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Pastoral Care in the Polish Legions (1914–1918) in Light of Memories (Outline of the Main Problems)

*Opieka duszpasterska w Legionach Polskich (1914–1918)
w świetle wspomnień (zarys głównych zagadnień)*

ABSTRACT

The article draws readers' attention to valuable historical sources, which are the memories of the chaplains of the Polish Legions from 1914–1918. Pastoral care in the above-mentioned armed formations and the numerous problems associated with it have been shown in light of those accounts. At the front (often under extreme combat conditions) a strong bond was formed between the soldiers and their 'spiritual guardians'. The chaplains were not only priests, but also fulfilled various functions on an *ad hoc* basis. They served, for instance, as translators, suppliers, paramedics, librarians, teachers, psychologists, and, in the last resort, as gravediggers... Memories of their service shed interesting light on the everyday (not only spiritual) problems of the soldiers of that time.

Key words: Chaplains, Polish Legions 1914–1918, pastoral care, memories, legionnaires, struggle for independence, military service, religious rites

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A large amount of historical literature has already been written about the epic history of the Polish Legions during the Great War, including valuable, extensive monographs. It is impossible to list all of them here¹. Currently, after the celebration of the centenary of regaining independence, new works have appeared – from widely known and discussed monographic studies² to numerous small contributions to this issue³. We also have extensive monographs on the functioning of military pastoral care in almost all branches of the Polish Military in our history⁴. Nevertheless, in this important section of our national history we still find many interesting threads that have not yet been fully described or have only been indicated when discussing wider social or political issues. Newly published sources are constantly appearing, such as *Wspomnienia wojenne* by Father Kazimierz Nowina-Konopka, a work that for over 70 years rested in the Archives of the Southern Province of the Society of Jesus and although some researchers knew about their existence⁵, they were relatively rarely used before they appeared in print⁶.

Many issues related to the struggle for independence are still waiting for in-depth analysis. One of the more interesting subjects related to legionnaires is the pastoral care provided by the Catholic Church over them. The matter was not easy for many reasons. Some bishops demonstratively distanced themselves from the actions of irresponsible ‘rebels’, who were exposing their compatriots to the repressions of the invader, not allowing them to enter churches⁷.

One may be tempted to say that the attitude of the church hierarchy to the Riflemen’s Association, and afterwards to the First Brigade and the Polish Legions, changed over the years of the Great War and was never

¹ For instance: J. Snopko, *Final epopei Legionów Polskich 1916–1918*, Białystok 2008; M. Walak, *Niepodległością naznaczeni, z dziejów powstania i walk III Brygady Legionów Polskich 1915–1917*, Bełchatów 2010; 4 *Pułk Piechoty Legionów Polskich – historia i pamięć. W 100 rocznicę powstania*, eds. U. Oettingen, W. Rutkowska, J. Główo, Kielce 2015.

² A. Chwalba, *Legiony Polskie 1914–1918*, Kraków 2018.

³ J. Piotrowski, *Zaopatrzenie w Legionach Polskich 1914–1918 w świetle wspomnień*, in: *‘Nie wierząc nam, że chcieć, to móc...’. Legiony i ich wpływ na sprawę polską w latach 1914–1918*, eds. Z. Girzyński, J. Kłaczko, Toruń 2018.

⁴ J. Odziemkowski, S. Frączak, *Polskie duszpasterstwo wojskowe*, Warszawa 1996; *Historia duszpasterstwa wojskowego na ziemiach polskich*, eds. J. Ziótek et al., Lublin 2004.

⁵ A. Cz. Żak, *Duszpasterstwo wojskowe w armii austriackiej i w legionach Józefa Piłsudskiego w czasie I wojny światowej*, in: *Historia duszpasterstwa*, p. 300.

⁶ Here we can point to an otherwise good text, in which these memories were not used: K. Rędziński, *Kapelani w Legionach Polskich Piłsudskiego*, ‘Przegląd Powszechny’ 1991, 4, pp. 117–128.

⁷ S.F. Składkowski, *Moja służba w brygadzie*, Warszawa 1990, p. 18.

uniform, although generally remained rather indifferent or even hostile⁸. The most famous example of such an attitude could be Augustyn Łosiński, the bishop of Kielce, who forbade priests from his diocese to participate in the burials of legionnaires⁹. The Pauline Fathers at Jasna Góra Monastery acted in a similar way; for instance, initially they did not want to open the chapel and unveil the image of the Virgin Mary to the legionnaires who had arrived to Częstochowa. The church hierarchy was most reluctant to see the paramilitary movement that had arisen in Galicia – controlled by politicians of the pro-independence Left, often originating from circles reluctant to religion – and at the same time so attractive to young people. In Galicia, the Rifle Squads operating there before 1914 were perceived as being more right-wing and gathering believers in general. However, finding a chaplain for them was not easy, because almost every priest was aware of the critical attitude of the majority of Catholic hierarchy towards legionary formations. Moreover, in the early days of the war, even after the merger of the Riflemen's Association and the Polish Rifle Squads, all riflemen were not recognized as Austro-Hungarian combatants, so those captured – especially from the Kingdom – could simply be hung by Muscovites as traitors¹⁰, and this also applied to their chaplains. There were not many candidates for martyrs¹¹.

It was not easy to find among the clergy those who were not frightened by the harsh conditions of war and had adequate life experience. Most of the hastily appointed chaplains, who kept their records as early as August 1914, had a critical opinion of this improvised army, who lacked elementary order and often basic equipment¹². The volunteer soldiers themselves quite often were not connected with the church in any way¹³. Moreover, many of them had a longer period of activity in various left-wing

⁸ K. Rędziński, *op. cit.*, p. 118. 'Na trasie napotymano celowo pozamykane świątynie' ['On the route, they came across intentionally closed churches'].

⁹ More on the attitude of the majority of the clergy towards the legionary act, see, among others: G. Liebrecht, *Biskup Augustyn Łosiński Ordynariusz Diecezji Kieleckiej w latach 1910–1937*, Kielce 2018; M. Przeniosło, *Akcja werbunkowa do Legionów Polskich na Kielecczyźnie 1915–1916*, in: *Między Wisłą a Pilicą. Studia i Materiały Historyczne*, vol. 1, eds. K. Bracha, S. Wiech, Kielce 2000.

¹⁰ J. Herzog, *Krzyż Niepodległości. Wspomnienia ze służby w Legionach*, New York 1994, p. 49.

¹¹ K. Lenczowski, *Pamiętnik Kapelana Legionów*, Kraków 1989, p. 15. 'Niewiele stracę, gdy zginę, bo tylko życie doczesne, a mogę dużo dobrego uczynić' ['I will not lose much when I die, because only this life, and I can do a lot of good'].

¹² A. Dylewski, *Legioniści Piłsudskiego*, Warszawa 2014, p. 20. The opinion of Father Dominik Ściskała of 29 August 1914, included in his memoirs: *Z dziennika kapelana wojskowego 1914–1918*, Cieszyn 1926.

¹³ P. Cichoracki, *Droga ku anatemie. Wacław Kostek Biernacki 1884–1957*, Warszawa 2009, p. 31.

organizations and did not spare public statements critical of religion¹⁴. In such context, some priests experienced serious dilemmas as to whether their work made sense in these circumstances, writing about it directly in their journals: ‘Chaplain of the Legions! I wasn’t very fond of it. I knew there were only socialists, painters, theatre artists, etc.’¹⁵.

A separate issue was the fact that the lineup of the Polish Legions, to some extent, reflected the national and religious mosaic of the time in Poland. Indeed, the most numerous group were ethnic Poles, usually of the declared Roman Catholic faith, but in the Legions served a large percentage of dissenters¹⁶ as well (Lutherans¹⁷, a bit less frequently Greek and Orthodox Catholics¹⁸, and even Muslims)¹⁹. There was also a large group of nationally assimilated Jews²⁰, who had not yet crossed the barriers to religious change, or had no intention of doing so, while remaining agnostics or atheists. There were also people who for various reasons were rather religiously indifferent, often coming from mixed religion families²¹. As can be observed, there were many problems that chaplains had to face (even the basic one, i.e. to find out who was interested in their ministry) from the very first moments of their pastoral activity in such a religiously diverse environment which simply reflected the current ethnic of the population composition in the territory of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

¹⁴ J. Jędrzejewicz, *W służbie idei. Fragmenty pamiętnika i pism*, Londyn 1972, pp. 78, 94.

¹⁵ ‘Kapelan Legionów! Nie bardzo mi się to uśmiechało. Wiedziałem, że są tam same socjali, malarze, artyści teatralni itp.’. K. Nowina-Konopka, *Wspomnienia wojenne 1915–1920*, Kraków 2011, p. 32; K. Lenczowski, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

¹⁶ Among the dissenters there was then Colonel (later General and Minister) Mieczysław Norwid-Neugebauer, who burst out laughing when the overzealous chaplain mistakenly wanted to take a confession from him. On his father’s side, he was of German origin while on his mother’s – of Hungarian; the family was Lutheran, and he himself was religiously indifferent.

¹⁷ The later Minister (Lieutenant in the First Brigade) Ignacy Boerner was the son of an Evangelical pastor in Zduńska Wola, see biographical entry on Ignacy Boerner, in: *Leksykon Piłsudczykowski*, vol. 1, Gdańsk 2015, p. 59.

¹⁸ Waclaw Harasymowicz (1875–1923) – Lt. Col. of the Polish Military, from the Uniate family, in the Polish Legions from 5 August 1914, in: W.K. Cygan, *Słownik biograficzny oficerów Legionów Polskich*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1998, pp. 56–58.

¹⁹ The most famous figure from this circle was undoubtedly the activist of the Polish Socialist Party, Aleksander Sulkiewicz, from a family of distinguished Polish Tatars, who died while saving his friend at the front. See: A. Koc, *Jak zginął Aleksander Sulkiewicz...*, ‘Niepodległość’ 1978, 11, pp. 139–160.

²⁰ From a Jewish family came, among others, later Minister Henryk Floyar-Rajchman, who first polonised his surname in 1917, and converted to Catholicism only in 1920. See the biographical entry on H. Floyar-Rajchman, in: *Leksykon*, p. 130.

²¹ For example, Józef Beck’s mother came from a Greek Catholic family, see biographical entry on J. Beck, in: *Leksykon*, p. 31.

In the course of performing pastoral care, new problems arose related to the priests functioning in extreme frontline conditions. Even organizing the basic equipment necessary for the exercise of pastoral service was sometimes a complex task. Some clergymen (similarly to rank-and-file soldiers), with their hopes for a quick rebuilding of Poland defeated, left the Legions or, considered useless in the army, resigned from their positions due to numerous complications in their service that they were unable to cope with²².

Many chaplains lost their valuable possessions during sudden retreats, errors in military transport or as a result of simple thefts. The biggest problem was the loss of the field altar. Supplementing this type of deficiencies was not easy and usually required even a short trip to the rear. At times, when in need, chaplains helped each other by lending liturgical vessels when one of them went on a leave. They also supported each other in preaching in order to diversify the services for the regiment's soldiers. All this meant that they had to be in constant contact with each other. It was required not only by religious reasons, but also by matters of a political nature. Some of them had problems in relations with the Austro-Hungarian authorities and, as the records show, they could then count on the support of their colleagues. Nevertheless, these good relations were severely tested after the resignation of Brigadier J. Piłsudski. In the Legions there was a strong propaganda pressure on all officers so they would collectively hand in their resignations. Under this pressure, a conference of all chaplains was held at the priest superior's, during which it was debated whether to resign (as they had such a right as volunteers). The rift was clear. The chaplains of the 1st Brigade were in favor of the resignations, while the remainder mostly opted for mitigating the charged moods. Ultimately, it was decided that all priests without exception would remain with the soldiers, as long as at least one was in the unit. Interestingly, at the end of World War I despite the decreasing number of military units, priests were still reporting for pastoral work in Legions in 1918, although those units were being liquidated by the central states. Apparently, the legend of the legionary act reached even Catholic seminaries...

We know the names of most legionary chaplains, and some of them went down in the history of the Polish army due to the interesting memoirs they left behind. A few of them are worth mentioning here. They have been serving this difficult ministry at the front for probably the longest

²² J. Panaś, *Pamiętnik kapelana Legionów Polskich*, Lwów 1920, p. 18. 'Ponieważ O. Damian wystąpił z Legionów...' ['Since Father Damian has left the Legions...']. See: A.C. Żak, *op. cit.*, pp. 303, 311.

time: Capuchin friar Kosma Lenczowski²³, Jesuit Kazimierz Nowina-Konopka²⁴ (6th Regiment), Reformed Franciscan friar Patrycy Władysław Antosz²⁵ (II Brigade 2nd Regiment), Piarist Henryk Ciepichałł²⁶ (I Brigade 1st Regiment) or priests, such as: Stanisław Żytkiewicz²⁷ (I Brigade 5th Regiment), Józef Gilewicz²⁸ (II Brigade 4th Regiment), Józef Panaś²⁹ (II Brigade 3rd Regiment, and at the same time field superior at the Legions Headquarters). Panaś was probably the first, after two years, to publish his memoirs from the time of his service in the Legions. Undoubtedly, the chaplain of the Carpathian Brigade was the most outstanding figure in this group. He wrote about himself very modestly, not concealing that he was afraid many times at the front. He sincerely described retreats from the enemy's offensive, but at the same time he was always with his soldiers,

²³ Karol Marcei Lenczowski (1881–1959) – the first legionary chaplain since 7 August 1914. In general, more materials were preserved by the monks whose legacy was secured in the monastic archives, such as photos of many chaplains. See: J. Marecki, *Stan pamiątek po O. Kosmie Karolu Lenczowskim kapelanie legionowym*, 'Niepodległość' 1995, 27, pp. 242–243.

²⁴ Kazimierz Nowina-Konopka (1879–1941) – Jesuit, Professor in Chyrów, chaplain of the Polish Legions since 27 December 1915, initially in the 4th Infantry Regiment, later – since 13 September 1917 – in the 6th Infantry Regiment. In the Second Polish Republic, once more Professor in Vilnius and Chyrów (1921–1930), missionary in Rhodesia since 1931, then in Denmark in 1937, during the War shot to death by the Soviets in Lviv while, evacuating from the city on 26 June 1941.

²⁵ Władysław (Patrycy within the order) Antosz (1882–1966) – Reformed Franciscan friar, chaplain, initially in the 2nd Infantry Regiment, later in the III Brigade, an experienced speaker and a talented preacher.

²⁶ Henryk Ciepichałł (1886–1934) – Piarist, a graduate of theology at the Jagiellonian University, in the Polish Legions since 15 June 1915, interned in Beniaminów after the Oath crisis; post-war, a student of philosophy at the University of Warsaw, left the clergy in 1921 and returned to active service in the Polish Military in 1922, he worked in the commissariat of General Inspectorate of the Armed Forces. In the literature, he is sometimes erroneously described under the surname Ciepichatt. See: W.K. Cygan, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 23–24.

²⁷ Stanisław Leon Żytkiewicz (1889–1956) – chaplain of the Polish Legions since 14 August 1914, in 1919 he was chaplain to the defenders of Lviv, dean at the front in the war with the Bolsheviks in 1920, chaplain of the Field Curia in 1937, retired in 1938 due to a progressive mental illness, probably caused to a large extent by the dramatic war experiences of 1914–1921. After the war, he died forgotten and in poverty in a fire in his hometown.

²⁸ Bronisław Józef Gilewicz – chaplain of 4th Infantry Regiment and then 5th Infantry Regiment. When the II Brigade had passed through the front to the Russian side, he ended up in the internment camp Huszt. After his release from the camp, he never returned to the army.

²⁹ Józef Panaś (1887–1941) – chaplain of the Legions, previously co-organiser of the 'Sokół' and rifle squads, after the war, dean priest of Corps District Command, left the army after the May Coup and joined the opposition peasant movement. During World War II, he belonged to the Polish resistance in Lviv in 1939. Murdered by the Bolsheviks during interrogation on 4 April 1941.

even in the most difficult moments for him personally, about which he wrote: 'Apart from rheumatism I got in the Carpathians, I also went down with acute bronchitis, but I couldn't go to hospital, because I was the only one for the whole Brigade (two other chaplains left for the Kingdom'³⁰.

In general, sometimes the shortage of chaplains in the Polish Legions would deem especially taxing, as we can find in some soldiers' memoirs. As a matter of fact it was never a particularly large group. Seniority of the officers of the Polish Legions from 1917 lists only 10 chaplains serving in this formation, these were already mentioned: Józef Panaś (Legions Command)³¹, Antosz Władysław (2nd Infantry Regiment), Kosma Lenczowski (4th Infantry Regiment)³²; Stanisław Żytkiewicz (5th Infantry Regiment.); dr Stanisław Gilewicz (Kaminsk Health-Resort); Henryk Ciepichał (1st Infantry Regiment); Wiktor Kwapiński (3rd Infantry Regiment); Kazimierz Konopka (6th Infantry Regiment); Franciszek Łuszczki³³ (Divisional Sanitary Unit); Zygmunt Wiszniewski³⁴ (Dęblin Hospital), but we can assume with a high degree of probability that this record only reflects the state of affairs in this particular year of the Great War. The rotation in the course of the hard service was significant. Preserved photographic documentation from the Congress of Chaplains of the Polish Legions in 1917 indicates that it was a truly elite group. In the photo, we can see nine of these people³⁵.

Of course, the group of chaplains that passed through all legionary brigades during the four years of the Great War was slightly more numerous. However, we must take into account the fact that in case of some no legacy in the form of memories has been preserved. Moreover, the service of some of them was shorter, because they had to leave after a few months due to their health condition, or were transferred for other

³⁰ 'Oprócz reumatyzmu, którego się nabawiłem w Karpatach, zapadłem również na ostry katar oskrzeli, ale nie mogłem jednak wyjechać do szpitala, bo na całą Brygadę byłem sam jeden (dwaj inni kapelani wyjechali do Królestwa)'. J. Panaś, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

³¹ Detailed course of military service of some chaplains. See: W.K. Cygan, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 83–84.

³² W.K. Cygan, *Słownik biograficzny oficerów Legionów Polskich*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1992, pp. 59–61.

³³ Franciszek Józef Łuszczki (1886–1955) – priest, chaplain of the Legions since 2 June 1916, temporarily chaplain of 5th Infantry Regiment in 1917, chaplain during the war with the Bolsheviks in 1920, after the war in parishes in the Eastern Borderlands; during World War II, the Home Army chaplain in the Lublin region, in 1943 he saved the inhabitants of his parish from pacification, thanks to his good command of the German language (probably from the time of his service in the Legions).

³⁴ The indicated clergyman served for some time in the LP Group Command.

³⁵ See website at: <http://www.diecezja.rzeszow.pl/2015/04/franciszek-jozef-luszczki-k-s-mjr-1886-1955/> [accessed on: 2 I 2019].

reasons. Anyway, the priests mentioned above, also during the four years of their service in the Legions, changed the units they served, took their leaves, finally received medical attention in the front end and returned to their units, having lost their notes on the way. (Some authors of the memoirs were very cautious as they sent notes in the form of letters to monasteries, and these survived)³⁶. It is only appropriate to agree with the opinion that the monks turned out to be the best prepared (they represented Capuchins, Jesuits, Piarists, Franciscans, and Reformed Franciscans)³⁷. Accustomed with discipline in their orders, they could bear the military drill more easily and were able to bear on with soldiers even in the most difficult moments of their service.

Despite that, the rotation among the chaplains at the front was substantial, as well as among the soldiers entrusted to their care. Few were able to go through such a long period without major trauma or severe illness requiring treatment. The chaplains, as well as the soldiers with whom they shared their ups and downs for years, were not omitted by typhus, pneumonia, fractures, gunshots, and all other wounds, sometimes very serious ones. The case of an elderly Observant, Father Cyril Strzemecki, who simply did not manage to perform such a difficult service, should be rather perceived as an inglorious exception³⁸.

With the passing of time, almost all of them (even the ideological supporters of independence) adopted a critical attitude towards the war, they had no combat enthusiasm, but they rather refrained from openly critical opinions about the further warfare – sometimes due to the military discipline in force, and sometimes in the belief that they cannot undermine faith in the purposefulness of actions. At the front this type of behavior seems justified. After all, priests were not able to stop the dramatic war events. On the other hand, overt criticism of military orders could subsequently result in undermining discipline in the military. The vast majority of chaplains were aware of their limitations in this matter, so although they did not approve of the war, they clearly avoided its total condemnation, for fear that it might encourage weaker individuals to desert. Moreover, some of them were aware that this armed conflict opened up new possibilities with regard to the struggle for independence, therefore they generally retained their political judgments with restraint. However, everyone considered it necessary to provide pastoral care, most often to young people who, detached from their family home, were

³⁶ K. Nowina-Konopka, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

³⁷ K. Rędziński, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

³⁸ A. Chwalba, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

deprived of a moral compass and sometimes simply ran wild in the war. The more so because the young officers did not set a good example, as they wrote in their notes: 'Soldiers' songs, a doctor's guitar, and two robust Marys. Then poker'³⁹.

The chaplain was sometimes the only thin thread linking them to the moral principles they had learnt at home. It is also worth noting here that sometimes very young boys fled to the Legions, still in their adolescence, who naturally sought authority in their environment. In military matters it was a senior soldier or a superior, but in other 'life matters' the advice could be given by a priest whom they trusted because he shared their fate. It happened that the clergy provided addresses of level-headed people who took care of such a teenage 'soldier', who had no one to maintain contact with. At the beginning, they exchanged correspondence with their recommended 'caretakers', but during the leave they were often invited to their homes as guests, which they were very pleased with. In a life-threatening situation at the front young boys behaved in all sorts of ways. For some, it was time to think about eternity, for others, to use life as quickly as possible, regardless of any moral principles. Chaplains had to be at the side of both. Observing them closely, they gradually changed their minds about the legionnaires. The same clergymen who previously saw them as suspected socialists wrote on closer acquaintance: 'A mixed bunch of mockers and malcontents, but only seemingly. Everyone is ready to suffer for Poland, though lice bite them [...] The guys were honourable, the brigade best of all, the regiment best of all, the battalion, the company, the platoon were outdoing each other to show that they were real Polish soldiers, one better than the other'⁴⁰.

The priests gradually changed their minds, but the war and life in the trenches brought various situations, not only the glorious ones. In such a large group of soldiers, sometimes tragic events happened, including death – not necessarily in the field of glory. The clergy were present at the most difficult moments at the end of life. Not only with the wounded in combat, but also with those who broke down morally and committed some serious offences for which they were sentenced to death by a court-martial. There were various people in the Legions (including demoralized people) and some of them faced the highest punishment at the hands

³⁹ 'śpiewki żołnierskie, gitara doktora, i dwie bycze Marysie. Potem poker'. T. Furgalski 'Wyrwa', *Dziennik 1913–1916*, ed. P. Cichoracki, Kraków 2011, p. 83.

⁴⁰ 'Zbieranina kpiarzy i malkontentów, ale tylko pozornie. Każdy za Polskę gotów cierpieć, choć go wszy gryzą [...] Honorne były chłopaki, brygada nad brygadą, pułk nad pułkiem, baon, kompania, pluton prześcigały się nawzajem, żeby pokazać, że są prawdziwymi polskimi żołnierzami, jedni lepsi od drugich'. K. Nowina-Konopka, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

of their colleagues. At this point, it is worth quoting a memory of the chaplain, who demanded decent treatment of those sentenced to death and immediately, upon learning of such a quick execution, intervened with the head of the legionary gendarmerie: 'I go to Kostek and ask how it could be done without a chaplain! Maybe some of them wanted a priest and the Holy Sacraments. 'But they were right bastards!'. Fine, but in the face of death, even bastards do confess. After all, it is about eternal salvation. 'Such rogues don't deserve the Kingdom of Heaven'. I went to Piłsudski to speak up for my office, I cannot be a parade or advertising chaplain, I should be present at these unpleasant moments. 'I will tell Kostek about this'. [...] I was there with the three executed later'⁴¹.

Here we have reached another interesting point. At this point in his life, Piłsudski was a Protestant, with many of his close companions being at odds with the principles of the Catholic Church in their personal lives. Nevertheless, they had to take into account the fact that most of the legionnaires, to a varying degree of course, were believers and associated themselves closely with the Catholic Church. The example of execution indicated above is extreme in nature, but disputes over the scope of pastoral care also broke out in a different, less controversial context. The problem of where and how to organize the Sunday Mass, and whether and how to celebrate the usual feasts/holidays, could also cause irritation. Undoubtedly, the issue of a document, an instruction for military chaplains serving with the Polish Legions, was an attempt to somehow regulate such disputes⁴².

The chaplains, acting within the framework of the applicable law, did not want to leave the issue of military morality without any criticism. Meanwhile, the military command often turned a blind eye to gambling (mainly in the form of playing cards for money)⁴³, drunkenness (in which it sometimes took an active part)⁴⁴, or occasional intimate contacts of legionnaires with the local population⁴⁵. From the point of view of the

⁴¹ 'Idę do Kostka i pytam, jak można było robić to bez kapelana! Może który pragnął kapłana i Sakramentów Św. 'A to byli dranie!' Dobrze, ale w obliczu śmierci dranie także się spowiadają. Przecież tu chodzi o wieczne zbawienie. 'Takim łotrom szkoda Królestwa niebieskiego'. Zaszedłem do Piłsudskiego upomnieć się o mój urząd, ja nie mogę być kapelanem od parady czy reklamy, ale powinienem być przy tych przykrych chwilach. 'Ja powiem to Kostkowi' [...] przy trzech później rozstrzelanych byłem'. K. Lenczowski, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁴² J. Marecki, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

⁴³ T. Alf-Tarczyński, *Wspomnienia oficera Pierwszej Brygady*, Londyn 1979, p. 42.

⁴⁴ W. Solek, *Pamiętnik legionisty*, Warszawa 1988, p. 72.

⁴⁵ J.K. Maciejewski, *Zawadiaka. Dzienniki frontowe 1914–1920*, ed. A. Knyt, Warszawa 2015, p. 179. 'Gram w oczko, przegrywam [...], potem pożyczam i odgrywam się [...]

superiors these were private matters, not officially condemned in any way, as long as they did not interfere with the service. On the other hand, on the part of the chaplains these things were seen quite differently, i.e. in terms of the sin of youthful soldiers, and therefore should be strongly condemned and eliminated. There was a lot of room for dispute here, if not for open conflicts. Chaplains often demanded to put an end to some practices, which in their opinion were clearly in conflict with morality, while the leadership sometimes saw it as simply 'innocent male entertainment'. The fact is, however, that over time there was an unwritten, fragile compromise between the parties. Chaplains were sometimes less strict in minor matters, such as singing vulgar chants, smoking and drinking alcohol sometimes by evidently underage soldiers, and the commanders under their pressure tried to limit gambling and drinking (which could be a serious problem, with sometimes unpleasant consequences), directing interest in soldiers towards sport⁴⁶, including more and more popular football matches, which were sometimes attended even by brigadier Józef Piłsudski. However, there were still contentious issues, sometimes even in acute form.

In general, the chaplains were rather well received by the legionnaires, many sympathized with them, trying to help in the difficult service. Nevertheless, there were also cases of conflicts with officers or soldiers, as always when people are forced to stay together for a long time in claustrophobic spaces (dugouts, cramped quarters or just trenches). Chaplains most often had a natural ability to get out of such conflict situations, although there were also such (most often with a high-rank commander involved) that resulted in a request for transfer to another unit⁴⁷.

The clergy, moving along with the legionnaires, had the opportunity to observe how their charges were received by civilians in their accommodation places. We have many interesting observations on this subject from different regions of the country. Much depended on the behavior of the soldiers and their spiritual guide. Nevertheless, an even more interesting question was how the chaplains of the Legions were perceived by their fellow priests. These are sometimes situations that indicate great confusion, fear and even hostility on the part of those around you. One of such accidental contacts was described by Father Lenczowski: 'In Chmielnik, I go to the presbytery. The old parish priest from the time

Całymi dniami grywaliśmy w karty' ['I play blackjack, I lose [...], then I borrow money and win back [...] We used to play cards all day long'].

⁴⁶ A. Chwalba, *op. cit.*, p. 250. 'Burdy w szynkach, rozpusta, kradzieże...' ['Bar brawls, debauchery, theft...'].

⁴⁷ K. Nowina-Konopka, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

of the 1863 Uprising got scared of me. No way! I went back chastened and I still don't know what it meant. I think he might have been afraid of deception and betrayal, as many priests received me in the same way⁴⁸.

Here we come to another issue. Chaplains did not have the support of their confrères in the priesthood and their superiors who could intercede for them or give advice were far away, so they identified themselves to a large extent with their 'flock'. Although they did not carry weapons (Father Kosma Lenczowski carried a revolver given to him by the Legionnaires as a gift) and they did not fight (probably only in self-defense), having been with Legionnaires for a long time in a similar situation of lack of acceptance from civilians, *de facto* they themselves gradually became soldiers in the sense of belonging to a group. In a general sense, they were also inspired by the 'brotherhood in arms'. They knew these young men perfectly well and the confession was only a formal supplement to this knowledge. The boys were very sinful, so there was a lot of work. One of them, observing one evening a young girl serving in the Legions in a male disguise, wrote about it years later, figuratively, but at the same time mockingly: 'I am committing one of the seven deadly sins listed in the Catechism, that is the sin of impure thoughts, punishable by hell'⁴⁹. By no means did it always end on sinful thoughts, because youth has its own rights. Another legionnaire wrote about these matters in a highly laconic but straightforward style: 'Night on the lookout in the park – through the window – at Sophie's'⁵⁰.

Evidently, as far as sexual relations are concerned, chaplains noticed a kind of desperation in legionnaires, probably related in part to the fear that they might not be able to have much of a life. In these circumstances, young boys often associated themselves with women they met quite by chance, sometimes much older or with evident character defects. Chaplains generally cooled down the 'hot heads' looking for a priest for a quick wedding at the front, of course recommending a sacramental union, but after the war, in an independent homeland⁵¹.

Also worth mentioning are the sermons delivered by the chaplains,

⁴⁸ 'W Chmielniku idę na plebanię. Proboszcz staruszek z czasów powstania 1863 r. wystraszył się mną. Nie ma rady! Jak niepyszny wyszedłem i dotychczas nie wiem, co to znaczyło, chyba się bał podstępu i zdrady, bo u wielu kapłanów, podobnie mnie przyjęto'. K. Lenczowski, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

⁴⁹ 'Popełniam jeden z siedmiu wymienionych w katechizmie grzechów głównych, czyli grzech nieczystych myśli, który grozi piekłem'. T. Alf-Tarczyński, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁵⁰ 'Noc na czatach w parku – przez okno – u Zośki'. T. Furgalski 'Wyrwa', *op. cit.*, p. 102.

⁵¹ K. Lenczowski, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

achieving visible success in teaching. One of the legionnaires later figuratively recalled: 'We sat down to the card game of *preferans*, playing it until it was time to go to midnight mass [...] Father Żytkiewicz spoke softly, kind of shyly, with his eyes closed [...] I was left with sort of an image of this sermon: a Christmas table in heaven. Behind it, sits Christ and the sweet Mary, among the Polish knights [...] For the first time in my life I understood that a carol can constitute a fervent prayer. And you can't sing it, because you choke on your own tears'⁵².

In general, however, not all chaplains were good preachers. Some of them were self-conscious in that regard and tried to involve other clergymen. Sometimes, conversely, a local clergyman agreed to celebrate Mass, but it was rather difficult to invite a good preacher to the front, unless it was the Suffragan Bishop of Lviv, Władysław Bandurski, who was reliable and could constructively speak even to young people demoralized by the war; like he did for instance during the Sunday Mass on 26 December 1915, when his words were noted by a certain 'brawler': 'You are the shepherds on their watch. You are the first to see the Star of Bethlehem of the rebirth of our homeland... – I heard him for the first time, he left an impression on me'⁵³.

This opinion confirms that the abovementioned Suffragan Bishop of Lviv was one of the most outstanding preachers with whom the legionaries came into contact. In practice, he often served as the chaplain of the Legions, although he was not assigned such canonical mission. This commitment contributed to his subsequent resignation as a Suffragan Bishop of Lviv. It was no coincidence that Władysław Bandurski was considered the honorary chaplain of the First Brigade of the Legions. Of all the clergy who spared no effort serving young soldiers, he was probably the most outstanding figure (although also other Catholic hierarchs had liking for the Legions, such as the Archbishop of Lviv, Rev. Józef Bilczewski, or the Bishop of Przemyśl, Józef Pelczar). However, the documents that have survived to this day prove that Archbishop Bandurski's involvement in matters related to the Legions were particularly immense. Even when interned in Vienna, through letters he kept in touch with the soldiers he cared for. He was very

⁵² 'Siedliśmy do *preferansa*, łupiąc go aż do momentu, kiedy trzeba było jechać na pasterkę [...] Ksiądz Żytkiewicz mówił cicho, jakby nieśmiało z zamkniętymi oczyma [...] Został mi z tego kazania jak gdyby obraz: wigilijny stół w niebie. Za którym siedzą Chrystus i przesiódka Maryja wśród polskich rycerzy [...] Po raz pierwszy w życiu zrozumiałem, że kolęda może być gorącą modlitwą. I można nie móc jej śpiewać, bo się człowiek zachłystuje płaczem'. T. Alf-Tarczyński, *op. cit.*, pp. 38–40.

⁵³ 'Wy jesteście pastuszkami, którzy czuwacie. Wam pierwszym pojawiała się gwiazda betlejemka odrodzenia ojczyzny... – Pierwszy raz go słyszałem, zaimponował mi'. T. Furgalski 'Wyrwa', *op. cit.*, p. 133.

devoted to young soldiers in need, also in a specific economic dimension, which led him to almost complete personal bankruptcy. He intervened whenever he felt that someone in the Legions was being hurt⁵⁴.

Following the various testimonies left by the legionnaires, one cannot help but feel that the work of the chaplains met with a very substantial response. Influenced by the events at the front and the aware of the fragility of human life, many of them converted. Of course, this change was not always permanent and not always in line with the church's recommendations. Nevertheless, we have testimonies confirming this tendency even among individuals who previously were far from religion, holding views that were sometimes even hostile to the Catholic Church. Immediate notes made by a well-known church critic and at the same time an active freemason are worth paying attention⁵⁵. Unfortunately, it is impossible to precisely determine whether and to what extent these were the effects of the work of the chaplains, or rather the extreme front conditions soldiers had to face. In any case, chaplains were generally (even by non-believing socialists) perceived unequivocally positively as those exceptional priests who followed their flock in the most difficult times. An example of the commander of the First Brigade himself should be mentioned here, who, after a serious illness in February 1916, decided to return to the Catholic Church. The matter was kept in secret, thanks to the chaplain, Henryk Ciepichałł, who entered the appropriate act in his diary (instead of in the book of activities of the pastoral office kept by each chaplain) in order to keep the matter confidential⁵⁶.

The clergy at the front also had a lot of administrative work. Apart from the above-mentioned document, they also often kept other records. It should be mentioned here about the cadaster of graves in the battlefields of the First Brigade of the Polish Legions, lists of legionnaires killed in specific battles, and official correspondence regarding the fallen, wounded or missing soldiers, preserved in the archives. Chaplains often sought support for soldiers from various social organizations at the rear of the front, such as the Women's League and other charity societies. Correspondence on such matters has been preserved. Chaplains, having much better

⁵⁴ *Nie tylko Pierwsza Brygada, Przed i po kryzysie przysięgowym*, ed. S.J. Rostworowski, Warszawa 1993, pp. 18–19. A letter of Bishop Władysław Bandurski written because of the attacks on Col. Władysław Sikorski of 2 December 1916.

⁵⁵ M. Römer, *Dziennik 1914–1915*, vol. 2, eds. K. Bizacka, J. Sienkiewicz, Warszawa 2017, p. 874, the entry from 23 December 1915. 'Jestem religijny, dziś bardziej jeszcze wierzący i z Bogiem obcujący niż może kiedykolwiek dotąd w życiu' ['I am religious, today even more believing and communing with God than ever before in my entire life'].

⁵⁶ J. Majchrowski, *Pierwszy ułan Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1993, p. 63.

social contacts than many officers, were able to organize support for the monotonous front diet. On their hands, numerous and various gifts were made by the donors. Those gifts usually ended up in the cauldron shared by soldiers or were distributed among the most needy privates⁵⁷. Some clergymen became so involved in these efforts that they even started to have a flair for business and they tried to find the best supplies for 'their' legionnaires, not only from provision officers. This additional informal functions best reflected in the childish words of both soldiers and young officers at the sight of a well-known clergyman returning from the rear: 'Hey Father Chaplain! What have you brought us?'⁵⁸.

There are numerous traces of this economic and educational activity in the documents kept in the legacy of some chaplains. Protocols deserve attention, these include: interrogations of soldiers, receipt books⁵⁹, book depositories, that make us realize that the chaplain was more than merely a spiritual guardian. For example, Colonel Bolesław Roja was looking for a comprehensively educated Jesuit, fluent in German, for his regiment, and he was motivated by the necessity of frequent contacts with German professional officers, to whom the chaplain would proudly represent the entire unit during staff talks. Thus, an additional, completely informal function of the chaplain in this regiment was to serve as an interpreter and a representative⁶⁰.

Oftentimes, a clergyman was a kind of guardian in the literal sense of the word. Many soldiers (mainly younger or uneducated) benefited from the advice and help of an educated chaplain with full trust. They turned to him in life matters. They wanted him to facilitate marriage, help in changing religion, say, from Judaism to Catholicism, and sometimes they simply asked for cigarettes...

Many chaplains took on additional duties, serving as suppliers⁶¹, liaisons between the command and the front, bringing water and hot meals to the front line. The educational aspect of their work was also important. They set a positive example for legionnaires who – like people are – were prone to jealousy, envy, and ambitions beyond measure, and were often just tired, embittered, and discouraged. The chaplain had to observe all these states of mind and soothe them as much as possible.

⁵⁷ J. Panaś, *op. cit.*, p. 43. 'Pakiety rozdałem chłopcom...' ['I distributed the packages among the boys...'].

⁵⁸ 'A ks. Kapelan! Co nam ksiądz przywiózł?'. K. Nowina-Konopka, *op. cit.*, p. 141. 'Cukierki!' ['Candies!'].

⁵⁹ J. Marecki, *op. cit.*, pp. 242–243.

⁶⁰ K. Nowina-Konopka, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁶¹ K. Rędziński, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

Generally, however, they were clergymen with some experience and were able to cope even in these extreme situations. Some of them did not accept the vulgarity in their environment and introduced a system of monetary penalties for those legionaries who were crude. Chaplains also collected donations to pay for widows and orphans, and when financial penalties were not applicable due to insolvency, they used a different method – by embarrassing the guilty. However, all sorts of things happened in mutual relations. Sometimes chaplains had to patiently endure the so-called barracks jokes, because not all soldiers were kind to them on a daily basis. One of such jokers wrote: ‘The young chaplain of this regiment, Father Żytkiewicz, catches my hand: ‘Advise me, soldier, how should I name my horse?’ Since the priest looks very modest, I advise him to name it: Mistress, Trollop, Hour...’⁶².

On the other hand, it happened quite often that the soldiers themselves came out with initiatives that also had a religious dimension. Particularly noteworthy is the idea of building a chapel on the front line – by legionnaires under the direction of Major Jędrzej Galica, an architect by profession. At the headquarters of the 4th Regiment, a highland-style chapel was built, which, unfortunately, was destroyed after a few months as a result of enemy drumfire. Young soldiers joked that at that point they only had to build a presbytery to have a proper parish. Similarly, they were willing to take part in the construction of the magnificent Holy Sepulchre before Easter. Legionnaires were sometimes very helpful in organizing a quiet place for the Sunday Mass, which on the front line was not easy at all and sometimes required a lot of preparation. There were more similar grassroots initiatives and in these cases the chaplains were ‘good spirits’, kindling and supporting the religious zeal of soldiers.

In general, celebrating the Holy Mass in the middle of nowhere was not an easy task, especially when the weather was unfavorable or when they were accompanied by violent artillery fire of the enemy at the front. However, the chaplains’ efforts often resulted in solemn ceremonies, which, despite rather modest setting, were remembered by the emotionally engaged soldiers for a long time. In the memoirs of one of these adolescent, barely fourteen-year-old volunteers (effectively cheating about his age) we read:

In Konary, at the beginning of June 1915, a solemn field Mass was celebrated upon a large meadow, probably some pasture in the middle of

⁶² ‘Łapie mnie za rękaw młodziutki kapelan tego pułku ks. Żytkiewicz’: ‘Poradźcie mi obywatelu, jak nazwać moja wierzchówkę’. Ponieważ ksiądz wygląda na bardzo skromnego, dla przekory radzę ją nazwać: Utrzymanką, Kobietką, Hurysą...’. W. Solek, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

the village; the altar with Our Lady of Częstochowa and the White Eagle at the top were arranged. At that time, I was serving at the Holy Mass. The brigade chaplain, Father Kosma, celebrated [...] With the priest already in liturgical vestments, we waited for the staff and for the Commander [...] And when, in course of my duties, I turned away from the altar, I saw the Commander right in front of me with his head bowed to the ground, and next to him [...] there were Sosnkowski, Śmigły, Belina, Brzoza, Berbecki, – the commanders of his soldiers, there were Sieroszewski, Strug, Kaden-Bandrowski⁶³ – famous writers [...]; in my mind at the time it was the entire Poland, and seeing it myself, I really felt a Polish soldier⁶⁴.

Some priests did not limit themselves to pastoral service, but also behaved heroically, although they did not fight with weapons in hand on the front lines, they set an example of great faith, humanity and sacrifice. Not very religious, the later Prime Minister, Dr. Sławoj Składkowski, gave a beautiful testimony to this, writing in his memoirs about an extremely difficult situation of the legionnaires after a completely unsuccessful attack on the enemy's fortifications, one that even the officers could not cope with:

'There are many of them still lying under the Russian wires. It's two in the morning, and in an hour it will simply be too late. Should we not take them out now, they will die, for it is impossible to walk near the Muscovite trenches during the daytime. At that instant, our priest, chaplain Żytkiewicz mounts his horse, led to him by the orderly. To our questions, where he is going, he replies that to the Russian wires, to look for the wounded. He is too weak to walk on his own, hence he rides his horse. He remains silent at our arguments that it makes no sense [...], but clicks on the horse and starts waving his whip. Soon he sinks into the darkness [...].

The wounded brought in in the morning say that some 'Gentleman' directed a sanitary patrol towards them [...] He was riding a hundred

⁶³ The writer also remembered those days, though from a slightly different perspective. See: J. Kaden-Bandrowski, *Nabożeństwo po bitwie*, in: *Bitwa pod Konarami*, Kraków 1915, pp. 47–48.

⁶⁴ 'W Konarach na początku czerwca 1915 r. odbyła się uroczysta Msza św. polowa na dość obszernej łące, prawdopodobnie pastwisku w środku wsi, urządzono ołtarz polowy z Matką Boską Częstochowską i Orłem Białym u szczytu. Służyłem wówczas do Mszy św. Celebrował kapelan Brygady Ojciec Kosma [...] Czekaliśmy z ubranym w szaty liturgiczne księdzem na sztab i na Komendanta [...] A gdy w czynnościach ministranta odwracałem się od ołtarza, widziałem Komendanta tuż przed sobą z pochyloną głową ku ziemi, a obok niego [...] był Sosnkowski, Śmigły, Belina, Brzoza, Berbecki – dowódcy jego żołnierzy, był Sieroszewski, Strug, Kaden-Bandrowski – sławni pisarze [...] w moim ówczesnym umyśle to była cała Polska, a ja sam widząc to, czułem się rzeczywiście polskim żołnierzem'. J. Herzog, *op. cit.*, pp. 86–87.

steps from the Russian trenches and supervised the operation of sanitary patrols, looking for the wounded. At around four he came back tired, but calm, as usual⁶⁵.

It should be noted here that the *de facto* war experiences of chaplains were often no less traumatic than those of ordinary soldiers, although they did not participate in the battle on the front lines. Most of them were next to the seriously wounded and dying for a long time. One of the youngest seriously injured soldiers wrote in his memoirs: 'I was laid on straw on the floor among the other wounded. I recognized a priest kneeling at my side. I prayed, and once again I lost consciousness...'⁶⁶. Meanwhile, chaplains, like soldiers entrusted to their pastoral care, also experienced various personal tragedies, receiving news about the fate of their loved ones⁶⁷.

In fact, the conditions of daily life for chaplains were not much better than those of their faithful at the front. They were often accompanied by dirt, lice-infested clothes, mud of trenches, sometimes hunger and cold. They have often witnessed the horrific torment of dying soldiers after severe wounds that had to be comforted nevertheless. They were with them in the most difficult last moments of their lives, and where necessary, they rolled up their sleeves and went to work as ordinary paramedics or even accidental gravediggers, when in the face of a sudden retreat and running for their lives no one thought about the Christian burial for the fallen... Unfortunately, the last offices were a frequent motive in the duties of the chaplain of the Polish Legions at the front⁶⁸, who being with the mostly young people for the long time, felt strongly attached to them emotionally.

⁶⁵ 'Dużo ich jeszcze leży pod samymi drutami rosyjskimi. Jest druga w nocy, za godzinę będzie za późno. Jeśli ich nie wyniesiemy teraz, to zginą, gdyż niepodobna iść we dnie pod druty okopów moskiewskich. W tej chwili ksiądz kapelan Żytkiewicz siada na swojego konika, którego podprowadził mu ordynans. Na pytania nasze, dokąd jedzie odpowiada, że jedzie pod druty rosyjskie szukać rannych. Jest zbyt słaby, by iść o własnych siłach, jedzie więc konno. Na nasze przedstawienie, że to nie ma sensu [...], nie odpowiada nic, cmoka na konika i rusza z miejsca, machając swą witką. Wkrótce wsiąka w mrok nocy [...]'. Ranni przyniesieni nad ranem, mówią, że jakiś 'Pan' przyprowadził do nich patrol sanitarny [...] Jeździł 100 kroków od okopów rosyjskich i kierował pracą patroli sanitarnych, wyszukując rannych. Koło czwartej wrócił zmęczony, ale spokojny jak zwykle'. S.F. Składkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

⁶⁶ 'Położono mnie na słomie na podłodze pośród innych rannych. Poznałem księdza kłęczącego przy mnie. Modliłem się i znów zapadłem w nieświadomość...'. J. Herzog, *op. cit.*, pp. 174–175.

⁶⁷ J. Panaś, *op. cit.*, p. 84; 'Mój młodszy brat Franciszek już dwukrotnie ranny [...] zginął. Pozostawił żonę i dwoje małych dzieci' ['My younger brother Franciszek was wounded twice [...] and he died. He left behind a wife and two young children'].

⁶⁸ J. Cisek, K. Stepan, *Lista strat Legionów Polskich 1914–1918*, Kraków 2006, p. 30; 'Pochowany przez ks. kapelana...'. ['Buried by the chaplain...'].

Remembering the Legions and their battles, it is impossible to forget about all this and one should note the dedication of this small group of priests who decided to carry the pastoral service to legionnaires, as well as to share with them the difficult fate of the soldier.

The accounts and memories of both chaplains and legionnaires extant to this day and extensively used in this paper fully confirm this. Most of them were created during the warfare or shortly afterwards, so they are of great documentary value. Some chaplains sent them back to relatives or confreres aware of their importance. The descriptions of Legion's everyday life, various events and occurrences comprised in them are often confirmed by other official and private sources⁶⁹. The image of the war is honest, authentic, though cruel at times – even if the memories were created by people who did not fight in a line every day. The specificity of this kind of historical accounts has already been thoroughly analyzed by researchers⁷⁰. However, it is worth emphasizing the advantages of this group of sources, which were created by the clergymen who served at the front, and at the same time encourage those interested to read them and use them in a wider scope than before.

(translated by LINGUA LAB)

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⁶⁹ Including the preserved photographic documentation, see: J. Odziemkowski, S. Frątczak, *op. cit.*, pp. 63–72.

⁷⁰ U. Oettingen, *Obraz wojny w literaturze wspomnieniowej żołnierzy Legionów Polskich*, in: *I wojna światowa w literaturze i innych tekstach kultury. Reinterpretacje i dopełnienia*, eds. A. Jamrożek-Sowa, Z. Ożóg, A. Wal, Rzeszów 2016.

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STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł zwraca uwagę czytelników na wartościowe źródła historyczne, którymi są wspomnienia kapelanów Legionów Polskich z lat 1914–1918. Opieka duszpasterska w wymienionych formacjach zbrojnych i rozliczne problemy z nią związane została ukazana w ich świetle. Na froncie (często w ekstremalnych warunkach bojowych) ukształtowała się silna więź między żołnierzami i ich 'opiekunami duchowymi'. Kapelani bywali nie tylko duszpasterzami, ale także pełnili doraźnie w miarę potrzeby inne rozliczne funkcje – dla

przykładu: tłumaczy, zaopatrzeniowców, sanitariuszy, bibliotekarzy, nauczycieli, psychologów, a w ostateczności także grabarzy... Wspomnienia z ich służby rzucają interesujące światło na codzienne (nie tylko duchowe) problemy żołnierzy tamtych czasów.

Słowa kluczowe: Kapelani, Legiony Polskie 1914–1918, opieka duszpasterska, wspomnienia, legioniści, walka o niepodległość, służba wojskowa, obrzędy religijne

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