



*Protestant Military Chaplaincy
of the Polish Armed Forces*

the Bishop *words*

The Christian Church fulfilling the missionary command of Jesus: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28, 19.20) works on many levels. One of these planes is acting through dedicated environmental ministries.

As chaplains of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy of Polish Armed Forces we have the great honour and privilege to serve among generals and admirals, officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers and civilian employees of the Ministry of Defence. The history of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy dates back to 1919, when the Commander-in-Chief, Marshal Józef Piłsudski, called it into existence in the structures of the Polish Army by a state decree of January 18, 1919. The difficult time of post-war communist Poland and the struggle with the churches led by the then oppressive power apparatus and politicization of the army resulted in the suspension of official pastoral activity

in the so-called "Polish People's Army". The year 1989 brings a change of power, difficult talks about restoring the activities of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy of the Polish Armed Forces begin, which ended in 1994 with the signing of relevant contracts and full reactivation in 1995.

For nearly 30 years, we have been standing faithfully next to the soldiers of the Republic of Poland, listening to the problems, rejoicing in successes, praying and giving gifts of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

We represented our Ministry in countless state and military ceremonies.

We believe that God will acknowledge our service and receive the glory that is due Him. We entrust our free Homeland, and at the same time all those serving the Brightest Republic in uniforms, to His care, protection and blessing.

God bless you!
bp Marcin Makula



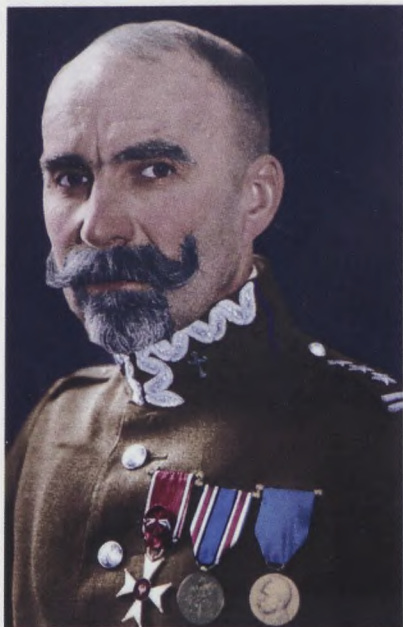
visionaries

Religious freedom was a Polish characteristic that was particularly evident in the 16th century – a Golden Age for the Republic of Poland. Under the protection of the Polish monarch in 1525 – as his seigniory – the first Lutheran country in the world was formed (Duchy of Prussia). From 1574 every ruler of the Republic was obliged to vow before a coronation, that he would not allow “anyone to be repressed for religious reasons”.

And so, when at the end of the 18th century while trying to save the independence of Poland, this tradition was again referred to, there could have been only one response. The capital’s Protestant parish gave General Tadeusz Kościuszko’s army access to the highest point in the city at that time – the lantern tower on the cupola of the Holy Trinity Protestant church. In exchange for this service the parson of the Warsaw parish was meant to become the first Protestant military chaplain in Poland. However, the insurgency collapsed, together with

the independent Republic of Poland, its army, and the service of military chaplains. Just over a century later the wishes of that Warsaw parish person were about to come true. On the 11th of November 1918 World War I finally ended. The joy of the Polish people after the end of the battles was accompanied by the joy of gaining independence. After 123 years of slavery the Republic of Poland reappeared on the map of the Europe.

A few days earlier a letter had arrived at the Ministry of Military Affairs, which was just being formed. Its sender, Rev. Ryszard Paszke – who afterwards polonized his surname to Paszko and later became the first Chief Military Chaplain for the Lutheran Church – drew attention to the need for “creating an office of evangelical chaplains in the Polish Army”. A few days later it happened that among small number appeared the first soldier of the Republic of Poland, evangelical by choice – Marshal Józef Piłsudski.



WIARA I MUNDUR RYSZARD PASZKO i inni kapelani ewangeliccy





establishment of the *Protestant Military Chaplaincy*

In 1994, the Minister of the Polish National Defense established the Protestant Military Chaplaincy. The mission of reactivating the pastoral structure was entrusted to Rev. Jan Hause as Chief Chaplain. From September 1, 1995, four chaplains were appointed for each of the military districts. It was Rev. Adam Pilch, dean of the Warsaw Military District. Since 1999, deputy of the Protestant Military Bishop who is also the pastor of the Evangelical-Augsburg parish of the Ascension of the Lord in Warsaw. Posthumously promoted to the rank of brigadier general.

The first chaplain of the Krakow Military District was Rev. Zbigniew Kowalczyk, then parish priest in Rybnik. Later, he served as the Dean of the Type of Armed Forces of the Land Forces. He retired in 2012 in the rank of colonel.

Rev. Ryszard Borski became a chaplain in the Silesian Military District, being the pastor of the parish of St. Krzysztof in Wrocław, and from 1999 he takes over the duties of the Chief Military Chaplain and becomes the first Protestant Military Bishop promoted to the rank of brigadier general by the President of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Aleksander Kwaśniewski, on August 15, 2005. In 2011 he retired.

Rev. Marek Loskot became chaplain of the Pomeranian Military District and from 1999 he was the Dean of the Naval Armed Forces. In 2010 he was promoted to the rank of commander. In the years 2010–2014 he was the Chancellor of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy. In the field of the Church, he is the pastor of the Protestant parish in Bydgoszcz.



died *in service*

Father Adam Pilch was born on June 26, 1965 in Wisła. He graduated from elementary school and hotel technical school there. After passing the secondary school-leaving examination in 1984, he began his studies at the Christian Theological Academy at the Evangelical Theology Department.

He graduated from theological studies in 1989, passing the MA exam. On July 15, 1990, in Sorkwity, he was ordained a priest of the Evangelical-Augsburg Church in Poland. On the day of his ordination, he assumed the position of diocesan vicar of the Diocese of Warsaw and held this position until 1993. In the years 1993–1995 he was the administrator of the Evangelical-Augsburg Parish of the Ascension of the Lord in Warsaw, where in 1995 he was elected parish priest.

In 1995, he began working in the Protestant Military Chaplaincy, receiving the rank of major as dean of the Warsaw Military District. From 1999, he served as the

deputy of the Protestant Military Bishop with the rank of colonel.

Due to his function, he was supposed to participate in the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Katyń massacre. Unfortunately, on April 10, 2010, together with 96 participants of the government delegation, he died in the crash of the Polish Tu-154M plane in Smolensk. On April 24, 2010, he was buried at the Evangelical-Augsburg Cemetery in Warsaw.

On April 15, 2010, he was posthumously promoted to the rank of brigadier general, and on April 3, 2011, a commemorative plaque dedicated to him was unveiled in the side nave of the Evangelical Church of the Ascension of the Lord Warsaw on which we read: *“Be preaching the message of God’s grace and love, he created an open inviting Church of Jesus Christ. Appointed in 1995 to the Protestant Military Chaplaincy, he preached the Word of God and brought comfort to soldiers in many places around the world ...”*.



chaplains *yesterday and today*

The Protestant Military Bishop and the Chaplains of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy perform pastoral service among the soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. From 2021, the head of the pastoral ministry is the Chief Chaplain – Protestant Military Bishop, Bishop Marcin Makula, and since 2022, the function of the deputy bishop has been performed by Fr. Col. Wiesław Żydel.

The history of the establishment of the pastoral ministry dates to the Second Republic of Poland, when the restitution of military chaplains began in accordance with the idea from seventy years ago, when the postulates contained in the memorial of Fr. Paszko fell on fertile ground and already in January 1919 a decree was published on the establishment of pastoral offices for Protestants, Orthodox and Jews. The Military Ordinariate of the Polish Army (Roman Catholic) was the first to be restored, then the Orthodox Ordina-

riate of the Polish Army, and in November 1995, the Protestant Military Chaplaincy was re-established.

Successive superiors acting as the Chief Chaplain after the end of the service of Fr. Jan Hause were: Bishop Lieutenant General Ryszard Borski in 1999–2009 and Bishop Col. Mirosław Wola in 2010–2020. Today, in the structures of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy, next to the Protestant Military Bishop and his deputy, three Deans of the Armed Forces, Fr. Lt. Col. Sławomir Fonfara – Dean of the Land Forces, Fr. Lt. Col. Tadeusz Jelinek – Dean of the Navy and Fr. Lt. Col. Tomasz Wola – Dean of the Air Force. Seven military chaplains and two civilian chaplains as well as two Border Guard chaplains undertake daily service (based on an agreement between the Evangelical Military Bishop and the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard). The Dean of the Border Guard is Fr. Col. Kornel Undas.

with prayer
*and the Word
 of God*

The main mission of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy is to accompany the soldiers of the Polish Army in their daily service for our homeland. Each chaplain – clergyman has a territorial area of responsibility and taking actions related to the specificity of the function performed. In our area, we care primarily for our co-religionists serving in the armed forces of the Republic of Poland, but we also provide care and pastoral care to all soldiers of the Polish Army who need it. On daily basis, the Military Chaplaincy consists in multi-level support for all those performing difficult service both in the country and abroad. This support begins when

young people cross the gates of military units to perform military service and continues throughout the period of service, and often also after the soldiers retire. Chaplains participate in military oaths, unit holidays and state holidays and ceremonies. We are where the soldier expects and needs pastoral support. We provide psychological assistance in crisis situations, we conduct ethics classes, and if the situation requires it, we act as mediators between superiors and subordinates. Very important elements of our pastoral service are blessings and prayers, which accompany each celebration of a soldier's family.





pointing *the direction*

The service of chaplains of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy in the Polish Army is not limited only to providing Protestant soldiers with access to religious practices. Ethics classes play an important role. After the reactivation of the pastoral ministry, they were most often organized for conscript soldiers and conducted as part of educational hours. Today, Protestant chaplains conduct classes with soldiers of the Voluntary Basic Military Service and soldiers of the Territorial Defence Forces. Cyclical ethics classes are conducted by chaplains mainly in Training Centres, Military Academies or NCO Schools, during which the topics discussed are adapted to the needs of a professional army. Another aspect of education for Polish Army soldiers are occasional classes carried out in military units or institu-

tions, among others, on the occasion of the Non-Commissioned Officer's Day, Veteran's Day of Operations Outside the State Borders or other. Among the topics discussed there are issues related to motivation, argumentation, tolerance, understanding, or ordinary everyday choices faced by a modern soldier. The Protestant Military Chaplaincy also includes those who are in their teenage years, and thus are too young to put on the uniform of a Polish Army soldier, but already want to serve their homeland today. Chaplains meet, among others, with youth from certified military uniformed classes and other interested groups, promoting respect for the Homeland and ethical features in line with the motto of the Polish Army: „God, Honor, Homeland”.



open to the world *and family*

Since 2015, the Protestant Military Chaplaincy has been organizing the Charity Run of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy. Each time the run was combined with a fundraiser for the treatment and rehabilitation of children or, as was the case in 2020, the collected funds were donated to the MEGREZ Hospital in Tychy, as part of the support for medics during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The runs are accompanied by military picnics and outdoor concerts, during which participants can listen to good music, see military equipment and talk to soldiers about the hardships of their daily service. Thanks to this initiative, it is possible to integrate not only runners, but entire families.

For several years, the run has also had its virtual edition, where competitors can start anywhere in the world, and the winner is the one who covers the longest distance. Although sports competition always evokes a lot of emotions, the greatest value of Charity Runs is real help for those in need and creating a safe and friendly atmosphere for whole families.

In addition to its statutory tasks, the Protestant Military Chaplaincy integrates and takes care of the families of chaplains. An important component of our everyday life are family gatherings, which have an extremely intimate and family character. Thanks to them, families of chaplains can get to know each other, exchange experiences and support each other.



raising *qualifications*

Improving professional qualifications by soldiers of the Polish Armed Forces is an indispensable element of a well-functioning army. Also obtaining subsequent wax degrees proves the willingness to improve and gain experience. Therefore, chaplains of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy, like all soldiers of the Polish Army, are obliged to improve their qualifications.

Annual training ground, combined with the spiritual formation, held at the bases of various military units belonging to all types of armed forces, are not only exercises that improve the physical fitness and develop skills in everyday service of a soldier, but also deepen knowledge about modern equipment of the Polish Army, protection against weapons of mass

destruction, fire protection, or living in an adventurous area, which can be used while on active duty.

Training, courses and improving qualifications are also a great opportunity to participate and learn about the systematic training of soldiers and the challenges faced by chaplain training units on a daily basis.

Protestant chaplains also participate in language and medical courses, as well as in international conferences and conventions, which are a platform for exchanging experiences and learning the methodology of pastoral work of chaplains from other NATO countries. All this is done for personal development and better performance of tasks in the Polish Armed Forces.



in an ecumenical *family*

Protestant chaplains provide pastoral help to soldiers both in the Polish Armed Forces and to all those serving in missions abroad. We cooperate and create pastoral care with the chaplains of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches on the planes of common prayer, organization of meetings, conferences and services in events important for the military, giving evidence of an ecumenical attitude. Chaplains of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy are involved in many international projects, collaborating in the creation of the Conference of Chief Military Chaplains, the Conference of NATO Air Force Chaplains, the Conference of Chaplains of the Baltic Countries, the Conference as part of the annual BALTOPS exercises,

the Working Group on the creation of the Conference of NATO Land Forces Chaplains, and the Course Young Chaplains. The long-term cooperation with the ministries in Europe and in the USA is important to us – including among other the implementation of joint conventions and projects. Currently, due to situation of war in Ukraine we are developing and deepening cooperation with chaplains of allied American troops stationed in bases in Poland. Partners of the Protestant Military Chaplaincy are also Christian military associations and institutions such as the Office for Veterans and Victims of Oppression, the Central Military Library and the Military Centre for Civic Education.

**Święto Wojska Polskiego
Warszawa 2022**

ETYKA

Czy śmierć pomaga żyć?

STR. 9

TEMAT NUMERU

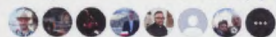
**Reformacja, czyli stała
potrzeba zmiany**

STR. 12

Z KART HISTORII

O Ojcu Reformacji

STR. 18

**Ewangelickie
Duszpasterstwo
Wojskowe**Polubienia: **2 tys.**
1,8 tys. obserwujący

Wyślij wiadomość

Lubisz to

*on the website
and on the paper*

One of the important areas of our activity is the media. With the message of the Word of God and pastoral help, we reach soldiers, their families, and entire society. Therefore, we use many different available methods and means for our activities.

For over 20 years, we have been publishing the magazine "Wiara i Mundur" ("Faith and Uniform"), which not only includes reports on pastoral activities, but also reflections on the Word of God, articles on psychological, pastoral, historical and cultural topics. With our newspaper we reach military units, border guard units, libraries, parishes and individual recipients. We do not limit ourselves to printed editions only, but each issue is also published on the EDW website.

Another space in which we operate is the website of the Ministry www.edw.wp.mil.pl. It contains information on the current activities of the Military Bishop and chaplains, history, as well as contact details for all protestant priests serving in the Polish Armed Forces.

We also talk about our pastoral service through current reports on the Pastoral profile on Facebook. Thanks to this action, we maintain contact with all interested parties and reach out to the young generation. Chaplains are also actively involved in the work of Christian Internet Television, for which they record daily meditations, later published both on YouTube and Facebook, and many chaplains live weekly broadcasts of church services and celebrations taking place in their parishes, inviting participation and all concerned.

PROTESTANT MILITARY CHAPLAINCY OF THE POLISH ARMY

Nowowiejska Str. 26, 00-909 Warszawa
phone +48 261 840 950, fax. +48 261 840 940
e-mail: edw@ron.mil.pl
home page: www.edw.wp.mil.pl
Facebook: EDWWP



WOJSKOWE CENTRUM
EDUKACJI OBYWATELSKIEJ

IM. PEK. DYPL. MARIANA PORWITA

Published by: PROTESTANT MILITARY CHAPLAINCY OF THE POLISH ARMY

The patron of the issue: THE CHIEF CHAPLAIN – THE PROTESTANT MILITARY BISHOP MARCIN MAKULA

Text: COLLECTIVE WORK OF EDW CHAPLAINS EDITED BY FR. DANIEL FEREK • Design: KLAUDIA LECLERCQ • DTP: LILIANNA ZAWADZKA

Print: MILITARY CENTER FOR CIVIC EDUCATION