# Summary

The subject of the thesis is to present the biography of Bishop Augustinus Bludau of Warmia along with a multifaceted account of his pastoral, organisational, administrative, social and scientific activities. Bishop Bludau lived between 1862 and 1930 and held the office of Ordinary of the Diocese of Warmia from 1908 to 1930 (he assumed responsibility for the diocese in 1909). Those were the days when ecclesiastical Warmia was situated within the borders of East Prussia, which was a province of the Prussian state which, in turn, was a part of the German Reich. This period was marked by major events important for both the general history and the history of the region – the First World War, the 1920 plebiscite in Warmia, Mazuria and Powiśle and the economic crisis of the first half of the 1920s. Bishop Augustinus Bludau led the Diocese of Warmia and its Catholic inhabitants through all this turmoil. Consequently, he became a prominent figure in the history of the region in the last century and exerted a great influence on the attitudes of the local population.

Augustinus Bludau was born on 6 March 1862 in Dobre Miasto, in the territory of historic Warmia, in the former East Prussia. He came from a Warmian family of German roots and completed elementary school in his home town. Between 1875 and 1883, he studied at the secondary school in Elbląg and, after obtaining his school-leaving certificate in March 1883, he enrolled at the Theological Seminary in Braniewo, from which he graduated in 1887. He was ordained into the priesthood on 13 March 1887. In April 1889, Fr. Bludau began specialist studies at the Royal Academy of Theology and Philosophy in Münster in the field of theology and biblical studies, which he completed on 16 February 1891, earning the degree of Doctor of Theology. Afterwards, he returned to Warmia. In the years 1891–1894, he was the vicar of St. Catherine's parish in Braniewo and, at the same time, he lectured at the Hosianum High School and the Theological Seminary. From November 1894 to May 1895, he held the posts of subregent (vice-rector) of the Seminary and prefect (superior) of the Bishop's Convent for young boys undergoing formation for the priesthood. In 1895 he received his habilitation and, in April of that year, the future Ordinary returned to Münster, where he engaged in academic work at the Faculty of Theology of the Royal Academy as an associate professor of New Testament exegesis. During his time there, he taught and lectured at the Academy (which became the Wilhelm University in 1902), carried out research work and published articles and monographs. In 1897 he was appointed full professor. From 1899 to 1900, he also served as the rector of the university, and from 1900 to 1901 and from 1904 to

1905, he was in charge of the Faculty of Theology. Following the death of Bishop Andreas Thiel in 1908, he was elected by the Cathedral Chapter in Frombork to hold the office of the Ordinary of Warmia. He subsequently received a papal nomination, and on 12 April 1909, he was anointed as a bishop.

During the reign of Bishop Augustinus Bludau, considerable changes were introduced to the ecclesiastical administrative structure of Warmia. New parishes and deaneries were established, and the diocesan boundaries were altered. The Ordinary looked after the faithful and provided them with deep pastoral care. He was the shepherd of all diocesans, striving to take a neutral stance towards ethnic disputes. He took care to provide the Polish Warmians with hymn books and prayer books in their mother tongue. He also pursued a policy of coexistence with the inhabitants of East Prussia of other religions – Evangelicals and Jews. He sought to protect the Catholic population in Warmia during the First World War, and he adopted a neutral stance during the 1920 plebiscite, wishing to be an authority for all the faithful and ensure that there were no conflicts on the grounds of nationality. He maintained good relations with the state and provincial authorities, showing no political interest.

In 1922, Bishop Bludau convened a diocesan synod, which brought order to administrative matters in the diocese and stimulated religious life. He also became involved in social activism and supported the Diocesan Caritas Association and other charitable organisations. He supported the establishment and development of various Catholic associations and unions. Bishop Bludau's rich scientific output and his achievements in the field of biblical studies and the history of the first centuries of Christianity deserve particular mention.

Bishop Augustinus Bludau died in Frombork on 9 February 1930. His life and activities are commemorated in the recollections and accounts of his colleagues and recorded in the memory of the inhabitants of the diocese.