

(cover page)

Keepsake Book

For the First Anniversary

The Misunderstanding in St. Casimir's Parish in South Bend, Indiana,
which occurred on the 15th of February, 1914.

On Sunday Evening, 14 February, 1915,
at Warsaw Hall

By arrangement of the
Parish Committee
together with the
Literary Circle

(near the middle of the pamphlet)

(Krotka Historya Nieporozumienia w Parafii sw. Kazimierza Krol., na
“Warszawie”)

A Short History of the Misunderstanding in St. Casimir's Parish at
“Warsaw”

The Parish of St. Casimir's in the vicinity of “Warsaw” was organized in the year 1898 through the auspices of the late Rev. W. Czyzewski, C.S.C. Upon the building and construction of the church, the Rev. Anthony Zubowicz C.S.C. was assigned as a pastor. Several months later, another clergyman was appointed as pastor, the late Rev. Eligiusz Raczyński, C.S.C., and served as pastor until 11th of June, 1902, at which time death took the life of this pastor.

Following this pastor's death, a second pastor was appointed, Rev. Anthony Zubowicz, C.S.C., and served this parish from 1902 to June of 1913. An assistant pastor, Rev. Leon Szybowicz, C.S.C., and was well greeted and liked by the parishioners who proclaimed him as a very good Pole and a patriot. Upon the death of Rev. W. Czyzewski, C.S.C., Rev. Anthony Zubowicz became a pastor of St. Hedwig. Upon the departure of Rev. Zubowicz, St. Casimir's Parish was valued at \$100,000.00, the sum of \$15,000.00 was left in the treasury at this time.

After the departure of Rev. Anthony Zubowicz, a new pastor was appointed, Rev. M.T. Szalewski, C.S.C., who had been serving the St. Hedwig Parish as an assistant. From this appointment of Rev. Szalewski, a misunderstanding has taken place by the parishioners. A meeting was called by several members of the parish with Bishop Alerding to plead for an appointment of a pastor other than Rev. M.T. Szalewski.

The reason for seeking the dismissal of Rev. Szalewski is that in 1911, during Rev. Zubowicz's vacation, the administrator of St. Casimir's was Rev. M.T. Szalewski, C.S.C.; during this time a member of the Kaz Pulaski Falcon nest died, and Rev. Szalewski refused to admit a group of uniformed Falcons, which bore the body of their dead comrade into church. Rev. Szalewski's action was based on an order of the Bishop. Rev. Szalewski, aware of such an order, did not notify the members of the nest or the family of the deceased, knowing that this would cause unpleasant complaints from both of these parties. Therefore, all people in "Warsaw" lost faith and friendship with Rev. Szalewski.

At this time, the church committee had met and made a visitor's appointment with Bishop Alerding and presented a document of the misunderstanding between Rev. Szalewski and the parishioners. The Bishop accepted the committee, but refused to make any decision on the transfer of Rev. Szalewski and turned the matter over to the Provincial of Holy Cross, Rev. Morrissey. Rev. Morrissey quieted the parishioners by appointing a new pastor, Rev. Boniface Iwaszewski, C.S.C. After serving the parish for two months, ill health forced him to resign from the pastorship of St. Casimir's. On the 7th of October, 1913, Rev. Szalewski made his appearance at St. Casimir's and assumed the role of pastor. Once again the parish church committee met with Rev. Morrissey and him to replace Rev. Szalewski, who was seen as a not friendly and non-cooperative pastor. Rev. Morrissey decision was to have the church committee speak with Rev. Zubowicz and Rev. K. Stuczko in Chicago Illinois. They would decide who to appoint as pastor of St. Casimir's. This decision was not very acceptable to the council.

When Father Szalewski was made pastor, the assistant up to that time at St. Casimir's Parish, Rev. L. P. Szybowicz, C.S.C., received orders to leave the parish and go to St. Hedwig's; of this the parishioners energetically protested, until the end, the 17th of October 1913, when he left his

pastorship; before a great ovation, Szybowicz consented to take leave of the parish.

In a short time Rev. Szalewski saw that he is not well liked by the parishioners; alone he left the parish and returned to St. Hedwig's; he is seen in "Warsaw" no longer.

On several occasions, the church committee has met with the Provincial at Notre Dame and with the Bishop requesting the appointment of Rev. Leon Szybowicz, who is well liked by all the parishioners. After all the pleas that were made, the decision was to transfer Rev. Szybowicz to Portland Oregon and appoint Rev. Stanislawa Gruza, C.S.C.

When the day arrived to accept the pastor, the church committee refused his admittance to the rectory, since the position was that the pastor could only be Rev. Szybowicz or a secular priest.

The parish committee made plans on several occasions to meet with the Bishop and with the Holy Cross Provincial to change the parish pastor, they were informed that it would be of no help, the Bishop and Holy Cross Provincial had decided, and the pastor would be Rev. Gruza. The Bishop warned them that if this turmoil continued, he would close the church.

Rev. Gruza attempted to enter the rectory, but was refused. When the parish committee has asked Rev. Gruza to attend a meeting at Warsaw Hall pertaining to church activities, he decided not to attend; this caused a lose of confidence in him by the parishioners.

On several occasions, the parishioners have refused entrance of Rev. Gruza, causing the Bishop to warn that if this continues he would file a suit against the 24 members of the church committee. On the 7th of February, a law suit was filed in court on this matter.

All this time, the parish did not have a pastor, so the faithful recited their own prayers on Sundays in the church. On the 6th of November, 1913, with the permission of Rev. Morrissey, the Monstrona was removed to from St. Casimir's church and taken to St. Hedwig's church. It was a very upsetting occasion; and a hatred was developing in many because their rights had been taken from them.

Rev. Gruza had several members of the church committee on his side. The two factions could not see eye to eye.

On Saturday, 14th of February, 1914, it was formulated that Rev. Gruza and his supporters on the parish committee together with the Sheriff's Department would enter the rectory.

At 8 o'clock Rev. Gruza came to the church escorted by Sheriff Edward Swanson and some policemen. When they saw what was happening, they returned to headquarters.

At about 10 o'clock, a contingent of 50 police and sheriff deputies were called in to control "Warsaw" and to install Rev. Gruza as pastor. The parishioners who gathered around the church wanted to know what would happen next.

At 11 o'clock all the bells to ring in the church and the people wondered what would happen.

The police approached and tried to make entrance into the rectory, parishioners were pushed and shoved and beaten with night-clubs and fists. This was called the bloody Sunday in the history of Polonia. Several ladies were bleeding from blows sustained by police. Many husbands, whose wives were attacked, came to their aid to prevent further massacre.

At this time the doors were forced open to the rectory. An automobile then arrived, with Rev. Gruza as a passenger and intending to enter the rectory. Rev. Gruza witnessed what was happening with the people and ordered the chauffeur to leave. Several parishioners received bloody wounds.

It was rumored that the Governor of the state would send the National Guard to the parish, but this did not materialize.

Next week Tuesday and Wednesday, several parishioners were jailed because of this uncalled for turmoil.

On Monday, 8th of March (translator's note, correct date is Monday March 9) dispositions were taken from the accused in police court by special judge

Albert Slick. The accused were represented by attorneys W.A. Grzesk, Geo. Kurtz, Geo. Sands and J.V. Wypsynski. The case continued more than a week. The final judgments found guilty: I. Kimnec, K. Graczyka, W. Banaszaka, L. Michor and S. Banaszaka, who were sentenced to go free for \$25 fine and costs. The sentences of the accused were not agreed to and were appealed to superior court, which finally came to court and were dismissed in January 1915. The charges against the other accused were dismissed in court. In the time that the case was being heard, Father Stanislaus Gruza with a company of sheriff's deputies arrived on a rainy day and orderly took possession of St. Casimir's Parish, and since that time he remains, with a certain handful of favored parishioners, because a majority of former parishioners frequent other churches.

The Bishop filed a lawsuit against F.A. Witucki and Wojc. Kajzer for \$10,000.00 for instigating this turmoil in the parish. An judgment was issued in January 1915 dismissing this suit.

Such is the short history of the parish and the church in the misunderstandings which lead to "Bloody Sunday", and for this occasion we have come this day, for this dispute continues to this day.