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Andrzej Kopiczko

CHARITABLE INITIATIVES OF WARMIA'S CLERGY IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Charity is defined as Church activities that aim to “minimize and eliminate poverty, to assist the needy in becoming financially independent and further their personal growth”¹. This type of assistance dates back to the beginnings of Christianity, and the first historical records mentioning charity work are found in the Acts of the Apostles and the letters of the Apostles. Beginning from the 4th century, attempts were made to institutionalize charitable work by opening church-run hospitals and poorhouses. The needy received help from brotherhoods and guilds, and as of the 15th century, from mounts of piety, institutional pawnbrokers run as a charity. The charitable initiatives that had originated before the Council of Trent were continued through the end of the 18th century, and they began to take on a different form only in the following century. Although church-run hospitals, shelters, foundations, donations and grants for the needy were still encountered, many countries introduced a system of state welfare provision. The Church also became more committed to helping the needy as part of the new institutions, mostly charity and welfare organizations. In historiography, this body of doctrine is referred to as Catholic social teaching.

In the 19th century, Warmia was a part of Prussia where social services were regulated by the General State Laws for the Prussian States of 1794. Citizens who had no relatives, but were registered tax payers, were entitled to assistance from their respective province. The others constituted the responsibility of the state, mostly through hospices. Unions and associations of the poor run by secular authorities played an important role, but they were unable to solve all social problems². Charity programs were also carried out

¹ R. Łukaszyk, F. Woronowski, *Dobroczyenne duszpasterstwo*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 3, Lublin 1985, col. 1385–1389.

² W. Schaffer, *Staatliche Neuordnung der Armenpflege seit Aufklärung und Säkularisation*, in: *Geschichte des kirchlichen Lebens in den deutschsprachigen Ländern seit dem Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Bd. 5: *Caritas und soziale Dienste*, hrsg. E. Gatz, Freiburg 1997, pp. 43–45.

by religious institutions and organizations, but in the 19th century, most of them were created on a local basis in parishes and monasteries³. The Kulturkampf policy put a temporary halt to the development of such organizations, but the law of 21 May 1886 reestablished the former role of nuns and monks in charity institutions. This legislative change revived hospitals, orphanages and care homes, and it fostered the emergence of new initiatives which, in the Warmia diocese, were introduced mainly by the Sisters of St. Catherine and St. Elizabeth with the support of local parish priests⁴.

In Warmia, the beginnings of the 19th century did not witness spectacular change. All brotherhoods serving the poor were closed down, but hospitals and hospices continued to operate. Most of them faced financial difficulties. In 1772, the possessions of bishops and the Cathedral Chapter were confiscated by the Prussian government which went on to seize the property of the Collegiate Chapter in Nowe Miasto and Bernardine estates in 1810. The Society of Jesus, which was not a major contributor of welfare services in the Warmia diocese, was dissolved in 1780. The former principal donors, the bishops and the Cathedral Chapter, were no longer able to give financial support to all social and charity initiatives. The hospitals financed by the Canons fell into decline. At the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, Olsztyn had two hospitals that were financed mostly by the Cathedral Chapter in Frombork. The leprosy hospital and the Holy Spirit Hospital did not meet the new requirements, and they were sold in 1825 and 1872, respectively. The West witnessed the emergence of modern, well-equipped hospitals with professional medical staff, but Warmia lagged far behind in this regard. New epidemics and plagues, economic development and population growth forced the local authorities to build new hospitals. This was also the case in Olsztyn. A committee of 14 members was thus formed, and it was headed by Baltazar Józef Oster, a local pharmacist, member of the city council and the parish council. Archpriest Walenty Blockhagen, a highly esteemed member of the clerical community, a good organizer and a generous donor, also played an important role in the committee. The committee's composition testified to the local community's preference for parish-ran hospitals. This tradition was upheld in the draft statute which was forwarded for the approval of Warmia Bishop Józef Ambroży Geritz in March 1858. The new hospital was opened in 1867⁵.

³ E. Gatz, *Kirchliche Mitarbeit in der öffentlichen Armenpflege. Die Neuanfänge einer eigenständigen kirchlichen Armenpflege*, pp. 57–58. In the past, religious brotherhoods, hospices and orphanages had been operated mostly by parishes, but bishops and chapters significantly contributed to their efforts. In the 19th century, they mainly inspired and supervised charities, while the actual work was done by parish priests and monasteries. Due to growing costs and small revenues generated by grants and foundations, charity initiatives were largely financed by municipal authorities.

⁴ R. Traba, *Niemcy – Warmiacy – Polacy 1871–1914. Z dziejów niemieckiego ruchu katolickiego i stosunków polsko-niemieckich w Prusach*, Olsztyn 1994, p. 112.

⁵ A. Kopiczko, *Szpitalnictwo w Olsztynie w XIX i w pierwszej połowie XX wieku*, in: *Olsztyn 1353–2003*, eds. S. Achremczyk and W. Ogrodziński, Olsztyn 2003, pp. 242–244.

A detailed list of all foundations and charity institutions ran by local priests was developed on 14 August 1837, indicating that 26 organizations had been supervised by the Cathedral Chapter. The initiatives included student scholarships awarded by the Canons (15), a foundation for the sick and needy, the Holy Spirit Hospital in Frombork, donations for the patients, two foundations supporting the needy, including farmers, Bishop Potocki's foundation in Braniewo, a hospital in Święta Lipka, a fund supporting people suffering from an illness or disability, a fund for fire victims in Warmia, funds for young women and endowment funds. They were followed by charity organizations ran by the archdeaconry, including in Olsztyn, Königsberg and Orneta. The latter hosted the Holy Sprit Hospital and St. George's Hospital, while Olsztyn was the seat of the Holy Spirit Hospital and the Gemms Benefice in Bartąg (part of the Olsztyn archdeaconry). The highest number of foundations and charity institutions were set up in the Lidzbark archdeaconry (which, in theory, was still a seat of Warmia's bishops), including the castle hospital for patients from the bishop's palace, a hospital for the poor, St. George's hospital, a benefice, two foundations, as well as four organizations in the villages of Ignalin (2 foundations), Kraszewo (hospital) and Babiak (foundation). The Dobre Miasto archdeaconry operated five charities in the city (including the Holy Spirit Hospital) and two hospitals in the villages of Świątki and Eldyty Wielkie. Braniewo was the seat of four hospitals of St. Andrew's, Maasianum, Barschianum and Nowe Miasto, while Pieniężno hosted St. George's Hospital and three foundations, including a fund for unmarried girls. Five charities each were found in the archdeaconry of Reszel and Jeziorany, including two hospitals (one hospital for the poor) and the Franciszek Schmidt foundation for single women in Reszel, and a hospital and foundations in Jeziorany. The Barczewo archdeaconry operated a hospital in the city and three health institutions in the villages of Klebark Wielki, Klewki and Ramsowo. Königsberg was mentioned at the end of the list as the seat of only one foundation for education⁶.

The above institutions and charities had been created before the 19th century, but they continued to receive financial support from the Canons of the Cathedral Chapter and parishes, testifying to the local clergy's dedication to helping the needy.

In the 19th century, the Sisters of St. Catherine and St. Elizabeth participated in the efforts to build modern hospitals, and they became increasingly involved in nursing services. From among 15 institutions erected at the time, several were built under the supervision of parish priests. Edward Hermann, the parish priest of Biskupiec Reszelski, later the auxiliary bishop of the Warmia diocese, initiated the construction of a hospital in Olsztyn and St. Joseph's Hospital in Biskupiec Reszelski in 1858. In both institutions, the board

⁶ Archive of the Warmia Archdiocese in Olsztyn (AAWO), AB J A 4. The new hospital in Kraszewo was built by the local parish priest, Piotr Krieger. – A. Kranich, *Kirche und Kirchspiel Reichenberg. Ein Gedenkblatt zum 50jährigen Priesterjubiläum des Pfarrers A. Hosmann 1853–1903*, Braunsberg 1903, p. 33.

of directors was headed by parish priests. St. Joseph's Hospital had 40 beds and a chapel, and the patients were nursed by the Sisters of St. Catherine⁷.

The legacy handed down by Ambroży Kampsbach, the parish priest of Tolkowiec, enabled the construction of the Marian Hospital in Braniewo (1863) which was run by the local archdeaconry. Kampsbach purchased a house and a garden near the Frombork Gate, and the estate was later transformed into a hospital. The facility was expanded in 1865, 1879, 1880 and 1881–1882. In 1863–1887, patients were nursed by the Sisters of St. Borromeus who were later replaced by the Sisters of St. Catherine. The hospital was supervised by the curia headed by the local archpriest⁸.

The Cathedral Canons were in charge of St. Joseph's Hospital in Frombork which was rebuilt in 1805 and expanded in 1855. The hospital could accommodate 16 pensioners. The patients were nursed by the Sisters of St. Catherine and treated by physicians from Frombork⁹. The archpriests of Dobrze Miasto ran a hospital by the same name in the city. The first building was erected in the 17th century, but it proved to be too small, and a new facility was built in 1878 in the vicinity of St. Nicholas' church. In 1892, the hospital underwent yet another expansion scheme, and it was provided with a chapel six years later. Medical care was provided by the local doctors, and nursing services were offered by the Sisters of St. Catherine¹⁰. The Marian Hospital in Malbork which was opened in 1866 also proved to be too small to accommodate the growing needs for medical services, and a reconstruction effort began in 1896. A chapel was added, and the building was merged with the Holy Spirit Hospital. The Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul were the hospital's nursing staff until the end of World War I.¹¹ St. George's Hospital in Pieniężno, built in the 17th century, was refurbished in 1887–1888 and adapted to modern medical standards. It continued to be operated by the parish, and the patients remained in the care of local physicians and the Sisters of St. Catherine (1888)¹².

Edward Stock, the parish priest of Barczewo in 1869–1889, bought in 1889 a house which was turned into St. Anthony's Hospital. The demand for medical care soon outgrew the hospital's capabilities, and in 1901, Barczewo's new parish priest, Jan Hirschberg, ordered the construction of a new building. The project was completed in 1903. The new hospital had two operating theaters, surgery preparation facilities, a sterilization room and a bath. The hospital remained parish property, and its staff comprised two doctors and six Sisters of St. Catherine¹³.

⁷ R. Teichert, *Geschichte der Stadt Bischofsburg*, Bischofsburg 1935, p. 105; J. Steinki, *Katholische Caritas und katholisches Vereinswesen in der Diözese Ermland*, Braunsberg 1931, p. 22.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 23.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 35.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 24–25.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 27–28.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 28.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 29; A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, part 2: *Słownik*, Olsztyn 2003, pp. 278–279.

Jan Briese, the parish priest of Orneta, was also deeply committed to charity work. Having assumed pastoral responsibilities in 1896, he became a member of the Prussian Landtag. In 1879, he organized celebrations commemorating the 500th jubilee of the parish in Orneta. Briese built St. Elisabeth's Hospital in the city and started a foundation by the same name. Funds were donated by a female resident of Karkajmy by the last name of von Shau. The first part of the new building was put into use in 1875, and the entire hospital was expanded in 1899 to accommodate 70 patients. Nursing services were provided by the Sisters of St. Catherine¹⁴.

In the 19th century, the Warmia diocese was deeply committed to caring for children, in particular orphans. Although orphan care was the domain of nuns (the Sisters of St. Vincent, St. Catherine and St. Elisabeth), the clergy readily offered their assistance, and care centers were often established in local parishes. The achievements of St. Joseph's orphanage in Lidzbark Warmiński deserve special mention. The facility was opened in 1859 by Warmia Bishop Józef Geritz, a distinguished supporter of charity initiatives. In 1851, Geritz donated 4,000 thalers to a church in Kwidzyn and 10,000 thalers to a mission in the diaspora. Three years later, he gave financial support to a girls' school in Jeziorany (1,000 thalers). His contribution fostered the reconstruction of the former bishops' castle in Lidzbark Warmiński in 1859, which was turned into an orphanage for 160 children aged 2 to 15 years. The bishop initially donated 25,000 marks to the project, expanding his contribution by a further 10,000 and 6,000 thalers in January and March of 1863. The Cathedral Chapel was placed in charge of the orphanage, and it appointed two curators for the job. Pastoral care was provided by chaplains, and the orphanage received financial support from many members of the clergy¹⁵.

Antoni Arendt, head of the Teaching Seminar in Braniewo, pioneered a project for teaching deaf children. In 1845, he opened a small school for hearing-impaired students in Braniewo. A similar initiative was launched in Reszel in 1881¹⁶. The local archpriest, Paweł Romahn, also contributed to the cause by creating the Warmian Society for Helping the Deaf. He was assisted in his work by vicar Eugeniusz Brachvogel¹⁷.

New foundations for the poor were started in the 19th century by Canons Jan Feyerstein (1888), Rudolf Borowski (15 April 1888, a facility for impover-

¹⁴ J. Steinki, *Katholische Caritas und katholisches Vereinswesen in der Diözese Ermland*, pp. 29–31; A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, part 2: *Słownik*, p. 38.

¹⁵ The list has been published in *Katalog duchowieństwa katolickiego w diecezji warmińskiej (do 1945 roku)*, p. 92. cf. *Das St. Josephi-Stift in Heilsberg 1859–1933*, Heilsberg 1933, p. 15nn.

¹⁶ Cf. A. Steinki, *Katholische Caritas und katholisches Vereinswesen in der Diözese Ermland*, pp. 82–84; A. Arendt also bequeathed funds to hospitals and charities (including 11,000 marks for Braniewo and around 355 marks in annuities for Orneta). – *Ermländisches Kirchenblatt*, 1936, p. 247; F. Buchholz, *Bilder aus Wormditts Vergangenheit*, 2nd ed., Wormditt 1931, p. 130.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 24; J. Steinki, *Katholische Caritas und katholisches Vereinswesen in der Diözese Ermland*, pp. 82–83.

ished maidens and widows) and Józef Neumann who established an endowment fund of 4,500 marks for elderly women in Bisztynek, donated 7,500 marks to the purchase of First Communion supplies and 3,000 marks to St. Joseph's orphanage in Lidzbark Warmiński. Extensive support was also provided by Warmia's bishops, in particular Andrzej S. Hatten, Józef Geritz (ordained before 1821) and Andrzej Thiel. Upon learning that some children from the poorest families could not afford a hot meal at school, Thiel ordered that 30 meals be served every day at his expense. He donated 565 marks, raised during celebrations of his 80th birthday, to a church construction project in Orzechowo near Olsztyn¹⁸. He also gave financial support to the reconstruction of a hospital in Reszel in 1897. Canon Karol Diters von Dittersdorf made a bequest to a monastery school in Braniewo¹⁹.

Warmia's parish priests also made frequent displays of generosity. Georg Matern mentioned a number of benefactors, among them fathers Franciszek Austen, Piotr Baranowski, Kazimierz Koitka, Jan Neubauer, Jan Pulta and Józef Setta (who made a bequest of 1,500 marks to single women in Bisztynek), adding that the list was incomplete²⁰. Father Jan Szadowski purchased property in Wielbark where he started an orphanage for Polish children²¹. Father Dominik Wobbe created a trust for the upkeep of two children in St. Joseph's orphanage in Lidzbark Warmiński²². Father Antoni Paschke established a mortgage bond of 7,000 thalers in his will, and the funds were to be divided equally between the Sisters of St. Borromeus (Sisters of Mercy) in Braniewo and the Cathedral Chapter in aid of the poor in East and West Prussia²³. Father Józef Teschner was also a generous donor who built churches in Pasym and Klebark Wielki, as well as two churches in Olsztyn in the 20th century²⁴. The list would not be complete without father Feliks Schreiber who initiated the Copernicus Catholic Home project in Olsztyn and personally participated in construction works²⁵.

¹⁸ AAWO, Olsztyn 935 (13 October 1906); E. Poschmann, *Der Kreis Rößel. Ein ostpreußisches Heimatbuch*, 3rd ed., Kaltenkirche/Holstein 1991, p. 300.

¹⁹ A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1525–1821*, part 2: *Słownik*, Olsztyn 2000, p. 54.

²⁰ G. Matern, *Die katholischen Wohlthätigkeits-Anstalten und –Vereine sowie das katholisch-soziale Vereinsleben in der Diözese Ermland*, Freiburg 1900, pp. 47–49.

²¹ T. Grygier, *Z zagadnień diaspory na Warmii i Mazurach*, KMW, 1959, No. 2, p. 171.

²² *Das St. Josephi-Stift in Heilsberg 1859–1933*, p. 21.

²³ AAWO, AB, H 295e (Presbyteri in Crossen), p. 40.

²⁴ Cf. W. Barczewski, *Kiermaszy na Warmii i inne pisma wybrane*, ed. W. Ogrodziński, Olsztyn 1984, p. 162.

²⁵ Many priests financed the construction of new churches in Mazury. Financial grants supporting the construction of a shrine in Prabuty were made by Marcin Behlau of Sątopy, Adolf Keuchel of Dobre Miasto, Ferdynand Engelbrecht of Głotowo and Piotr Baranowski of Tychnowy. – *Ermländische Volksblätter*, 17 February 1874. Lists of the clergy who supported churches in Mazury were published by *Pastoralblatt für die Diözese Ermland* after collections organized by the St. Adalbert Association and the St. Brunon Association. Jan Oswald, a professor at the Hosianum Secondary School, bequeathed 15,000 marks to priests in mission

Other aid projects initiated by Warmia's clergy in the 19th century were a continuation of charity traditions from the previous centuries, and they included scholarships. Educational support was a priority goal in the charity work of bishops, the Cathedral Chapter and parish clergy. Several scholarship schemes from the previous centuries had been preserved, mostly the trusts and funds created by Frombork Canons Jan Preuck²⁶, Kazimierz Michał Dąbrowski, Paweł Dominik Drommler, Jan Hannowa, Eustachy Knobelsdorf, Michał Konarski, Jan Kreczmer, Józef Kretzmann, Jan Jerzy Kunigk, Marquardt and Runesius, Maciej Montanus, Jan Rucki (Rudzki), Michał Siedler, Przemysław Szemborowski, Szymon Treter and Euchard Zornhausen, Reszel Canon Laurenty Fredler and Sątopy Canon Piotr Filitz²⁷. The extent to which scholarship funds continued to be awarded in the 19th century remains unknown, but the fact that they were listed by the diocesan curia testifies to their significance.

In the first half of the 19th century, the scholarship scheme received a cash injection from a trust created by Bishop Andrzej S. Hatten. The bishop bequeathed 10,000 thalers to scholarships for youths attending a secondary school in Braniewo²⁸. Financial support was also provided by Henryk Schmülling, principal of Braniewo's secondary school in 1811–1827²⁹.

Bishop Józef Hohenzollern funded three annual awards for Seminary alumni who delivered the best sermons. The students of Józef Scheill and Bernard Busse financed scholarships for the authors of best papers in the subjects they taught³⁰.

Canon priest Rudolf Borowski (died in 1890) bequeathed 6,000 marks in Prussian bonds with 3.5% interest to the diocesan curia. The funds were to further the education of youths from the Borowski family as well as other students. The bequest was officially approved by the Prussian government in

outposts (including Kętrzyn, Wystruć, Bartoszyce). The legacy was approved by the Königsberg government on 8 November 1885 - Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin–Dahlem (GStA), HA, Rep. 76 IV, Sect. 2, Abt. XIX, No. 10, Bd. 1 Schenkungen und Vermächtnisse zu Gunsten des Bischöflichen Stuhls und des Domkapitels von Ermland 1869–1930 (dated 6 September and 8 November 1885).

²⁶ For more information, refer to the subchapter on the academic studies of Warmia's clergy. Cf. A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1525–1821*, part 1, Olsztyn 2000, p. 152. A list of scholarships for secondary school students was developed by Franciszek Dittrich in October 1906. The benefactors were: Paweł Dominik Drommler, Andrzej S. Hatten, Jan Kreczmer, Jan Jerzy Kunigk, Marcin Müller, Józef Neumann, Michał Sidler and Kuhn, a secular donor. – AAWO, Scholarship request files.

²⁷ Cf. AAWO, AB J A 4 (14 August 1837).

²⁸ *Zum Andenken an Andreas Stanislaus von Hatten, Bischof von Ermland. Festschrift zum fünfzigjährigen Priesterjubiläum des Herrn Prälaten Josef Carolus*, Braunsberg 1887, pp. 33–34; B.M. Rosenberg, *Das königliche und staatliche Gymnasium 1811–1933*, Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ermlands, 1966, Bd. 30, p. 547.

²⁹ B.M. Rosenberg, *Das königliche und staatliche Gymnasium 1811–1933*, p. 547.

³⁰ A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, part 1: *Studium prozopograficzne*, Olsztyn 2004, p. 111.

a decision of 25 June 1887³¹. In his will dated 27 May 1876, Canon priest Jan Lingk bequeathed 6,600 marks (in mortgage bonds with 4% interest) to a scholarship fund for Catholic students. The fund was later expanded to include the bequest of Antoni Finck, the parish priest of Młynary³². August Hermann, the parish priest of Kolno, donated 12,000 marks to the construction of a church in Bartoszyce, an equal amount to a scholarship fund for talented youths hoping to study theology and 4,000 marks to the construction of a belfry clock in Kolno³³. In 1861, canon priest Józef Nauman made a donation to secondary school students from impoverished families in Braniewo and Reszel. Antoni Thiel funded a scholarship for secondary school students in Biskupiec, Braniewo and Dobre Miasto. Students also received financial support from Canon priests Antoni Eichhorn, Michał Krüger, Jan Lingk and Marcin Müller³⁴.

Parish priests also donated funds and made bequests to students. The archpriest of Dobre Miasto, father Herman Preuschoff, bequeathed 3,000 marks to a boys' school in the city³⁵. The parish priest of Krosno, August Schacht, contributed to the establishment of a home economics school in Orneta in 1890.³⁶ Each year, dean Jan Wermter of Dzierzgoń personally financed First Communion supplies for five children. Inspired by his generosity, Bishop Andrzej Thiel provided him with 100 thalers to be spent on school children. Dean Wermter used those funds to buy 40 books in German and 154 books in Polish³⁷. The Stipendium Warmiense scholarship fund also catered to the needs of school students in Reszel³⁸.

An organization supporting university students was founded 1885. In 1900, it had 120 members who made annual contributions of 3 marks each. The organization was headed by Franciszek Dittrich of Braniewo³⁹.

Annual grants were made as part of the *dos puellarum (pro dote puellarum)* trust for girls from impoverished families. Initially, the trust supported two centers in Olsztyn and Frombork which were merged on 8 November 1833 and placed under the supervision of the Cathedral Chapter in From-

³¹ GStA, HA, Rep. 76 IV, Sect. 2, Abt. XIX, No. 10, Bd. 1 Schenkungen und Vermächtnisse zu Gunsten des Bischöflichen Stuhls und des Domkapitels von Ermland 1869–1930 (dated 9 May and 25 June 1887).

³² Ibidem, dated 16 March 1889 and 11 April 1889.

³³ Ibidem, Last will and testament dated 22 February 1883.

³⁴ Cf. A. Kopiczko, *Duchowieństwo katolickie diecezji warmińskiej w latach 1821–1945*, part 2: *Słownik*, pp. 60, 154, 169, 189–190; G. Matern, *Die katholischen Wohlthätigkeits-Anstalten und –Vereine sowie das katholisch-soziale Vereinsleben in der Diözese Ermland*, p. 49.

³⁵ G. Beckmann, *Geschichte der Stadt Guttstadt. Festschrift zum sechshundertjährigen Stadtjubiläum (neuere Zeit)*, Guttstadt 1929, p. 158.

³⁶ F. Buchholz, *Bilder aus Wormditts Vergangenheit*, 2nd ed., pp. 65–66.

³⁷ A. Szorc, *Dzierzgoń. Od początku do dni naszych 1248–1998*, Dzierzgoń 1998, p. 345; AAWO, AB JS 84, pp 91–92.

³⁸ AAWO, AK I W 21 (1882–1919).

³⁹ G. Matern, *Die katholischen Wohlthätigkeits-Anstalten und –Vereine sowie das katholisch-soziale Vereinsleben in der Diözese Ermland*, p. 50.

bork. The trust's beneficiaries were Cathedral Hill staff members and Frombork residents.

The chapter offered financial support to fire victims. The Fonds für Abgebrannte (foundation for fire victims was created in aid of this cause, and it was financed mainly by the Krämera (Kraemerische Stiftung) foundation. Most contributions amounted to 50 marks, but higher sums were also donated⁴⁰.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the German church saw the need to create an organization that would consolidate and coordinate charities in the fight against progressing poverty. In 1879, its efforts gave rise to the German Caritas Association (Caritasverband) seated in Freiburg. On 23 August 1916, the Convention of German Bishops proclaimed the association the official representative of the Catholic Caritas agency⁴¹.

The Caritas association in Warmia was established in 1906 under the name of Caritasverband für die Diözese Ermland. The founding meeting, held on 23 March 1906 at the Hunting Lodge in Königsberg, was attended by representatives of all charity institutions in the diocese. Meeting participants appointed the association's first board with the following composition: Andrzej Hinzmann of Orneta as the chairman, Jerzy Matern of Szalmia as the operating director, Wichert of Braniewo as a secular treasurer, Bishop Andrzej Thiel as the honorary chairman, followed by successive ordinaries⁴². The successive years witnessed only minor changes in the composition of the diocese's authorities. Jerzy Materna was replaced by Artur Kather of Elbląg in 1919, by Józef Steinki in 1924 and father Augustyn Scharnowski in 1936. The board of the diocese had minimum 12 members. The chairman and the director were appointed by the ordinary, whereas parish divisions were headed by parochial vicars. The association became responsible for nearly all types of charity projects. Caritas worked with parishes, charity institutions, associations and brotherhoods⁴³. Relief centers were created around the country. Kindergartens, girls' schools and organizations preparing girls for family life were opened in 52 towns and cities. The association refurbished hospitals, pensioner centers, it organized holiday camps for children from impoverished families and the Ruhr Basin.

⁴⁰ A. Kopiczko, *Dzieje Warmińskiej Kapituły Katedralnej*, part 1: *od 1821 roku*, Olsztyn 2010, pp. 52–53.

⁴¹ J. Majka, *Caritas*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 2, Lublin 1985, col. 1333.

⁴² Other priests were also members of the first board, among them Franciszek Dittrich, Paweł Küssner, Maksymilian Reichelt and Franciszek Schulz. – *Ermländische Zeitung*, 23 August 1906; R. Traba, *Niemcy–Warmiacy–Polacy*, p. 116.

⁴³ J. Steinki, *Katholische Caritas und katholisches Vereinswesen in der Diözese Ermland*, pp. 9–11.