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The *Honoris Causa* Doctorate for John Paul II from Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw on 15 December 2001

The conferral of an *honoris causa* doctorate to the Holy Father John Paul II was the biggest event to date in the history of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University (UKSW) in Warsaw. It is worth recalling the circumstances accompanying this event to understand better its momentousness.



fot. Arturo Mari, „L'Osservatore Romano” 2001

Context and determinants

The Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw was established by the Act of 3 September 1999 (Journal of Laws No. 79, item 884) on the basis of the Warsaw Theological Academy (ATK), being a state and Catholic school of higher education, operating from 1954 to 1999¹, made up from the Theological Faculties of Warsaw University² and the Jagiellonian University.³

As the Warsaw Theological Academy was set up by a one-sided decision of the government authorities of the time, there were doubts as to its canonical nature. However, they were gradually overcome. With the decision of the Congregation for Seminaries and Institutes of Study of April 1958, the ecclesiastical authority over Warsaw Theological Academy was granted to the Primate of Poland⁴, however its canonical nature was still not regulated. As late as 1974, being authorized by the Congregation, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate of Poland, issued two documents regulating the question of the canonical nature of the scientific degrees obtained in ATK⁵.

ATK received full ecclesiastical rights in 1989. The long-lasting efforts ended in issuing a decree by the Congregation for Catholic Education on 29 June 1989

¹ Cf. The Preamble of the Statute of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Warszawa 2001, p. 7.

² The act was Publisher, in: M. Myrcha, *Zagadnienia prawne Akademii Teologii Katolickiej*, "Polonia Sacra. Kwartalnik Kanoniczno-Historyczny" 7 (1955) z. 1, p. 70 and in: H.E. Wyczawski, *Ogólny zarys dziejów Akademii Teologii Katolickiej*, in: *XX lat Akademii Teologii Katolickiej. Księga Pamiątkowa 1954-1974*, red. H.E. Wyczawski, Warszawa 1976, p. 14ff.; J. Mandziuk, *Dzieje Akademii Teologii Katolickiej w Warszawie 1954-1999*, Warszawa 1999, p. 12ff.; R. Bartnicki, *Uniwersytet Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie. Miejsce ATK i UKSW w kościelnym szkolnictwie wyższym*, in: *Wyższe szkolnictwo kościelne w Polsce. Wizja kardynała Karola Wojtyły i jej realizacja*, ed. J. Majka, Kraków 2002, p. 254ff.; R. Bartnicki, *Korzenie UKSW. Z dziejów uczelni na warszawskich Bielanych*, Warszawa 2017, p. 251ff.

³ The original: AUJ WT II.27. Annex XVI nr 591/54. Printed version: *Państwowe prawo wyznaniowe Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej*, zebrał M. Fąka, Warszawa 1978, p. 124ff.; K. Wojtyła, *Nauczyciel i Pasterz*, t. 2: *Memoriały i pisma do rządu i władz administracyjnych 1959-1978*, zebrał i oprac. M. Jagosz, Rzym–Kraków 1998, p. 261; R. Bartnicki, *Uniwersytet Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie...*, p. 255; R. Bartnicki, *Korzenie UKSW...*, p. 252ff.

⁴ Cf. H.E. Wyczawski, *Ogólny zarys dziejów Akademii Teologii Katolickiej...*, pp. 22-24.

⁵ Archives of the Primate of Poland. The text published in: A. Lewek, *W 25-lecie Akademii Teologii Katolickiej w Warszawie (1954-1979)*, "Biuletyn Informacyjny Akademii Teologii Katolickiej" 10 (1979), nr 5-6, p. 22ff.; R. Bartnicki, *Korzenie UKSW...*, p. 113ff.

whereby the canonical nature of ATK was acknowledged and the Warsaw ordinary was established as its Great Chancellor.⁶ No doubt the decree was issued with John Paul II's consent.

In the nineties the ATK already satisfied the conditions that a university should meet, agreed by the Main Board of Science and Higher Education in 1992. This fact and the will of distancing from its complicated origins freed up the efforts to convert ATK into a university.⁷

All this happened thanks to John Paul II's kindness and approval. In accordance with the initial concept, the conversion was to be carried out by changing the name from "Warsaw Theological Academy" to "Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University." Since ATK was both a state and ecclesiastic school of higher education, the consent of Church authorities was also needed. On 13 December 1997, Rev. Roman Bartnicki, Rector, together with Rev. Wojciech Bołoz, Deputy Rector, presented the Holy Father the status of the efforts to convert ATK into a university. The Pope received both guests very sympathetically and eagerly encouraged them to continue the efforts taken for that purpose. "Go to the Congregation," he said. On the following day, the rector and the deputy rector paid a visit to Cardinal Pio Laghi, the Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education. In the aftermath of the visit, they returned to Warsaw with a decree allowing for the change of the school name.⁸

However, it was still far away from establishing a university. A documentation consisting of 3,700 pages had to be prepared and many formal obstacles had to be overcome. The management of the Ministry of National Education took the position that an application should be filed not for the change of the name but for a conversion of ATK into Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University. Not only had there to be a change of the fascia, but the establishment of a new school of higher education also had to take place. This is what turned out to be the new concept especially when the draft statute of UKSW had been submitted to the ministry. Since ATK was both an ecclesiastic and state school, the applicants believed that the University would be so too. However, it turned out that there were problems. The experts of the Main Board of Science and

⁶ Translation published in: "Studia Philosophiae Christianae" 28(1992) nr1, pp. 64-65; R. Bartnicki, *Korzenie UKSW...*, p. 253ff.

⁷ Cf. F. Ziejka, *Doktorat honorowy Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego (15 grudnia 2001)*, in: Idem, *Jan Paweł II i polski świat akademicki*, Kraków 2014, pp. 189-191.

⁸ Polish translation: R. Bartnicki, *Korzenie UKSW. Z dziejów uczelni na warszawskich Bielanych*, Warszawa 2017, p. 491ff.

Higher Education and the ministry held that this concept was contradictory to the Higher Education Act. They argued that ATK could have been a state and ecclesiastic school because it had offered theological studies and studies connected with theology that is ecclesiastical studies. A university, in line with its nature, does research and offers studies in many domains, and therefore being a state institution, could not also be ecclesiastic.

Looking for a solution, in February 1999, Rev. Roman Bartnicki, the Rector, put forward a new concept for the university. It could be a state university that would have faculties also under the Church supervision. The whole university, with research, teaching and education, would derive from the Christian inspiration. On 16 February 1999, that concept was presented to Cardinal Józef Glemp, the Primate of Poland. Apart from Rev. Roman Bartnicki, the Rector, the meeting was also attended by Rev. Wojciech Bołoz, the Deputy Rector, and Rev. Wojciech Góralski, the Dean. The Primate suggested that we consult the **Congregation for Catholic Education**.

In March 1999, Rev. Roman Bartnicki, the Rector, and Rev. Professor Wojciech Góralski went to Rome. On 11 March they spoke to Archbishop Giuseppe Pittau, the new Secretary of the **Congregation and submitted a letter addressed to Cardinal** PioLaghi, the Prefect. They met with Archbishop Pittau's approval who, nevertheless, said that the case needs a decision to be taken on a higher level, i.e. the Secretary of State, and in practice has to be taken by the Holy Father himself.

On 13 March 1999, the Holy Father John Paul II met Rev. Roman Bartnicki, Rector of ATK and Rev. Wojciech Góralski, Dean of the Faculty of Canon Law in a private audience. Both were, at the same time, privileged and surprised since in accordance with the earlier arrangements, due to the Pope's full diary, they were supposed to meet only Bishop Stanisław Dziwisz. Instead, Rev. Mieczysław Mokrzycki let them into the Holy Father's apartments. They presented the Pope with the new concept of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University. In a cordial conversation, the Holy Father approved and supported the concept. He said among others: "Why only one university in Warsaw? Warsaw is such a big city that it is worth having not only another one but even a couple of such universities." This decision of the Holy Father allowed us to take further efforts.

On 3 September 1999, the Lower Chamber (*the Sejm*) of the Republic of Poland passed the bill on the foundation of UKSW. On 22 September it was approved by the Upper Chamber (*the Senate*) and on 30 September – signed by the President. On 28 September 1999, the Congregation for Catholic Education

issued a decree by which it established canonically UKSW and included into it the Faculty of Theology (together with the Institute of Family Studies), the Faculty of Canon Law and the Faculty of Christian Philosophy, until now operating in the Warsaw Theological Academy.⁹ On 1 October 1999 Rector Bartnicki sent the Holy Father a letter in which he informed the Pope about the foundation of the university and asked for his Apostolic Blessing for the new university.¹⁰ On 22 October 1999, John Paul II signed the letter in which he sent his Apostolic Blessing to Father Rector, the Senate and the whole community of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University.¹¹

On 4 November 1999, in his address during the opening ceremony of the academic year at UKSW, the Rector said, among others: “What university it will be depends first of all on the community gathered here, on professors and students.” But how was it possible to maintain the Christian character of a university in which one half of faculties is under the supervision of Church authorities while the other half reports only to the Ministry of National Education? It seemed that the factor strengthening the Catholic character of the university could be the prominent persons of the Church awarded *honoris causa* doctorates at UKSW. It was about expressing gratitude to the representatives of the Church who contributed most to setting up the UKSW. On the 29 May 2000, an *honoris causa* doctorate was awarded to Archbishop Józef Kowalczyk, the Papal Nuncio to Poland and on 8 October 2001 – to Józef Glemp, the Primate of Poland.

⁹ The Latin original of the decree was published in “Kroniki Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie” 2000 nr 1-2, p.150, and the Polish translation, “Studia Theologica Varsaviensia” 46 (2008) nr 2, p. 66ff.

¹⁰ Cf. *List Jego Magnificencji Rektora UKSW do Jego Świątobliwości Jana Pawła II zawiadamiający o utworzeniu w Warszawie Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego i odpowiedź Ojca Świętego z 22 października*, “Kroniki Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie” 2000 nr 1-2, pp. 213-215; *Pismo Księdza Rektora UKSW do Jego Świątobliwości Jana Pawła II zawiadamiające o utworzeniu w Warszawie Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego z dnia 1 października 1999 r.*, in: *Ksiądz Rektor Roman Bartnicki. Od Akademii Teologii Katolickiej do Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego. Księga Pamiątkowa dla Księdza Profesora Romana Bartnickiego dedykowana z okazji 40-lecia pracy naukowej*, z przedmową ks. rektora Henryka Skorowskiego, Warszawa 2012, p. 312ff.

¹¹ Published in: *Ksiądz Rektor Roman Bartnicki. Od Akademii Teologii Katolickiej do Uniwersytetu...*, p. 133.

Preparations for the ceremony and its course

We were thinking about an *honoris causa* doctorate for the Holy Father John Paul II with some hesitancy. After all, ATK, the predecessor of UKSW, was built on the ruins of the Faculty of Theology of the Jagiellonian University, so precious to the Holy Father. But on 15 May 2001, Rev. Professor Waldemar Chrostowski, the Deputy Rector of UKSW, at a sitting of the Rector's Council, put forward a motion to immediately take efforts to grant an *honoris causa* doctorate to John Paul II. Rector Bartnicki asked Deputy Rector Chrostowski to write the text of the resolution in that case to be adopted by the University Senate. On 16 May, Rector Bartnicki presented that proposal to Cardinal Józef Glemp, the Primate. As quickly as 17 May 2001, Rector Bartnicki included into the agenda of the UKSW Senate sitting an additional point: "A draft of a resolution on awarding an *honoris causa* doctorate to His Holiness John Paul II." The Senate adopted the resolution by acclamation. Its last sentence included the following words:

"In the twenty-third year of John Paul II's pontificate and in the second year of its existence, the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw wards Your Holiness an *honoris causa* doctorate, ensuring that Your gracious acceptance of it, expected wholeheartedly by our whole academic community, would be an obligation for us, as well as a solid and permanent foundation on which the present and the future of our university, with God's help, will be built."

On the following day, Rector Bartnicki wrote two letters: one to the Holy Father and the other to Bishop Stanisław Dziwisz. In the letter to the Pope, he kindly asked him to accept the doctorate. He wrote: "The whole academic community are fully aware of great honour that Your acceptance, Your Holiness, of our doctorate would bring to our university. Let me emphasize that this fact will oblige us to an even deeper faithfulness to the Magisterium in our research and teaching." The letter to Bishop Stanisław Dziwisz, the Secretary of the Holy Father, apart from information about the resolution of the UKSW Senate, included a request for "submitting the resolution of our University Senate to the Holy Father and support for our desires."¹²

A couple of days later, Rev. Waldemar Chrostowski, the Deputy Rector, went to Rome, taking with him the resolution of the Senate and the Rector's letters. On 26 May he was met by Bishop Stanisław Dziwisz, who promised to support the case. Two weeks later, great news came from the Vatican. In the letter of 12

¹² UKSW Archives.

June 2001, Archbishop Leonardo Sandri, in the name of the Secretariat of State, announced the Holy Father's consent to the conferral of the doctorate. Here is the content of the letter:

“Magnificence, the Reverend Father Rector,

In the name of His Holiness John Paul II, I would like to thank you for the letter of 18 May this year together with the enclosed resolution of the Senate of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw. The Holy Father is grateful to You, Father Rector, and the whole University Senate for the signs of kindness and commitment to His Person.

With reference to the content of the letter, please be informed that the Holy Father could welcome you in the Vatican late autumn this year, the year that is specifically dedicated to the late Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński “the Primate of the Millennium”. You may arrange the details with The Prefecture of the Papal Household or His Holiness' Private Secretariat.

The Holy Father, in His prayer, dedicates to God, You, Father Rector, Professors, Students, Faculty Members and the Staff of the University and wholeheartedly gives You His Apostolic Blessing.”¹³

The news about John Paul II's consent to the conferral of the honorary doctorate was welcomed with great joy. The preparations for the ceremony started instantly. At the end of September, Bishop Dziwisz sent information that the ceremony could take place on 15 December 2001.

The ceremony of 15 December was attended by more than 130 people: members of the Senate and representatives of professors, administration people and students. The university choir conducted by Rev. Professor Kazimierz Szymonik arrived by coach. The ceremony was also attended by Cardinal Józef Glemp, the Primate and the Great Chancellor of UKSW, Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, Archbishop Edward Nowak, Ms Hanna Suchocka, the ambassador of Poland to the Holy See, and by Warsaw authorities – Joanna Fabisiak, the then Deputy Chairman of the City Council of Warsaw, and Karol Szadurski, the Mayor of the Commune of Warszawa-Bielany.

The UKSW choir set off in a coach as early as on Tuesday 11 December, sponsored by a Warsaw-Praga citizen. The UKSW Senate and other people departed on Thursday by an Alitalia flight. The same plane was boarded by Primate Józef Glemp. From Rome Fiumicino Airport a coach took some of them to the Pacific Hotel near the Vatican and others to the Polish Institute at Via Pietro Cavallini,

¹³ Ibidem.

38. Some others were accommodated in convents and guesthouses. Friday was a day of sightseeing Rome.

The ceremony of awarding an *honoris causa* doctorate took place on Saturday, 15 December 2001 in the *Clementine Hall* of the Apostolic Palace. It commenced by the UKSW choir performing *Totus Tuus* by Henryk Mikołaj Górecki. Then, the floor was taken by Cardinal Józef Glemp, the Primate. He said: “There are two reasons why, as the Great Chancellor of the University, I wholeheartedly dare to recommend this gesture. The first is the – end of the year celebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of Cardinal Wyszyński, the Primate, whose name is a guarantee of the Catholic character of the university. The other is the fact that the Holy Father has been an Honorary Citizen of the Capital City of Warsaw for six years now.”

Rev. Roman Bartnicki, the UKSW Rector, made a laudation, read the text of the diploma and handed it in a silver tube to the Holy Father. The choir sang *Gaude Mater Polonia* and then the Pope took the floor. It is worth paying attention to two motifs of this informative speech:

“We have to highlight, what seems to be rarely highlighted, that both as a pastor and a statesman, Cardinal Wyszyński put an emphasis on the role of the widely understood culture in shaping the spiritual face of the Church and nation [...] The cultural past, the heritage of the creative effort of mind and hands of generations animated with the spirit of faith rooted in Gospel, is the foundation of the identity of the Polish nation. The Primate of the Millennium rightly pointed to the need of studying this heritage, getting to know the foundations that were laid one thousand years ago under the inspiration that it held – from generation to generation – within the community of the Church, gathered around Christ, remaining under the influence of the Holy Spirit, heading for the Father’s home. Isn’t it the prime task of universities? Isn’t it, even more, the task of a university that is named after the Primate of the Millennium? As the Primate’s bishopric seat in Gniezno upholds the religious tradition of St. Adalbert, let your University protect the cultural heritage that stems from this tradition. Be faithful to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński’s call to care about the culture.”

In another passage: “These words... I address to you, representatives of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, knowing that this University – through firm scientific commitment of its professors and students – will shape the spiritual face not only of Poland but of the whole Europe. This is a massive task – it would seem even too great – but this is a mission to which all European scientific milieus referring to the Christian tradition are called.”

On the request of Primate Glemp, the Holy Father dedicated a copy of the icon of Our Lady of Częstochowa that was to replace its copy dedicated in 1957 by Pope Pius XII and has been, since then, visiting Polish dioceses and parishes. Two children provided the Holy Father with a huge postcard depicting a young people's gathering on Błonia Wilanowskie Park in Warsaw held a couple of months before.

The Holy Father gave all those gathered His Apostolic Blessing. Then, each person could come individually to the Pope to get a blessing for themselves and their nearest and dearest. Each person received a rosary. The Holy Father also blessed special wafers brought from Warsaw that were later shared among the academic community during an annual meeting accompanied with the exchange of Christmas greetings and carol singing.

In the evening on 15 December 2001 in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere, Primate Józef Glemp presided a concelebrated Mass (ending the Year of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński) and said the homily.¹⁴ Bishop Stanisław Dziwisz, the Poles living in Rome and a delegation from UKSW participated in it.

On the following day, Sunday 16 December, the delegation of UKSW came to St. Peter's Square to participate in the Angelus with the Pope. It came with a banner and received the Pope's greeting and blessing for its return way home.

The UKSW Rector and Deputy Rectors – Rev. Wojciech Góralski, Rev. Waldemar Chrostowski and Zygmunt Niewiadomski were invited to Sunday dinner and conversation at the Pope's apartments. This was a unique experience. Each of the invited persons had an opportunity to take the floor. Rev. Bartnicki, the Rector, thanked the Holy Father for his consent to establish the university. He presented the structure and standing of UKSW. At some point, he spontaneously (without planning it beforehand) promised the Holy Father that the annual university meeting, at which special wafers are shared, Christmas greetings are exchanged and carols sung, will be held each year on 15 December, on the anniversary of the conferral of the *honoris causa* doctorate to the Holy Father. Zygmunt Niewiadomski, Deputy Rector for Development, presented the university development plans. He highlighted three issues: 1) UKSW will not be a too big university. Ultimately, it could have 20,000 students and 10 faculties; 2) A *universitas* concept of the university was adopted. The university will

¹⁴ Józef Kardynał Glemp, Prymas Polski, *Maryja prowadzi nas do Chrystusa. Homilia podczas Mszy świętej Rzym, bazylika S. Maria in Trastevere 15 grudnia 2001 r.*, "Wiadomości UKSW" 2001 nr 4, p. 6ff.

offer many fields of study, perhaps also medicine (this point interested the Pope a lot); 3) UKSW should be a scientific and cultural centre for Warsaw and the Masovia Region, making its base available to the region and spreading Christian ideas across it.

In all the addresses during the academic year opening ceremony, the feast of UKSW, the university meeting, at which special wafers are shared, Christmas greetings are exchanged and carols sung, Rector Bartnicki called to mind a special character of UKSW, being a public university but specifically connected with the Catholic Church; the university that in the performance of its tasks draws inspiration from Christianity. (This is declared by all UKSW statutes). He always referred to the words of the Holy Father John Paul II or Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, the Primate and the University Patron.

John Paul II's teaching is continuously followed at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in various research projects, numerous publications,¹⁵ and diploma dissertations.¹⁶ Symposiums and scientific conferences dedicated to John Paul II are organized.¹⁷ Rev. Zdzisław Struzik, Professor of UKSW, chairs the Institute of the Pope John Paul II in Warsaw, which among various activities, publishes dissertations directly devoted to or making references to the thought of that

¹⁵ For example: K. Czuba, *Idea Europy kultur w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II*, Warszawa 2003; H. Juros, *Nauka, polityka naukowa i ludzie nauki w życiu Karola Wojtyły. Przyczynek do biografii naukowej Profesora i Papieża*, in: "Nauka" 2005 nr 3, pp. 9-23; *Zatroskany o człowieka i świat. Nauczanie etyczno-społeczne Jana Pawła II*, red. H. Skorowski, Warszawa 2005; C. Parzyszek, *Nowa ewangelizacja – drogą Kościoła do nadziei. Refleksje w oparciu o nauczanie Jana Pawła II*, Ząbki 2010; J. Sokołowski, *Błogosławiony Jan Paweł II Wielki*, Warszawa 2012; G. Łęcicki, *Media audiowizualne w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II*, Warszawa 2012; K. Flader, W. Kawecki, *Święty Jan Paweł II. 15 portretów pięknego życia*, Kraków 2014.

¹⁶ Piotr Latawiec, Director of UKSW Main Library, listed together doctoral and master dissertations written by 2005 and dedicated to John Paul II's teaching, kept in UKSW Library. The list consists of 106 pages. Cf. P. Latawiec, *Jan Paweł II. Prace doktorskie i magisterskie napisane na ATK i UKSW w zbiorach Biblioteki Głównej UKSW*, in: *Jan Paweł II Wielki 18 V 1920 – 16 X 1978 – 2 IV 2005*, "EPISTEME: Czasopismo Naukowo-Kulturalne" 2005 nr 50, pp. 99-204.

¹⁷ For example the symposium entitled *Twenty Years of John Paul II's Pontificate* (16 November 1998) – papers gathered together in the book: *20-lecie pontyfikatu Jana Pawła II. Sympozjum ogólnouczeniiane w Akademii Teologii Katolickiej w Warszawie 16 listopada 1998 roku*, ed. J. Krasieński, Warszawa 2000; the symposium entitled *Blessed John Paul II – the Apostle of the People of God*, papers published in a book of the same title, ed. M. Kowalczyk, R. Skibiński, Warszawa 2011; International Conference to commemorate the canonization of John Paul II (18 May 2015) – papers published in: *Splendor personae. Święty Jan Paweł II*, red. B. Gacka, C. Ritter, Warszawa 2017.

Great Pope. John Paul II was also commemorated by the fact that on 20 January 2000, the UKSW Senate gave his name to the lecture hall in a building on the campus in Bielany.¹⁸

The Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University appropriately paid its last respects to the late Holy Father. In the last week of John Paul II's illness until the date of his funeral, at the students' initiative, there were prayer vigils held and Holy Masses celebrated both in the Immaculate Conception, St. Joseph and St. Ambrose (post-Camaldolese) Church in Bielany (used by UKSW) and near the church being erected at the university campus in Młociny. On 7 April 2005, during the Senate sitting, Rector Bartnicki commemorated the late John Paul II while the Senate adopted a resolution that paid tribute to that Great Pope. Three coaches set off from UKSW for Rome, to participate in John Paul II's funeral: one with faculty and staff members and two with students. In the night from Thursday to Friday, Rector Bartnicki went by air from Katowice together with a group of 20 rectors of Polish universities. John Paul II's funeral took place on Friday, 8 April 2005.

A unique initiative was undertaken by students of the UKSW Institute of Media Education and Journalism. They decided to organize celebrations commemorating John Paul II a month after his death. They reached the authorities of the Capital City of Warsaw, got a permission to hold the celebrations on Plac Piłsudskiego, in the centre of Warsaw, and gathered financial means to cover the costs (approx. PLN 100,000). On Saturday evening, 21 May 2005, a Holy Mass was celebrated by Piotr Jarecki, Warsaw auxiliary bishop, during which Holy Communion was distributed by extraordinary ministers. On Sunday, 22 May, Primate Józef Glemp unexpectedly appeared on Plac Piłsudskiego and presided the Holy Mass. Then a big concert was held, in which well-known Polish artists/bands performed (among others, Stanisław Soyka and Golec uOrkiestra).

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¹⁸ Resolution No. 1/2000 of 20 January 2000 on naming the main lecture hall after John Paul II, "Acta et Notificationes" nr 1, p. 16.

- w Warszawie” (2002) nr 1-2, pp. 22-26; Idem, in: “Zeszyty Prawnicze” 2(2002) nr 1, pp. 217-220; Idem, in: *Jan Paweł II Wielki 18 V 1920 – 16 X 1978 – 2 IV 2005*, “EPISTEME: Czasopismo Naukowo-Kulturalne” (2005) nr 50, pp. 89-92; Idem, in: F. Ziejka, *Jan Paweł II i polski świat akademicki*, Kraków 2014, pp. 199-201; Idem, in: R. Bartnicki, *Korzenie UKSW. Z dziejów uczelni na warszawskich Bielanach*, Warszawa 2017, pp. 433-436.
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