



The Holy See

**MESSAGE OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS
FOR THE 625th ANNIVERSARY OF THE THEOLOGICAL FACULTY
OF THE PONTIFICAL JOHN PAUL II UNIVERSITY IN KRAKOW**

*Venerable Brother
Archbishop Marek Jędraszewski
Grand Chancellor
of the Pontifical John Paul II University
Kraków*

On 11 January 1397, on request of Saint Queen Hedwig and her husband Ladislaus, [Pope Boniface IX](#), by the Bull “*Eximiae devotionis affectus*”, established the Faculty of Theology of the then-Kraków Academy, which later became the Jagiellonian University. The present-day Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical John Paul II University is its continuation. Therefore, 625 years have passed since this epoch-making event, which marks the beginning of the history of your relatively young Athenaeum. Together with you I thank God for this more than six-centuries-long, with all its scientific and teaching achievements, as well as its spirituality created by its holy founders, professors and students.

The history on which you are building the present is noteworthy and important, but at the same time demanding. The present time demands of all of us that we do not forget tradition, but at the same time look with hope towards the future, and create the future. The motto of your University is the call to “Go and make disciples” (*Mt 28:19*), and its mission statement affirms that the activity consists of scientific reflection on the content of Revelation, using classical and contemporary research methods. [Saint John Paul II](#) emphasized the need for this “ministry of thought”, through which university environments unite with the mission of the Church to spread Christ’s message throughout the world. Thus, faithful to centuries of tradition, you read the signs of the times, and courageously accept new challenges to take the truth of the Gospel effectively to contemporary humanity and to the world. May your university be a place of formation of the new generation of Christians, not only through scientific study and the search for truth, but also via the social witness of living the faith. May it be a community in which the acquisition of knowledge is combined with the promotion of respect for every person, for the love of God who created them, and with care for

the formation of hearts, opening them to what is most important, what is lasting and does not pass away. The young have their dreams and their goals, and a Catholic university should help them to achieve them on the basis of truth, goodness and beauty, which have their wellspring in God. Its ministry of thought and the search for truth is necessary today in the Church in Poland and throughout the world. Carry it forward with a sense of responsibility, to be faithful to your mission: go and make disciples!

In prayer I entrust to God you, dear brother, the Rector and the Professors, the students and the staff of the university, invoking the intercession of Saint Hedwig, Queen and founder of the Faculty, and of Saint John Paul II, and I impart my heartfelt apostolic blessing to you all.

Vatican City, 6 January, Solemnity of the Epiphany, 2022

FRANCISCUS

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