

Dear Readers

In 1622, Pope Gregory XV established the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide and appointed it to direct missionary activity throughout the world. After a period of “patronage mission” entrusted to the kings of Spain and Portugal in the overseas structures of the Church, the Pope once again became the shepherd with full responsibility for spreading the faith. Propaganda Fide initiated a new era in the history of missions in modern times.

The first part of the 153rd volume of the “Nurt SVD” recalls the important decisions and events that marked 400 years of the institution: formation of missionary territories (F. Jabłoński), the Instruction of 1659 (R. Zawadzki), formation of missionaries in the 17th century (M.A. Rostkowski, T. Szyszka), the courageous correspondence of E. de Mazenod with the Congregation (K. Lubowicki).

The monumental work of Gregory XV, which, by the decision of John Paul II (1988), is continued by the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, marked the Universal Church with a missionary paradigm. Pope Francis, under the constitution *Praedicate Evangelium* (2022), merged the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith with the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization into a single body – the Dicastery for Evangelization headed directly by the Pope (M. Kacprzyk).

In the second part of the volume, the themes of enculturation and contextualisation in the age of Eurocentrism (P.B. Steffen) are interwoven with the issues of missionary spirituality of St Arnold Janssen, the founder of three missionary congregations (S. Orečný, J.E. González Magaña, I. Král). Tomáš Halík’s vision of “religious faith” will also appear. This is how the Czech philosopher and theologian defines a life attitude open to adventurousness and the search for its meaning (K. Jasiński). Does an exclusively optimistic religion lead to a salvific utopia while Christian pessimism ends in the abandonment of all hope? The theses of Marian Zdziechowski, who is a representative of ‘religious pessimism’, are tempered by Francis. The Pope warns against an exclusively negative assessment of the effects of secularisation, which leads to pessimism, bitterness and a “crusading spirit” in defence of the faith (M. Gawlik).

The volume ends with a grateful theme of Polish and Crimean Tatars. The presence of Tatar motifs in small sacral architecture from Lower Silesia to the Zamość region is a discovery (J.A. Krajcarz). Relations between the Polish and Crimean Tatar ethnic groups after the annexation of the Crimean peninsula by Russia in 2014 are gaining a new dimension today, especially in the Polish migrant diaspora (M. Łyszczarz).

Enjoy your reading!

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