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Polish Religious, Scientific, and Cultural Center in Orchard Lake, Michigan

History of the Campus at Orchard Lake

The 115-acre² estate on which the Orchard Lake Schools campus is located was purchased in 1909 for \$ 83,000 dollars, by the rector of the Polish Seminary in Detroit, Fr. Witold Buhackzowski³. The reason for the change in the location of the seminary was the lack of space in the current headquarters; moreover, it was beneficial to move the seminary from the center of a growing city, where the automotive industry was developing, to a more secluded place, which was at that time forested area of Orchard Lake. Previously, the site belonged to the Michigan Military Academy, which began to decline after the death of its owner, Colonel Rogers (1902), and after a few years it was closed, and then, in 1909, put up for an auction. The property purchased during the auction housed nine school buildings and farm buildings - because the academy had its own farm with a vegetable garden and an orchard. The oldest building on the campus, the so-called the castle, built in 1858, was the private residence of Joseph Tarr Copeland (he served as a judge of the Michigan Supreme Court and fought in the Civil War as a general). In 1877 the Colonel Joseph Sumner Rogers (also a Civil War veteran) purchased the property and founded a military academy which operated in Orchard Lake for thirty years.

Eight school buildings were erected for the needs of the Military Academy, as well as the chaplain's house, infirmary, and seven farm buildings: barns, stables, cowsheds, a forge, and others. Currently, there are eight buildings on the campus that still remember the times of the military academy. The building called the Gallery is the oldest (after the castle) building on the campus built during the times of the Military Academy. It was built in 1888 as a canteen for cadets. On the two-level back room there was a kitchen, bakery, warehouses, and

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² *Almanach Jubileuszowy Seminarjum Polskiego, Kolegium Św. Marji i Szkoły Wyższej w Orchard Lake, Michigan*, Detroit 1935, s. 94.

³ F. Renkiewicz, *For God, Country, and Polonia: One Hundred years of the Orchard Lake Schools*, Orchard Lake 1985, s.62.

apartments for employees, in the final section of the building there was a weapons depot, which was completely consumed by a fire in 1888. The canteen also served as a dining room for seminarians until 1917, before a fire broke out for the second time and the back of the dining room, housing the kitchen, bakery, and pantry were completely burnt down. After the dining room was restored, a chapel was arranged there in 1919, and after the temple was built in 1962, the former chapel was turned into a gallery of Polish painting, where concerts, exhibitions, and various meetings were organized. In 2016, the gallery was closed due to the poor condition of the building structure.

The school building, designed by architect W. E. Brown, was put into use in 1890 and is still used as intended as the main building of the high school - St. Mary Preparatory. In a spacious hall on the third floor of the building was initially a chapel, and in the years 1919–1957 there was a library.

The current administration building, built in 1891, served military academy as a quartermaster building, which, apart from offices, also housed a post office, a tailor's service point, a hairdresser, apartments for women working on the campus, and in the basement there were warehouses and a laundry room, which in the original place works to this day. After 1909 some rooms were allocated to the infirmary, but offices and apartments for employees were still there. Currently, the entire building is dedicated to the administration offices of Orchard Lake Schools.

The old gymnasium, built in 1895, was designed to resemble the West Point gymnasium and was the biggest building of its kind in Michigan at the time. After the construction of new sports facilities on the campus, a stage for theater performances was built in the gymnasium. Currently, the hall is used as originally intended as a sports hall. A boiler room with a water tower is adjacent to the gymnasium building. Originally, it was a separate building, built in 1889.

The building of Fr. Andrew Wotta Center has an interesting history too. It was built in 1891 as a horse riding arena and used in bad weather conditions that precluded outdoor exercise. For the needs of the seminary, in 1912 the building was completely renovated and modernized. Window projections were created in the attic and the structure was strengthened by adding buttress walls, which changed the appearance of the building's external façades. The interior was intended for a library, a theater room, and classrooms, and a dormitory was arranged in the attic. In 1919, the theater hall was converted into a student canteen. In 1952, a

recording studio and rooms for rehearsals of the school orchestra and Cantorum scholars were prepared in the building. In 1985, wooden facilities were added to store the water equipment of the school sailing teams. In the same year, one of the rooms in the building was allocated to the so-called The Panorama of Poland, with 107 figures (approx. 30 cm high) presenting outstanding characters from the history of Poland, from the beginnings of the Polish state to the present day. In the adjacent room, the so-called Polish room was created, where folk art was exhibited. There was also a place in the Wotta building for a bookstore with Polish books, as well as a memory room devoted to the founder of the seminary, Fr. Józef Dąbrowski and Fr. Józef Swastek. Currently, the ground floor of the building houses only high school classrooms, and additional archives are located in the attic. Panorama of Poland is open to visitors.

The last building erected at the time of the military academy is a Victorian-style mansion built after 1892 for the son of Colonel Rogers. Later, apartments for seminary professors were arranged there, and in 1936 the building was converted into a convent for the Felician Sisters. After building a new home for the sisters in 1962, women working on campus moved into the building. The building has not been inhabited for several years and requires a general renovation, as does the first building on the campus, so the castle, which is also uninhabited and requires renovation. The castle went through various vicissitudes. The first owner, J. T. Copeland, extended the residence by adding two wooden wings and turned it into a holiday resort that operated in the years 1870–1877. Next, the castle was the residence of Colonel Rogers, and later functioned as the headquarters of the seminary.

In 2014, the oldest building erected for the military academy (1884) - cadet barracks - was demolished. The three-story building was planned for nearly 150 cadets (double rooms). In the years 1925–1928, two wings were added to the building, which housed apartments for professors and students as well as classrooms. Some of the rooms also served as warehouses for the expanding archive⁴.

The first facility built after 1909 is the seminary building that was put into use in 1916, and it has been used by Polish seminarians until now. For over 80 years, there was a chapel in the lower floor of the building. In 2000, a new chapel was added to the seminary building, which was funded by Stanley Bielawski. Another building was erected in 1924; it is a building

⁴ B. Bohnett, *Edgar Rice Burroughs and the history of the Michigan Military Academy. Them was the Days!*, s. 31-38; J. Homles, *A Commemoration of 100 years The Orchard Lake Schools 1885–1985*, Orchard Lake 1988, s.129-133; *Almanach Jubileuszowy ...* s. 92–95.

called Ark (from Noah's Ark), and it was a dormitory for high school students with the classrooms on the ground floor that are still used by high school as intended. The archive is located on the first floor of the building; it was moved from the barracks building demolished in 2014. The second floor of the building is dedicated to the museum. The building also houses the campus post office and a liturgical center.

The next buildings were erected at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s. In 1957 the library building was put into use, and named after the founders, Alumni Memorial Library. A year earlier, a small post office building, the present High School Admission Building, was built. The central building of the campus, which is the Shrine of Our Lady of Orchard Lake, was built in 1962 according to the design of Walter J. Różycki (a graduate of high school in 1928). The statue of Mary on the front of the chapel and the scene of the last supper in the main nave were designed by Joseph Jankowski (a college graduate in 1940) and made by Clarence Van Duzer. The temple seats 750 people. Since 2016 the temple is also called a sanctuary of St. John Paul II for the Archdiocese of Detroit. Currently, a project to build two side altars is being carried out (the Divine Mercy and John Paul II); the authors and contractors of the project are the two artists Bożena and Andrzej Praszczyk.

In the year of the construction of the sanctuary (1962), a college building was also built - Marian Hall with lecture halls and a dormitory for nearly 100 students. Currently, lecture halls are used by high school students and seminarians. And the dormitory was converted into flats for employees, offices, and warehouses. In 1966, the Orchard Lake Schools Ladies Auxiliary Foundation built a canteen with six separate dining rooms, and on the first floor of the building a convent was designed for the Felician Sisters who lived on the campus until 2003. It is now the residence of the chancellor.

In the early 1970s two buildings were built for a high school. In 1972 a boarding house was built consisting of St. Albertus Hall and St. Maximilian Kolbe Hall housing approximately 150 en suite rooms. The following year, a sports hall for basketball with seats in the stands for 1000 spectators was erected, television recording studio and the Sports Hall of Fame, where the cups won by the youth from Orchard Lake schools are displayed. The founder of the sports facility was Robert Dombrowski, a graduate of the high school in 1951.

The newest buildings on the campus were erected at the beginning of the 21st century. In 2000, a new chapel was added to the seminary building, and specialized laboratories for physics, chemistry, biology, etc., funded by Mary and Frank Padzieski, were built for the

high school. Around 2002, the Dąbrowski Fieldhouse was expanded by adding a full-size ice hockey rink with 1,300 seats in the stands. A banquet hall has been designed on the upper floor. A football stadium was also built at that time. In 2004, the library was expanded by adding a glass part of the building. Then the name was changed to Adam Cardinal Maida Alumni Library. Currently, the plan for the development of the material base of the Orchard Lake Schools campus includes the construction of a new high school building, as well as the renovation and expansion of the gallery building. On the campus property there is also the grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes founded in 1941 by Josephina Rzeppa. On the campus square you can admire the Katyn monument made by the artist Marian Owczarski⁵.

The genesis of the Polish Seminar and the first years of its operation

A matter of availability of education for Polish youth was one of the most important challenges faced by the first Polish organizations operating in the United States. The subject of establishing Polish high schools and a teachers' seminary was raised on the pages of the Polish press at the beginning of the years. 70. XIX c⁶. During the Second Sejm of Polish Emigration, held in Chicago in 1874, the intention was made to establish a Polish-American college and funds were raised for this purpose⁷. Originally it was planned to establish a college in Nebraska, where intense colonization was taking place and many Poles established their farms there. In 1877 a land was purchased from voluntary taxes of members of the Polish Roman Catholic Union to build a college. With the purchase of land in Nebraska, the idea appeared among the members of the Union that the school should also be a place for the preparation of candidates for the priesthood, as the crowds of emigrants were constantly flowing in, and thus the need for the service of Polish priests became urgent. The originators of the idea of the Polish seminary were guided by the idea of shaping candidates for the priesthood from Polish families in the Polish national spirit which would be unattainable in an American seminary. The leading role in the Union was played by the Resurrectionist priests and priests cooperating with them. At that time the president of the Union was a Franciscan, Fr. Leopold B. Moczygomba, founder of the first Polish settlement of Virgin Mary in Texas. Whereas Fr. Józef Dąbrowski was then a member of the Senate of the Union⁸.

⁵ J. Homles, *A Commemoration...* s. 134–137.

⁶ M. Hajman, *Zjednoczenie Polskie Rzymsko-Katolickie 1873-1948, Chicago 1948, s. 32.*

⁷ Tamże, s. 36.

⁸ Tamże, s. 47.

Soon Fr. Moczygamba, who was appointed by the religious authorities as a penitentiary at the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome, submitted to the Holy Father, Leo XIII, a petition in which he presented that in America there are already approx. 200,000 Poles who need pastoral care in Polish. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a college that would educate Polish youths, future candidates for theological seminaries and other universities. In the same petition, Fr. Moczygamba asked for the possibility of donating the alms he had collected in Rome for the construction of the college and for permission for further fundraising for this purpose. On January 14, 1879, the Holy Father himself wrote on the petition: "Annuimus in omnibus iuxta petitia", which means we agree to everything as requested. In order to be more involved in the founding of the college, and in the future a seminary, Fr. Moczygamba moved to the Order of the Resurrectionists. However, he commissioned the younger priest - Józef Dąbrowski to start the seminary, and in 1882 he started establishing the Polish parish of St. Cyril and Methodius in Lemont, Illinois⁹. Meanwhile, the decision to locate the college in Nebraska met with strong criticism among Poles. The Provincial Superior of the Resurrectionists postulated to change the location of the college during the chapter of the Congregation held in 1880¹⁰. For this future university Fr. Dąbrowski chose a place in Detroit which at that time exceeded Chicago in the number of Polish emigrants. To obtain a permission to establish a Polish seminary, Fr. Dąbrowski sent a request to the bishop of the Detroit diocese, on March 14, 1884, and Bishop Caspar H. Borgess granted a permission to establish a seminary for the education of Polish priests for all dioceses in the United States where Poles settled¹¹. The number of Polish emigrants was then estimated at half a million. Fr. Dąbrowski purchased two and a half acres of land for the construction of the seminary at the intersection of St. Aubin and Forest streets, near the first Polish church in Detroit, St. Albertus. The cornerstone was consecrated on July 22, 1885¹², it was the millennium jubilee of the apostles of the Slavs Cyril and Methodius, and therefore these saints were accepted as patrons of the seminary. The opening of the Polish seminary took place on December 16, 1886¹³. However, not all Polish priests shared the ideas of Fr. Dąbrowski about the need to

⁹ A. Syski, *Ks. Józef Dąbrowski Monografia Historyczna 1842–1942*, Orchard Lake 1942, s. 129–132. W przytoczonej monografii zamieszczona jest łacińska wersja listu do papieża Leona XIII, natomiast J. Swastek w publikacji *The Formative Years of the Polish Seminary in the United States*, Orchard Lake 1985, zamieszcza fotokopię wersji listu w języku włoskim, z cytowaną powyżej adnotacją papieża Leona XIII. W wersji włoskiej skierowana jest bezpośrednia prośba o pozwolenie na założenie polskiego seminarium.

¹⁰ M. Hajman, *Zjednoczenie Polskie...* s. 52.

¹¹ A. Syski, *Ks. Józef Dąbrowski...* s. 139.

¹² F. Renkiewicz, *For God, Country...* s. 33.

¹³ J. Swastek, *The Formative Years of the Polish Seminary in the United States*, Orchard Lake 1985, s. 46.

establish a Polish seminary. He himself argued this decision: “Without the Polish seminary, Poles, if not all, at least to a large extent, will lose their faith here, as in a Protestant country. It is better to think ahead of time to keep them Catholics here in the Holy Faith than to convert them later when they become unbelievers”¹⁴. From the very beginning, the seminary was subordinate to the bishop of Detroit, and candidates from various states in which the Polish diaspora lived were applied to it. As the level of education of the applicants varied, preparatory classes at the high school level were created. The study cycle lasted ten years, five of which were spent in high school, two in philosophy, and three in theology. All boys could apply to high school, regardless of their desire to enter the seminary. In contrast, the two-year college-level course had two profiles, one philosophical for priesthood candidates and the other for lay professions such as law, medicine, and technology.¹⁵ In high school most subjects were taught in Polish. In English, geography, US history, mathematics and chemistry were taught. Similarly, in the philosophy course, most subjects were taught in Polish, while philosophy and the Hebrew language was taught in English. Theology was taught only in Latin¹⁶. Although the seminary was established for Poles, Fr. Dąbrowski was open to help in educating priests of other nationalities. The offer to open a branch for Czech seminarians was presented by Fr. Dąbrowski to Bishop C. H. Borgess in a request to establish a seminary. This necessity did not arise, but for many years the seminary educated Lithuanian candidates for priesthood¹⁷.

As the number of candidates increased year by year, a new chapel was added in 1902 and the foundations for the new wing of the building were prepared. The construction was completed by the new rector of the seminary, Fr. Witold Buhaczkowski. In 1908, the construction of a separate building began, housing a theater hall, a library, a reading room, a hall for a school orchestra, and other rooms. The building was completed in the spring of the following year, but the new investment did not solve all the housing problems, so Fr. Buhaczkowski had the intention of moving the course of theology to a secluded place. It was then that he found out that the Orchard Lake Military Academy campus was up for sale and, after completing the transaction, decided to relocate all levels of education to a new location¹⁸.

¹⁴ A. Syski, *Ks. Józef Dąbrowski...* s. 147.

¹⁵ *Almanach Jubileuszowy ...* s. 53.

¹⁶ Tamże, s. 82.

¹⁷ Tamże, s. 54; J. Homles, *A Commemoration...* s. 112.

¹⁸ Tamże, s. 67, 86.

Fr. Józef Dąbrowski, the founder of the seminary

He was born in 1842 in the village of Żółtańce (Chełm powiat), where his father leased a farm. He graduated from a gymnasium in Lublin. In 1862 he began studies at the Main School in Warsaw, where he immediately became involved in the underground movement of students preparing to participate in the planned uprising against the Russian invader. He took a part in the fights at the beginning of the uprising, when Ludwik Mierosławski was the dictator of the uprising. He commanded a group of ten insurgents and miraculously escaped death. After the defeat of the uprising, he was hiding because he was facing imprisonment or deportation to Siberia, and perhaps the death penalty. At the beginning of 1864, he managed to get to Germany, then to Switzerland, where he wandered around and earned his living by undertaking various physical work. In March 1866, he was already a first-year student of the newly opened Polish College in Rome, so a theological seminary led by resurrectionist priests. He was ordained a priest on August 1, 1869, and soon left for the United States at the invitation of the bishop of Green Bay in Wisconsin, where he asked to be assigned to the Polish ministry¹⁹. In the spring of 1879, he received a very neglected, spiritually and materially, Polish parish in Polonia, in the State of Wisconsin. For over twelve years this place has become an area for positivist "work from scratch". According to Fr. Dąbrowski, the condition of Polish settlements in Wisconsin was as follows: "There are enough of our settlements, and there is not one school. Children grow, but only on the body, in size, and their minds sleeps ... nationality fades (...). Our Poles live without Mass, without a sermon, without learning..."²⁰. First, he had to deal with the local business community and moved the church building to a new location, from old one, where church was surrounded by three taverns (two German and one Polish). Then, in 1874, he invited Felician Sisters from Kraków to run the school. Thus, the town of Polonia became the cradle of Felician Sisters in the United States. Soon the sisters founded their novitiate there and were sending sisters to run schools in other Polish parishes in distant states. In the village of Polonia, apart from school, the sisters also ran the first Polish orphanage. Father Dąbrowski was not only the chaplain of his parish, but also cared for Poles living among forests in towns located even 80 miles from the parish. In his parish, Polonia, he was not only a chaplain but also a builder - in the literal sense of parish buildings such as: a church, a school, a sisters' house and presbytery. He also shared his knowledge by teaching novice sisters not only religion, but also general history,

¹⁹ Tamże, s. 30-45, 54.

²⁰ Tamże. S. 64.

church history, geography, arithmetic, Latin, physics, chemistry, and drawings. He had a special love for science. While still in Switzerland, he attended lectures on mathematics and technology in Bern. He was interested in electro mechanics and technical inventions. He himself built a sundial in the garden and installed a telephone between the parish buildings. For the purposes of educating children and for parishioners, he was developing books, then printing them on a manual printing press, and finishing with binding. He taught the sisters of how to make ink, dry and gray soap, yeast and vinegar, repair shoes, and make a cloth from wool. He also knew about gardening²¹.

Father Dąbrowski did not stop at the pastoral care of Polish emigrants. He also dealt with the indigenous peoples of America, so Indians living in the surrounding forests. He learned their language and even published an Indian-Polish dictionary for the Felician sisters. The Indians invited him to feasts and weddings, calling him a "black dress". He converted to Christianity one tribe of about 200 people. There are records of Indian baptisms in parish registers. He taught them the art of farming and encouraged them to settle down. However, this mission was unsuccessful. The Indians returned to a nomadic lifestyle²².

From 1882 Fr. Dąbrowski settled down in Detroit, where Felician sisters moved their headquarters. Here also Fr. Dąbrowski worked as a construction worker at the construction of the nuns' convent, and later at the construction of the seminary. He also continued his hobby by arranging physical and chemical workshops as well as a mechanical workshop in his small house. He developed a printing house in the convent of the sisters where he continued to publish the textbooks he had developed. He also taught sisters the art of printing and book binding. The first book he published, while still in Polonia, was *Calendar (Kalendarz)*. Then he published: *Polish Readings (Czytanki Polskie)*, *Arithmetic (Arytmetyka)*, *Polish Geography (Geografia Polska)*, *Gardening (Ogrodnictwo)*, and others. In 1891 he started publishing the illustrated weekly newspaper *Sunday (Niedziela)*, which continued to publish until 1907²³. Striving for the best education for Polish youth, Fr. Dąbrowski took care of providing qualified teaching staff. He brought to the seminary teachers both clergy after studies in Rome and lay teachers who had diplomas from American universities. He was particularly concerned with the education of the sisters who were a main pillar of his teaching staff. Initially only in primary schools, but over time the sisters established their own

²¹ Tamże, s. 76, 97, 189,

²² Tamże, s. 92.

²³ Tamże, s. 101, 112, 161.

universities. Their success is supported by the fact that all the sisters/teachers passed the diocesan school commissions exams established by the Third Baltimore Synod in 1887. The sisters repeated their success in 1892 by passing the teachers' examination before the state commission in Lansing, Michigan state capital²⁴.

Although he was not an expert in literature, Fr. Dąbrowski was developing his pupils' literary passion by organizing the Literary Society. He was also famous for organizing patriotic ceremonies, especially in 1883, on the 200th anniversary of the Relief of Vienna, when he "moved the entire Detroit Polonia at that time". He reacted similarly to the events of the school strikes in Września in 1902, issuing a proclamation in the weekly newspaper *Sunday (Niedziela)* and organizing a protest rally in Detroit together with other priests²⁵.

There were dramatic situations in Father Józef's priestly life. While still in Polonia, he survived three fires in buildings that destroyed the presbytery, the sisters' house, and the church. Probably twice, they were set on by the priest's enemies²⁶. The experience in Detroit was also dramatic, when he was appointed administrator of St. Albertus Church during the famous scandal of Fr. Dominik Kolasiński. Supporters of Fr. Kolasiński attacked him several times, even during the service, and they threatened to take his life. An aggressive crowd broke windows in the convent of the Felician Sisters and in the seminary²⁷. Another problem that probably caused the death of Fr. Dąbrowski is a revolt of 29 seminarians who, among many different demands, under the threat of leaving the seminary, demanded that the vice-rector be dismissed. Father Dąbrowski did not give in, so the seminarians left. The petition was presented on January 23, 1903, on February 2, Fr. Dąbrowski survived a heart attack and died two weeks later, on February 15²⁸. For several reasons, Fr. Józef Dąbrowski deserves to be called the father of Polish diaspora education in the United States. He edited and published the first textbooks for Polish schools, he brought the first Polish sisters to run parish schools, and finally, he is the founder of the first and only one Polish theological seminary in the United States.

²⁴ Tamże, s. 114; *Almanach Jubileuszowy* ... s. 32.

²⁵ *Almanach Jubileuszowy* ... s. 29, 64, 66.

²⁶ A. Syski, *Ks. Józef Dąbrowski...* s. 87.

²⁷ Tamże, s. 152, 158.

²⁸ Tamże, s. 125.

Educational Institutions in Orchard Lake

Moving the seminary from Detroit to Orchard Lake in 1909 did not completely solve the problem of housing 326 students²⁹, as the barracks were designed for 144 cadets. Therefore, additional bedrooms were temporarily arranged in the gymnasium, and in 1912 they were moved to the renovated building of the former horse riding school, where there was also space for a library and other necessary rooms. The acquisition of over 100 acres of land created the conditions for the construction of new buildings. The first object was the building of the seminary, the construction of which began in 1914 and was completed in 1916. At that time, the first reforms in the educational structure were carried out, namely established a high school - St. Mary Preparatory, and the theology and philosophy courses were extended to make them comparable with the programs of universities with similar profiles. From 1915 the Cyril and Methodius Seminary was entered on the list of Accredited Schools at the State University of Ann Arbor. Two years later the high school also received such accreditation³⁰. In the years 1927-1929 the educational system was adapted to the educational requirements of American schools. Since then, there have been three separate educational units with a four-year cycle of study: St. Mary's High School, St. Mary's College, and SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary³¹. From that moment St. Mary's College obtained the right to award scientific titles³². At the end of the 1920s, the principle that remains valid to this day was established that the costs of educating a seminarian are covered by the diocese to which a given seminarian is assigned³³. St. Mary's College was incorporated into the Detroit Consortium of Colleges and Universities in 1969, and in 1971 became a member of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. In the same year, the Seminary became a member of the Association of Theological Schools. In 1976, the College was accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools³⁴. Even though each of the schools operated separately, the principal of the schools was always the rector of the seminary. The change took place in 1977, when the office of the chancellor was established, being the main head of schools, known as Orchard Lake Schools. The director of the high school, the president of the college, and the rector of the seminary was subordinated

²⁹ *Almanach Jubileuszowy...* s. 94.

³⁰ *Tamże...* s. 105, 116.

³¹ F. Renkiewicz, *For God, Country...* s. 67.

³² *Almanach Jubileuszowy...* s. 154.

³³ Z. Peszkowski, *Ludzie Stulecia...* s.116.

³⁴ J. Homles, *A Commemoration...* s. 16

to the chancellor³⁵. Of these three institutions, there is now a seminary and a high school. Whereas St. Mary's College ceased operations in 2000 and was incorporated into Madonna University in Livonia, Michigan, run by the Felician Sisters. Before the reform of school management was carried out, in 1972 the Supervisory Board was reformed by creating the Council of Regents and the Supervisory Boards of individual schools subordinated to it³⁶.

Various organizations were active at the seminary, bringing together seminarians, priests and laymen. One of the most important was the Sodalicja Mariańska founded in 1917, with its own library and a bookstore. From 1920, Sodality began publishing *Sodalis*, which became the most important press body in Orchard Lake. The magazine was published until 1981. Various organizations were established to support the seminary. In 1899, the Alumni Association was established (reorganized in 1923). In 1938, the Ladies Auxiliary Society at the Alumni Association was established, and in 1948, the Circle of Friends of the Polish Seminary³⁷. In 1937 periodical *Alumnus* began to be published and has been published since the 1980s under the name *Orchard Lake Good News*³⁸.

Various clubs and organizations were also established among the seminarians. One of the first was the Literary Society under the protection of St. Casimir, founded in 1895. The Society operated for nearly hundred years, organizing the celebrations of national anniversaries, as its mission was to maintain the national spirit. For over dozen years, the Literary Society published the *Wrzos* magazine³⁹. In 1897, from the Society of St. Casimir the Lithuanian Hope Society was established, gathering Lithuanian youth. The society was very active as early as 1914⁴⁰. One of the most dynamic organizations was also the Missionary Society of Polish Students, founded in 1919. In 1938 they started publishing the *Magnet* magazine. There were also religious societies among the students, as well as societies that developed a passion for science. A group of 50 boys - orphans from Siberia, who arrived to Orchard Lake in 1945 from refugee camps in India, founded their own organization. In 1949 they started publishing the *Nasza Droga* magazine. The first name of the organization -

³⁵ F. Renkiewicz, *For God, Country...* s. 141.

³⁶ J. Homles, *A Commemoration...* s. 16.

³⁷ R. Nir, *Stulecie Polskiego Seminarium w Orchard Lake w Stanach Zjedoczonych 1885-1985*, Orchard Lake 1987 s. 87, 137, 145.

³⁸ R. Nir, *Stulecie Polskiego Seminarium...* s.85, 133, 141, 149, 236.

³⁹ *Almanach Jubileuszowy...* s. 89; R. Nir, *Stulecie Polskiego Seminarium...* s. 104

⁴⁰ *Almanach Jubileuszowy ...* s. 105; . Swastek, *The Formative Years...* s. 91.

the Circle of Boys from Poland changed to the Knights of Dąbrowski, and with time the organization moved its headquarters to Chicago.

The students' first monthly magazine was the *Student's Voice (Głos Studenta)* published in 1900 by the Literary Society. In the years 1938-1977 the yearbook of all three schools called *Eagle* was published. In the 1940s, college students published the literary magazine *The Lake Oracle*, and in the 1960s, the *Surge* magazine. In 1958 high school students started publishing the *Laker* magazine⁴¹.

From the beginning of the seminary St. Cecilia's singers club existed. There were also other school bands known. In 1939 the Cantorum schola was established at the seminary. In 1943 the music department began publishing the *Dynamics* magazine. In the last decades of the 20th century folk groups of song and dance such as Zakopane and Galicja functioned among college students. At the same time, the Society of Piotr Skarga was specializing in staging plays by both Polish and American authors. Sports teams were thriving at Orchard Lake Schools from the beginning. The Athletics Society published *The Lakeside Punch* in the 1920s⁴².

Responding to the needs of the Church, the Orchard Lake Schools expanded its educational offer for lay people. In the 1930s, summer training courses for sisters/teachers were organized. In 1969, for the first time women entered the college. In the same year, summer courses for candidates for permanent deacons began. Starting at 1977 the laity could obtain a master's degree in catechetics. Currently, the seminary offers courses in theology for lay people, allowing to obtain a master's degree in theology⁴³.

At the end of the 1960s and 1970s, few scientific centers operated at the seminary. The first of them was the Center for Pastoral Studies, founded in 1968. It published the preacher's *Word and Liturgy (Słowo i Liturgia)* quarterly, and the *Apostolstwo Chorych* monthly. The following year the Polish-American Liturgical Center (still in operation) was established. It is publishing liturgical materials, especially the so-called *Pan z Wami* containing the texts of the readings for the Holy Mass for each day of the year. In the same year (1969), the Center for Studies and Research on Polish Culture was established by the college, and in 1978, the John Paul II Center, documenting the pontificate of the Polish Pope, was established, and it was

⁴¹ *Almanach Jubileuszowy...* s. 60; R. Nir, *Stulecie Polskiego Seminarium...* s. 237

⁴² J. Homles, *A Commemoration...*s. 16; *Almanach Jubileuszowy...* s. 120; Nir, *Stulecie Polskiego Seminarium...* s. 273.

⁴³ J. Homles, *A Commemoration...* s. 16-17; Z. Peszkowski, *Ludzie Stulecia 1885–1985*, s. 120.

issuing its own bulletin. Since 1953, Orchard Lake Schools began awarding the highest distinction, the Fidelitas Medal⁴⁴.

Among the alumni of the Scientific Departments were hierarchs: Card. Jan Król, a college graduate, Bishop Alexander Zaleski, Bishop Stefan Woźnicki, Bishop Arthur Krawczak, Fr. prelate Zdzisław Peszkowski. The most important of the guests who visited Orchard Lake Schools was Card. Karol Wojtyła, who came to Orchard Lake twice, in 1969 and 1976⁴⁵.

From the beginning of the seminary the power was exercised by the rectors: Fr. Józef Dąbrowski 1885-1903, Fr. Witold Buhaczkowski 1903–1916, Fr. Michał Grupa 1917–1932, Fr. Antoni Kłowo 1932–1937, Fr. Władysław Krzyżosiak 1938-1943, Fr. Edward Szumal 1943-1956, Fr. Wallace Filipowicz 1956-1967, Fr. Walter Ziemia 1967–1977. Since 1977, the head of all institutions in Orchard Lake has been assigned to the chancellor: Fr. Stanisław Milewski 1977–2000, Fr. Timothy F. Whalen 2000-2012, Fr. Thomas C. Machalski 2012-2017. Since 2017 the Chancellor of Orchard Lake Schools is Fr. canon Mirosław Król.

Polish Mission

The Polish Mission was started in 2009, when from the fund of Dr. Edward Wikiera, the Polish American Art & Culture Research Foundation was established. The intention of the founder was to promote and support Polish culture, and to secure it for future generations. The Polish Mission took over some of the tasks that were carried out in the past by the Orchard Lake Schools. Guarding and promoting Polish heritage was instilled in the Polish seminary by the founder, Fr. Józef Dąbrowski. His successors took over these ideas and Orchard Lake Schools from the beginning was not only a religious center, but also became a center of Polish culture and science. Famous professors such as Rudolf Tarczyński, the author of the history of Polish literature, or Fr. F. Węgier, the author of many theological theses were teaching here. In the 1930s, there was even an idea to establish a Polish university in Orchard Lake, and although this did not happen, efforts were still made to preserve Polish heritage, and to engage in Polish affairs, especially during World War II. In 1941 religious and lay professors organized humanitarian aid for Poland on a large scale. 50 Polish orphans from Siberia found shelter and gained education in Orchard Lake schools. On

⁴⁴ Z. Peszkowski, *Ludzie Stulecia...*s. 175; J. Homles, *A Commemoration...* s. 15-17

⁴⁵ Z. Peszkowski, *Ludzie Stulecia...* s. 185, 189; J. Homles, *A Commemoration...* s. 16.

the radio waves of Free Europe, a voice from Orchard Lake was heard, criticizing Poland's surrender to the sphere of influence of the USSR. There was also an opposition to the imprisonment of Fr. Primate Stefan Wyszyński. In the 1950s and 1960s, Orchard Lake was a place of activity for the Polish-American Society of Historians. The Polish Diaspora Documentation Center was established at that time, and it gave a rise to the creation of the Central Archives of the Polonia. The center in Orchard Lake promoted Polish culture also in the immediate vicinity by sponsoring Polish knowledge competitions in Detroit and other nearby cities. The conditions for performances of Polish groups were also created by building a stage in the gym. The 1960s was the time of creating an art gallery, which was not only a place where paintings were exhibited, but also made it possible to organize classical music concerts and numerous cultural meetings⁴⁶. The artist Marian Owczarski has run the gallery for almost 40 years. At the end of the 1960s, the Center for Studies and Research on Polish Culture was established at the College; it specialized in conducting courses on Polish traditions, collecting literature on the history and culture of Poland, and, above all, publishing its own publications on Polonia in America. The Polish Genealogical Society of the state of Michigan cooperated with the Center⁴⁷. From 1970, during the first Sunday of the month the so-called Polish Day was established. On this day, not only was Holy Mass celebrated in Polish, but also cultural programs including exhibitions and concerts were presented in the gallery. Starting 1973, the local Polish radio started transmissions of the Sunday Holy Mass from the seminary chapel. In the 1970s, the Polish-American Heritage Workshops were also conducted. The last two decades of the 20th century turned out to be very dynamic; Orchard Lake was the place of Polish religious and patriotic celebrations with local dance groups presenting on the stage of the Orchard Lake auditorium and school children presented academia's. Since 1993 the Father Dabrowski Polish Language School for Children, founded by Alina Paszek, started operating in Orchard lake.

There was a collapse in the field of science in 2000. It was related to the closure of the college and the Polish Culture Research Center. As early as in 1985 Fr. prelate Peszkowski noticed the weakening of the pulse of scientific life and criticized the lack of care for Polish archives and museums. He was asking: "We have built with donations a great gymnasium, but where is the place to preserve our archival collections, which are priceless?". Admittedly,

⁴⁶ ⁴⁶ Z. Peszkowski, *Ludzie Stulecia...* s. 127, 129, 133.

⁴⁷ R. Nir, *Archiwum Seminarium Polskiego w Orchard Lake w latach 1978-2008*, „Studia Polonijne”, t. 35 : 2014, s. 10.

this question still remains unanswered. Unfortunately, to this day, archival and museum collections are kept in buildings that do not meet the standards required for archives and museums.

Established in 2009, the Polish Mission continued organizing cultural events and took over the care of the collection of the archive, museum, and art gallery. The archive was established and led by one of the greatest experts in the history of the Polish community, Fr. Józef Swastek associated with Orchard Lake in the years 1942–1977. He was a history lecturer, an archivist at the Archdiocese of Detroit, a co-founder of the Polish American Historical Association, and the editor of the journal of the same organization, the *Polish-American Study*, for about 25 years. He was also a co-editor of the Polish American Encyclopedia, an editor of the *Sodalis* magazine (1942-1947). He took care of collecting and securing collections from Polish parishes and various institutions, encouraging the cooperation of his pupils - Polish priests. In 1978, Fr. dr. Roman Nir became a successor of Fr. Swastek and served as a director of the archives for thirty years. At that time, the archive was expanding its collection with donations from Polish organizations and private individuals. Several organizations donated their library collections, archives, and museum exhibits to Orchard Lake, which allowed for the creation of the museum. In 2009, when the Polish Mission was created, Fr. dr. Stanisław Flis became a director of the archives. Fr. Flis was reconciling this work with running a liturgical center and publishing the *Pan z Wami* missal as well as other liturgical materials. At that time, the periodicals and rare books were separated from the archives and assigned to the library. In 2014 the archive collections, previously stored in the barracks building, found its new place on the first floor of the Ark building. Since 2019 Sr. Genowefa Potaczała MChR is in charge of the archives.

Most of the archive's collections are the documents created at Orchard Lake's educational institutions as well as legacy of scientists associated with Orchard Lake. The second group of collections consists of archival materials donated by Polish diaspora organizations and private donors. Most of the museum collections come from donations from Polish organizations and private individuals. The main part of them are memorabilia from World War II donated by veterans of the Second Corps of the Polish Armed Forces, the Home Army, and concentrations camps' prisoners. A separate section of the museum is a gallery of paintings donated to Orchard Lake by various people. The art collections include works by outstanding Polish artists such as Juliusz Kossak, Jacek Malczewski, Zofia Stryjeńska, and Tadeusz Styka. Another peculiarity of the museum is the "Panorama of Poland" consisting of

107 figures depicting important characters from the history of Poland from the beginnings of the Polish state to the present day.

In order to provide a professional care for the collections gathered in Orchard Lake, already in the first year of existence of the Polish Mission, cooperation was established with the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, which brought the Polish Mission with real results. First of all, the most valuable painting collections that, since 2015, are stored in appropriate warehouses until a new gallery building is built, have been cataloged professionally. In 2018, the inventory of the museum's collections began, but the process has not yet been completed. In the area of compiling archival collections, the Polish Mission has been cooperating with the head office of the State Archives in Poland. The valuable resources of the archives include a collection of old prints and volumes of Polish diaspora magazines awaiting conservation.

As part of popularizing Polish culture and promoting the Polish Mission in Orchard Lake, partnership was established with institutions both in Poland and in the USA. The most important of them is cooperation with the Lech Wałęsa Foundation, and the preparation of an exhibition related to the 30th anniversary of Solidarity. The exhibition was presented at the Wayne State University during the visit of the former President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Wałęsa in 2010. The Polish Mission also cooperated with the Auschwitz Birkenau Museum in implementing the *Forbidden Art (Sztuka Zakazana)* educational project. Another area was related to collaboration with President Dwight Eisenhower's library and museum on *The Men of Valour* project, referring to the 70th anniversary of Operation D-Day and the Battle of Monte Cassino. Currently the Polish Mission along with the Institute of National Remembrance started a new project that pertains the erection of a monument commemorating the soldiers of the Blue Army resting in the cemetery near Orchard Lake. For several years the genealogy organization Polonica Americana Research Institute also cooperated with the Polish Mission.

The first director serving the Polish Mission for nine years was Marcin Chumięcki. His successor in 2018-2020 was dr. Arkadiusz Górecki. The management structure of Orchard Lake is as follows: Orchard Lake Schools is led by a chancellor supervising the seminary rector, St. Mary's Preparatory (high school) director, and a director of the Polish Mission. Each of the three institutions has a separate Board of Directors which are subordinate to the Board of Regents, i.e. the main board of Orchard Lake Schools. Already Fr. Józef Dąbrowski

planned to establish a supervisory board for the Polish seminary. According to his concept, it was to consist of a dozen or so people: five American bishops (there were no Polish bishops at that time), several Polish priests, and several prominent secular Poles. It was also planned that the papal delegate from Washington would be the protector of the Polish seminary. All these efforts were made to secure the title⁴⁸. In 1942 it was established that the **Orchard Lake Schools are owned by Polonia** "The Schools are reincorporated with ownership transferred from the Archdiocese of Detroit to a representative group of Polish Americans, including clergy and laity"⁴⁹.

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⁴⁸ A. Syski, *Ks. Józef Dąbrowski...* s. 163, 169.

⁴⁹ J. Homles, *A Commemoration...* s. 15, 106.