

John Paul II FOUNDATION



◆ July 2011
◆ Newsletter No. 35



My Dear Members and Friends of the John Paul II Foundation,

2011 is a year especially rich in significant events; it could be said that God writes a wonderful history that will be forever inscribed in our hearts. We are grateful to our Creator for the great gift of the Blessed John Paul II. On May 1st, at St. Peter's Square, united with over a million pilgrims, we were the witnesses of this history. We were listening to the Pope Benedict XVI words, "Blessed are you, beloved Pope John Paul II, because you believed. Continue, we implore you, to sustain from Heaven the faith of God's people."

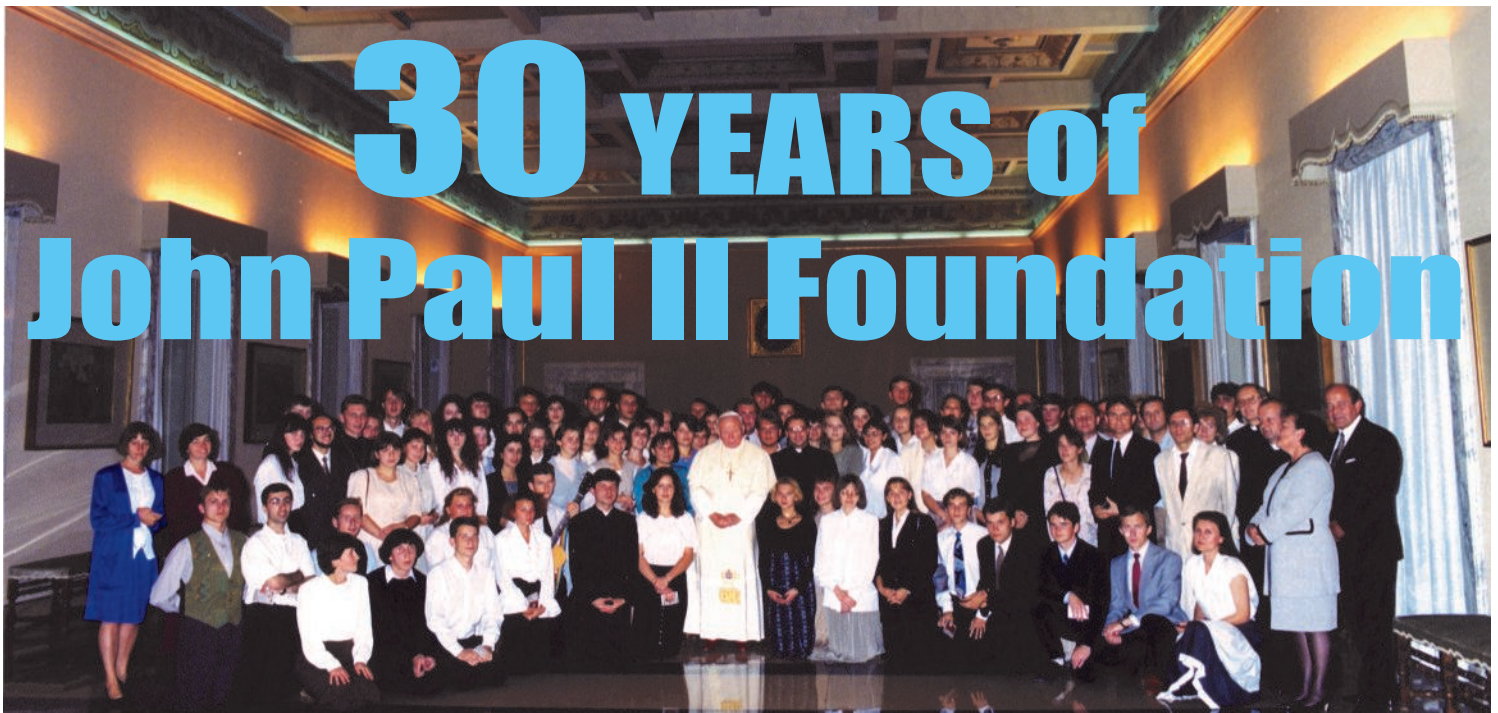
The new Blessed John Paul II is a gift, but at the same time it is a call to promote his teachings and to be witnesses of his love to the entire world. His example leads us to holiness that is both personal and communal. Holiness means daily life with God. As John Paul II stated, "Saints, who in every historical period demonstrated the brilliance of the Divine Light to the world, are visible witnesses of the mysterious holiness of the church. (...) To understand the deepness of the Church you have to look at them! But not only on those saints who have been canonized, but also on all the saints hidden, anonymous, who tried to live the Gospel in the midst of ordinary daily duties. They reveal what the church is in its deepest essence, while protecting it from mediocrity; they shape it from the inside, stimulated to be Christ's Bride without any spot or wrinkle."

Let us be those anonymous saints, to whom Blessed John Paul II refers. Let the period after the beatification be a time of renewal of our hearts and our Foundation's Chapters groups. Let it be a time of our preparations to celebrate the 30th anniversary of our Foundation. A successful anniversary not only provides opportunity to summarize our achievements, but it also allows us to look into the future where the John Paul II Foundation is heading. We did a lot, and for that I would like to express from the bottom of my heart my sincere thanks to all of you and simultaneously to ask you: to go ahead. Sometimes, it is a very sacrificial path, helping the poor, but talented young people from the East, promoting John Paul II's teachings and entire heritage which he handed to us.

Let the 30th anniversary be the next point in the growth of our Foundation for the glory of God and for the wellbeing of others through the intercession of the Blessed John Paul II. Hence, let us be those anonymous saints, who try to live the Gospel in the midst of ordinary daily duties.

St. Card. Rylko

Cardinal Stanisław Rylko



30 YEARS of John Paul II Foundation

On October 16, 1981 in the Vatican, the Holy Father John Paul II established a Foundation bearing his name. In the Decree of Establishment he outlined its goals: "to promote religious, cultural, and social initiatives which will serve the faithful." The Foundation, with its headquarters in Rome, currently embraces almost the entire world. The Foundation consists of forty four Chapters and the Friends of the Foundation are located in seventeen countries in Europe, North America and Asia. Individuals who are members desire to learn more about the teachings of John Paul II and actively contribute to their dissemination, helping to achieve the Foundation's goals.

The main institutions of the Foundation are the Polish House, the Polish Institute of Christian Culture, and the Center for Documentation and Research of the Pontificate of John Paul II. These institutions are lo-

cated in Rome as well as at the John Paul II Foundation House in Lublin. The propagation of Christian culture, the dissemination of John Paul II's teachings, and assistance to pilgrims are part of the Foundation's goals. Thanks to the sacrifice of many people and the support provided by many Polish institutions, a Center by Via Cassia widely known as the "Polish House" was purchased. Already beginning in August of 1980, the first pilgrims were able to stay at the "Polish House."

Official celebrations related to the newly established Foundation with the handing down of the keys to the Holy Father of the newly purchased house took place on November 7, 1981 in the Vatican and on the next day at the Polish House. Delivering a speech in the Paul VI Hall, John Paul II pointed out that Rome is like a "link of chain" that joins our homeland of Poland

with the Christian world. It forms a "cross-road" used by missionaries from many European countries who were bringing the Gospel to our predecessors. For that reason, the Polish House should be a "Sensitive point laid out by the cross-road," as stated by the Holy Father, "the road that leads from Rome to the world and to Poland, and these roads leading back to Rome."

The Polish Institute of Christian Culture was launched in 1981 with it's main goal of conducting research on the role of Polish culture in Christianity and to support Polish culture in the Eternal City. In 1990 in Lublin, a Laboratory Research section of the Institute was opened. In the Laboratory Research, the role of Polish Christian Culture in the Slavic countries, especially those countries which were included in the former Soviet Union, was analyzed. Scientific and cultural activities of the Institute of



Handing keys of the Polish House in Rome



Richard Krzyżanowski and abp Szczepan Wesoly meet Pope



Christian Culture included meetings, sessions, and symposia organized in Rome and in Poland. Cooperation with KUL's John Paul II Institute and with the scientific quarterly "Ethos" helped both initiatives to flourish, and are currently well known in the European scientific environment.

Following John Paul II's idea that "now the time has come to disseminate our experience and to share our achievements with others...", the Foundation provides help through foreign stipends given to scientists from Poland as well as through stipend awards given to young people from Eastern and Middle Europe who are mainly studying at KUL in Lublin. The first group consisted of scientists who received awards for queries in archives and libraries in Italy. The program existed from the beginning and included at first fifty, and then twenty stipend awards. The second group consists of students who are from the former Soviet Union and post-communist countries. For over twenty years, more than 900 students graduated from the Catholic University of Lublin, seventy six students defended their doctoral thesis, and six became professors. Annually, approximately 150 individuals receive stipend help. The Foundation was giving awards to students from the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw (currently known as UKSW), and for a few years it has provided stipend awards to young people from the former communist countries who are studying at the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow. The Holy Father considered this activity as the most precious as it provided personal joy and satisfaction. "I had the chance to meet these young people several times," revealed John Paul II, "and I was convinced that they constitute a treasure of which we can be proud."

For twenty five years the Institute of Christian Culture has also organized the "Summer University of Polish Culture" at the Polish House for the young people of Polonia. Every year dozens of participants come to Rome from various countries for the three week course. The sessions are held in Polish and English. The course and stay in Rome provide a chance to learn more about Polish culture, literature, social studies and issues related to faith and immigration.

In 1981, the Center for Documentation and Research of the Pontificate of John Paul II was established. Due to the variety of the collected documents three different



Pope John Paul II and administration of the Foundation



Foundation members in St. Stanislaus B & M church in Rome



Summer University participants



divisions were created within the Center: archives, a library, and a museum. The Center has approximately fourteen museum pieces that were obtained mainly from Poland. The collection was catalogued according to the names of the Polish institutions, social groups and individual donors, as well as cities and places.

All represented institutions within the Foundation have been conducting publishing activities, issuing books under the auspices of the Foundation and in cooperation with scientific institutions and publishers in Poland and abroad. For almost thirty years approximately ninety books were successfully published thanks to the efforts of the Foundation. We do not include in that count books published in the following foreign languages: Belarusian, French, Russian, and Italian. The majority of the books, however, were published in Polish and were issued in Rome and Poland. We should also mention the Bullarium Poloniae set which includes the documents of the Holy See related to Poland. Since 1982, seven volumes were published which covered the period from the 11th to the 15th centuries. This publication is being released by the Foundation and the Catholic University of Lublin under the patronage of the Polish Academy of Science.

The John Paul II Foundation is an institution of the Church, international, and strongly connected with John Paul II's homeland. Moreover, it is a charitable institution that supports the education of poor young people. Many aspects of the Foundation's activities mirror, in some way, the universalism encouraged by the Holy Father and his pontificate. It can be stated that for the entire world John Paul II was a signpost of faith and morality, as well as a sign of love for all people. He is the Pope of the millennium. As the Pontiff he pointed out a way that we should take and taught us how to build bridges that can unite various nations.

◆ **John Paul II Foundation**

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John Paul II in the Polish House in Rome



25th Anniversary Concert



Students in Lublin, Poland