



Father Ryszard Kosian, OMI

(1932 – 2017)

Born on 14 January 1932 in Trawniki, voivodeship Opole, and died on 14 March 2017 in Toronto. Son of Sykstus and Gertruda neé Polak. In 1947, he entered a Minor Seminary in Lubliniec; and after that completed the novitiate in Markowice, Pomerania. He studied theology and philosophy in the Major Seminary of Oblates of Immaculate Mary in Obra. He was ordained on 22 June 1958. He served the pastoral ministry in the parishes in Gorzów Wielkopolski, Zieleniec and Ulima. From 1960 to 1969 he resided in Gorzów Wielkopolski, Katowice and Kędzierzyn, where he was preaching missionary sermons (*Polish: misje ludowe*).

Canada

Fr. Kosian came to Canada in 1969. He served the pastoral ministry in the following parishes: Holy Rosary Church in Edmonton, AB; St. Stanislaus Kostka and St. Casimir's churches in Toronto; St. Hyacinth Church in Ottawa; Our Lady of Perpetual Help in St. Catharine's, ON. During the final years of his life, he resided at St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish in Toronto.

In addition to his pastoral duties, Fr. Kosian took upon himself a range of other activities. He chaired the Conference of the Polish Priests for Eastern Canada and organized annual pilgrimages to Midland, ON, (1977 - 1985). He was a Board Member of the Canadian Polish Congress and of the Supervisory Council of the Canadian Polish Millennium Fund. He participated in the preparations for the pastoral visit of John Paul II and chaired the Pope's

meetings with the Polish Canadian community at the CNE stadium in Toronto during the pastoral pilgrimage to Canada in 1984.

Fr. Kosian was a member of the organization Friends of the Catholic University in Lublin in Canada. He was the originator of the World Day of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and supporter of the John Paul II Collegium project at this same university.

Shortly after his arrival in Ottawa in 1982, Fr. Kosian proposed that the changes be made in the decorum of St. Hyacinth Church. The triptych depicting the Passion of Jesus placed in presbytery under the stained-glass image of St. Hyacinth, as well as all other sculptures, was created by Leszek Celuch from Skarżysko. The marble altar was replaced with a wooden one, and some new paintings were also added.

Coincidentally, Fr. Kosian's pastoral ministry in Ottawa fell during the time when the martial law was imposed in Poland, which resulted in a new wave of 'Solidarity' immigrants arriving in Canada. He was sincerely supportive towards them, and made the parish a place where they received real assistance and counseling. One of the "Solidarity" immigrants recalls: "I remember one Sunday in July of 1984 when for the first time we participated in the eleven-o'clock Mass at St. Hyacinth. The church was packed with people; many were forced to stay outside because there was no more space. At this moment, we experienced a profound feeling of relief combined with a strong sense of belonging to our national and spiritual community even though we were so far away from our Fatherland. Although we could not see any familiar faces, we had no doubt that we would make friends and that St. Hyacinth's parish was the place where we were going to meet them."

Fr. Kosian's sermons were not only uplifting but also enhanced by his humorous and personal stories. He left Ottawa in 1994.

Fr. Kosian loved music and fine art. He also wrote plays and poems. The proceeds from his first volume of poems, published in 1997, he donated for the construction of the John Paul II Collegium at the Catholic University in Lublin.

I Pray

I pray
 Perhaps not quite the same as others
 Who just chant their little supplications
 Kneeling - deeply meditating on their reflections
 I pray while I'm running being busy
 I am all this time with You, my Lord
 I feel you are inside me – as I try to be in You
 All the hours, months, and years
 I don't care –
 whether I am sitting and typing
 whether I am in the chair reading
 I am with You always

Telling you everything
 not hiding anything
 You know me
 You see right through me
 You are there since the morning light
 Walking with me throughout the day
 Until it's time to go to sleep at night

Publications

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/MJD/

English translation /SH/

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