

## **December 2023 New Issues Polonus Bulletin**

### **30 Years of PostEurop**

This A-denominated (3.90-zł) postal card honors PostEurop, the trade association now representing 55 European postal operators, including Poczta Polska. Since 1993, it has promoted cooperation, growth, and innovation among its member postal administrations. It is perhaps best known for conducting annual competitions among its members on thematic subjects for EUROPA stamps. Its headquarters is based in Brussels. It is an officially recognized restricted union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), one of many such restricted unions located in regions around the world. The UPU was originally established in 1874 to facilitate a uniform worldwide postal system; it is now an agency of the United Nations.

In 2008, Kraków hosted the Plenary Assembly of PostEurop, an event that was commemorated on a stamp issued on January 15, 2008, and described in Polonus Bulletin 531 in September 2008.

<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>December 1, 2023</b>
<b>Printing Method</b>	<b>Offset</b>
<b>Design</b>	<b>Poczta Polska S.A.</b>



## St. Francis Nativity Scene in Greccio

This A-denominated (3.90-zł) postal card recognizes the Nativity Scene of St. Francis in Greccio (*Szopka Bózonarodzeniowa Św. Franciszka w Greccio*). According to Catholic belief, Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardon, known as Francis of Assisi, created the first-ever living nativity scene eight centuries ago on Christmas night 1223 in a cave at the village of Greccio in Lazio, Italy. Francis arranged to have a stable created, with a manger or crib; hay was laid down; and an ox and donkey were brought to the site. An audience of local residents brought candles and torches to light the event, while Francis preached on the importance of Christ's birth.

In 1228, Francis was canonized, and a basilica was built in his honor in the town of Assisi in the Umbria region of central Italy. His crypt is located there in the basilica that was consecrated in 1253. Within that basilica, there is a series of fresco scenes by the painter Giotto that show scenes from St. Francis' life. The imprinted postage on the card shows one of the frescoes that depicts him kneeling with a child in his hands, an allusion to the living nativity event of 1223. The left side of the card shows a recent elaborate nativity scene at the Franciscan Church in Poznań, located off Bernardyński Square.

**Date of Issue**

**December 6, 2023**

Printing Method  
Designer

Offset  
Joanna Fleszar-Haspert



## I am. I Remember. I Watch. 70 Years of the Jasna Góra Appeal

This 3.90-zł stamp calls attention to the 70th anniversary of the Jasna Góra Appeal (*Apelu Janógorskiego*), popularized in 1953 in the efforts to free Poland's imprisoned Catholic Primate Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński. The Appeal consists of a traditional daily prayer said at 9 pm to Our Lady of Częstochowa at Jasna Góra: *Mary, Queen of Poland, I am close to you, I remember you, I watch*. Pope John Paul II noted that: *To be watchful means to protect something of great value* (Poland's spiritual heritage). [Source: Address of Pope John Paul II at Częstochowa, June 1979.]

The general origin of the tradition dates back to 1910, when St. Józef Sebastian Pelczar, Bishop of Przemyśl, decreed that church bells in his see should ring for 15 minutes each day at 9 pm in anticipation of the re-coronation of the sacred image of the Black Madonna in Częstochowa. Later, in 1930 the Polish pilot Captain Władysław Polesinski founded the Cross and Sword Organization of Catholic military officers who stopped every day at 9 pm and prayed to Mary. This practice was popularized by Father

Leon Cieslak, a Warsaw Pallottine, who actually composed the specific words of the Appeal.

In February 1953, the government issued a decree subordinating the Catholic clergy to the communist state. To this, the Primate Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński and the bishops refused to comply: *Non possumus.... (We cannot put the things of God on Caesar's altars.)* As a result, Wyszyński was imprisoned from September 1953 until October 1956. During that time, the popularity of the daily prayer grew. Later, Pope John Paul II would express the desire that the prayer become a tradition practiced in every Polish family. The tradition of the prayer remains popular in Poland today, and it is broadcast live from Częstochowa on radio, television, and the monastery's YouTube channel.

[Source: ucanews.com, 2024]

<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>December 8, 2023</b>
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<b>Printing Method</b>	<b>Offset</b>
<b>Designer</b>	<b>Poczta Polska S.A.</b>



## **45 Years of the Social Committee for Renovation of Kraków's Monuments**

This A-Denominated (3.90-zł) postal card acknowledges the work of the Social Committee for the Renovation of Kraków's Monuments (*Spółecznego Komitetu Odnowy Zabytków Krakowa*), or SKOZK, established in 1978 after the city was added to the UNESCO World Heritage list, one of the first 12 sites included in the prestigious list. SKOZK initially subsidized its renovation activities with contributions from other Polish cities and industrial enterprises. However, in 1985 the Sejm established a national fund to support the program, and SKOZK was assigned the administration of the program.

Numerous restorative projects have been subsidized, such as work on the Wit Stwosz (Veit Stoss) Altar at St. Mary's Basilica (see the imprinted postage and the left and center of the card); the Benedictine Abbey at Tyniec; and the Pauline Fathers' Skalka Monastery in Kazimierz. Subsidies have also been allocated for restoring the exteriors of various tenement houses and old cemeteries in the city. An ambitious program for future renovations has also been proposed - Kraków has over 1,200 registered historic monuments, and some 300 have been identified as needing repair.

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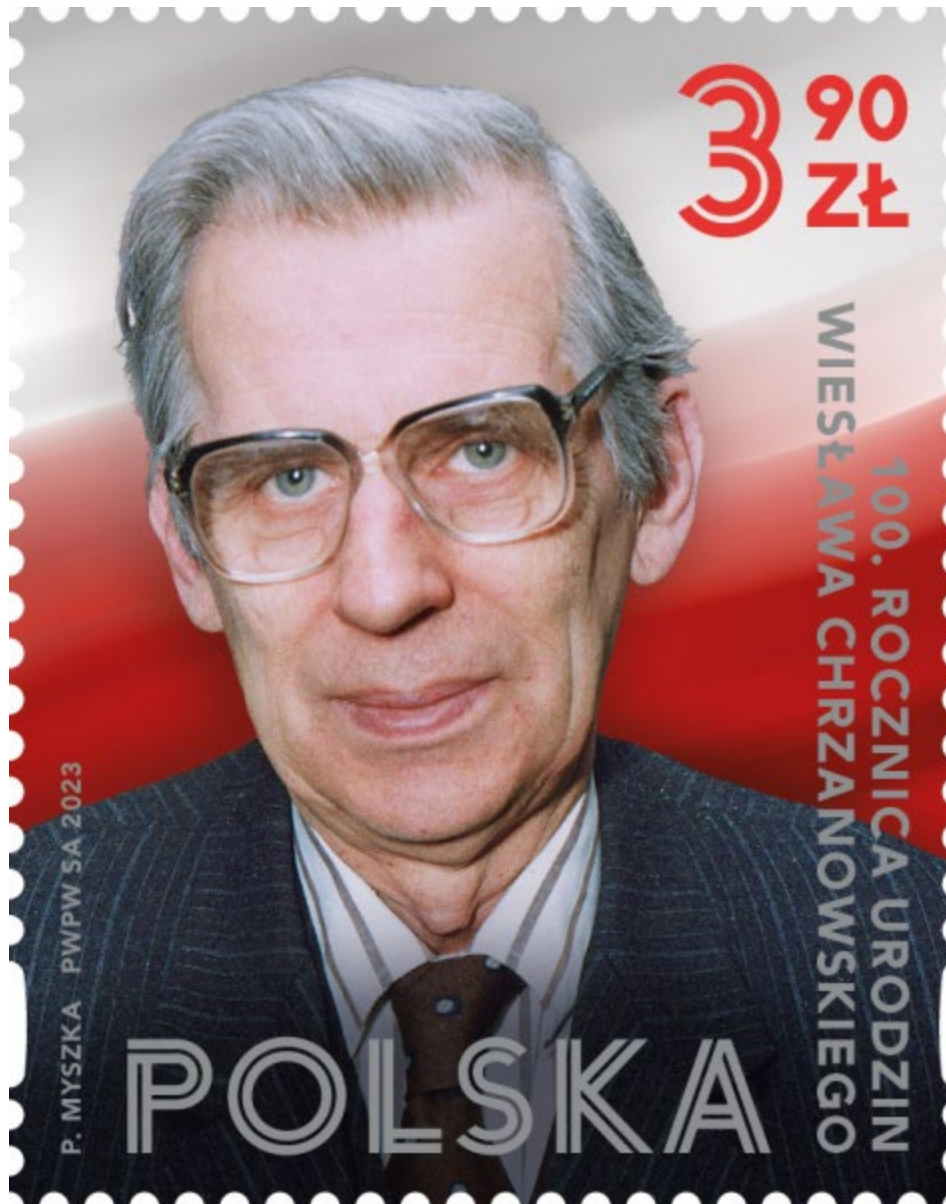


## 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Wiesław Chrzanowski

The centennial of Polish politician, lawyer, and professor Wiesław Chrzanowski's birth is celebrated on this 3.90-zł stamp. Chrzanowski co-founded the Christian National Union (ZChN) political party, served as Minister of Justice and Prosecutor General in 1991, and from late 1991 until 1993 was Marshal of the Sejm. [See description of the stamp issued in his honor on April 16, 2013, appearing in Polonus Bulletin 551 in June 2013.] He is perhaps best known as always seeking political dialogue and compromise, and was considered a man of principle – modest and humble. [Source: Tomasz Sikorski, polishhistory.pl]

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**December 20, 2023**  
**Single in Pane of 12**  
**Offset**  
**Paweł Myszkowski**



## Saints and Blessed

St. John of Kanty or John Cantius (1390-1473) is highlighted on this A-denominated (3.90-zł) postal card. He was a Catholic priest and scholar born in the town Kęty in southern Poland. He was educated at the Kraków Academy and later taught theology there. He has been characterized as humble, and was known to the poor of Kraków for his philanthropy. He is said to have kept only the money and clothes absolutely needed to support himself. He slept little, ate sparingly, and took no meat; he made pilgrimages to Jerusalem and Rome. [Source: franciscanmedia.org] He was beatified in 1678, named patron of Poland and Lithuania in 1737, and canonized in 1767. He is entombed at St. John Cantius Church of St. Anne in Kraków.

The imprinted postage on the card shows an image of him in the Church of St. Margaret and St. Catherine of Alexandria in Kęty, perhaps the oldest image of the saint. The center of the card shows a black and white photo of the church. The left side of the card shows a fragment of a painting entitled *The Vision of St. John Cantius* by Władysław Rossowski (1857-1923), a student of Jan Matejko. It is located on the northern wall of the nave at the church in Kęty. The painting is very similar to a painting by Kazimierz Wokulski from 1893.

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**December 23, 2023**  
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**Jacek Konarzewski**

