He was the first non-Italian Pope in recent history, and instructed not to say anything. These were also the words of Jesus. Bishop Clark compared the flame of the papal candle to the flame of the Olympic torch. Both are for justice and peace. This needs to be carried in our lives. He concluded that "the flame always should reman active in our lives."

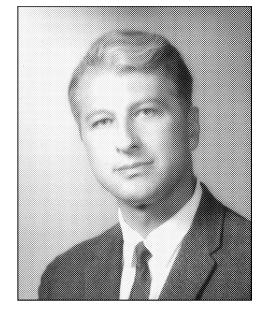
Yola Tensor concluded with "Pie Jesu." Szymon Grab's organ postlude was "Allegro Maestoso" from II Organ Sonata by Mendellson – Bartholdy.

After the mass, Richard Wideryński thanked Bishop Clark, the priests who assisted, as well as those who contributed, and the choir.

He then introduced Ms. Paulina Kapuścińska Consul General of the Republic of Poland. Ms. Kapuścińska, acknowledged the members of the Krakusy dance group, Army Krajowa veterans, and representatives from the many countries who participated and attended the mass.

Pope John Paul II Mass to page 16

IN MEMORIAM Dr. Stanislaw K. Toczek



Died March 5, 2008 of congestive heart failure at his home following a long illness. He is buried in the family plot at Forest Lawn - Hollywood Hills

For Stan Toczek, the Odyssey from his native Poland to the US where his professional dreams have been fulfilled was a long, arduous and, often, uphill journey. Born in Haczów, Poland, on September 10, 1923, Dr, Toczek was a part of a generation that experienced the destruction of their country, tremendous human losses, altered borders, mass migrations and a struggle for simple survival.

When WWII ended and his high school reopened, he graduated with excellent grades. After the Russian Army occupied Poland, Stan was warned to leave Haczów and went to Wrocław in Poland's western territories. Wrocław became at that time, a haven for the Professors and staff of the University of Lwów who had survived the persecutions of both German and Soviet occupiers. They had migrated in large numbers to Wrocław determined to recreate the Lwów University including the medical school renowned for its high academic standards.

Because the shattered buildings of the university, classes could not begin at once. Thus. Stan and a small group of his fellow students became for a while guards, roofers, carpenters, painters, mechanics, etc.

After receiving his medical diploma from the University of Wrocław, Stan went to Warsaw where he studied Neurosurgery.

After five years of hardship and painstaking studies, he obtained the specialty certification in Neurosurgery. This was followed by a five year assignment as Adjunct Professor in the Neurosurgery Department of the Warsaw Academy of Medicine.

In 1960 he received a prestigious Post-Doctoral Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship to do a research project in neurophysiology at the University of California in Los Angeles. Here he lost his heart not only to his beloved specialization, but to his future wife and lifetime companion, Ariadne, a fellow medical scientist who had been born in Athens, Greece. And thus another link in the beautiful American mosaic came into

Having been warned by friends not to return to Poland due to the political situation, he decided to continue his medical pursuits in the United States.

The long list of Dr.Toczek's scientific, consultative, and teaching positions include Mt. Zion Hospital and Medical Center in San Francisco, the Stanford Research

Dr. Stanisław Toczek to page 15