

January, 2024

God Bless – Dear Friends,

Ten months have passed since we received the generous donation from the PACCF, and we are tremendously grateful for your financial help.

In January, 2023, we established the Padre Pio Foundation. Ultimately, we intended to establish a primary school for blind and visually impaired children. Throughout the northern part of Poland, there is no such a school. Parents of children finishing preschool education are faced with a difficult choice. They can send a seven-year-old child to the school in Laski, near Warsaw (approx. 350 km from home), to a boarding school or to an integration class in public school closer to home. Those choices come with many inconveniences and risk of downgrading the child's mental well-being.

Thanks to the help of the PACCF, lessons in our wonderful little school began on September 4, 2023 with six 1st Graders. Three children are completely blind, including Jas, who lost his sight a few months ago. There are three more children who are visually impaired. It was a great difficulty to find specialists and qualified teachers – but, we did it, although we have had many sleepless nights, now behind us.

Our team consists of eleven specialists including: in the field of typhlopedagogy, computer science, orientation spatial, physical rehabilitation, English language, early school education, science, Braille language, etc. Each of them, apart from substantive preparation have huge open Hearts. One of the specialists travels from distant Warsaw for just one day of lessons. Recently, we also managed to employ a wonderful teacher, a woman who lives near Gdansk and moved from Ukraine.

Every day is filled with great joy and satisfaction, as we learn to build our school. In the meantime, we rent our rooms from Early Intervention Center (a branch of Laski). However, we have hope that one day our school will have its own building.

Every day we look with joy at the equipment in our classroom: beautiful furniture, multimedia boards, enlarger for visually impaired children, Braille typewriter, computers for our first graders, printer with Braille. All this is a gift from PACCF. We also used the funds provided to pay all the required fees in connection with establishing our school.

By the school entry, there is a plaque acknowledging who our “Special Friend”, the PACCF is and to whom we owe our school.

Many of us travel kilometers every day to reach our school. We do not lose hope, thanks to our dedicated work, support of sponsors and volunteers, and thanks to our patron, Padre Pio, we can develop this facility and many others and pave the way to independence for many more children.

We send our warmest regards and biggest gratitude. God Bless!

The Director, Teachers, Therapists, Staff and Parents
Padre Pio Foundation
Gdańsk Sobieszewo