

My beloved dad finished his earthly course earlier this month, on October 2nd, [2017] at the age of 92, having been consecrated for 70 years, and an elder for majority of those years. He has had such a dramatic life's story, that many brethren who knew him, both in the USA and Poland, asked me to write it down, especially how he became a Bible Student, believing that it would be a blessing.

With much Christian Love,
Sr. Renata Grudzien

Brother Marcin Mieczysław Jakubowski was born on January 9, 1925 in Lublin, Poland to a very religious catholic family. He had an older sister, two older brothers and a younger sister Zofia (still living). They lived next to a catholic church and for years he served as an altar boy.

As a 16-year-old teenager, during the WWII, he ran away from home with a friend and joined the underground army to fight against the Nazi Germany, but they quickly realized that this endeavor involved killing people, which they did not want to do, so they asked if they could leave. Leaving was not an option, as it could endanger the lives of others, so the commanding officer ordered for them to be taken deep into the woods and executed. The soldier, however, who led them out took pity on the boys, fired his gun into the air and allowed them to escape.

Mieczysław returned home, but a little time has passed when he was captured by communist secret police and taken prisoner for his participation in the guerilla warfare against Nazi Germany. Without any court trail he was sent to a concentration camp in the north Siberia, where he endured bitter cold and hunger. After 18 months of back breaking labor where his main job was to dig mass graves and bury the dead, when great powers reached the agreement in Potsdam he was released and returned to Poland with only few other men who were left alive from cattle railroad car fully packed with prisoners.

He made his way back home to discover that his youngest sister Zofia (about 14 years old at the time) returned home from learning to be a seamstress, which took place at a home of some brethren in a neighboring town. While there, she was introduced to the Bible, Volumes and other Bible Students literature and attended meetings. She came back so enthusiastic about what she had learned about the Truth, that she began sharing it with her family.

When Sunday came, the entire family was expected to go to church, but Zofia refused to go, claiming that she was no longer catholic, which angered her father greatly. While the others went to church, the father took a wet rope and begun beating his daughter trying to force her to renounce her new religion. Mieczysław heard the cries of his sister while he was at church, after few minutes he could not stand it anymore, run back home and protected her with his own body. After receiving few strokes, he persuaded his father to stop. When their father finished flogging, he ordered his daughter to choose between her new faith and her family. She was to profess that she was catholic and could stay home, or she was no longer welcomed in the family home. Zofia collected few of her things and chose to leave her family. Br. and Sr. Wójciak (Eva Adams and Margaret Earl's grandparents) took her in, and she lived with them for a while.

Mieczysław, 20 at the time, was so surprised that a 14-year-old child would choose some new religion over her own family, that he had to learn what this new religion was all about. He found his sister, begun attending meetings himself, and shortly both of them consecrated. They introduced the Truth message to the other siblings, their spouses, their mother. They were so zealous in preaching the Truth message to all, that in a short amount of time, the entire family heard the call and consecrated. The only one who did not want to hear the Message was the father.

Many people in the village heard the Message as well, Br. Jakubowski became an elder in the class, and the local people because of his preaching named him the "Bishop". This did not go over well with the local priest, who was merely a parish priest, and did not hold any higher titles. It is believed, that a priest through some fiery Sunday sermons persuaded a gang of bandits, who probably formed to oppose the new communist government, to assassinate Br. Mieczysław Jakubowski, and they tried to do just that on several occasions. Each time they came with guns and rifles, forced their way into the house, beat up some family members, but the Lord always protected him, and he was able to escape either through an open window or other ways.

The last time the bandits came to the house, they did not find him again. It was June 26, 1949, late evening, and Br. Jakubowski along with many brethren were attending a convention which was being held in his village Zemborzyce, at the house where his brother Jan lived with his parents-in-law.

The bandits broke into the family house demanding to find out where the "Bishop" was? Br. Jakubowski's father did not want to tell them, so that angered them more and they proceeded to beat him until he was unconscious and left.

Later they went to the convention site and missed him again, as he took a different route returning home. However, they surrounded the convention site. Some of the brethren were sleeping already in the house and some in the barn. They fired their weapons through the windows and inside the barn. They killed 2 sisters and Br. Mikołaj Grudzien (Dariusz, Zbigniew, Anna and Mikołaj Grudzien's grandfather) who was the chairman of the convention and injured many others.

The persecution did not end there, but it slowed down. After this convention, Br. Jakubowski was chased again and a gun was fired at him 32 times, but all of those shots missed him, the Lord was clearly protecting him.

At the end, his own father Franciszek, who was so opposed to the Truth, decided that this beating which he experienced was allowed by the Lord as a sign to him, because that's what he had done to his own daughter some years earlier. He never went back to the catholic church, started to attend meetings, and consecrated his life unto the Lord as the last member of the family.

Bro. Jakubowski served the class in Lublin as an elder for many years, and later the class in Jasło, Poland. While he was a member of the Lublin class, and because the Truth literature after the war was very scarce, he was heavily involved along with few other brethren in the

reproduction of Watchtower articles and other literature using an old mechanical duplicator and distributing them to the brethren in Poland. This was a very physically demanding job, which was done after work in evenings and nights.

He served at many conventions, including international conventions, and traveled as a pilgrim to visit many classes throughout Poland, USA and Canada. During the communist times, when it was difficult to rent a hall for a convention, he organized and held over 40 conventions in his own home as well as many young people's meetings. He wrote articles for the Na Straży publication, (equivalent to the Dawn magazine or Herald) and was an editor of that publication for over 20 years.

He was active and zealous to the very end. Even at his advanced age, he led the meeting just one day before he died. The Bible was on his lips not daily but hourly, and his knowledge of the Scriptures was extraordinary. Yet, he was a very modest man, and everything he did in life, was with one purpose, to bring glory to God and His Son. He truly lived the words of our Lord: "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35.

The hearts of those who knew him are sad for the loss of fellowship, but we rejoice with the hope we have, and the words of John: "(...) Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on! (...) so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them." Revelation 14:13