



The Holy See

**VIDEO MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS
TO THE PEOPLE OF POLAND
ON THE OCCASION OF THE CANONIZATION OF BLESSED JOHN PAUL II**

Dear Fellow Countrymen of Blessed John Paul II!

The moment is near for the canonization of that great man and great pope, known to history by the name of [John Paul II](#). I am happy to have been called to proclaim his sainthood, this Divine Mercy Sunday, at the close of the Easter Octave. I am grateful to John Paul II, as are all members of the People of God, for his inexhaustible service, for his spiritual leadership, for having introduced the Church to the third millennium of the faith and for his extraordinary witness of holiness.

[Pope Benedict XVI](#) rightly observed, three years ago, on the day of the beatification of his Predecessor, that what John Paul II asked of everyone, that is, not to be afraid and to open wide the doors to Christ, he was himself the first to do: “society, culture, political and economic systems he opened up to Christ, turning back with the strength of a titan — a strength which came to him from God — a tide which appeared irreversible. By his witness of faith, love and apostolic courage, accompanied by great human charisma, this exemplary son of Poland helped believers throughout the world not to be afraid to be called Christian, to belong to the Church, to speak of the Gospel. In a word: he helped us not to fear the truth, because truth is the guarantee of liberty” ([Homily, 1 May 2011](#)). I fully identify with Pope Benedict XVI’s words.

We all know that, before travelling the roads of the world, Karol Wojtyła grew in service to Christ and to the Church in his homeland, Poland. It was there his heart was formed, a heart that then swelled to universal dimensions, firstly by participating in the [Second Vatican Council](#), and above all after 16 October 1978, for in him all nations, languages and cultures were given a place. John Paul II was everything for all people.

I thank the Polish people and the Church in Poland for the gift of John Paul II. We have all been enriched by this gift. John Paul II continues to inspire us. He inspires us by his words, his writings,

his actions, his style of serving. He inspires us by the suffering he endured with heroic hope. He inspires us by his total self-entrustment to Christ, the Redeemer of man, and to the Mother of God.

During the recent visit *ad Limina Apostolorum of Polish Bishops*, I underlined that the Church in Poland continues to have great potential in faith, prayer, charity and Christian practice. I also focused on the pastoral challenges facing the family, the youth, the poor and vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. I hope that the canonization of John Paul II, and that of John XXIII as well, may give new impulse to the daily and persevering work of the Church in your homeland. I rejoice in the fact that, God willing, in two year's time I shall for the first time visit your country for World Youth Day.

I invite all of you to profoundly live the canonizations of Blessed John Paul II and Blessed John XXIII. Some of you will be coming to Rome, but thanks to mass media, many more will be able to participate in this great event. Thus, I would like as of today to thank all the journalists of newspapers, radio and television for their service to the canonization this Sunday.

I greet all the fellow countrymen of John Paul II, as well as those who do not belong to the Catholic Church. I carry all of you in my heart. May God bless you all!