



# POLISH ROMAN CATHOLIC UNION OF AMERICA

FOUNDED 1873



## The Polish Roman Catholic Union of America – Mother of all Polish American Fraternal Organizations

- Founded in 1873 – oldest Polish American and largest Polish Roman Catholic Fraternal in the United States

The three founders:



Rev. Teodor Gieryk



Rev. Wincenty Barzyński, C.R.



Jan Barzyński



Rev. Wincenty Barzyński, C.R.  
**First PRCUA Chaplain**

- Fr. Wincenty Barzyński – the most important PRCUA Founder - of the Congregation of the Resurrection, a very important Pole in Chicago in the late 1800s
- Driving force behind PRCUA – Fr. Barzyński's desire to create community institutions that would reflect Polish Catholic values
- The founding of PRCUA due to need for an organization to unite all Polish immigrants



Rev. Teodor Gieryk  
**First PRCUA President**

- Born in German-occupied Poland in 1837 and immigrated to America after 1866
- Became a priest in Detroit, Michigan
- Proposed the creation of a central society of Poles in America



Jan Barzyński  
**First PRCUA Secretary**

- Born in Russian-occupied Poland and immigrated to America in 1871
- Worked as agent in Texas for the first serious Polish American newspaper *Orzeł Polski*
- Worked to begin an organization that would unite Polish Americans and end factional disputes



Rev. Leopold Moczygemba  
**Second PRCUA President**

- Fr. Leopold was an immigrant to Texas in 1854 with a group of 100 Silesian families; established the community of **Panna Maria** near San Antonio – first permanent Polish community in America
- A Franciscan, he secured the Charter for a Polish seminary





Piotr Kiołbassa  
**Third PRCUA President**

- Born in Silesia, emigrated with parents to Panna Maria, Texas
- Civil War veteran
- Treasurer of the City of Chicago
- One of the founders of the St. Stanislaus Kostka Society whose purpose was to provide aid to needy members and form a Polish parish



- Headquarters on Chicago's near-Northwest side was built in 1913 at intersection of Milwaukee Ave and Augusta Blvd
- The PRCUA opened a library, and, in 1935, founded one of the first ethnic museum and archives in the United States – a priceless treasury of artifacts from Poland and Polonia – today **The Polish Museum of America**
- In 2013, the 100th Anniversary of its construction, the PRCUA building was named a **Historic Landmark** on the National Register





# THE PRCUA TODAY

- Approximately 50,000 members across the United States
- Licensed to sell life insurance and annuities in 24 states
- Fraternal membership benefits such as mortgages, scholarships, grants, educational loans
- Sponsorship of numerous national sports tournaments and various cultural events
- Sponsorship of numerous Polish language and dance schools, religious Polish traditional gatherings such as Święconka, Opłatek