



John Paul II

The Saint from Wadowice



Edmund Wojtyła with his parents – Emilia and Karol

Photo from the collection of The Holy Father John Paul II Family Home Museum in Wadowice

I have discovered this mystery through the hands of my mother, who put my little hands, the hands of a child, together for prayer and who showed me how to make the Sign of the Cross, the sign of Christ, who is the Son of the living God. Today, after all these years, I am so grateful to you my mother and to you my father, and to you my brother!

John Paul II – Wadowice, 14.08.1991

18.05.1920 – Karol Józef Wojtyła, the son of Karol and Emilia, is born

20.06.1920 – he is baptised by Franciszek Żak in the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Wadowice

13.04.1929 – Karol's mother – Emilia – dies at the age of 45

25.05.1929 – Karol makes his First Holy Communion

04.12.1932 – Karol's eldest brother – Edmund – dies at the age of 26

03.05.1938 – the sacrament of confirmation is administered to Karol

14.05.1938 – Karol passes his matura exam in religion, the Polish language, the Greek language and the Latin language, obtaining the grade: very good

07/08.1938 – Karol Wojtyła moves to Krakow with his father



Karol Wojtyła being carried by his mother Emilia

Photo from the collection of The Holy Father John Paul II Family Home Museum in Wadowice



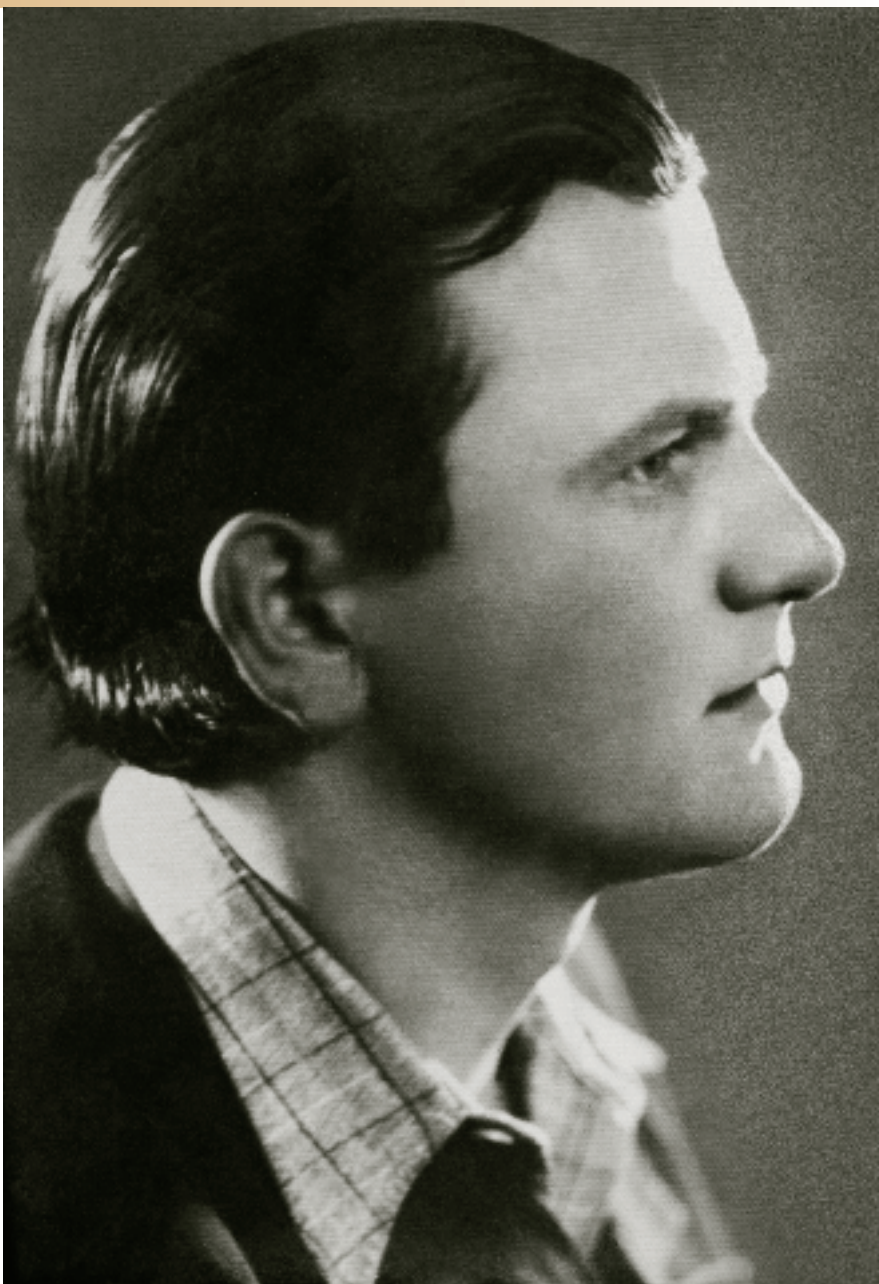
A small Lolek (an abbreviation of Karol)

Photo from the collection of The Holy Father John Paul II Family Home Museum in Wadowice



Karol after the First Holy Communion

Photo from the collection of The Holy Father John Paul II Family Home Museum in Wadowice



Karol Wojtyła – a portrait of a secondary school graduate

Photo from the collection of The Holy Father John Paul II Family Home Museum in Wadowice



Cardinal Karol Wojtyła during his visit to Wadowice

Photo by Andrzej Leń



Cardinal Karol Wojtyła in Wadowice – from the left: mitred prelate Edward Zacher

Photo by [Andrzej Leń]

I would like to express my gratitude to mitred prelate Edward Zacher, who was my religion professor at the lower secondary school in Wadowice, who later made a speech during my first mass as a priest and then during my first mass as a bishop, as an archbishop and as a cardinal, here in the church in Wadowice and who gave a speech also today, the day which opens a new phase on the path of my life, the path which can only be explained by boundless mercy of God and by singular care of the Mother of God, Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

John Paul II – Wadowice, 7.06.1979

18.02.1941 – an army officer Karol Wojtyła – the Pope's father
– dies and is buried at the Rakowicki Cemetery in Krakow

01.11.1946 – Karol Wojtyła is ordained to the priesthood

04.07.1958 – Karol Wojtyła is appointed bishop by Pope Pius XII

30.12.1963 – Karol Wojtyła is appointed archbishop by Pope Paul VI

28.06.1967 – Pope Paul VI bestows a cardinal's pallium on Karol Wojtyła

26.11.1967 – Karol Wojtyła celebrates his Pontifical High Mass
in the church in Wadowice



Cardinal Karol Wojtyła in Wadowice – a pastoral visit

Photo by [Andrzej Leń]



John Paul II in Wadowice – the first visit on June 7, 1979

Photo from the archives of the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Wadowice



John Paul II in Wadowice – the first visit on June 7, 1979

Photo by Andrzej Leń

When I look back, I can see how the path of my life leads me, through the local environment, through the parish church and through my family, to one place – to the baptismal font in the parish church in Wadowice. It is at that font that on 20 June 1920 I was made God's adopted son and I was admitted to the Church of my Redeemer. As a then-archbishop of Krakow I have already solemnly kissed this font to commemorate the millennium anniversary of the adoption of Christianity in Poland. Then, as has been mentioned by the prelate, I did it for the second time, already as a cardinal, on the day of the 50th anniversary of my baptism and today, I have kissed this font for the third time, coming here from Rome, as the successor to the Saint Peter.

John Paul II – Wadowice, 07.06.1979

16.10.1978 – Karol Wojtyła is elected at the Conclave as the successor to the Saint Peter and takes the name of John Paul II

07.06.1979 – the first visit of Pope John Paul II to Wadowice. The Pope meeting the citizens of Wadowice at the square in front of the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary



John Paul II in Wadowice – the first visit on June 7, 1979
Photo by [Andrzej Leń]



John Paul II in Wadowice – the first visit on June 7, 1979
Photo by [Andrzej Leń]



John Paul II in Wadowice – the first visit on June 7, 1979

Photo by [Andrzej Leń]

It is with great emotion that I come to this town where I was born, to the parish church where I was baptised and admitted to the Church of the Christ, to the environment in which I was growing for eighteen years — from my birth to my matura exam.

John Paul II – Wadowice, 07.06.1979



John Paul II in Wadowice – the second visit on August 14, 1991

Photo by [Andrzej Leń]

May you be blessed Peter, in a special way in this new church that has been consecrated today under your name and has been dedicated to the living God for the glory of the Holy Trinity.

John Paul II – Wadowice, 14.08.1991



John Paul II in Wadowice – the second visit on August 14, 1991

Photo by [Andrzej Leń]

I would like to express my gratitude to all of you who together with your priest Michał Piosek contributed to the construction of this church. The new church constitutes an element of the panorama of old Wadowice seen from the Skawa river and the first hills of Beskid, it constitutes the element of this panorama together with the ancient parish church, but also together with the church of the Carmelites, where at the beginning of this century the prior was Blessed Rafał Kalinowski.

John Paul II – Wadowice, 14.08.1991

- 13.05.1981** – assassination attempt on the Pope's life at St. Peter's Square in Vatican City
- 13.05.1982** – a pilgrimage of John Paul II to the Shrine of Fátima on the anniversary of the assassination attempt to thank for the miraculous saving of his life
- 17.07.1989** – resuming diplomatic relations between Poland and the Holy See
- 14.08.1991** – John Paul II visits Wadowice for the second time and consecrates a new votive church of Saint Peter the Apostle. The church was built to thank for electing Karol Wojtyła the Pope and for saving his life on 13 May 1981 after the assassination attempt
- 17.11.1991** – canonization of Blessed Rafał Kalinowski



John Paul II in Wadowice – the second visit on August 14, 1991

Photo by [Andrzej Leń]



John Paul II in Wadowice – the third visit on June 16, 1999.
Bread and salt welcome in hometown
 Photo by Arturo Mari

It is with great reverence that I kiss the threshold of the House of God – the parish church in Wadowice, and inside the church I kiss the baptismal font at which I was baptized into Christ and admitted to the community of His Church. It is in this church that I went to confession for the first time and made my First Communion. It is here that I was an altar boy. It is here that I thanked God for the gift of priesthood and – already as an archbishop of Krakow – celebrated my silver jubilee of priesthood. Only the One who gives all the graces knows how much good and how many graces I have found in this church and in this parish community. It is Him – one God in Trinity – that I worship today on the threshold of this church.

John Paul II – Wadowice, 16.06.1999

25.03.1992 – the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
 in Wadowice is given the title of Minor Basilica

16.06.1999 – the third pilgrimage of John Paul II to Wadowice

19.08.2002 – a helicopter with Pope John Paul II flies over Wadowice



John Paul II in Wadowice – the third visit on June 16, 1999
 Photo by Mieczysław Mateja



John Paul II in Wadowice – the third visit on June 16, 1999
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John Paul II in Wadowice – the third visit on June 16, 1999

Photo from the archives of the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Wadowice



John Paul II in Wadowice – the third visit on June 16, 1999

Photo from the archives of the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Wadowice

During my first visit to Wadowice, I asked you to continuously pray for me in front of the portrait of the Mother. I can see that the favour I asked you has been sculptured in stone. I believe it is a sign that it is also engraved deep in your hearts. (exclamations: We remember...) [I whole-heartedly thank you for your prayers.] I can constantly feel its effects and I still kindly ask you to pray for me.

John Paul II – Wadowice, 16.06.1999

02.04.2005 – John Paul II dies at 9:37 p.m.

28.06.2005 – the cause of beatification of John Paul II is officially opened

01.05.2011 – the beatification of John Paul II in Rome by Pope Benedict XVI

18.05.2012 – Blessed John Paul II proclaimed patron of Wadowice

27.04.2014 – the canonization of Blessed John Paul II in Rome by Pope Francis

As they say, there is no place like home. So many years have passed since I left Wadowice. But I always come back to this town and I can feel everyone here is waiting for me like in my family home.

John Paul II – Wadowice, 16.06.1999



On 18 May 2012, at the main square in Wadowice, His Eminence Cardinal Stanisław Dziwisz handed on to the mayor of Wadowice a decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments proclaiming Blessed Pope John Paul II patron of Wadowice. The decree is a result of a request of the mayor of Wadowice, Ms Ewa Filipiak, who on Sunday 15 May 2011, at the main square in Wadowice, during thanksgiving celebrations after the beatification of John Paul II, asked His Eminence Cardinal Stanisław Dziwisz for help to proclaim Blessed John Paul II patron of Wadowice. To that the Cardinal replied: *"I think you do not have to ask for that, although we can try to obtain a decree. It is a fact that Blessed John Paul II is patron of Wadowice and of the whole surrounding area. The Providence has given a new patron for the year two thousand, a patron of freedom, the latter being expressed in unity and in solidarity"*.



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Photos on the cover: page 1: from the archives of the Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, last page: J. Jędrygas

Publisher: Commune of Wadowice, Tourist Information, 4 Kościelna St., 34-100 Wadowice, telephone: +48 33 873 23 65, www.it.wadowice.pl

Printed by: **Grafikon** Jarosławice 324, 34-100 Wadowice, telephone: 33 873 46 20, e-mail: biuro@grafikon.com.pl, www.grafikon.com.pl

Wadowice 2014