



The Holy See

***LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI
TO ARCHBISHOP STANISŁAW DZIWIŚZ OF KRAKOW
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 25th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE POLISH INDEPENDENT
TRADE UNION "SOLIDARNOSC"***

*To my Venerable Brother
Archbishop Stanisław Dziwiśz
Metropolitan of Krakow*

Twenty-five years have passed since the memorable days during which the workers in the dockyards of Gdansk, and subsequently in other industrial establishments, gave birth to the trade union movement that took the name "Solidarnosc".

In connection with this date, I place in your hands, Your Excellency, as my Envoy to the Jubilee solemnities, my greeting to the people who actively participated in those events and those who today are concerned with this heritage of the Polish workers' movement.

We are all aware of the great importance that the birth of this trade union has had in the events of Poland and in the history of the whole of Europe. Not only did it peacefully bring about unexpected political changes in Poland, setting the Polish People on the path of freedom and democracy, but it also pointed out to other peoples of the former Eastern Bloc the possibility of atoning for the historical injustice that left them behind the "Iron Curtain".

I know how dear to the heart of my great Predecessor, the Servant of God John Paul II, it was that this act of historical justice take place, and that Europe breathe with her two lungs - the Western and the Eastern. I know how he supported "Solidarnosc" with his authority and, when necessary, also with skillful diplomacy.

I also know that it was a just cause whose best proof is the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the admittance to the European Union of the countries which had remained behind it after the Second World War.

I congratulate the Poles who had the courage, with the Church's support, to unite spirits, ideas and forces, and their union has borne fruit throughout Europe to this day. I cordially hope that everyone may enjoy not only freedom, but also the financial well-being of the Country, both families and individual citizens.

Please convey my greeting to the Authorities of the Republic, to the former and current activists of the Independent Union "Solidarnosc", as well as to the other participants in the Jubilee celebration.

I impart my Blessing to you all: in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

From Castel Gandolfo, 23 August 2005

BENEDICT XVI

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