

## **Regional Reports**

**2024 PACT Annual Meeting  
Saturday, November 9, 2024**

### **Annual Report on the Members in the Region of South Texas**

#### **San Antonio**

**by Elaine Stephens Mazurek**

**Our Lady of Sorrows**, 3107 N. St. Mary's St., offers a Polish Mass every Sunday at 8:00 am celebrated by Fr. Marian Piekarczyk, SDS, the Polish priest-in-residence, 210-730-1234. This church also offers Mass and Rosary in Polish every first Saturday at 7 pm. Since September 1986, Our Lady of Sorrows has been the base of operations for the spiritual care of Polish immigrants, known as the Polish Catholic Mission. – First Polish church in San Antonio, later razed for Hemisfair'68 and rebuilt at a nearby location. . The church highlights the exquisite stained-glass windows from the original St. Michael's Church, home to early Polish parishioners in San Antonio. <https://olssa.org/Polish-catholic-mission>

**Seraphic Sisters Shrine to Our Lady of Częstochowa**, and Divine Mercy Chapel in San Antonio, 138 Beethoven St. It is a beautiful gathering place for families and small groups, with a museum providing opportunities for adoration and retreats. Visiting priests are often needed for Mass; please contact Sister Emilia at 210-337-8193 for more information.

#### **The Leopold Moczygemba Foundation**

**by Elaine Stephens Mazurek**

The Foundation continues to offer annual scholarships to youth through an essay contest. The FLMF actively promotes the heritage left to us by Fr. Leopold Moczygemba, and the pioneering Silesian settlers who came to Texas in 1854. FLMFoundation.org. An annual Gala is held; in 2025, it will be in April at Kosciusko, Texas.

In 2024, the foundation published Silesian Profiles III. It is available on FLMFoundation.org.

Retired FLMF President, Msgr. Franciszek Kurzaj, has published several books about the Silesian Texans, the foundation, and more, available at many events. The organization maintains two websites, FLMFoundation.org, and a *vast and beautiful website* – SilesianTexans.com, which is focused on the histories of Silesian-Texans, including priests, religious, families, and parishes. The site is professionally presented and researched.

#### **Bandera**

**by Elaine Stephens Mazurek**

**St. Stanislaus Catholic Church**, Pastor – Msgr. Franciszek Kurzaj. The parish festival is the first Sunday in May. Church tours are offered on Fridays during Lent from 4:30-7pm or can be arranged through the office.

**Bandera County Sister City Partnership**; with Strzelce Opolski in Poland. Contact Roy Dugosh, brother of the founder, the late Elenora Dugosh Goodley, former PACT Director. In 2023, Roy Dugosh worked with film directors, Artur Owczarski and Dakota Wortman, to produce “The Cowboy Capital,” a movie that premiered in Bandera and is also being shown in Poland in the summer of 2023.

## **Panna Maria**

### ***Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria***

The Polish Heritage Center in Panna Maria, Texas celebrated the three-year anniversary of opening its doors to the public on October 23, 2024. This year, the Center welcomed over 4,300 guests ranging across all ages, ethnicities, and locations. The Center was the vision of Bishop Emeritus John Walter Yanta as a place to honor Polish ancestry and further educate visitors of the rich traditions and culture the Polish community built and continue to maintain. We ask for your daily prayer for our Center to be a place of pilgrimage for ancestry and education, asking the Blessed Virgin to intercede for us with her Divine Son Jesus under the title of Our Lady of Czestochowa, Patroness of Poland.

â€• -Bishop John Yanta

The Center presents a state-of-the-art immersive experience for visitors. An award-winning twenty-six-minute film in the theatre provides visitors with an overview of the information and artifacts they Polish will encounter throughout the galleries. Visitors can also enjoy an audio option that provides additional information to the label texts in the form of a hand wand that can be programmed in English, Polish, Spanish, and a children’s version. Part of Bishop Yanta’s â€™ vision was for the Center to be accessible to all groups and communities. Regardless of ancestry, there is something for everyone at PHC. Visitors can spend hours in the main gallery reading and listening to the sounds of Polish history from its origin to contemporary times. The PHC also contains a library containing a wide range of books focusing on all aspects of Poland including history, literature, language, and culture. The archives house those special objects that may be too fragile for everyday public use but can be researched and viewed upon appointment. The Center also provides families and researchers resources to track their family genealogy. The computer station in the library is equipped with tools such as Ancestry, and the center is proud to be in collaboration with the Silesian Profiles Committee where they have generously donated the digital and physical research and databases.

The third-year anniversary has been a remarkable year for PHC. First, Alice Poore, Executive Director of the Center, and her team have honored Bishop Yanta’s â€™ vision of educating our future generations about the culture and heritage of the first Polish immigrants by incorporating a new educational outreach to students in grades 3-8 in surrounding school districts in South Texas. From November 2023 through July of this year, the center has been blessed with over 1,300 students that traveled through the doors to experience the beautiful exhibits, a scavenger hunt in the Czestochowa exhibit and a traditional Polish craft.

With the rental option of the Bishop John W. Yanta Room, the PHC has hosted a multitude of events ranging from birthday parties, rehearsal dinners, couples’ showers, cultural events, luncheons, business meetings and Christmas parties. The Center has become especially popular for family reunions.

In February, the Polish Heritage Center held its first Red & White Gala as a major fund raiser. With over 250 in attendance, guests enjoyed cocktails, a steak dinner, a raffle and entertainment provided by The Dueling Pianos from Houston, Texas. It was a huge success and our goal was met.

One of Bishop Yanta’s objective was to bring cultural events to the center for all to enjoy. In March, the center hosted Duo Klavitarre, from Poland. Jolanta Ziemski, a classical pianist, and her husband Maciej Ziemski, a classical guitarist, entertained guests with music from a variety of composers. It was an evening of beautiful music and delicious cuisine provided by Apolonia catering.

Spring brought excitement to the Polish Heritage Center through artistic design and creativity during our first Polish Heritage Center Art Contest for school age children, held in April. Students from three

county school districts were invited to submit their creations to the PHC. Art students, from Karnes City High, grades 9 – 12, Runge Elementary, grades K-5, and Falls City Elementary, Middle School and High School, grades K-10 competed in our contest with over 100 entries. These beautiful, unique, and creative paintings and illustrations were displayed by grade level, around the PHC, for two weeks for all to enjoy. An Open House was held to provide an opportunity for parents and the public to view the students' artwork on display. What a wonderful way to experience the creativity of our youth in Karnes County!!!

In July, the PHC celebrated the life of our dear friend and Board Treasurer, Betty Kowalik. Betty had a wonderful friendship with Bishop John W. Yanta and a strong connection to the Center from its beginning. As Al Notzon, President of the Board stated, "Her work ethic, her attention to detail and her demand for accuracy were essential in the successful opening and operations of the Center." We are so blessed for Betty's friendship, her kindness and her devotion and support of the PHC.

August brought the long-awaited arrival of Bishop John W. Yanta's headstone to Panna Maria and the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church. A Celebration of Life was held on August 3, with a mass and the blessing of Bishop's headstone. A reception was held at the Center with over 200 people in attendance and entertainment was provided by the Wawel Polish Folk Dance group from Houston. It was a beautiful tribute to Bishop John W. Yanta and exactly what he had always envisioned...the Center filled with people enjoying Polish culture.

This year marks the first Bishop John W. Yanta Academic Scholarship awarded by the Polish Heritage Center. Lauren Dziuk, a 2023 graduate from Falls City High School, a lifelong parishioner of Holy Trinity Catholic Church, and attending Texas A&M University in College Station is the inaugural recipient of the Bishop John W. Yanta Scholarship. Lauren is the daughter of Chris and Janelle Dziuk of Falls City. The scholarship is named for the first Bishop to come from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Polish immigration to Texas, and the visionary and driving force behind the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria. The \$10,000 scholarship is awarded to descendants of the Polish immigrants to Texas who are enrolled in a Texas university, are involved with the institution's Polish club and who have a recommendation from their parish priest. The candidate is also interviewed by a scholarship committee. The John W. Yanta Academic Scholarship is awarded each year. For more information contact the Polish Heritage Center.

The PHC was invited to participate in the first annual Oktoberfest at La Villita in San Antonio in September. The festival was held to highlight German, Polish and Czech cultures. The three-day event was filled with fabulous music by accordionists, Dr Jim Mazurkiewicz, of Texas A&M and Rebecca Jane, One Lady Band. Everyone enjoyed delicious pierogis, courtesy of Asia Gonczar from Apolonia Catering along with traditional Polish wedding sausage, made by Tim Bordovsky and family of Polloks in Falls City. Genny Krause and Elaine Stephens arrived in their handmade, traditional, Polish costumes to share with the crowd their beautiful culture.

Since the beginning of the year, the Polish Heritage Center has had the pleasure of sponsoring several outstanding virtual lectures. In January, Nathan Silverstein, President and Founder of the Polish Club at U T shared his experience "In Leading a Polish American Student Think Tank." In March, Dr. Anna Muller, from the University of Michigan, shared very moving excerpts from her book, [If Walls Could Speak: Inside a Women's Prison in Communist Poland](#). In the month of April, our listeners enjoyed "Polish Food Traditions: Continuity of Culture," presented by Rusty Kiolbassa, of Kiolbassa Provision Company, Genny Kosub Kraus, Connoisseur of Polish Dance and Culture, Colleen Swain, Director of World of Heritage Office, along with a recorded discussion with Anna Hurning, Food Blogger. Our virtual in May was entitled "Polish Unity in the Face of Danger: Events That Influenced the History of Europe," presented by Dr. Piotr Przybylski, Assistant Director for Polish Studies, Saint John Paul II Institute, at the University of St. Thomas-Houston. "Victor Cordella: Timeless Beauty in Architecture," by Mark Dillon, was presented in June. In the Fall, our final two presentations were, "The Importance of Polish Films and the Austin Polish Film Festival," presented by Michael Walkiewicz, and "America's Forgotten Ally: Poland in the Second World War," by Dr. James Pula.

In November, the PHC will open an exhibit that will honor our Polish Veterans, their service and sacrifice to the country.

The gift shop at PHC displays a variety of beautifully crafted and designed items by Polish artisans unique to visitors.

We graciously thank all our generous donors and supporters and look forward to welcoming all those that have yet to visit the Center, and we remember the visionary behind the Polish Heritage Center, Bishop John Yanta. For more information about the Polish Heritage Center please visit our website at <http://www.polishheritagecentertx.org/> or visit us on Facebook.

## **Panna Maria Historical Society**

**by Elaine Stephens Mazurek**

Operates the Panna Maria Visitor Center and has been open for many years, recording PM history. Maintains the outstanding museum inside the historic St. Joseph school. Visit their pretty website [PannaMariaTexas.com](http://PannaMariaTexas.com).

**Immaculate Conception of the BVM Catholic Church – Elaine Mazurek Stephens**

Father Iwaniec Wieslaw, pastor. Christmas is especially beautiful and features Polish Christmas carols by the choir. Has a large number of descendants of the original 1850s Polish settlers.

## **St. Hedwig**

**by Elaine Stephens Mazurek**

**Annunciation of the BVM**, Recently retired Pastor, Rev. Boleslaw Zadora SDS served the parish for many decades. The parish annually held Masses for the Polish American Priests Association. A beautiful church in a rural farming and ranching setting. Many parishioners are descendants of the 1800s Polish/Silesian settlers.

## **Kosciusko**

**by Elaine Stephens Mazurek**

**St. Ann Catholic Church**, built in 1898 following the establishment of a Polish school in 1892. Named for Polish General Thaddeus Kosciusko. Spelling is accepted in several ways. The annual picnic is on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in August. Parishioners include many descendants of original 1850s Polish/Silesian settlers.

## **Cestochowa**

**by Elaine Stephens Mazurek**

**Nativity of the BVM**, many parishioners are descendants of original 1850s Polish/Silesian settlers. The spelling was adapted by the parishioners.

## **Falls City**

**by Elaine Stephens Mazurek**

**Holy Trinity Catholic Church**. a large number of parishioners are descendants of original 1850s Polish/Silesian settlers.

## **Yorktown**

**by Elaine Stephens Mazurek**

**Holy Cross Catholic Church** of Yorktown, today a large and thriving parish, was a mission of Meyersville, in 1866. For a short time in 1868 there was a resident pastor, Father John Frydychowitz, but again, it soon became Panna Maria's mission church. In tracing the history of the Catholic Church in Yorktown, we learn that its founders were Polish families who came from villages in Upper Silesia, Poland, then under German rule. These early settlers arrived in Texas between 1854 and 1856.

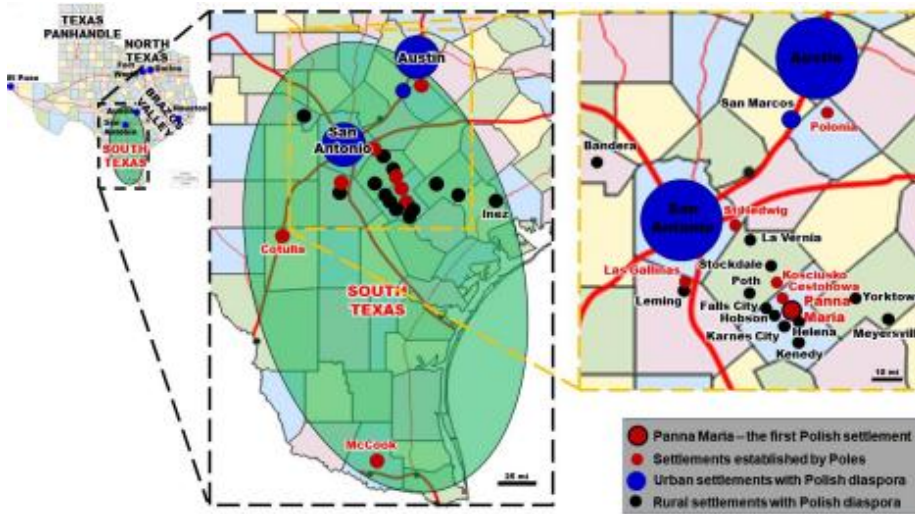
# **Polish American Priest Association of Texas - PAPA of Texas**

***By Msgr. Frank Kurzaj Oct. 8, 2024***

PAPA of Texas is a group of priests with Polish roots; born in Poland or if born in Texas, from Polish families. They come together three times a year in different places in Texas. They use occasions such as birthdays or name days to gather and conduct their meetings. Presently there are about thirty active members of PAPA of Texas. A representative from PAPA of Texas participates in PAPA of the U.S. by attending the meetings held in different states in the U.S.

## **More South Texas communities with Polish diaspora:**

***McCook, Meyersville, Inez, Las Gallinas, Karnes City, Leming, Kenedy, Cotulla, Hobson, La Vernia (my home!).***



*Map created by Dr. Piotr Przybylski.*

## **Brazos Valley Regional Report**

- **Established:** Sister City between Bryan/College Station and Toruń, Poland

### **Bremond and St. Mary's Catholic Church** – Denis Kubiak/Hector Davila

The following information are activities that the Polish community of Bremond participated in this past year.

#### **NOVEMBER 2023**

- All Souls Day saw lighted candles and prayed in St. Mary's cemetery at graves of relatives and friends. The cemetery was a sight at night Bremond was well represented at the annual PACT meeting held in the city of Bryan at St. Joseph Catholic Church.

#### **DECEMBER 2023**

- Members supported and participated in Bremond's annual Christmas Parade along downtown's main street. Costumed members along with guests joined together at the White Eagle Hall to rehearse and to fortify themselves before traveling to the Bremond nursing home and various other private homes where Polish Christmas Carols were performed and refreshments were enjoyed. A record number of residents requested Kolędy to visit their homes this year. Brian Marshall and family led the group throughout the town and surrounding area.

#### **JANUARY 2024**

- Appreciation dance to recognize citizens and to encourage new membership was presented by the Chamber of Commerce of Bremond at St. Mary's recreation center. A DJ and western country band entertained the crowd.

## FEBRUARY 2024

- Bremond celebrated two Polish customs this month. The first was on February 2nd - Matki Boskiej Gromnicznej (Candle Mass) with an early morning outdoor Mass at St. Mary's Church with attendees holding blessed candles. The second custom was on before Lent started. Tlusty Czwartek - fat Thursday - The Polish Store in Bremond featured various flavors of Paczki ( Jelly filled polish donuts ). The Bremond Polish store was excited to report they were sold out by noon of that day.

## MARCH 2024

- Parishioners attended St. Mary's Church annual " Swieconka " blessing of food baskets on Holy Saturday at the Church, displaying their various Polish delicacies in beautifully decorated baskets.

## MAY 2024

- Some of Bremond's citizens traveled to Our Lady of Czestochowa Catholic Church Houston to help celebrate their Spring Festival and the observance of the 3rd of May ceremonies.

## JUNE 2024

- Annual " Polski Dzień " Friday and Saturday June 23rd and 24th, downtown Bremond, The consulate general Dignitaries of Poland attended and participated in the opening ceremonies. Polish musicians and Czech Polka bands provided dancing and listening to music all day. Many Polish vendors. Many participated in the annual " Polish pickle run, " giving all runners kielbasa and piwo. Jagoda Polish Folk Dance ensemble from Dallas performed to the audience's delight.

## AUGUST 2024

- Country music rocked St. Mary's Recreation Center at the end of the month, two country and western bands provided entertainment for paying guests who also participated in a silent auction. ( Proceeds to benefit Chamber building funds).

## SEPTEMBER 2024

- During the September Bremond Chamber of Commerce meeting held at the City Hall, President Kenny Groholski announced that finally, Bremond was officially awarded the title it was used for almost a decade ( as required by state law ). Bremond is the " Polish Capital of Texas " (along with Trademark).
- Some of Bremond's citizens traveled to Our Lady of Czestochowa Catholic Church Houston to help celebrate their Polish Harvest Festival.

## OCTOBER 2024

- Citizens of Bremond represented Bremond at Anderson Texas annual church picnic and enjoyed the meal and danced to the Bryan Marshall Band.
- Members present a Pre-Bazaar Polka Party in the Park. Polka music featuring 2 bands help celebrate St. Mary's Church Bazaar weekend with music on Saturday evening and night in City Park Bremond.
- Volunteers participated in the annual St. Mary's Catholic Church Fall Bazaar in all aspects of this Day Long Event.

## GENERAL

- Represented Bremond at several Polish and Czech Festivals and church picnics.
- PNA lodge #128 is back in operation.

## **St. Joseph in New Waverly by Clara Malak**

Host of November 2022, PACT Annual Meeting, New Waverly, Texas

## **St. Stanislaus (Bishop) Catholic Parish in Chappell Hill, Texas**

(est. 1889) in Chappell Hill, Texas (Washington County) “The Birthplace of Texas”

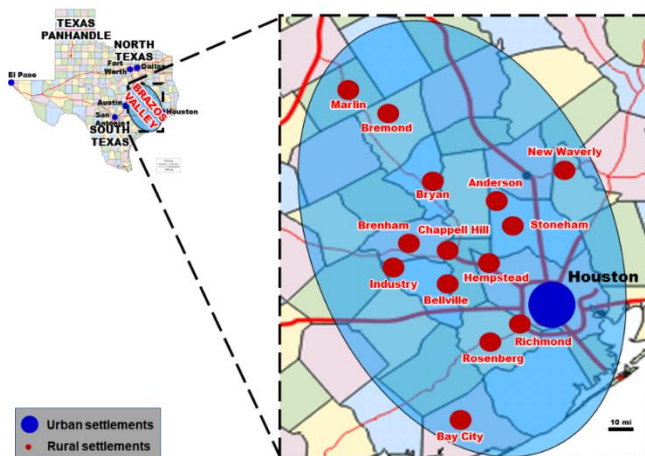
- Mass Schedule: Saturday Vigil – 6:00 p.m.; Sunday – 8:00 a.m. Wednesday – 6:00 p.m. Thursday and Friday – 8:00 a.m.
- Parish Website: <https://www.ststanislauschappellhill.com/gallery>
- Pastor: Father Thaddeus Tabak, SDS; Bishop: Diocesan Bishop Joe S. Vasquez of Austin
- 16th Annual Polskie Kolędownia – Annual Koledowania in Chappell Hill, Texas was held on Saturday, December 30, 2023 and 17th annual will be held on December 28, 2024
- The 87th Annual Homecoming Festival and “Dozynki Mass” celebrating 135 years of St. Stanislaus (Bishop) Catholic Parish in Chappell Hill, Texas held on Sunday, September 1, 2024.
- Celebrating Father Thaddeus Tabak’s birthday with a Polish meal following mass on Saturday, December 4, 2023
- Józwiak family reunion held on Saturday, September 7, 2024 with Polish folk music from the 19<sup>th</sup> century ancestors.
- Cegielski family reunion was held on Saturday, October 12, 2024 with Polish folk music from the 19<sup>th</sup> century ancestors.
- Derkowski family reunion was held on Saturday, April 27, 2024
- The Bilski family reunion was held on Saturday, September 28, 2024

## **Chappell Hill Museum and Historical Society**

- Polish room dedicated to the Polish immigrants to Washington County
- Polish photos, information, and documents have been archived, scanned, and kept for historical access
- Hosted Polish Christmas Carolers on Saturday, December 30, 2023
- Distributed the PACT directories and information

## **St. Stanislaus in Anderson & St. Joseph in Stoneham – by Mike Kurtin**

- Spring Festival, May 26, 2024
- Fall Homecoming and Bazaar , October 13., 2024
- St. Joseph Church in Stoneham, Annual Bazaar May 26, 2024
- Anderson Spring Festival is May 11, 2025 -tentative
- Annual Bazaar and Homecoming October 12, 2025
- Stoneham Bazaar May 26, 2025



Map created by Dr. Piotr Przybylski

## **Houston Regional Report** by Piotr Przybylski and Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden

## **Polish Consulate General in Houston:**

- Acting Consul General: Andrzej Fąfara
- Support Polish organizations, Polish school children, and local Polish diaspora with grants (e.g., Pact, UST)
- Polish Passport renewal program
- Organize events, e.g., the annual Polish Independence Day celebration
- Strengthen economic cooperation between companies from Poland and Texas through partnerships and business initiatives

### **Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Houston**

3040 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 525

Houston, Tx 77056

tel.: +1 713 479 6776

www: [gov.pl/usa](http://gov.pl/usa) TT: [@PLinHouston](https://twitter.com/PLinHouston)

## **Our Lady of Czestochowa Church**

**Pastor: Fr. Tadeusz Rusnak**

- Sunday Masses:
  - 9am English Mass
  - **11am Polish Mass**

### **OLOC Activities:**

- **Polish Festivals** - twice a year:
  - May Festival (1<sup>st</sup> weekend of May to commemorate the May 3<sup>rd</sup> Polish Constitution of 1791)
  - Polish Harvest Festival / Dożynki - September
- **January**
  - Oplatek
  - Sylvester (New Year's Eve Gala)
  - § Jasełka (Christmas Caroling by Polish school children and parish musicians)
- **February**
  - Karnawał (Mardi Gras Ball) organized by the Polish School
  - **Lent:** Lenten Fish Fry
  - **Easter:** Święconka (food blessing)
  - Concert to commemorate the 1943 Uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto
- **May**
  - Nicolaus Copernicus concert (org. by the Polish Consulate General)
  - Children's competition of Pilecki drawing
- **November**
  - Garage Sale organized by the Knights of Columbus
  - Singing of Polish Patriotic Songs
  - Polish Independence Day celebration (org. by the Polish Consulate General)
- **December**
  - Św. Mikołaj (St. Nicholas) organized by the Polish School
  - Polish National Alliance annual gala
  - Wigilia (Christmas Eve supper)

## **Nicolaus Copernicus Polish School Houston Saturday School:**

**This school year 2024/ 25 enrolment is 77 students and 12 teachers.**

- Principal- Hanna Tomaszekiewicz
- Schools' website <https://szkolapolskahouston.com/en/main-page/>
- Regular classes are every Saturday from 10:00-2:00 from August until May



- Polish school is highly active with lots of activities all year long

**The most major events are:**

- Polish Harvest Festival in September
- Pasowanie na Ucznia, Students and Teachers Reunion with the Teachers Day in October
- Polish Bilingual Day in October
- Polish Heritage Day in October
- Polish Independence Day in November
- Mikołajki in December
- School's Wigilia in December
- Jaselka in January
- Carnival Ball for the kids in February
- Carnival Ball for Adults in February. This is the biggest fundraiser for the Polish School
- Contest for the most beautiful Easter Palm- Palm Sunday
- Easter Egg Hunt in April
- Mother's, Father's, and Children's Day in May- Family Picnic
- Polish Summer Camp in June and July



**St. John Paul II Institute (University of St. Thomas)**

Offers classes of Polish history, language, and culture, and on philosophy and encyclicals of St. John Paul II, on campus and online, for the UST students and for non-students as audit.

An academic scholar exchange with KUL (Lublin), Papal University (Krakow).

- November 2022 – International Fest on UST Campus
- December 2022 – Christmas at the Mall with Polish ornaments
- March 2023 – two lectures of Bp. Slawomir Oder on the Canonization process of Pope John Paul II
- April 2023 – Lecture about Polish Saints by Fr. Dr. Witold Kania
- April 2023 - Piotr Orłowski, CEO at Ellocco Production in Florida who also represents Telewizja Polska (Polish Television) to do a Polish TV1 News interview about the St. John Paul II Institute in Houston
- May 2023 – Concert of Polish classical music related to Karol Wojtyła
- May 2023 – lecture about Korfanty by Dr. Piotr Przybylski
- June 2023 – annual students fieldtrip to Poland following the footsteps of St. John Paul II
- September 2023 - Poetry Night of Wisława Szymborska by children of the Houston Nicolaus Copernicus Polish School (org. by the Polish Consulate General)
  - September 2023 - ZOOM lecture – “The Treasure of His Youth: The Life and Death of Jan Rodowicz ”Anoda.”” – Kurtyka Foundation; Dr. John Hittinger as a panelist
  - October 2023 - Polish Texans class Graduation by Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz; reception
  - October 2023 - Overview of new St. John Paul II classes and Polish Studies classes and events for Chappell Hill Historical Society by Dr. Piotr Przybylski
  - November 2023 – Lecture about Eucharistic renewal in the school of John Paul II and Benedict XVI by Fr. Dr. Bogusław Migut
  - November 2023 - John Paul II and the Coming of Ages - Introduction to Integral Leadership by Dr. Michał Luczewski
  - November 2023 – Lecture about the Ulm Family by Dr. Piotr Przybylski at the Holocaust Museum
  - October 2023 – Lecture Series (5 virtually) Polish Texas History: The History of Texas Polonia by Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz\
  - October 2023 – Lecture Series class graduation and reception by the St. John Paul II Institute at the University of St. Thomas

## Wawel Dance Group

**Director: Yessica Krozel**

- Over 65 members
- 3 subgroups: Adults, Mini Wawel (children and teenagers), and Babcia Wawel (elderly)
- Performing at a wide variety of events throughout Texas and across the US
- Performing for many International Festivals throughout the major cities of Texas (Houston, Galveston, Katy, Sealy, Panna Maria, and Austin)



- Performed at the Seattle Polish Festival in July 2024
- Representatives of Poland for the Texas Independence Day Celebration in Washington-On-The-Brazos
- Hosted the PFDA 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala - 20 dance groups from the US and Canada traveled to Houston to experience a weekend long celebration for PFDA, alongside attending a Goralski Podhalanski workshop hosted by Wawel and Andrzej Budz
- Part of the Polish Folk Dance Association of the Americas (Yessica Krozel is the secretary for the association and board member)
- Performers for the annual PACT Meeting
- Supporting and performing the annual Bremond, TX Polish Days

Festival

- Polish Heritage Day performers at John Paul 2 Landing Park
- Annual Houston Heritage Slavic Festival members and performers
- Honorary members, performers, and organizers of the annual Houston Polish Festivals
- Supported by the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Houston as well as Wspólnota Polska in Warsaw, Poland
- <https://wawelhouston.com/index.html>



## Other Polish organizations and events in Houston:

- **Polish Theatre Groups:**  
*Associated with OLOC, Director: Michal Szpak*  
*Associated with Holy Name Retreat Center, Director: Fr. Nicholas Divine*
- **Classical Music Group: Duo Dramatique – Dominika Dancewicz**
- **Polish National Alliance Texas Chapter** – exhibits or displays at a majority of the events in the region Co-sponsors or supports all events.
- **Dom Polski (Polish Home)** – Annual Christmas Party, Quarterly meetings, Sponsoring Polish Events and groups
- **Polish Progressive Lodge 2336 – PNA**, Meetings, supporting and sponsoring Polish Events and Groups and Sponsorships
- **Kosciuszko Lodge 165 – PNA** - PNA, Meetings, supporting and sponsoring Polish Events and Groups and Sponsorships - PNA, Meetings, supporting and sponsoring Polish Events and Groups and Sponsorships
- **Council 182 – PNA – Supporting events with Lodge 2336 and 165 and Polish Home Inc in additional to PNA event in general**
- **Houston Slavic Heritage Festival** (September) – yearly festival celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> year! Polish-Ukrainian-Czech-Croatian. This year was the Polish Year and was extraordinarily successful

- **Polish Film Festival** (October-November) Houston: Dr. Zbigniew Wojciechowski, Adam Siuk
- **Polish Bridge Club** – 40 members
- **Polonia Restaurant** - Catering and Deli: (Houston/Bremond) Polish Pavilion at Renaissance Festival
- **Polki w Houston**
- **Polacy w Teksasie (FB)**
- **Polish American Chamber of Commerce in Texas**
- **October 2023/2024 – 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Polish Picnic at the John Paul II Landing Park in Cypress by PACT**

### **Polish Media in Texas:**

- Forum Polonia Houston
- Zgoda newspaper by PNA
- PNA Region H
- Polish Events and Happening in Texas
- Various Polish Groups Facebook
- WEBR Radio hosted by Andrew Gołębiowski, The Polish American Radio in Buffalo, New York
- A written tribute about Bishop John W. Yanta for the Wilson County News about the life and impact of Bishop Yanta
- TVP Polish Television
- TVN Polish Television
- Wilson County News
- Brenham Banner Press
- TV Stations in Houston (list them)
- Brazos Valley Insight Magazine
- Texas Monthly Magazine

## **DFW Metroplex Regional Report**

### **Parafia pw. św. Piotra Apostoła – St. Peter the Apostle Parish, Dallas, TX.**

***Jadwiga Wasilewski, Parish Council President  
St. Peter the Apostle, Dallas TX***

Under the care of the Society of Christ Fathers since 1985, Saint Peter the Apostle provides mass in both English and Polish. Multiple Feast days are celebrated in our parish throughout the year – though not all are listed here, we welcome you to celebrate with us. Visit our website at [stpeterdal.com](http://stpeterdal.com) for more information.

- Saturday Mass 6:30 PM Polish Mass
- Sunday Masses: 9 am
- English Mass **11am Polish Mass**
- Pastor: Fr Jacek Wesołowski SChr

***The following are some of the Polish events at St. Peter the Apostle:***

#### **November**

- Mass celebrated in honor of Polish Independence Day (Msza św. za Ojczyznę w rocznicę odzyskania niepodległości) - singing of Polish Patriotic Songs – Brunch served in cafeteria.

#### **December**

- Św. Mikołaj (St. Nicholas Market) with coordination for the Polish School of Dallas – visit from St. Nicholas during Mass
- Christmas Eve Midnight “Shepherd’s” Mass ( Pasterka ) & Christmas Day Mass.

## January

- Opłatek – 2nd week of January
- Sylvester (New Year's Eve Gala)

## February/March

- Feb 2: Matki Bozej Gromnicznej – Candlemas- all the candles to be used in the church for the coming year are blessed, and the faithful are invited to bring their own candles so that they can be blessed and used in the home for prayer throughout the year. ( Uroczystość upamiętnia ofiarowanie Jezusa w Świątyni Jerozolimskiej )
- Lent: Stations of the Cross in Polish & Lenten Fish Fry
- Gorzkie żale jak w każdą niedzielę Wielkiego Postu po Mszy Sw. - Lenten devotion in Polish, combined with the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
- Niedziela Palmowa – Palm Sunday
- Easter: Święconka- blessing of the Easter baskets is one of the most enduring and beloved Polish traditions in our parish community on Holy Saturday.

## May

- Majowka (1st weekend of May to commemorate Polish National Flag Day, Constitution Day, and International Workers' Day) – Polish vendors from around Dallas are welcome to attend. Traditional folk attire is encouraged.

## August

- August 15th the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Święto Matki Boskiej Zielnej
- Blessing of herbs and then woven into wreaths that are hung near holy pictures and used as medicinal recipes as protection against illness and natural disasters.

## Religious Education in English & Polish

Oferujemy nauczanie religii dla dzieci w klasach Pre-K do 8 klasy. Zajęcia z religii odbywają się w niedziele po Mszy Świętej.

We offer Religious Education for children in grades Pre-K through 8th grade. Religious Education classes are offered on Sundays after Mass.

## Jan Karski Polish School of Dallas

*Polish School of Dallas, Texas*

Since its establishment in 2006, the Polish School of Dallas has been serving the Polish community in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. The school offers classes on Saturdays from 11 AM to 2 PM, with 65 students enrolled in 10 classes.

The Board of Directors consists of Principal Marek Panek, Director of Education Paulina Wyszomirska, and Director of Administration Piotr Rej.

To foster Polish traditions and customs, the school organizes several events throughout the year for the broader Polish community. These events include meetings with Santa, Easter

egg hunts, Christmas plays (Jaselka), Constitution Day celebrations and camping trips.

More information can be found: <https://polishschooldallas.org/>



## George Dabrowski Small Big Hearts Foundation

*Dallas, Texas*

The George Dabrowski Small Big Hearts Foundation, established in 2016, is a Polish non-profit organization which helps children born with cranio-facial syndromes. We work alongside Medical City Children's Hospital Dallas, Ronald McDonald House of Dallas and Gift from the Heart Foundation in Chicago, to provide the best care for children who struggle with medical conditions which require



specialized surgeries and/or treatment in Dallas-Fort Worth. Our organization also provides financial support to all local members of the Polish community in the DFW area. Thus far, twenty-eight families and individuals have received financial and organizational support from our Foundation, including families from Poland, Romania and Italy.

Remi Sejwa, President  
Dorota Piszczor, Family Coordinator  
Andrzej Kaminski, Treasurer  
Iga Njagi, Board Member  
Robert Kraszewski, Board Member  
[www.smallbighearts.org](http://www.smallbighearts.org)

### **Special Events:**

- October 28, 2023 - 6th Annual Fundraising Gala  
Performance by Duo Klavitare from Bremen, Germany
- January 2024 - The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity  
Delegation of the Small Big Hearts Foundation members in Austin and Dallas
- March-April 2024 - visit from Adam Kerner and his family  
Surgery in Medical City Children's Hospital - skull enlargement  
Recovery in Ronald McDonald House of Dallas
- June-August 2024 - visit from Filip Szajba and his family  
LeFort III surgery in Medical City Children's Hospital  
Recovery on Ronald McDonald House of Dallas
- October-December 2024 - visit from Zoja Marianowska and her family  
LeFort III surgery in Medical City Children's Hospital  
Currently recovering in Ronald McDonald House of Dallas

### **Coming soon:**

- November 3rd, 2024 - 7th Annual Fundraising Gala  
Performance by Grazyna Auguscik and Ben Lewis

## **Jagoda Polish Folk Dance Ensemble**

[www.jagodadance.org](http://www.jagodadance.org)

**fb: Jagoda Polish Folk Dance Ensemble**

**Dyrektor Artystyczny: Alicja Futoma, 214.842.1612, e-mail: [contact@jagodadance.org](mailto:contact@jagodadance.org)**

Jagoda Dance Ensemble Company is a non-profit organization incorporated under the 501c(3) of the IRS code. It promotes Polish culture and customs throughout the state of Texas, performing at major international multi-cultural festivals, as well as Polish Community events and private events.

### ***This year (2024) appearances include:***

- WOŚP event in Austin, Tx
- "Majówka" at the Polish church in Dallas, Tx
- International Festival in Plano, Tx
- Polish Days in Tayler, Tx

Rehearsals are being held on Sundays, 12:30 pm, at the Notre Dame School, 2907 Woodall Rodgers Fwy, Dallas, TX 75204. Everybody is invited!  
Children's' group meets at the Polish School of Dallas, <http://www.polishschooldallas.org/>, during school hours.



## **Austin Regional Report**

**By Art Gmurowski, President AUSTIN POLISH SOCIETY**

Nov 1, 2023 – Nov 1, 2024

**Austin Polish Society** is a Texas non-profit 501(c)(3) organization established in 2005. Our mission is to further knowledge of Polish culture, traditions, history, language, arts, current affairs,

and local events and foster friendly relations between the American and Polish people. Check out our website: [austinpolsishsociety.org](http://austinpolsishsociety.org)

Our programs and activities for Nov 1, 2023 – Nov 1, 2024 period included:

1. Holding **Polish Language Classes** for children and adults.
2. Organizing the **18<sup>th</sup> annual Austin Polish Film Festival** - [austinpolsishfilm.com](http://austinpolsishfilm.com) - (Nov. 2 - 5, 2023) twelve Polish films screened with following guests:
  - o Mishaël Porembski (director of **Burning Questions** documentary about Catholic Poles in Holocaust) – now viewable on Amazon Prime.
  - o Paulina Pytlak (leading actress in Feast of Fire (Święto Ognia) feature film
  - o Marcin Ciastoń (screenwriter of The Breach (Wyrwa) feature film
  - o Piotr Przybylski (speaker for historical films *The Pilecki Report* and *The Prophet (Prorok)* feature films)
  - o Sebastian Smoliński (Master of Ceremonies)
3. Organizing the **Ognisko** (Polish bonfire) event with Polish food and campfire songs on March 9, 2024.
4. Organizing the annual **Bigos Cook-Off** competition on April 20, 2024.
5. Co-organizing the **Michał Korzistka piano concert** with **DotDotDot Connect**, held on Sept. 14, 2024.
6. Organizing the **Marek Drewnowski piano concert** on Oct. 26, 2024 that was preceded by a screening of film “Chopin’s Concerto” directed by Krzysztof Zanussi.
5. Donated \$1,000 to **W Między Czasie** – Organization of Polish medics helping in Ukraine.
6. Donated \$1,000 to **Central Texas Food Bank**.
7. Donated various historical books to the **Polish Heritage Center** in Panna Maria, Texas
8. Sent delegation of members to attend the **Red and White ball** at **Polish Heritage Center** in Panna Maria.

## **El Paso Regional Report**

**By General Casimir Pulaski Polish American Society of El Paso**

In 2024, the General Casimir Pulaski Polish American Society of El Paso had a lot of exciting activities:

- March 2024: For the young members of GCPS and friends, we organized an egg hunting and eggshell painting (pysanki) event.
- On Easter Saturday, March 30th, members of GCPS, families, and friends blessed the food (Swieconka) in a Catholic parish house. The traditional food baskets were blessed by OMF Jaroslaw Wysoczanski.
- April: Consul General and Interim Andrzej Fafara, along with consuls Karolina Sliwa and Karol Pesta, joined the opening of the Polish Sunday School in El Paso.
- May: GCPS sponsored and assisted in organizing the Borderland Chopin International Piano Competition, taking care of two Polish contestants, young pianists Andrzej Wiercinski and Michal Basista.
- On Saturday, May 4th, a traditional Majówka was organized to celebrate Constitution Day. Young members participated in the "Quiz on Poland" and received books donated by the Consul General in Houston.
- The Polish Sunday School continued its educational role by organizing the "Laurka dla Mamy"
- July: GCPS honored Polish history by organizing an art contest titled "WARSAW" to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising. The contest was sponsored by the Consul General of Poland in Houston.
- In July and August, members of GCPS helped a Polish journalist from TVP Polonia shoot a documentary for his docuseries "Przystanek Ameryka," which is about the Polish diaspora in El Paso. The video can be found on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/nNMUJX-T3cY?si=mQnnx7gC7a1kR2xm>

- In September, GCPS organized the Polish National Reading 2024 event in El Paso, Texas. Polish-speaking members and friends of the Society presented excerpts from "Kordian," a drama by Juliusz Słowacki.

## **Texas A & M Polish Association Report**

*Yearly Report. by Jakub Sciuk, President*

### **General News/Attendance:**

Since the founding of the Texas A&M Polish Association (TAMPA) back in 2014, our Association has experienced many difficulties in regard to external and internal situations. As of May 2024, there has been a change in leadership as our previous president, Alex Futoma, has graduated and pursued a career elsewhere. In his place, Jakub Sciuk was elected president to effectively run the Association. In addition to this, we also elected a new secretary by the name of Keely Mikolajchak. In August 2024, the executive board of TAMPA made a proposal to change the makeup of the association as it was clear that our numbers of participation and involvement had greatly dwindled to only a handful of active members. Since these initial changes, the executive board has seen initial success, however as the semester progressed, we encountered similar challenges as previous semesters in which our numbers of active members dwindled towards the end of the semester. Originally, we had 28 active members, and now we have roughly 10 members that consistently attend meetings and social events. It is clear that our original changes did not work as intended and a revision on the structure of the association is necessary.



### **Association Finances:**

When it comes to TAMPA finances, we made roughly 480 dollars in dues which is in addition to the generous donation we received last May of around 6500 Dollars. This being said, the association is in good hands financially and is not expected to make any financial requests in the near future. The Association does plan on taking a field trip to Panna Maria in the near future which will cost the bulk of our funding. Regardless, with the organization revisions that will take place towards the end of the school year, we hope to see an increase in participation which will justify such a trip.

### **Organization Reception:**

Despite our decrease in attendance, we have admitted some freshmen which provided us with valuable insight on what works within the association, and what needs to change. With this input, we will continue to work towards a flourishing Polish community here at Texas A&M University.

### **Summary:**

To summarize, there was a large shift in leadership in which the responsibility of the Association was placed on Jakub Sciuk. In the meantime, we have appointed a new secretary and decided to change how the association functions. Although the initial changes met with positive reception, attendance and participation was lower than expected, prompting us to look over how the association functions and what needs to change. In terms of finance, we made a

## **Polish Club at the University of Texas at Austin**

*By President Polish Club at UT*

*The Polish Club at UT Report for 2024*

The Polish Club at UT is a leading Polish-American organization with over 500 members which hosts high profile guest speakers as well as promotes Polish culture through a variety of Polish events and trips.

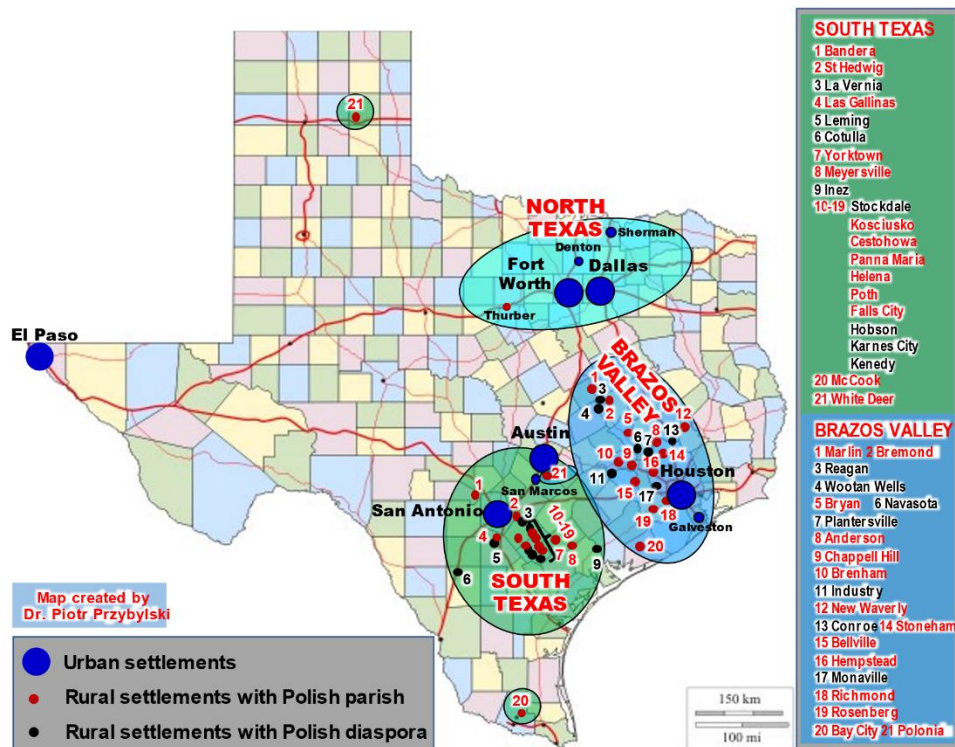
This past year, the Polish Club proudly hosted Honorable Daniel Fried, former U.S. Ambassador to Poland, for an in-person speech at the UT Austin campus. The Club additionally hosted several speakers virtually, such as Ambassador Stephen Mull, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, and Professor Hanna Suchocka.



The Polish Club also organized various cultural events to engage UT students with Polish culture and traditions. These include Dr. Jim's annual Christmas party, Wielka Orkiestra Świątecznej Pomocy, Pierogi making with Apolonia Catering, Śmigus Dyrngus Celebration, and trips to Ziggy's Kielbasa House.

As always, we would like to express our gratitude to the Polish American Council of Texas (PACT), its board of directors, and its membership for their generosity and support. We would like to thank Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz, Mr. Eric Opiela, Ms. Jolanta Mazewski-Dryden, and Ms. Elaine Mazurek-Stephens for going beyond to help the Club succeed. We are proud to be PACT members.

We are looking forward to continuing to grow and develop the Club this coming year. We wish everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year! *Wesołych Świąt i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!*



Note :PACT assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of this report.