



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY
OF HIS HOLINESS JOHN PAUL II
TO POLAND (MAY 31-JUNE 10, 1997)
VISIT TO THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF JASNA GÓRA

PRAYER OF JOHN PAUL II

Czestochowa — 4 June 1997

"O Mother of God, O Blessed Virgin, by God have you been glorified!"

Mother of Jasna Góra and Queen, I come to you today on a pilgrimage of faith to thank you for your ceaseless protection of all the Church and of myself, especially during the fifty years of my priesthood and those of my service in the See of Peter. With great trust I come to this holy place — on the hill of Jasna Góra, so dear to my heart, to cry out once more: Mother of God and our Mother, I thank you for being the guiding Star of the building of a better future for the world, for being the Patroness of the attainment of the civilization of love among the members of the human race. Mother, I humbly beseech you, surround with your maternal protection the days and years which still separate us from the Year 2000. I entrust to your intercession the preparation for the Great Jubilee of Christianity. Help all the nations of the world to begin the new millennium in union with Christ, the King of the ages.

Mother of the Church, Blessed Virgin Help of Christians, in the humility of Peter's faith I bring to your feet the whole Church, all the continents, countries and nations which have believed in Jesus Christ and have recognized in him the signpost marking their path through history. I bring here, O Mother, all humanity, including those still searching for the way to Christ. Be their guide and help them to be open to the God who is coming. I bring to you in prayer the peoples of East and West, of North and South, and I entrust to your motherly care all the families of nations. Mother of the Church's faith, just as you persevered in prayer with Jesus' disciples in the Upper Room, so be with us today in the Upper Room of the Church as she travels towards the third millennium of faith,

and obtain for us the grace to be open to the gift of God's Spirit.

Temple of the Holy Spirit, today in the Shrine of Jasna Góra I give you thanks for all the good which has come to my own nation in years of profound transformation. During my first pilgrimage to my homeland, I prayed that the Holy Spirit might be poured out upon Poland, imploring: "Let your Spirit descend, and renew the face of the earth, the face of this land" (*Homily at Mass in Victory Square, Warsaw, 2 June 1979, No. 4; in L'Osservatore Romano English-language edition, 11 June 1979, p. 5*). Later I visited Poland with the Tablets of the Ten Commandments. Here too I brought the youth of the whole world. I have always returned to my homeland for reasons of the heart, bringing a message of faith, hope and love.

The history of our homeland on the Vistula is marked by the witness of faith of Saint Adalbert and of many other Polish Saints and candidates for the honours of the altar; it has also been marked by the hard work of many generations who strengthened Poland in her faithfulness to Christ. For ten centuries we have remained a baptized Nation faithful to you, to your Son, to his Cross and the Gospel, to the Holy Church and her Pastors.

I come to you today, O Mother, to exhort my Brothers and Sisters to persevere with Christ and his Church, to encourage the wise use of regained freedom, in the spirit of what is most beautiful in our Christian tradition.

Queen of Poland, recalling with gratitude your motherly protection, I entrust to you my homeland and the social, economic and political changes taking place in her. May desire for the common good prevail over selfishness and divisions. May all who exercise public service see in you the humble Handmaid of the Lord, may they learn to serve and to recognize the needs of their fellow countrymen, as you did at Cana in Galilee, so that Poland may become a Nation in which love, truth, justice and peace reign. May the name of your Son be glorified in it.

Faithful Daughter of the Eternal Father, Temple of the Love that embraces heaven and earth, I entrust to you the service of the Church in the world, a world which so needs love. Mother of God, Mother of the only-begotten Son who gave us as the principle of life the new commandment of love, help us to become builders of a united world, in which peace triumphs over war, and the civilization of death is replaced by love for life.

May the International Eucharistic Congress in Poland become for all nations the beginning of a miracle of transformation in the spirit of the freedom brought by the Gospel of Christ. May humanity stand firmly with God, to whom belongs the whole world.

Mother of Unity and Peace, strengthen the bond of communion within the Church of your Son, enliven ecumenical efforts so that all Christians, by the power of the Holy Spirit, may become one family of sisters and brothers of Jesus Christ, the one Saviour of the world yesterday, today and

for ever (cf. Heb. 13:8).

Virgin Mother of God, help us to enter the Third Millennium of Christianity through the holy door of faith, hope and love.

O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary, accept our trust, strengthen it in our hearts and present it before the face of the one God in the Holy Trinity. Amen.

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