

Visitor Experience #40



Anna Caroline Janta: Sister Mary Władysława, SSND 1860 – 1944

By Janet Dawson Ebrom

Anna Caroline Janta was born to Woitek [Albert] Janta and Johanna Juntzik who had emigrated from Łąka, Upper Silesia, in present-day Poland, in 1856 according to the *Schüler Agency List.* The Janta [Jainta] family originally settled in Panna Maria, Texas, but relocated to Franklin County, Missouri, before their youngest daughter, Anna Caroline, was born. The family belonged to St. Gertrude parish in Krakow where the Jesuit missionaries from Washington, Missouri, about five miles away, ministered once a week. Thus, Anna Caroline Janta was baptized on October 27, 1860, by Father Martin Seisl, S.J., the pastor of St. Francis Borgia Catholic Church.²

Anna Caroline was welcomed by three older siblings: Maria, Francis, and Thomas. The Jantas were very devout Catholics whose faith had an immense impact on their children. Anna Caroline made her First Holy Communion on April 14, 1872, and she was confirmed that same year. These sacraments were administered by the Jesuits from nearby St. Francis Borgia who recorded the information in their own parish books noting that they took place at St. Gertrude's.³

On September 28, 1872, **Anna Caroline's** older sister **Maria** entered the convent of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Next, in 1874, her brother **Francis** joined the novitiate with the De La Salle Christian Brothers in Carondelet, Missouri, where he took the name **Brother Fabian**. The Jantas' prayerful daily life inspired their youngest child too. Even though **Anna Caroline** was only twelve years old when her sister left home for the convent, she, "...pleaded with her father to let her go too. She knew that postponement meant stronger resistance. Her father yielded when he saw that the religious life alone could make her happy." After living with a Catholic family in St. Louis for three years and spending many Sunday afternoons with the candidates of St. Joseph's School, **Anna Caroline** formally entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame convent on June 15, 1875.

Each step forward at the Motherhouse in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was a source of pious fulfillment and deep joy for **Anna Caroline**: receiving her habit to wear on August 22, 1879; making her first vows on August 28, 1882; and professing her perpetual vows on July 25, 1892. **Anna Caroline Janta** was given the religious name **Sister Mary Władysława**, and from 1878 through 1894, she was a devoted elementary teacher at St. Stanislaus Kostka School in Chicago, St. Stanislaus School in Milwaukee, and St. Stanislaus School in St. Louis. 8

Demonstrating natural leadership, **Sister Władysława** was the Superioress of St. Stanislaus Mission in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, beginning in 1894 while also teaching eighth grade for seven years. When living in Milwaukee, she learned that her dear mother, **Johanna Juntzik Janta**, had passed away back home in Clover Bottom, Missouri, and was laid to rest on September 29, 1898. Her mother had been an influential role model who had nurtured the vocations of her children.



On June 8, 1900, the census taker in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, stopped at 408 Mitchell Street to enumerate the convent residents of St. Stanislaus parish. Interestingly, the sisters were listed by their birth names rather than their religious names. The "Superior Sister of School" was recorded as **Caroline Janta**, age 39, born October of 1860 in Missouri. There were thirteen additional names with the occupation "School Sister." From 1901 to 1905, **Sister Władysława** was principal at St. Adalbert School in Grand Rapids, Michigan, while also teaching seventh grade. In 1905, **Sister Władysława** transferred to St. Josaphat School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where she served as principal and eighth-grade teacher for six years. During this time, she was notified that her father, **Albert Janta**, died on July 9, 1906, and was buried in St. Ann Catholic Cemetery in Clover Bottom, Missouri. Three decades earlier, trusting in God, he had lovingly allowed his youngest child to leave home to enter the convent where she would fulfill her mission in life.

Twenty-seven School Sisters of Notre Dame living on Second Avenue in Milwaukee were listed in the federal census on April 15, 1910. The census taker noted one of them as "Ladislawia" Janta, age 50.13 In 1911, she became principal of St. Stanislaus School in Berlin, Wisconsin. 14 Her years as an educational director provided primary preparation for a monumental position when **Bishop John Francis Regis Canevin** of the Diocese of Pittsburgh needed an accomplished leader for a small community of Polish Sisters. They were the Holy Ghost Sisters who settled in Donora, Pennsylvania, with the bishop's permission. Their order's previous work in Italy, Russia, Dalmatia, and Poland was caring for orphans, the sick, the poor, and the elderly; however, **Bishop Canevin** had aspirations for them to embrace a new community constitution and to become teachers for the diocese. 15 In 1912, the bishop petitioned Mother Marianne, Commissary General of the School Sisters of Notre Dame to help, and she selected Sister Władysława [Ladislaus] Janta with Sister Mary Allowine Nadeau as her assistant. 16 When **Sister Władysława** assumed leadership of the Holy Ghost Sisters, who did not yet speak English, she was directed by the bishop, "...to give the Sisters a solid religious training and to instruct them in all things pertaining to their future duties as teachers."17

"During the six years she spent among the Holy Ghost Sisters she was never seen ruffled, on the contrary she was ever composed, and her loving smile spoke volumes of charity. Sister was timid and harmless as a dove. She possessed a very pleasing personality and was in consequence easily approachable. The Holy Ghost Sisters revered her as their Reverend Mother. They saw that she was a living Rule.

"Mother M. Władysława was a model of humility. No work was too menial, too lowly for her. She gave evidence of this during her six years of exile from home. Many an hour she stood at the kitchen stove teaching the cook the five points of culinary art. Mother was a wizard at baking bread, buns, and the like. Every Monday good Mother M. Władysława took her post in the laundry to direct the washing to the joy and comfort of Sister M. Hedwig, the laundress. She was chief fireman also, since there was neither janitor nor stoker, but Sister Margaret, the present Reverend Mother, had charge of the furnace and the shoveling of the coal.

"Mother M. Władysława looked after the general cleaning during the absence of Sister M. Allowine on missionary tours. In short, Mother M. Władysława had full charge of the Holy Ghost Order. She instructed the Professed Sisters while Sister M. Allowine was Directress and Mistress of Candidates and Novices and had to shoulder the responsibility of training the future of the sprouting Order. These two worked beautifully hand in hand, and the good Lord crowned the work with marked success. Differing greatly by nature, one supplemented the other. On one of their visits to the Chancery in Pittsburgh, Bishop Canevin said, "Mother Marianne could not have chosen a better two for the hard work, — one takes things very seriously, while the other with her jovial spirit makes it possible to carry on this work to a complete success."

Even though **Mother Władysława** referred to her six years establishing the Sisters of the Holy Ghost as her "greatest sacrifice and responsibility," she mastered this milestone in her life. Before returning to her own beloved School Sisters of Notre Dame, she insured that the Sisters of the Holy Ghost could manage independently. After bidding them farewell, she moved from Donora, Pennsylvania, to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1918.

On January 30, 1920, the census taker in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, visited the convent on Mitchell Street and listed "S. Ladislaus Janta," age 61, as the head of the household comprised of fifteen others most of whom were also listed as teachers.²⁰ In addition to being the principal of St. Stanislaus School, Sister Władysława [Ladislaus] taught grades three and four until 1921.²¹ By the summer of 1921, Sister Władysława had relocated to Bessemer, Michigan, where she was principal of St. Sebastian School and also taught grades three and four for one



school year. The following summer brought another assignment, and she moved to Radom, Illinois, where she was the principal of St. Michael School for five years as well as a teacher of grades three to five.²²

In 1927, Sister Władysława became principal of St. Hedwig School in St. Louis, Missouri, her home state. During her five years in St. Louis, she also taught grades three and four.²³ Władysława was residing at 3219 Itaska Street in St. Louis when the School Sisters of Notre Dame were enumerated on April 4, 1930, in the census. She was recorded as "Marie L. Janta," the Sister Superior of six other sisters.²⁴ She remained teaching grades three and four while heading the school for two more years before becoming ill. For nine months, she convalesced at Villa Gesu in St. Louis before gaining enough strength to act as an aide at Holy Cross School in Cuba, Missouri. Still working in her late Władysława seventies, Sister contributed community service at St. Catherine Hall in St. Louis until 1938.²⁵

Her final years were spent at Villa Gesu in St. Louis, Missouri, where she passed away at the age of 84 [based on the year of her Baptism] on December 23, 1944. She was initially buried in the Villa Gesu Cemetery in north St. Louis County. Upon the sale of the Villa Gesu property in 2002, over 750 nuns' graves including **Sister Władysława's** were relocated to Resurrection Cemetery in southwest St. Louis. Anna Caroline Janta who became **Sister Władysława [Ladislaus]** as a School Sister of Notre Dame left an indelible mark on countless students for over fifty years as an excellent educator and school administrator. She also rose to a notable position as mother Superior of the Holy Ghost Sisters, the order she established in the Pittsburgh Diocese.

Photograph from: History of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Ghost. 50^{th} Anniversary Commemoration: 1913 - 1963, page 20

Surname spelling variations include: Janta, Jainta, and Yanta.

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The legacy of **Sister Władysława Janta** has already been honored by having her memorialized in the Polish Heritage Center by her distant cousin, **Bishop Emeritus John W. Yanta.** Each departed religious vocation from our immigrant families can be recognized. If you would like to memorialize a nun, priest, monk, or religious brother for a \$10,000 donation, please contact John Wojtasczyk at 210-387-7472.

Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation P.O. Box 28125, San Antonio, TX 78228 Tax ID: 46-0561240. A 501(c) (3) organization. http://www.polishheritagecentertexas.org/

¹Jonca, Karol. "Emigracja Ze Śląska Opolskiego Do Teksasu 1853-1857" [Emigration from Opole Silesia to Texas 1853-1857]. **Studia Śląskie** 57 (1998): 43-88.

²St. Francis Borgia Catholic Church, Washington, Missouri. Baptism Records, page 201, entry #108. LDS Microfilm #1906107.

³St. Francis Borgia Catholic Church, Washington, Missouri. Communions, entry #16. LDS Microfilm #1906109. Confirmations, page 160, entry #162. LDS Microfilm #1906107.

⁴School Sisters of Notre Dame database, ID Number 41185.

⁵Christian Brothers—Pioneer Educators in the South and Southwest Since 8151: Those who died in February. New Orleans-Santa Fe District, 2011, page 11. www.cbnosf.org/2011Necro02FebBinal.pdf

⁶School Sisters of Notre Dame Obituaries. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Privately printed, 1945, page 194.

⁷School Sisters of Notre Dame database, ID Number 50487.

⁸School Sisters of Notre Dame database, ID Number 50487.

⁹St. Gertrude Catholic Church, Krakow, Missouri. Burial Records, entry #11. LDS Microfilm #1906168.

¹⁰U.S. Population Census of Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, 1900, Dwelling #208.

¹¹School Sisters of Notre Dame database, ID Number 50487.

¹²St. Ann Catholic Church, Clover Bottom, Missouri. Burial Records, page 103, entry #38. Manuscript.

¹³U.S. Population Census of Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, 1910, Dwelling #13.

¹⁴School Sisters of Notre Dame database, ID Number 50487.

¹⁵www.sistersoftheholyspirit.com

¹⁶School Sisters of Notre Dame Obituaries. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Privately printed, 1945, page 195.

¹⁷History of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Ghost. 50th Anniversary Commemoration: 1913 – 1963. West View-Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Privately printed, 1963, page 30.

¹⁸School Sisters of Notre Dame Obituaries. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Privately printed, 1945, page 195.

¹⁹ School Sisters of Notre Dame Obituaries. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Privately printed, 1945, page 195.

²⁰U.S. Population Census of Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, 1920, Dwelling #206.

²¹School Sisters of Notre Dame database, ID Number 50487.

²²School Sisters of Notre Dame database, ID Number 50487.

²³School Sisters of Notre Dame database, ID Number 50487.

²⁴U.S. Population Census of St. Louis, Missouri, 1930, Dwelling #305.

²⁵School Sisters of Notre Dame database, ID Number 50487.

²⁶Missouri State Board of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics. Certificate of Death. File No. 3438.

²⁷Archdiocese of St. Louis, Missouri, Burial Index. Interment #494176. http://search.st/cathcem.org

DID YOU HAVE A PRIEST IN THE FAMILY?

If you were blessed with a priest in your Polish family, we want to hear from you. The Priests' Interactive promises to be a highlight in the Polish Heritage Center. Among its features will be brief stories about some of the deceased Polish priests who came from the heritage area. Al Notzon remembers his uncle, Monsignor Marcel Notzon, would purposely use big words so the kids were forced to use the dictionary to figure out what he was talking about. People in Panna Maria will remember that Father Bernard Goebel loved to hunt. He also enjoyed a glass of good Napoleon brandy. We just need tidbits of information, though any story you provide will be greatly appreciated. We especially look forward to getting family stories about the Revs. Theo Janysek, Edmund Dragon, Ed Dworaczyk, Julius Dworaczyk, and Peter Foegelle, among others. Please send your information to Susan Moczygemba-McKinsey at mckinsey@unm.edu. The sooner the better as we're working on this interactive now.

Phrase of encouragement in Polish

Our immigrant ancestors endured a great number of hardships, mishaps, and challenges. With their faith, they developed into an exceedingly hardy people. Among their coping skills are phrases and sayings that helped them to persevere. This phrase is still used today among those who remember and use their native tongue: Musi Być (pronounced *mooshe beach*). This roughly translates into: *It is what it is.* Thank you, **Fr. Wiesław**!

MOVED RECENTLY?

If you have moved recently, drop me a line so that I can insure that you continue to receive the newsletter without interruptions! Mail-forwarding services work only for a limited time. You can email me at wojtasczyk@sbcglobal.net or call 210-387 -7472. Thanks, John Wojtasczyk

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Veterans Recognition Expanded and Described

Good news! Participation in the veterans exhibit is being expanded!

We will honor all Polish-American immigrants from the 1800's who came to our South Texas heritage area, and their descendants through today, who served.

All of these veterans deserve to be recognized – those who died, those who were missing-in-action, and those who by the grace of God came home safely. They <u>all</u> deserve honor and respect.

We will pay tribute to those who served honorably in all the conflicts and campaigns from the Texas-Indian Wars and Civil War, through the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and are entitled to be recognized as participating in such.

Exhibit Description:

The exhibit, an interactive display, will be composed of two screens, a wall mounted 42" screen above, and below a 12" iPad mounted on an angled panel.

A series of inspiring and appropriate quotations will attract visitors to this display. Behind the quotations will be imagery, both video and still images, to include men and women in military uniform from all branches, and from different eras, details of ribbons, badges, and insignia, military parades, flags of service branches and the American flag.

Visitors will access a menu of selections on the iPad; for example, a family name, or a home town, or parish, or the name of a war. The names of those matching that menu selection will come up on the screen. Viewers will then select an individual from that list. Text and imagery will be displayed. Audio segments yet to be written and recorded, read by a narrator, will be heard through a localized overhead speaker. These narrations, accompanied by available photos, are intended to highlight anecdotes and life histories.

This interactive display will radiate patriotism and the respect and pride due those who served our great nation.

Please Help Us Remember Them:

We ask everyone who had an ancestor or family member, whose lineage can be traced to those immigrants and who served in combat, to provide us with as much of the following information as is available: name, rank, branch of service, birth date, parish or community from which they came, conflict or war served in, military decorations received, date of death if deceased, and personal recollections or stories, and a photo. We understand the amount of information will vary greatly. Please do not let the absence of details inhibit your submission.

Please email, or mail, **John Cebrowski**, PHC Board member and Vietnam veteran, with any information you may have. John's email address is <u>jcebrowski39@gmail.com</u>. His mailing address is: 18814 Salado Canyon, San Antonio, TX, 78258. Thank you

Memorializations & Tributes

We are grateful for your gifts and support

From May 9, 2020 to June 13, 2020

In honor of the "Dugosh's," by Ken & Helen Dugosh, Boerne, Texas

In memory of the Anton Prukop family, by Rev. Ty Bazar, Goliad, Texas

In memory of Terry Vaughn Buehring, Henry & Susie Lyssy Pieprzyca Buehring,

Ella Jean Najvor, and Werner & Evelyn Hoffman,

by Velmon & Peggy Pieprzyca Buehring, Karnes City, Texas

In memory of Frank & Johanna Pawlik Moczygemba and Frank & Mary Kotzur Manka,

by Pat & Barbara Moczygemba Hoffmann, San Antonio, Texas

In memory of Susan Lyssy Bienek,

by Lucian & Josephine Lyssy Moczygemba, Falls City, Texas

In memory of Steve & Ann Titzman and Lawrence & Cecelia Osburg,

by Richard & Carolyn Osburg, Calliham, Texas

In memory of Annie Sekula & James Albert "Jake" Dupnik,

by Thomas & Bridget Padalecki Pawlik, San Antonio, Texas

In memory of John & Lucy Dylla, by James & Lorraine Polonis, San Antonio, Texas

In memory of Virgil P. & Agatha Dudleski Respondek,

by Jeffrey & Anita Warzecha Respondek, Mission, Texas

In memory of Leon Pilarczyk, by Gladys Stanush, Adkins, Texas

In memory of The Descendants & Families of the 1854 Adamietz Settlers of Bandera, Texas,

by Martha Weynand

In memory of Gussie Frank & Theresa Regina Migura Yanta, by Fred Yanta, San Antonio, Texas In memory of D.H. & Petronilla Vyvlecka Zezula, by Lawrence Yanta, Victoria, Texas

In memory of Zefred Kruciak by: Judy Brandt, Ken & Debora Gerik, Ramona Klein,

Richard & Gail Gawlik Murray, and James & Angela Gawlik Richter

Corrections from previous issues:

Kenneth & Valerie Varoff Moczygemba, Adkins, Texas Annette Kalka Schulte, Bandera, Texas

John & Shirley Bordovsky, San Antonio, Texas Marvin R & Janet M Boroski, San Antonio, Texas

Roberta Coronado, Georgetown, Texas

Jessie & Susie Estrada, San Antonio, Texas

Ted & Lyda Golsch, Bulverde, Texas

Deborah Stanush Gomez, Georgetown, Texas Linda & William T Janysek, Runge, Texas

Martin & Judy Weber Jendrusch, Three Rivers, Texas

John & Mary Yanta Memorial Trust, San Antonio, Texas George & Betty Hooks Kowalik, Panna Maria, Texas

Leonard & Mary Krzywosinski, San Antonio, Texas Susan Moczygemba McKinsey, San Antonio, Texas

Walter & Carol Mika, San Antonio, Texas

Casper & Rosa Lee Jiral Moczygemba, Falls City, Texas Elaine Moczygemba, Hobson, Texas

Gery & Tanya Moczygemba, Seguin, Texas

Robert "Bobby" Moczygemba, Hobson, Texas Tawfiq & Patsy Woytasczyk Nimri, Knoxville, Tennessee

Alois & Lillian Kollodziej O'Berg, Shavano Park, Texas

Carlos & Guadalupe Malacara Ontiveros, San Antonio, Texas

Richard & Carolyn Osburg, Calliham, Texas

Thomas Pauken, Dallas, Texas

John & Patricia Picacio, San Antonio, Texas

Msgr. Daniel Plocharczyk, New Britain, Connecticut

Greg & Carolyn Rapstine, White Deer, Texas

Donald & Catherine Varella, San Antonio, Texas

John & Christie Schroeder Wojtasczyk, Panna Maria, Texas

Don Yanta, Karnes City, Texas

Thaddeus Zawistowski, Richmond, Texas

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Construction Photos



On Left: Ceiling of the Temporary Exhibit space. Soon it will be painted and a beautiful chandelier, similar to the one in the Wieliczka Salt Mine Chapel in Poland, will hang.

On Right: A section, in full scale, of the large, curved mural that will greet guests entering the Lobby. Displaying the mural are **Will Fuller** and **John Ebrom**.



On Left: Another beautiful look up at the dome of the Rotunda which will display images of Sts. Cyril & Methodius, St. Hedwig, St. Stanislaus, St. Hyacinth, and St. Pope John Paul II.

On Right: Newly cut stones that will line the south edge of the drive being offloaded and placed at the Heritage Center.





On Left: Terrazzo floor in the hallway between the Library and the Theater receiving its first grinding. Later it will be finely polished and sealed.

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PLEASE LETYOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS KNOW ABOUT THESE OPPORTUNITIES!

PHC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: The Board of Directors of the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria is actively recruiting an Executive Director. This individual will report to the Board and is charged with implementing Center policies. The successful candidate will be responsible for internal and external relations, the development of the center, its finances, its programs, and its staff and volunteers. This is a unique opportunity for a creative person to fulfill Bishop Yanta's vision to create the pre-eminent Polish Heritage Center in the US, one that honors the Polish immigrants who came to Texas in the mid to late 1800's. A full job description along with program information is available at the Polish Heritage Center website: www.polishheritagecentertx.org

PHC LIBRARIAN/ARCHIVIST: The Board of Directors of the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria is actively recruiting a Librarian/Archivist. Reporting to the PHC Executive Director, this individual will be responsible for the organization and preservation of all of the Center's collections, books, data files and records. Duties will also include presentations to outside groups and assistance to outside researchers. A full job description, including job qualifications and experience, is available at the Polish Heritage Center website: www.polishheritagecentertx.org.

Poland: Faithful Daughter of the Church

Second in a series by Bishop John W. Yanta



By George Lepo for Orchard Lake Schools, Orchard Lake, MI

The Baptism of Poland

The "Baptism of Poland" refers to the ceremony when the first ruler of the Polish state, Mieszko I and much of his court, converted to Catholicism. The date of Mieszko's baptism was on Holy Saturday of 14 April 966. The ceremony was preceded by a week of oral catechism and several days of fasting. The actual ceremony involved pouring water over the segregated groups of men and women, although it is possible that their heads were immersed instead, and anointed with the chrism. Dobrawa, Mieszko's wife, played a major role in Poland's conversion to Christianity. Before the adoption of Christianity, there were a number of different pagan tribes. Initially, the clergy came from the Western Christian European countries. Native Polish clergy took three or four generations to emerge. By the 13th century Roman Catholicism had become the dominant religion throughout Poland.

A Prayer for Our World and Our Country

O God, who show a father's care for all, grant, in your mercy, that the members of the human race, to whom you have given a single origin, may form in peace a single family and always be united by a fraternal spirit. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

May God bless you and yours,

t John W. Yanta

†Bishop John W Yanata