

Genealogical Research within the Polish National Catholic Church (P.N.C.C.)

There are no professionals available to respond to genealogical inquiries at the National Church Center of the Polish National Catholic Church. All of the work at the P.N.C.C. Archives is done by volunteers whose time is spent sorting, cataloguing and putting onto shelves the documents that it has received. Therefore, it is up to an individual to research his or her own P.N.C. ancestors.

The process for you to research your Polish National Catholic ancestors is a little different for members of the clergy than it is for lay persons.

Researching your P.N.C.C. Priest Ancestor

A person may have heard from one of his or her relatives that there was a P.N.C.C. priest in their family. Before any research can be done, other information must be found to give you a starting place. These five questions will help your research:

1. How do you know he was a priest?
2. When did he serve?
3. What [parishes](#) did he serve?
4. When did he die?
5. Where is he buried?

The answers to these questions will help guide your research. A knowledge of being a priest could be demonstrated by an ordination certificate which would give the date and place of ordination. A death certificate generally includes information on the: date of death, cause of death, location of the city and state where burial took place, the name of the funeral home, and may list family members names and relationships. Information on where he served as a P.N.C.C. priest could be obtained in personal letters, newspaper articles, obituaries, and parish publications such as Sunday bulletins and newsletters. The newspapers could be either local or of one the three P.N.C.C. official newspapers.

One of the best resources to use to find a priest of the P.N.C.C. is a Church Anniversary book. The P.N.C.C. published three whole Church Anniversary books: *Po Drodze Życia* for the Church's 25th, *Księga Pamiątkowa "33"* for the Church's 33rd and *Album 1897 - 1957* for the Church's 60th Anniversary. These all identify priests and their parishes.

Po Drodze Życia (After the Way of Life) is about the P.N.C.C. and its parishes as they were in 1922, the P.N.C.C.'s 25th year. *Księga Pamiątkowa "33"* has photos and Polish text depicting the history of the P.N.C.C. on the 33rd Anniversary of the P.N.C.C. (1897 - 1930) and *Spójnia* on its 20th Anniversary of *Spójnia* (1909 - 1929). *Album 1897 - 1957* commemorates the 60th Anniversary of the P.N.C.C. It contains photos and historical commentary in both Polish and English about the priests, parishes and organizations of the P.N.C.C. through 1957. Articles describing the content of these three Anniversary books were published in *God's Field*.

Another source could be one of the official P.N.C.C. newspapers. The P.N.C.C. has had three official newspapers: *Straż [The Guard]*, *Rola Boża [God's Field]* and *Trybuna [Tribune]* and one Western Diocesan newspaper: *Posłanictwo [Mission]*. Of these, two have been indexed by the Very Rev. Casimir J. Grotnik: *Rola Boża [God's Field]*, and *Straż [The Guard]*. The Indexes for *Rola Boża [God's Field]* contain integrated lists of all authors and articles from 1923 - 1953 and 1954 - 1970. The Indexes are in two volumes: Volume I: 1923 - 1953, Volume II: 1954 - 1970. The *Rola Boża [God's Field]* newspaper indexes also have separate necrology lists, which provide obituaries. The Indexes for *Straż* are also in two volumes and are similar in content to those for *Rola Boża [God's Field]*.

The other two newspapers, *Trybuna* and *Posłanictwo*, are not indexed, so would have to be read page by page. A quick way to go through these would be to check the indexes for the priest's name, followed by reading the newspaper pages noted.

The next documents that could be checked are Synod Reports; first would be the list of Synod delegates, followed by the clergy lists included in the Diocesan Bishops' reports. There are separate proceedings for Synods

12 through 22, covering the period from 1967 to 2006. The minutes of earlier Synods are in two books prepared by Very Rev. Casimir J. Grotnik, which cover the 1st through the 11th. One is in Polish, *Synody Polskiego Narodowego Katolickiego Kościoła* and another is in English, *Minutes of the First Eleven General Synods of the P.N.C.C. 1904-1963*.

If the Parish is not known, the next places to check would be the Diocesan Records at the appropriate [Diocesan Chancery](#), the minutes and the Anniversary Books of the Parish.

Po Drodze Życia, Księga Pamiątkowa "33", Album 1897 - 1957, Synod Proceedings volumes XIII through XXII and *Rola Boża Indexes Volumes I and II* are available for purchase from the [P.N.C.C. Book Department](#).

Synody Polskiego Narodowego Katolickiego Kościoła and *Minutes of the First Eleven General Synods of the P.N.C.C. 1904-1963* are available through the [Central Diocese](#).

Straż Indexes Volumes I and II are available through the [Polish National Union of America](#).

Researching your P.N.C. Laity Ancestor

The search for a lay person is somewhat different. First some additional information must be found to give you a starting place. Here are eight questions which could provide some additional information:

1. To what parishes did he or she belong?
2. When did he or she belong to each parish?
3. When did he or she die?
4. Where is he or she buried?
5. Was the person baptized in a P.N.C.C. parish?
6. Did he or she receive First Communion or Confirmation in a P.N.C.C. parish?
7. Was he or she married in a P.N.C.C. parish?
8. Did he or she receive a funeral in a P.N.C.C. parish?

The first documents to be looked at would be Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, Marriage and Death. These records would be kept in a book at the [parish](#). They may also be available at the [Diocesan Chancery](#). This information is not kept at the P.N.C.C. National Archives.

The next set of records to research would be the meeting minutes and Anniversary Books of the parish. Some Anniversary Books have the signatures or names of the original members of the parish. The last items to be checked at the parish level would be the minutes and financial secretaries' documents of the parish which should include the names of all members of the parish.

Another source could be one of the official P.N.C.C. newspapers, as cited earlier in this article.

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