



# The Holy See

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APOSTOLIC PILGRIMAGE TO POLAND

**MEETING WITH STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS  
OF THE PONTIFICAL THEOLOGICAL FACULTY OF KRAKOW**

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

*Krakow*

*Friday, 8 June 1979*

*Very Reverend and dear Dean,*

Thank you for the invitation that enables me today to visit the Alma Mater that is so dear to me, where I was first a student and obtained my doctorate and later worked for many years as lecturer and professor.

Every one knows my solicitude, when I was still Metropolitan of Krakow, to secure recognition for the rights due to this institution, which has undoubtedly merited them, and to obtain full respect for its academic character in keeping with the needs of the present, which are different in nature and field of action from those of the past, from those, for instance, of the time when the Krakow Theological Faculty still belonged to the Jagellonian University.

1. In response to these needs, I endeavoured, during my ministry at Krakow:

first, to renew and increase the number of researchers and secure for them the qualifications that in Church law (like the State procedure in Poland), constitute the basis of their autonomy;

second, to secure for a large majority of theology students the basic academic teaching and the corresponding canonically valid academic degrees. This concerned in particular the students of the ecclesiastical seminaries (future priests and pastors) of the Archdiocese of Krakow and of the

Dioceses of Czestochowa, Katowice and Tarnow, as well as the students belonging to the various religious orders and congregations, especially those studying at the Institute of the Vincentian Fathers in Krakow. This purpose was served by the system of agreements for scientific collaboration between the Papal Theological Faculty and the ecclesiastical seminaries that I have mentioned, which was approved by the Holy See (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education). During the final year of my work in Krakow, preparatory talks had taken place for drawing up a similar agreement with the seminary of the Diocese of Kielce.

2. The Theological Faculty, anxious to provide for the further instruction of priests and, in part, also of lay people after they had completed their basic studies, has broadened the system of what are called studies akin to faculties of other kinds, such as catechetical, liturgical, and ascetical studies, studies for the theology of family pastoral care and the study of contemporary thought. These studies have their seat in Krakow. Apart from that, studies of a similar character are carried on at Rzeszow for the priests of the Diocese of Przemysl.

3. The activity I have been speaking of is part of the *cyclus institutionalis* (basic academic study). At the same time, the Theological Faculty, in conformity with its character and its statutes, also organizes the studies contained in the *cyclus specializationis*, preparing for the licentiate and doctorate. These studies are carried on principally in Krakow. Apart from that, an agreement has already been made with the Ordinary of Tarnow, to open a specialized Patrology Institute there. The Ecclesiological and Mariological Institute founded earlier at Czestochowa in agreement with the local Ordinary also has a specialized character. During my ministry the request was also sent on for the Pastoral Institute at Katowice.

4. Specialization demands the singling out of the special scientific fields within which it is carried on, with the possibility of conferring academic degrees in accordance with the specialization. For that reason I asked Pope Paul VI, through the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, for the permission to confer scientific degrees not only in theology but also in philosophy.

Specialization in the field of Church history has a very particular reason for existing in Krakow, which has special resources providing possibilities in this field. Accordingly the Holy See will certainly go out to meet the requests for the approval of this specialization in the Krakow Athenaeum. The requests have long since been forwarded, and as a result of them the Institute of Church History has sprung up at the Papal Theological Faculty.

Authorization for the setting up of that separate specialization, as well as the separate specialization of philosophy, corresponds fully with my first plans. This also concerns the philosophy specialization under the form of a third Faculty of the Krakow Athenaeum. I beg you to continue the activity along these lines.

I express my deep joy at being able today to do homage, to the great past of our Alma Mater of

Krakow before so venerable an audience, together with my Successor, and in the presence of the Bishops and the full Council of the Faculty. I wish to honour once again the Blessed Queen Hedwig, Foundress of the Krakow Theology Faculty. I also wish with all my heart and with full conviction to confirm the historic decision of my Predecessor Pope Boniface IX expressed in the Bull *Eximiae Devotionis Affectus* of 11 January 1397.

To the Athenaeum I love so much I wish the blessing of the Most Holy Trinity and the constant protection of Mary, Seat of Wisdom, as well as the faithful patronage of Saint John of Kety, who was a professor here more than five hundred years ago.

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