



# The Holy See

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## APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE TO POLAND

### VISIT TO THE MARIAN SHRINE OF KALWARIA ZEBRZYDOWSKA

#### *ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II*

*Kalwaria Zebrzydowska*

*Thursday, 7 June 1979*

1. I really do not know how to thank Divine Providence for granting me to revisit this place: Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, the Shrine of the Mother of God, the holy places of Jerusalem connected with the life of Jesus and that of his Mother reproduced here, the "little ways", as they are called. I visited them often as a boy and as a young man. I visited them as a priest. Especially, I often visited the Shrine of Kalwaria as Archbishop of Krakow and Cardinal. Many times we came here, the priests and I, to concelebrate before the Mother of God. We came in the yearly pilgrimage in August and in the pilgrimage of certain groups in the spring and the autumn. More frequently, however, I came here alone and, walking along the little ways of Jesus Christ and his Mother, I was able to meditate on their holy mysteries and recommend to Christ through Mary the specially difficult and uniquely responsible problems in the complexity of my ministry. I can say that almost none of these problems reached its maturity except here, through ardent prayer before the great mystery of faith that Kalwaria holds within itself.

It is a mystery with which you are all quite familiar, you the Bernardine (Franciscan) Fathers and Brothers who are guardians of this Shrine, you the people who live here, who are members of the parish, and you the many, many pilgrims who come here at different times and in various groups from all over Poland, especially from the area close to the Carpathians, from both sides of the Tatra, some of you coming several times. Kalwaria has something in it that attracts a person. What produces this effect? Perhaps part of it is the natural beauty of the landscape extending to the foot of the Polish Beskid Mountains. It certainly reminds us of Mary going into the hill country to visit Elizabeth (Lk 1:39). But what chiefly *draws a person here again and again is the mystery of the union of the Mother with the Son and of the Son with the Mother*. This mystery is recounted in abundant artistic fashion by all the chapels and little churches extending around the central

Basilica reigned over by the image of Our Lady of Kalwaria, which was crowned with the diadem of Pope Leo XIII on 15 August 1887 by Cardinal Albin Dunajewski. For the centenary of the act, which will take place in 1987, you will prepare yourselves during the coming nine years. May these be years of deeply-lived preparation by you, and may they bring you still closer to the mysteries of the Mother and the Son, which have been so strongly lived and meditated upon in this holy place.

The mystery of the union of the Mother with the Son and of the Son with the Mother on the Way of the Cross and the path of her funeral from the Chapel of the Dormition to the Tomb of Our Lady. Finally, the mystery of their union in glory, recalled by the little ways of the Assumption and the Coronation. The whole of this, well laid out in time and space and covered with the prayer of so many hearts, of so many generations, constitutes a unique living treasury of the faith, hope and charity of the People of God in this land. Every time that I came here I was aware of drawing from that treasury. And I was always aware that the mysteries of Jesus and Mary on which we meditate while praying for the living and the dead are truly inscrutable. We keep coming back to them, and each time we encourage ourselves to return here again and again in order to immerse ourselves in them. In these mysteries is expressed a synthesis of all that is part of our earthly pilgrimage, of all that is part of our "little ways" of daily life. All of this was assumed by the Son of God, and through his Mother it is restored to man again: it is permeated by a new light, without which human life is senseless and remains in the darkness. "He who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (Jn 8:12). That is the fruit of my many years of pilgrimage through the little ways of Kalwaria. The fruit that I am sharing with you today.

3. That for which I want to give you courage and enthusiasm in this: keep visiting this Shrine. Even more do I want to say this to all of you, but especially to the young people (for it is the young who are particularly fond of this place): keep praying; we "ought always to pray and not lose heart" (Lk 18:1), as Jesus taught. Pray, and through prayer shape your lives.

"Man shall not live by bread alone" (Mt 4:4), and it is not by the temporal alone nor merely by the satisfaction of material needs, by ambition, or by desire that man is man. "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*" (Mt 4:4). To live by this Word, the Divine Word, we ought to pray "and not lose heart".

From this place I send to every one who is listening to me here or anywhere this simple fundamental invitation, from the Pope, to pray.

It is the most important invitation.

It is the most essential message.

May the Shrine of Kalwaria continue to gather pilgrims, and to serve the Archdiocese of Krakow and the whole of the Church in Poland. May a great work of renewal be accomplished here for

men, women, young people, liturgical service of the altar, and for everyone.

And I ask all those who will continue to come here to pray for one of the pilgrims of Kalwaria whom Christ has called with the same words that he spoke to Simon Peter: "Feed my lambs... Feed my sheep" (Jn 21:15-19).

I ask you to *pray for me here* during my life and after my death. Amen.

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