



The Holy See

**VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO THE POLISH PILGRIMS GATHERED TO CELEBRATE THE 300th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
CORONATION OF THE IMAGE OF OUR LADY OF CZESTOCHOWA, QUEEN OF POLAND**

Dear pilgrims,

I greet you all with great affection, especially those of you who have travelled a long way to arrive today, together with the dear brother Bishops and priests, at the *spiritual capital* of the country.

If Częstochowa is at the heart of Poland, it means that Poland has a maternal heart; it means that every heartbeat in life takes place together with the Mother of God. You are accustomed to entrusting everything to her: the past, the present, the future, the joys and anguish of your personal life and of that of your beloved country. This is beautiful. And it is beautiful for me to remember doing this with you, last year, when I placed myself under the Mother's gaze, when I looked into the eyes of Our Lady, entrusting to her heart that which was in mine, and in yours. I have a vivid and grateful memory of those moments, the joy of having come as a pilgrim too, to celebrate, under the Mother's gaze, 1,050 years of Poland's Baptism.

Another occasion of grace brings you together today in large numbers: 300 years ago the Pope agreed to place the papal crowns on the icon of Our Lady of Jasna Góra, your Queen. It is a great honour *to have a Queen as Mother*, the same Queen of the Angels and of the Saints, who reigns glorious in heaven. But it gives even greater joy to know *we have a Mother as Queen*, to love as a Mother the one whom you call Our Lady. Indeed, the sacred image shows that Mary is not a distant Queen seated on a throne, but rather the Mother who embraces her Son and, with Him, all of us, her children. She is a true Mother, whose face is lined, a Mother who suffers because she truly takes to heart the problems of our life. She is a Mother who is close to us, who never lets us out of her sight; she is a tender Mother, who takes us by the hand on our daily journey.

I hope you may experience this in the solemn Jubilee you are celebrating: may it be a favourable moment to feel that none of us is an orphan, because each of us has a Mother close by, an unparalleled Queen of tenderness. She knows us and she accompanies us with her

characteristically maternal style: gentle and courageous at the same time; never intrusive and always steadfast in goodness; patient in the face of evil and active in promoting harmony.

May Our Lady give you the grace to rejoice together, like a family gathered around its Mother. In this spirit of ecclesial communion, made even stronger by the unique bond that joins Poland with Peter's Successor, I bestow upon you my heartfelt Apostolic Blessing. And I ask all of you, please, to pray for me. Thank you.