

Response

More about Mgr Teofil Skalski

Having read with special interest what Father Aidan Nichols wrote on 'A Dominican Foundress in the Old Russia' (*New Blackfriars*, April 1991) I would like to add a few points of information regarding Mgr Teofil Skalski which might be of interest to a wider audience. I was baptised by Mgr Skalski in 1917 in the church of St Alexander in Kiev. A sizeable Polish community worshipped there and it was from this church, where he was hiding in the belfry, that Mgr Skalski was taken after the Bolshevik take-over. He was then sentenced to imprisonment under the Soviet penal code. As, Fr Nichols points out, he was later to share that imprisonment with Mother Ekaterina Sienskaya Abrikosova, although in September 1932 he was returned to Poland in an exchange for other prisoners. Mgr Skalski's memoirs, *Recollections of my life*, were published posthumously in 1978/80 by Jerzy Giedroyc, director of the Institut Littéraire (91, Avenue de Poissy, le-Mesnil-le-Roi, 78600 Maisons—Lafitte, France).

While still a child, Teofil Skalski befriended Casimir Markiewicz, whose death was reported in *The Times* of 5 December, 1932, in these terms:

'The death on Friday of Count Markiewicz, at the age of 57, is announced in a Reuter telegram from Warsaw. He was a painter and writer of plays and he married, in 1900, Miss Constance Gore-Booth. She was an ardent Suffragist and Sinn Feiner, and in 1918 she was elected for a Dublin Division, the first woman to be returned to Parliament, but she never took her seat. She died in 1927'.

Mgr Skalski visited Markiewicz on his deathbed and later wrote: 'Casimir Markiewicz received the Last Sacraments worthily and thus completed his stormy life, during which he had to part with his wife to go to wars and live through many adventures.'

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