

Before the outbreak of the First World War, Przasnysz was a thriving urban centre: its population was steadily growing, the industry was developing and new public buildings were erected. The 1st and the 2nd Battle of Przasnysz destroyed the town and nearby villages. Many residents of the district went into exile. The situation was not improved by the German occupation. Similarly to the rest of the Kingdom of Poland, occupied by German and Austro-Hungarian forces, the problem was hunger, poverty, illnesses, no room over people's heads and orphanhood.

Every winter of the war was harder than the previous one. These problems had to be tackled by charitable organisations, established with the consent of the occupiers. It was also the time when the first Polish authorities were being organised. One of the most important persons in Poland was a citizen of the Przasnysz land: Archbishop Aleksander Kakowski.

# DISTRICT WELFARE COUNCIL



**Stanisław Żórawski**

**4 419 550**



**RUBLES**

## CENTRAL WELFARE COUNCIL

The most important charitable organisation in the Kingdom was the Central Welfare Council, established in 1916. Its budget that year was 4,419,550 rubles.

The Central Welfare Council had its local branches: 40 district councils and 626 local councils. In Przasnysz District, the chairman of the council was Stanisław Żórawski, a landowner from Obrębic. Field support was provided directly by local councils.

In Przasnysz District, 14 councils were joined by 56 activists in total. They represented different social classes, thanks to which the councils became an institution that responded to the needs of almost the whole society.

## DISTRICT COUNCIL

**500**

free dinners a day in 1916

**50**

orphanages in 1916

**2 810**

children in the care of orphanages in 1916

**7 000**

rubles of benefit for the poorest in 1917



the sum of 500 rubles collected in Przasnysz during the "Save Children" campaign would make it possible to buy

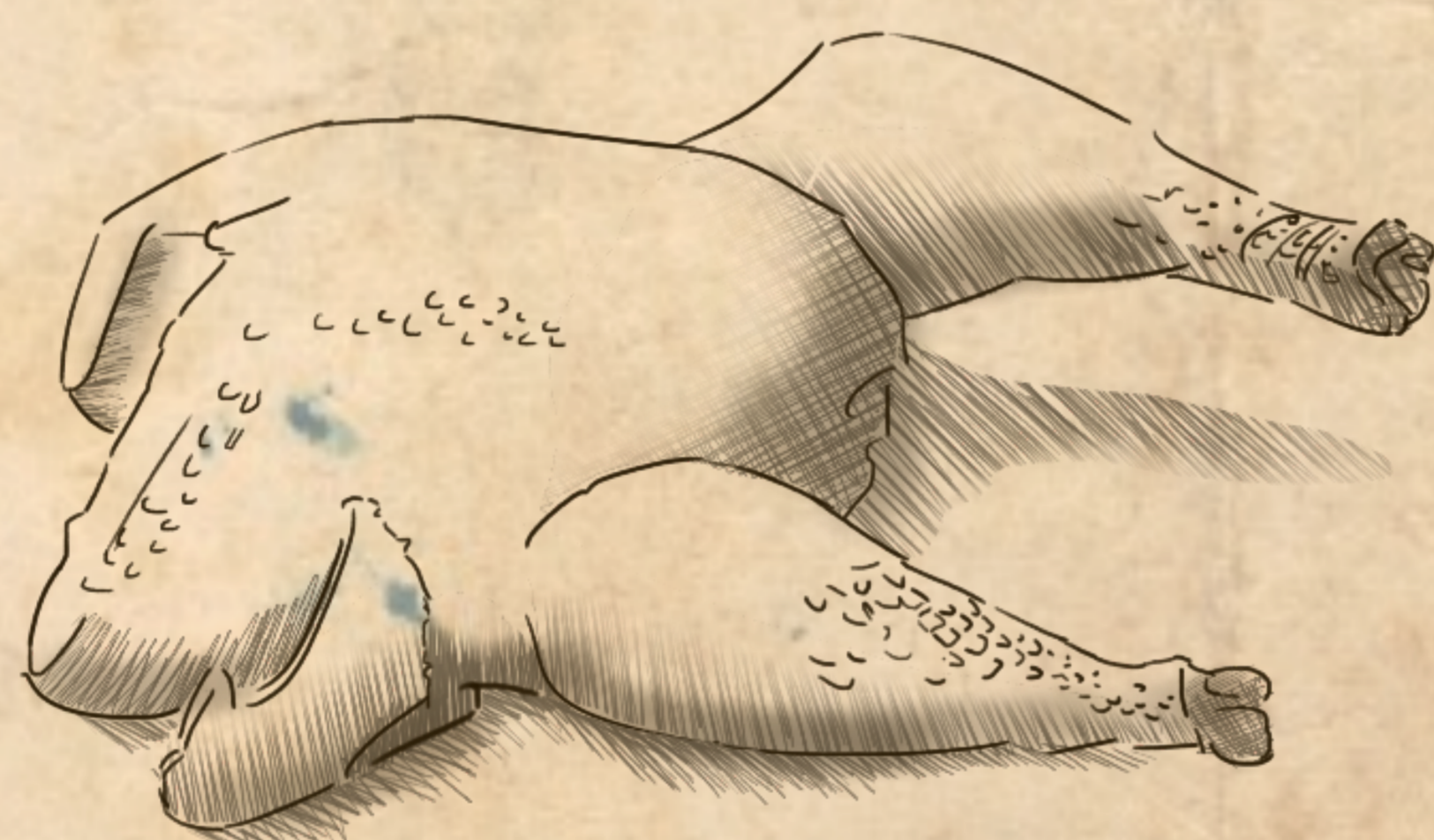
**78 one-litre bottles of wine**  
6.4 rubles

## SAVE CHILDREN

The most spectacular campaign organised by the Council was the Great Nationwide Campaign "Save Children". In 1916, about 30,000 charity collectors took part in it across the Kingdom of Poland. They visited 83 cities, 198 towns and 22,122 villages. 500,000 rubles were collected.

In Przasnysz District, people donated 3,049 rubles. This amount was enough to buy the following products (at maximum prices set by the occupiers):

**508 turkeys**  
6 rubles



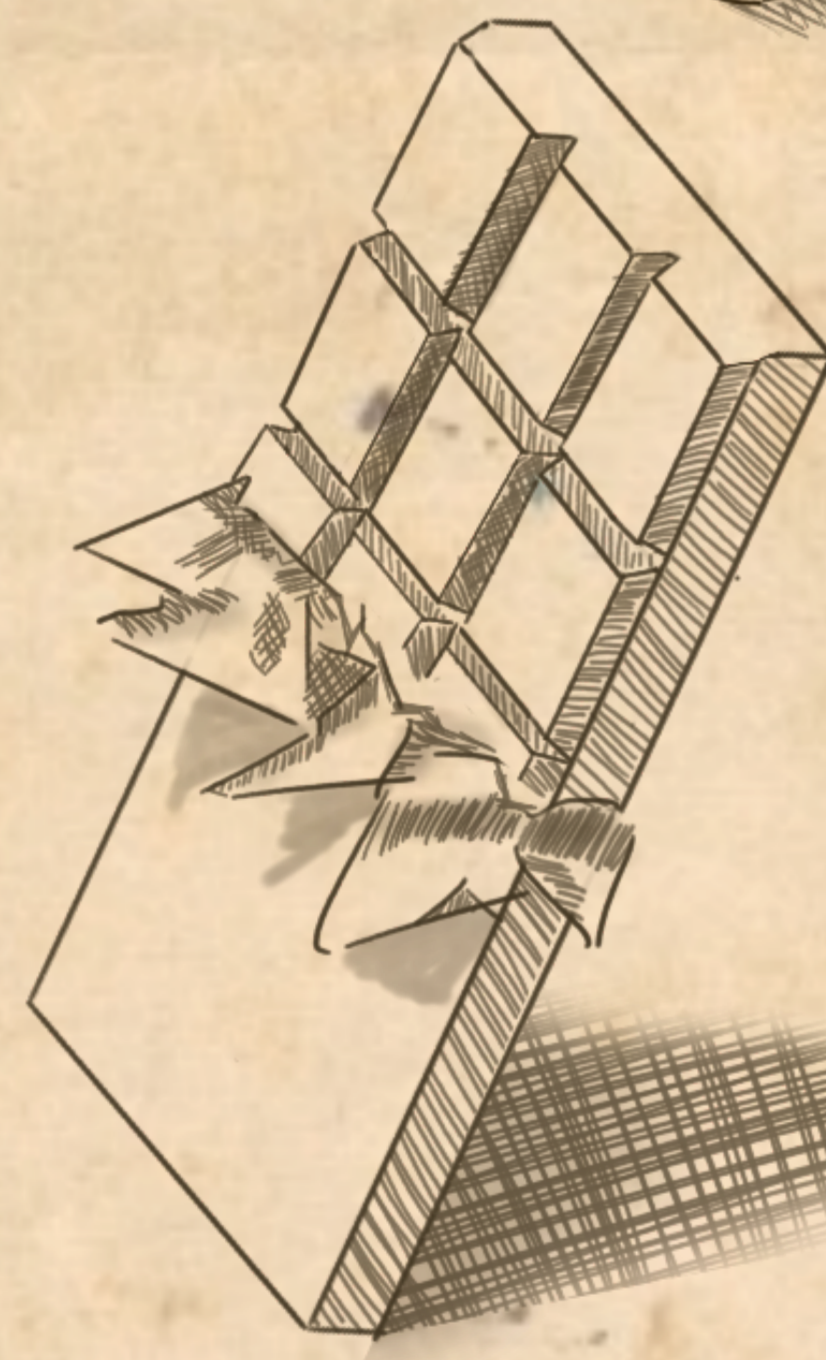
**1 100 kg of sausage**  
2.75 rubles



**2 000 one-kilogram jars of marmalade**  
15 ruble



**3 400 bars of chocolate**  
90 kopeks



**12 700 litres of milk**  
24 kopeks



**OPERARI SPERARE**  
to work and not to lose hope

**ALEKSANDER KAKOWSKI**  
archbishop metropolitan bishop of Warsaw



## OUR COUNTRYMAN

born in Dębiny, 8 kilometres from Przasnysz

### help to the poorest

In 1916, the Archbishop donated 5,000 rubles to the District Welfare Council in Przasnysz.

### loyalty to the homeland

In 1917, he became a member of the three-person Regency Council, which served as a surrogate Polish government in the Kingdom of Poland. During its rule, the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland (Dziennik Ustaw) and the Official Gazette of the Republic of Poland (Monitor Polski) were published for the first time. In November 1918, the Council transferred power to Józef Piłsudski.

### service to the Church

In 1919, Achille Ratti, the papal nuncio in Poland, was ordained a bishop. In 1921, Ratti became Pope Pius XI.