

Summary

The doctoral dissertation entitled “The Reverend Professor Walenty Gadowski (1861-1956)” is an attempt to synthesize holistically the priest’s life against the historical background constituted by the places in which he worked and the people he met. His life was inextricably connected with unrelenting work for communities in Southern Poland. He enriched Polish people’s religiousness by publishing catechisms, textbooks and articles which were some of the most remarkable methodological works at the turn of 19th and 20th century. His multifarious activity in various associations helped to unite Polish society during partitions of the country and later on, at the time of the II Republic of Poland, strengthened by tradition and religious heritage. Gadowski’s sustained efforts played a considerable role in making many trails in the Tatra Mountains and the Pieniny Mountains available to tourists from Poland and abroad. His long-term pedagogical work proved essential in the process of shaping moral attitudes of many Tarnów and Bochnia citizens, who subsequently paid their homage to the priest by calling him their Professor. Thus, the dissertation portrays the Reverend Walenty Gadowski as an initiator of many works which have survived to present times. The biography of the priest, a prominent figure in the history of Tarnów and Bochnia, is supposed to serve this overriding purpose. His activity has left an indelible mark on the collective consciousness shared by communities in Southern Poland and his name is still frequently recalled in the studies devoted to the history of Polish catechetics, community commitment and, last but not least, high mountain tourism.

Key words: 19th and 20th century, Tarnów, Bochnia, biography, clergy, Polish educators, catechetics, community commitment, high mountain tourism.