



WADOWICE
where it all began

SANTO SUBITO JOHN PAUL II FROM WADOWICE



SANTO SUBITO



*Market Square in Wadowice
Photo of the Archive of
the Municipal Office in Wadowice*

After the death of John Paul II, many people around the globe felt the absence of the man who changed the face of the modern world. During his funeral ceremony on April 8, 2005, we experienced an extraordinary phenomenon, for among the crowd gathered in St Peter's Square one could clearly hear the cries of 'Santo subito', or, 'Saint at once'. This public profession of faith that John Paul II is a saint marked the beginning of his beatification in 2011, as well as his canonisation in 2014. Over the course of both processes, a rich documentation has been compiled, which constitutes a source of knowledge about the deeds and virtues of the Pope from Wadowice.

The 10th anniversary of the canonisation of John Paul II, the most prominent resident of Wadowice, which falls in 2024, is an excellent opportunity to bring the figure of the saint closer once again. Based on numerous testimonies, a picture is being formed of a man who in his life practised virtues such as faith, hope, love, prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude to an extraordinary, or even heroic degree.

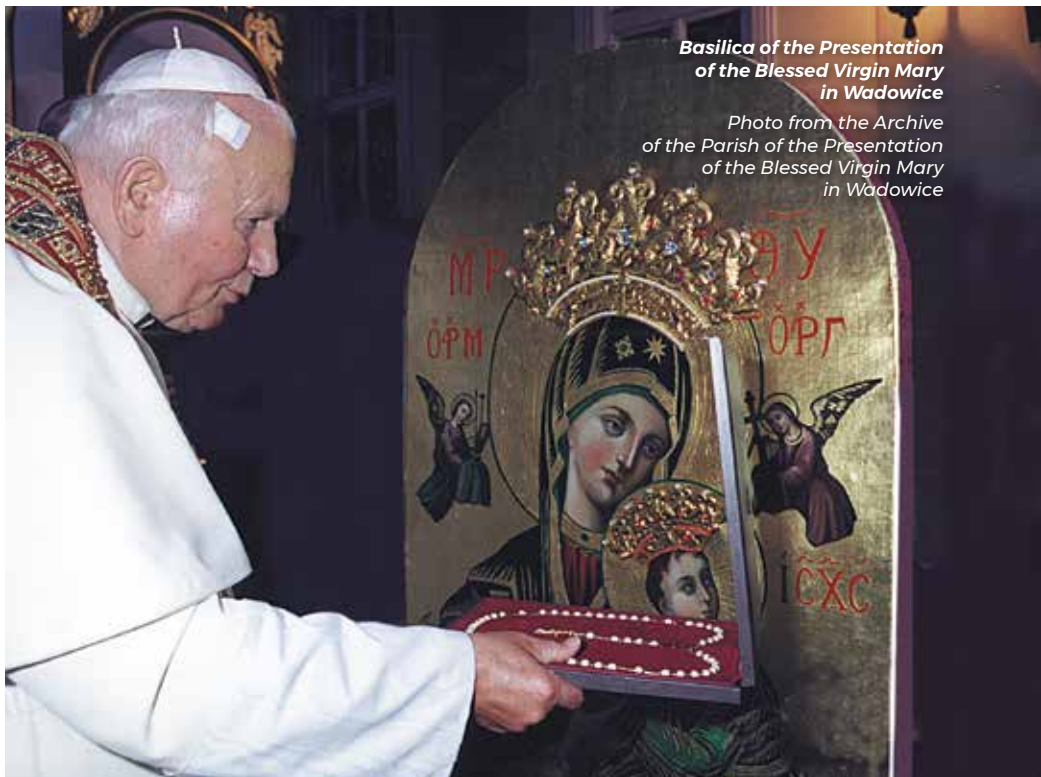
This publication is a kind of journey through the life of Karol Wojtyła, from his birth in Wadowice to the end of his earthly life in Rome, which presents how this heroism of Christian virtues was manifested throughout his life.

**John Paul II's
third visit
to Wadowice, 1999**

Photo by M. Mateja



FAITH



*Basilica of the Presentation
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
in Wadowice*

*Photo from the Archive
of the Parish of the Presentation
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
in Wadowice*

I have a special worship for the Guardian Angel. Since childhood, like probably all children, I have prayed many times: 'Angel of God, my guardian dear, To whom God's love commits me here... be at my side, guard my soul and body...'. My Guardian Angel knows what I do. My faith in him, in his caring presence, keeps deepening steadily in me. St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael are the Archangels I often invoke in prayer.

John Paul II

***Basilica of the Presentation of the
Blessed Virgin Mary in Wadowice***

*Photo of Archive of the Municipal
Office in Wadowice*



His school days have formed Karol Wojtyła's habit of saying the Angelus prayer. The church bell was a reminder of prayer time - morning, noon, evening. Charles recited the Angelus in every situation: on a trip, in class, as a priest and bishop, and even at school.

Zbigniew Siłkowski - school colleague

He was, above all, a man of prayer. He drew great strength from prayer. He used every moment of the day to pray. It was often a very simple prayer - a catechism pacifier, rosary or litanies. He brought traditional Polish devotions to the Vatican - the Hours, the Bitter Sorrows, the Stations of the Cross. John Paul II had a special worship for the Eucharist.

Archbishop Mieczysław Mokrzycki, former secretary of John Paul II

HOPE



Monastery of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers in Wadowice

Photo of the Archives of the Municipal Office in Wadowice

When, on October 11, 1978, I uttered 'Do not be afraid!' in the St. Peter's Square, I could not have fully realised how far these words would lead me and the whole Church. What was contained in them came more from the Holy Spirit.

John Paul II



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John Paul II

I can assure you that the distinguishing feature of St. John Paul II was his unwavering faith in God and the accompanying trust in man, redeemed by Christ. The Pope, who had to live in difficult times, never lost his conviction in the greatness and dignity of man, never gave up hope.

Cardinal Stanisław Dziwisz

LOVE

***John Paul II's family home
in Wadowice, today a biographical
museum of the Pope***

*Photo of the Archives
of the Municipal Office
in Wadowice*



It is with filial devotion that I kiss the threshold of the family home, expressing my gratitude to Divine Providence for the gift of life given to me by my Parents, for the warmth of the family nest, for the love of the closest ones, which gave a sense of security and strength, even when it came to facing the experience of death and the hardships of daily life in difficult times.

John Paul II

Love filled with justice was also very clearly present in the life of John Paul II. He was a man of mercy, because mercy and justice go together, one without the other does not exist. How much John Paul II did to make people understand what God's mercy is! How has he developed the cult of St. Faustyna Kowalska, presently well-known all over the world. The justice of God must include the face of mercy, and it is this gift that St. John Paul II has left us.

Pope Francis



*Little Karol Wojtyła
with his mother*

*Photo of the Museum
of the Family Home of the Holy
Father John Paul II in Wadowice*

How grateful I am to you my mother and my father and my brother! (...) How grateful I am to you for this greatest 'initiation'. Everything which I derive my ultimate meaning from.

John Paul II

PRUDENCE



*Karol Wojtyła's bench,
commemorating
the future pope's
studies at the local
secondary school*

*Photo of the Archive of
the Municipal Office in
Wadowice*

He was captivating in his simplicity, directness and great joy of life, even though his childhood was overshadowed by orphanhood. (...) Lolek surprised us, impressed and at the same time intimidated us with his maturity, his philosophical insight into many issues, and we were captivated by his profound integrity. He also amazed us with his moderation, prudence and serenity in accepting all that life brought. He was easy to connect with and easily created an atmosphere of closeness and friendliness with everyone.

Eugeniusz Mróz - classmate

*Karol Wojtyła
surrounded by his
secondary school
classmates*

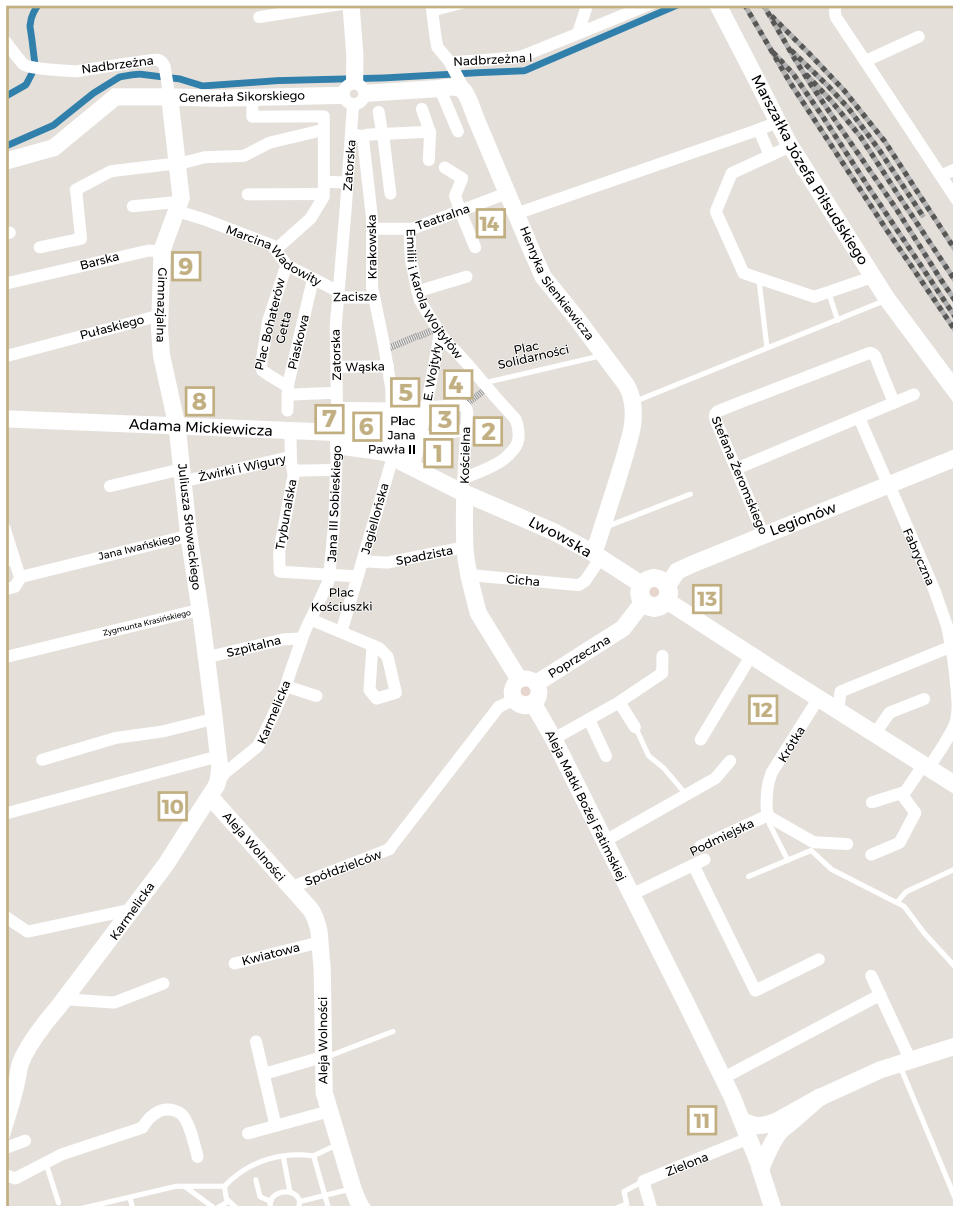
*Photo from
the collection
of E. Mróz*



I met a normal person who wouldn't put on airs. Normal, matter-of-fact, modest, enthusiastic about what he was looking for. And he was looking for the truth. One that would help Poles in Poland live and find themselves.

prof. Stanisław Grygiel - philosopher and friend of John Paul II

KAROL WOJTYŁA FOOT TRAIL





- 1 Family Home of Karol Wojtyła – Saint John Paul II
- 2 Former Hygienic Dairy
- 3 Parish church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 4 Catholic House
- 5 Former Marcin Wadowita Elementary School
- 6 Former Marshal Józef Piłsudski Square – Market Square
- 7 Former Karol Hagenhuber Confectionery
- 8 Former Marcin Wadowita Humanities Secondary School
- 9 Synagogue in Wadowice
- 10 Monastery of the Barefoot Carmelite Fathers
- 11 Church of St. Peter the Apostle
- 12 Military barracks
- 13 House of Divine Providence of the Congregation of the sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth
- 14 Former building of the ‘Sokół’ Gymnastic Society

JUSTICE

The former Elementary School building, today the seat of the municipal authorities

Photo of Archives of the Municipal Office in Wadowice



He wasn't showing off that he knew the answer. After completing a test, he wouldn't walk out like the others with a triumphant face. He sat until the end. [...] He didn't whisper hints in class, but with his facial expressions he would guide you to the right answer. Charles did not want to do anything against the law, against customary norms. Others, after all, often make their behaviour dependent on the situation: when someone's watching, they're nice; when nobody's watching, they do their own thing. Whether in front of the curtain or behind it, he was always the same, polite to the professor, the tertian, the colleague. He was a mate for both the Jew and the returnee, for the one from the countryside and the one from the city. Nobody could find anything against Lolek. He didn't have a friend of his own because everyone was his friend.

Zdzisław Piotrowski – classmate



**John Paul II's first
visit to Wadowice,
1979**

*Photo of the Archive
of the Municipal
Office in Wadowice*

*John Paul II's first visit
to Wadowice, 1979*

*Photo of Archives
of the Municipal Museum
in Wadowice*



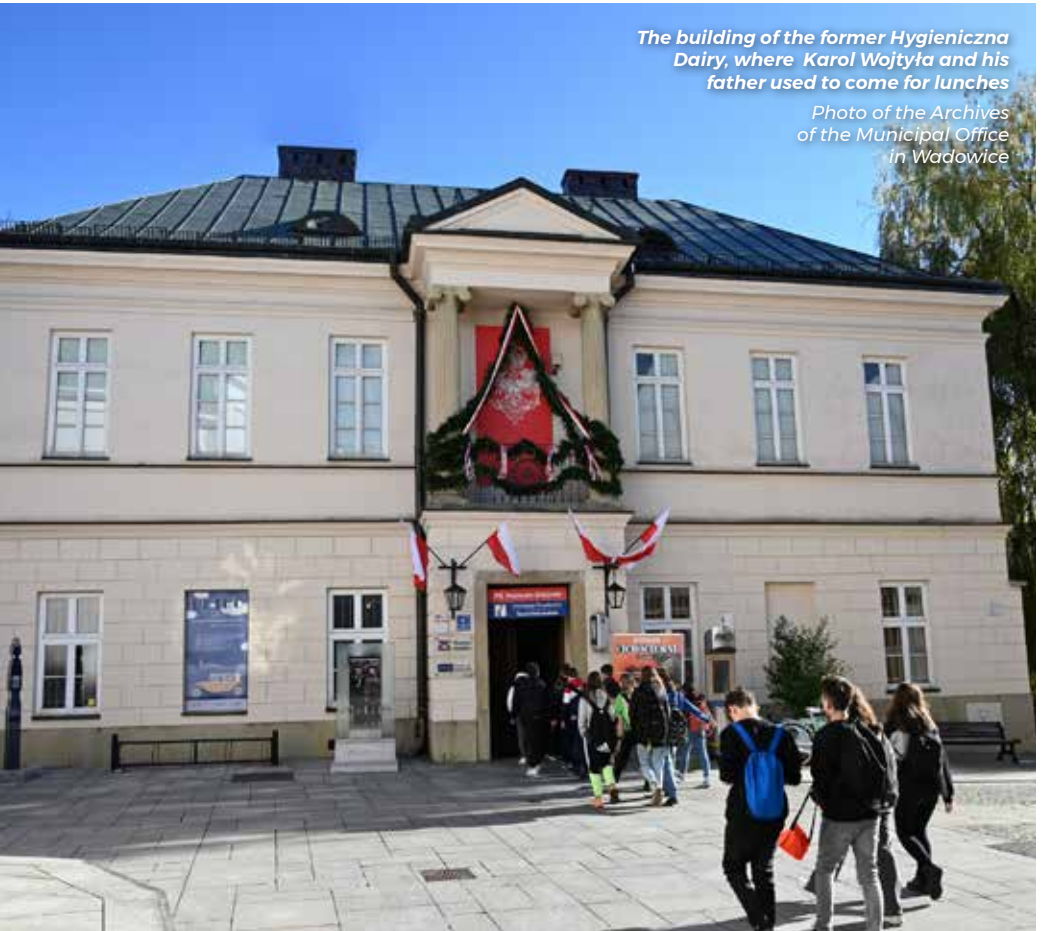
John Paul II was also a man close to his people. He went out to them all over the world. This way, he was pointing to the proximity of God Himself, who never leaves His people. He asked Israel: what nation has God as close as you do? This bond becomes even clearer in Jesus Christ. For a true shepherd must be close to the people and not just act as an administrator, perhaps even a good one, but only a manager. John Paul II set an example with his life, he was close to both the great and the small.

Pope Francis

MODERATION

The building of the former Hygieniczna Dairy, where Karol Wojtyła and his father used to come for lunches

*Photo of the Archives
of the Municipal Office
in Wadowice*



My boyhood and adolescent years are linked above all with the figure of my Father, whose spiritual life became extremely deepened after the loss of his wife and elder son. Watching him, I learned that you have to make demands on yourself and strive to fulfil your own responsibilities.

John Paul II



Karol with his father

Photo from the collection of E. Mróz

Lolek was a student who stood out from the class. [...] During breaks, while others run and shout - he remains calm. Reacts to any inappropriateness in the behaviour of peers. He was well-liked, although he counteracted his peers' pranks. He had a strong sense of ethics, of what could and could not be done. [...] Lolek stood out as a very capable, diligent student.

Jozef Titz - secondary school teacher



John Paul II Square
*Photo of the Archive
of the Municipal Office
in Wadowice*

In the first year of his pontificate, John Paul II announced that there would be a Corpus Christi procession through the streets of Rome. The tradition had been long gone. The following months were, therefore, very busy. The entire secular side of Rome strongly opposed the event. Authors of articles in the daily press tended to argue against the initiative, but the Pope nevertheless firmly insisted: the Corpus Christi procession must take place! And it took place on June 17. I attended this procession and I remember that the atmosphere was very tense, there were almost as many police officers as participants. I admired not only his fortitude, but also his love for the Eucharistic Christ, because there are matters where one cannot give way.

Fr. Ignatius Soler, Opus Dei

**John Paul II's third visit
to Wadowice, 1999**

*Photo of Archive of the Parish
of the Presentation of the Blessed
Virgin Mary in Wadowice*



Do not be afraid, open, open wide the doors to Christ. For His saving power, open the borders of countries, economic and political systems, wide areas of culture, civilization and development! Do not be afraid! Christ knows what a person carries inside. He alone knows it!

John Paul II

The apostolic pilgrimages of Saint John Paul II have gone down in history. As a true witness of Christ, he reached the farthest corners of the globe - making 104 trips to more than 130 countries. His first visit to his homeland, in 1979, opened the way for change in Poland, led to the creation of the first free trade union in the Soviet block - 'Solidarność'; and consequently, in 1989, brought freedom to the whole of Central and Eastern Europe.

Dr Janusz Kotański, Polish Ambassador to the Vatican

Courage, in order not to be something shallow or dangerous, must be associated with humility. This is what the Pope taught us not only with words, but with his whole being, especially in the last years of his life. Courage and humility are sisters - one dies without the other.

Bishop Michał Janocha

Let us pray for this gift of the Holy Spirit, which is called the 'gift of fortitude.' When a man lacks the strength to 'outgrow' himself for higher things - for truth, for justice, for vocation, for marital fidelity - it is necessary for this 'gift from on high' to make each of us brave, so that at the appropriate moment, from inside he told us: courage!

John Paul II

THE CALENDAR OF THE LIFE OF ST. JOHN PAUL II

- 18.05.1920 r.** – Karol Józef Wojtyła was born.
- 1929 r.** – Karol's mother Emilia died at the age of 45.
- 1929 r.** – Karol received his first Holy Communion.
- 1932 r.** – Edmund - Karol's brother - died at the age of 26.
- 1938 r.** – Karol passed his matriculation exam in religion, Polish, Greek and Latin with very good results.
07/08.1938. - Karol Wojtyła left for Krakow with his father.
- 1941 r.** – died Lt. Karol Wojtyła, father of the Pope.
- 1946 r.** – Karol Wojtyła took orders as a priest.
- 1958 r.** – Pope Pius XII appointed him bishop.
- 1963 r.** – Pope Paul VI elevated Karol Wojtyła to the dignity of archbishop.
- 1967 r.** – Pope Paul VI presented Karol Wojtyła with the cardinal's pallium.
- 16.10.1978 r.** – Karol Wojtyła was elected successor to St. Peter, he took the name of John Paul II.
- 1979 r.** – the first visit of Pope John Paul II to Wadowice.
- 13.05.1981 r.** – assassination attempt on the Pope in St. Peter square.
- 1991 r.** – John Paul II visited Wadowice for the second time and consecrated the new votive church of St. Peter the Apostle.
- 1992 r.** – the church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Wadowice was given the title of a Minor Basilica
- 1999 r.** – John Paul II's third pilgrimage to Wadowice.
- 02.04.2005 r.** – John Paul II died at 21.37.
- 01.05.2011 r.** – Beatification of the Servant of God John Paul II by Pope Benedict XVI in Rome.
- 2012 r.** – Bl. John Paul II became the patron saint of Wadowice.
- 27.04.2014 r.** – canonisation of Bl. John Paul II by Pope Francis in Rome.

*John Paul II's second
visit to Wadowice, 1991*

Photo by A. Leń





*A fragment of the interior of
the Wojtyła family flat where
John Paul II was born*

*Photo of the Museum
of the Family Home
of the Holy Father John Paul II
in Wadowice*

Wadowice is a special place in the life of Saint John Paul II. It was here that he was born and spent the first 18 years of his life, i.e. his childhood and youth. There are many places associated with the Pope in his hometown, but the house where he was born holds a special place among them. It is here that the Family Home Museum of the Holy Father John Paul II - the first museum in the world dedicated to him - has been operating since 1984. This year, the institution celebrates the 40th anniversary of its foundation and 10 years of operation of the multimedia and narrative permanent exhibition 'I was born in Wadowice'. Following the reconstruction it presents the figure and achievements of Karol Wojtyła - an outstanding Pole and a resident of Wadowice.

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