



Annual Fundraiser - Wadowice on the Potomac



Chairlady Irena Mirecki welcoming guests at the Wadowice celebration

On December 1, 2012 the Friends of John Paul II Foundation held their annual Fundraiser. The Awards Banquet is so named for Wadowice, Poland, the birthplace of Pope John Paul II. The banquet room at Ft. Myer Officers' Club was beautifully decorated and filled to capacity.

The program began with a welcoming by Irena Mirecki who chaired the event. She was followed by Cecelia Glembocki, President, who spoke about the Foundation and our current goal to keep alive the legacy of Pope John Paul II. The Master of Ceremonies was Raymond Glembocki, former President. The Opening Prayer was delivered by Fr. Michael Morris.

For dinner attendees had a choice of Prime Rib, Stuffed Flounder or Chicken Florentine, with all the sides, red or white wine, dessert and beverages.

Following dinner, the program resumed with an introduction of Father Morris by Linda Lock. Father Morris spoke about Blessed John Paul II as his inspiration.

The audience was clearly moved and inspired by Fr. Michael's recounting of the Holy Father's influence on the youth of the world as well as many other groups both Catholic and non-Catholic. It made many listeners who are members of the Friends group proud to be part of keeping his legacy alive and felt renewed enthusiasm to do so.

Cecilia Glembocki introduced Vir-

ginia Delegate Barbara Comstock, our Awardee that evening. Following the Presentation of the Award which read: In appreciation for promoting the *Legacy of John Paul II*.

Mrs. Comstock thanked the organization and spoke about her experience and dedication to John Paul II. Through her personal conviction, she realized the importance of John Paul's life and teachings, and that his legacy

had relevance to political and public life. Delegate Comstock's commitment to those values and her political courage to introduce House Joint Resolution No. 734 were indeed worthy of our special recognition.

Resolution 734 acknowledged John Paul II's unique contribution to defending the dignity of the human person during his papacy and after his visit to Poland in 1979 which led to the end of communism in Europe. The House bill passed with numerous supporters and now this proclamation will be displayed at the Blessed John Paul II Shrine and at the John Paul II Institute of Marriage and Family on the campus of Catholic University. When Mrs. Comstock made the presentation to the Holocaust Museum in Richmond, it was to remember John Paul's commitment to ecumenicalism and his broad reach to the world for peace, humility and respect for the human soul.

She is an inspiration for us all to contribute in the way we are most able. As a wife, mother and business woman she was also able to promote John Paul II's legacy in a unique way.

Ray Glembocki, the MC, summed up our future goals and Father Canon Philip Majka our Chaplain gave the closing Prayer. It was a beautiful event and guests came away satisfied and inspired. We are indebted to Mary Clare Haskin for sponsoring the event at the Ft. Myer Club.



Honoree VA Delegate. Barbara Comstock

From the President

Cecilia Glembocki

This is the time of year that we can look back over our past year and remember our loved ones who have passed on to a heavenly place to look upon us and guide us. We recall their memories as though they were yesterday. Such are the treasures of life and so precious to us in our minds.

Families and friends remembered them through their kind donations to the JP II Foundation and we can therefore know in our hearts that their gift inspires us to carry on the Legacy of Blessed John Paul II. His memory lives on.

Our efforts to promote John Paul's legacy is supported by such generous gifts. Our programs were graciously accepted by educators, administrators and the religious. There is a renewed interest in the life of Karol Wojtyla

Many of us look upon organizations as a place to have meetings, celebrate our Blessed John Paul's life, birthday or an event like Wadowice on the Potomac. Time goes by and John Paul II will always be remembered for the things he did; but yet it was more important to remember what he said. He created memories in all of us. His deeds and words are like monuments in our minds.

So be it, as we have a year filled with remembering Blessed John Paul II in our Educational Outreach program we were blessed to have thousands of children exposed to Blessed John Paul II. It is through the lesson plans, posters, and bookmarks and facts of the Blessed Pope that they were revealed to a new generation. It is with our vision we have for the future to continue to expose young people to His life.

It is with enthusiasm that we can see the renewed joy that Father Michael Morris had during our Wadowice on the Potomac. There is a generation of people, religious and others who still hold dear the memory of a man who so inspired them that they continue to spread his word through being a religious or as we are to spread his memory to all those who didn't have that moment to remember his words, deeds or memories he left upon us. We as a foundation will continue in faith to bring his teachings to life.

May you have the gladness of Christmas which is hope, the spirit of Christmas which is peace; and the heart of Christmas which is love.



Traditional Polish Christmas Tree



As is our custom, members of the Friends decorated a Polish Christmas tree at the new John Paul II Shrine of the Knights of Columbus. The nine foot pre-lit tree was donated by the Friends group and decorated by Richard and Bernadette Wiermanski and Robert and Mary Flanagan.

We were pleased to be able to continue the tradition and to add our Christmas contribution of the Polish tree to the beautiful display of creches from around the world. Although the Shrine has not been officially opened, some visitors are allowed to view the Christmas displays.



Shrine employees who helped decorate the tree: l-r Juan Reyes, Anna Jimenez and Caro Alcuaz

Wadowice Scenes



Fr. Michael Morris with the Glembockis



Master of ceremonies Ray Glembocki



Barbara Comstock receiving her award presented by Irena Mirecki and Cecilia Glembocki



Linda Lock introducing Fr. Morris



Fr. Canon Philip Majka



Fr. Michael Morris

Awards Granted to the Glembockis

The President of Poland, Bronislaw Komorowski awarded the Cavalier's Cross, Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland to Raymond Glembocki and his wife Cecelia Glembocki. The ceremony was held on November 8, 2012 at 5:30 pm in the Washington, DC Embassy of the Republic of Poland. The medals were presented to them by Ambassador Ryszard Schnepf.

The ceremony coincided with the embassy's celebration of the Polish National Holiday of Independence. It was attended by over 250 guests from across the broad spectrum of the Polonia, Washington officialdom, the resident Diplomatic Corps, various military representatives etc. The event was conducted entirely in Polish.

Ambassador Schnepf took the opportunity to introduce himself and become acquainted with the Polish-American Community. He awarded 11 men and women with various degrees of Polish decorations for their contributions to Polonia and Poland. Waldemar Izdebski spoke on behalf of



Ambassador Schnepf pinning award on Raymond Glembocki

all the honorees thanking the ambassador and Poland for the individually bestowed medals. He also thanked all the involved families for their support and understanding, without which the medalists could not dedicate as much time and involvement in the various recognized causes.

Everyone then proceeded to enjoy a grand sumptuous buffet and much camaraderie into the evening, with Ambassador Schnepf graciously available to personally speak with just about everyone who wished to do so.

R. P.-Polish American Journal



Cecilia Glembocki wearing her medal



Group attending the ceremonies listen to the ambassadors introduction

Irena Mirecki

Irena Mirecki passed away suddenly on Thursday December 13, 2012 at her home in McLean VA. She is survived by her loving husband Thaddeus; her two daughters Joanna (Richard) Millunchick of Ann Arbor, Michigan and Marta (Mark Kane) of the District of Columbia, four grandchildren Benjamin, Ava, Teresa, and Cyprian, and two brothers and a sister of Mundelein, Illinois.

She was born on December 11, 1944 in Austria, in Mautthausen concentration camp after her pregnant mother was arrested by the German occupiers. Her father was killed in an escape attempt during that deportation. After the war, she and her mother returned to Poland and lived in the Wroclaw region of southwest Poland, because her parents' native territory was annexed by the Soviet Union. After enduring years of hardships in post-war Communist Poland, her family immigrated to Chicago IL when she was 18. She married Thaddeus in October of 1967, and they raised their daughters steeped in the Polish community of the Chicago area.

Her passions were the Catholic Church and advocacy of issues important to Polonia. She was active in a number of organizations, such as the Polish Scouting Organization (in which she met her husband) and the Emilia Plater Polish School in the Chicago suburbs, where she was President of the Parents Association. She moved with her husband and younger daughter Marta to the Washington DC area in 1987, and continued to work in advancing Polonian causes. She was a two-term president of the Washington Chapter of the Friends of John Paul II Foundation.

As an active Board Member of the Friends of John Paul II Foundation she took part in and supported all their activities to raise funds and continue the Legacy of Blessed John Paul II by chairing events or serving on the committees. Other activities included volunteer office work

for the Polish Apostolate section of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The fall of communism in Poland presented her with new opportunities to help the people there, by involvement with social programs initiated by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, such as Breast Cancer Awareness Program for Poland, and ABC XXI, a program promoting parents reading to their children. Her many official functions included several terms as Chairwoman of the Parish Council of Our Lady Queen of Poland Parish and service on the Board of Directors of the American Council for Polish Culture, a nation-wide umbrella organization for regional associations promoting arts and culture. For many years she served as an officer of the Washington Metropolitan Area Division of the Polish American Congress, in the



roles of Corresponding Secretary and Membership Chair. She was a founding member and Vice President of the Stefan Korbonski Foundation, an organization dedicated to publishing works combating falsehoods about wartime and postwar Polish history.

She was known as an energetic advocate for Polish culture abroad, and widely recognized for her leadership. Her awards included: Cavalier's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland awarded by the President of Poland, the Order Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice from Pope John Paul II, the Award for Exceptional Service from the Polish American Congress, a Certificate of Civic Achievement from the Polish American Historical Society, the Medal of Merit for Faithful Service and Manifesting the Kingdom Award, both from the Archdiocese of Washington DC.

Her good humor, outgoing personality and, above all, her active engagement in our community, will be sorely missed.

Chaplains' Corner



**Father Canon
Philip S. Majka**
Chaplain:
Diocese of Arlington

**Let there
be light!**

The United States Postal Service has issued the 2012 Religious Stamp. It has the word CHRISTMAS as the bottom line! Christmas means Christ sending forth. Saint Joseph is seen leading Mary, the spouse of the Holy Spirit holding the infant Jesus into a valley of verdant pastures brightened by a fiery red sky. The Holy Family is led by a bright star to awake the consciousness of man-kind. Joseph the husband of Mary and foster father of Jesus is accomplishing his task. Mary, sometimes called the morning star [Stella Matutina] and Jesus, the light of the world, are entering into a world filled with the fire of God's love. Christ wished that this fire be ignited. He challenges us to be light of the world as the salt of the earth keeping our lights burning brightly.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. My prayer for all of us is that we keep the reason of this season of light, happiness and peace all the days of our lifetime.

Let there be light!

Duszpasterz Polski



**Ks. Father. Jan Fiedurek,
S. Ch.**
Chaplain:
Archdioceses of Washington

Dear Countrymen:

As I write to you, we are experiencing Advent in the Church; a time of awaiting the meeting with the Lord. Thesedays, people are always in a hurry to get somewhere. They are prisoners of the clock, alarms and telephone. They cannot wait. They are impatient, demanding new sensations. Whereas God has time. He is Lord of time. His attribute is eternity. God does not hurry. God waits...He waits to meet with man. What to do, so as not to miss the meeting with God- do not stop at holiday promotions, the madness of purchases and presents under the Christmas tree, the mailings sent with pre-set texts of greetings. Advent is just so the meeting with God and us has more sense, to make it the exceptional event He deserves.

My wish for you: that the deep experience of Advent will strengthen you in faith and love and prepare you for a joyous Holyday of Christ's birth; through fervent prayer, reading Holy Scripture and above all, a sincere experience of the Sacrament of Penance.

May the Newborn Christ, whom you will meet at the Holyday Eucharist, endow you and your families with joy and peace, and grant you a New Year that blesses you with everything good.

To All Our Members and Donors

We extend to you our gratitude and appreciation for your continued patronage and loyal support throughout the years. Our administrative needs are minimal, so we are able to send a very large percentage of the membership dues and all of the Year End Gift Giving donations to the Foundation in Rome, Italy. Because of your support, the Foundation is able to use a considerable amount of the funds for scholarships to sponsor poor and talented young people coming from Eastern and Central European countries to attend the Catholic University in Lublin, Poland.

A Memorial or Special Occasion Donation in remembrance of a family member or friend may be made to the Friends of John Paul II Foundation, Inc. This is a wonderful way to make a lasting gift that will perpetuate our Bl. Pope John Paul II's legacy and his elevation to sainthood. The names with the donation are forwarded to the John Paul II Foundation in Rome, Italy and they are acknowledged by the Director. Please use the form below to send in a Memorial or Special Occasion Donation.

The Holy Father Pope John Paul II said during a meeting with benefactors of the Foundation on October 23, 2001 that "The most outstanding of all initiatives is the fund for scholarships for young people from Central and Eastern Europe and from other countries of the ex-Soviet Union. After completing their studies at various faculties of the Catholic University of Lublin and other Polish universities, many students return to their countries and have become promoters of science and culture solidly based on perennial values. This work is invaluable! Whosoever invests in the human person, in his overall development, never loses. The results of this investment are imperishable".

Donations since our last publication

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- \$10-Student \$25-Individual \$35-Couple \$100-Supporting \$2,500-Life Benefactor*
*name goes on next plaque in the Home in Rome

I am a Life Benefactor and wish to make an additional gift \$ _____

All gifts including stocks, bonds, mutual funds, last wills and testaments are always welcome.
The Friends of John Paul II Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and donations are tax deductible.

\$ _____ Memorial or Special Occasion Donation for _____

Enclosed is my check made payable to:
Friends of John Paul II Foundation, Inc.

Please mail with this form to
Membership Chair, Gloria Klepczynski
1204 Whetstone Drive
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Visit our Web Site: www.jp2friends.org

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*The John Paul II Foundation
was established in Vatican City,
Italy, 1981.*

*Wishing
you a
Joyous
Christmas
and God's
Blessings
in the
New Year*



Friends of John Paul II Foundation, Inc.

NEWSLETTER

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