

Circumstances attending the inception of the Branch of Faculty of Social Sciences of the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL) in Stalowa Wola and its first years of activity

The inception of the Branch of Faculty of Social Sciences in Stalowa Wola is one of the most important landmarks in history of the city and regions. The inception was accompanied by struggles and stretched over a long period of time because of many obstacles placed in the way by contemporary authorities. These efforts were intertwined with difficult situation in Poland bearing fruit of system change, about which Holy Father John Paul II said: "I praise God for it (...) great spiritual heritage, (...) at the time of totalitarian domination by the Communist system made it possible for the people of this land to preserve their national and Christian identity (...)"¹. Holy Father saying about national heritage also emphasized the meaning of persons and places which played the particular role in transformations in Poland. Undoubtedly, for Stalowa Wola Archbishop Ignacy Tokarczuk was such a distinguished person, about who the Pope John Paul II said: "you spared no efforts, overcame every obstacles when it came to multiply places of worship and fires of God's life on extensive area of your diocese"². Amongst these significant places one should list Stalowa Wola and so Holy Father John Paul II did, when he said in Sandomierz: " In my heart I embrace the (...), particularly Stalowa Wola, a city which symbolizes the great faith of the workers, who with impressive generosity and courage built their church in spite of difficulties and the threats of the Communist authorities of the time. I had the joy of blessing this church."³. All Poles recognize the leading role of the Pope John Paul II in transformations performed in Poland. It is remarkably valuable, that in the context of these transformations Holy Father noticed the meaning of the Branch of KUL in Stalowa Wola, as one of their fruits, when said: "I want to direct words of greeting to the colleges and schools. I am greeting the Catholic University of Lublin and its Branch in Stalowa Wola (...)"⁴. A work crowned with the success of establishing the college has become for inhabitants of city and regions a "sign of the times".

This article is a reply on growing, especially amongst young students, interest in the brought up subject matter. Author's intentions were to present social situation in which an idea of creating the college was born, its reification and to describe the college activity to the year 2000. The study was based on documents disclosed by founders, college employees and on publications released during the inception and first years of the college activity. Author also used information from interviews with founders, employees and students of the Branch and from author's scientific observation.

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¹ Homily of Holy Father John Paul II at the Mass in Sandomierz 12/06/1999, „ Bóg jest Miłością, VII Pielgrzymka Jana Pawła II do Ojczyzny”, Olsztyn 1999, p. 153

² Homily of Holy Father John Paul II at the mass in Rzeszów 2/06/1991, p. 4

³ Homily of Holy Father John Paul II at the mass in Sandomierz 12/06/1999, „ Bóg jest Miłością, VII Pielgrzymka Jana Pawła II do Ojczyzny”, Olsztyn 1999, p. 152

⁴ Homily of Holy Father John Paul II at the mass in Sandomierz 12/06/1999, „ Bóg jest Miłością, VII Pielgrzymka Jana Pawła II do Ojczyzny”, Olsztyn 1999, p. 157