

# *Our Lady of Częstochowa*

**“Make our hearts awaken to become true apostles of faith.”**



*Queen & Protectress of Poland*  
*Feast day: August 26*

## *Our Lady of Częstochowa*

The praesidium of the Legion of Mary at Christ the King gathers under the name of Our Lady of Częstochowa. It is one title among many by which our Blessed Mother Mary is known. Although this title is not widely known in the United States, the Bishop of Worcester, Massachusetts, explains that Our Lady of Częstochowa, who is the Queen of Poland, “is for the Poles what Our Lady of Lourdes is for the French, and Our Lady of Fatima is for the Portuguese.”

However, unlike Our Lady of Lourdes and Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Częstochowa is not the result of an apparition. Her origin goes all the way back to Jesus Himself while He was on the earth. According to legend, Jesus made a number of objects as He was learning the trade of carpentry from St. Joseph, one of which was a table that the Holy Family used in their home. After the crucifixion when John the beloved disciple took the Blessed Virgin into his home, she brought this table with her. Soon, people began to flock to John’s home to visit the Mother of God. However, those who could not make the journey to her desired to have an image of her, and so objects bearing her likeness began to be made.



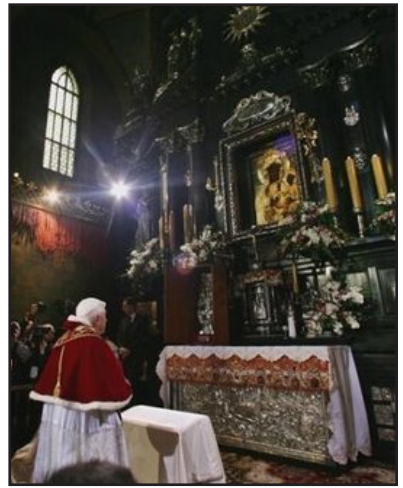
The artist St. Luke is credited with creating this image on the tabletop which Jesus had made, capturing in Mary’s face the compassion and consolation she feels toward all who suffer. As he painted this image, St. Luke listened as the Blessed Virgin told him about the angel announcing she was to be the mother of the Messiah, about the Holy Family’s journey to Bethlehem and Jesus’s birth in the stable, and their subsequent flight into Egypt, stories which St. Luke recorded in his Gospel.

Over the centuries, this image was hidden away during times of Christian persecution until the year 326 when St. Helena went in search of it. She found it in Jerusalem and brought it back to Constantine the Great, who built a church in Constantinople and enshrined the painting there. The image quickly gained notoriety for the graces bestowed upon those who prayed before it.

When Constantinople came under attack, the painting took a wandering journey through Bulgaria, the Czech country, and into Russia.

The image was in the Ukraine when the country fractured and became part of Poland. Eventually, the painting came into the possession of Polish prince Ladislaus who placed it in the castle of Belz, which came under attack by the Tartars. During this siege, an arrow flew through a chapel window and struck the painting, scarring the Blessed Virgin's throat. To protect the image, Ladislaus decided to transport it to Opala, the city of his birth. During the journey he rested one night in Czeszochowa. The following morning, with the image secured in the wagon, the horses could not move the cart.

Perplexed, Ladislaus prayed before the painting, asking the Blessed Virgin what he should do. A dream revealed to him to keep the image there in Czeszochowa on Jasna Gora (Bright Hill). Therefore, he placed the image in the Church of the Assumption. The day was August 26, 1382.



*Pope Benedict XVI prays before the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa during his 2006 papal trip to Poland (AP Photo/Diether Endlicher)*



In the year 1430, Hussites attempted to steal the painting. However, once again, when the image was placed in a wagon, the horses could not move it. So instead of taking the image with them, the thieves tried to destroy it, hacking at it with swords. The marks they inflicted still appear on the Blessed Virgin's face even though attempts have been made to restore the image. Every time the image has been retouched, the marks on her cheek and throat return. It is as though the Blessed Virgin wants everyone to know that she feels the pain of her suffering children.

Countless miracles are attributed to the intercession of Our Lady of Czestochowa, including the Miracle of Vistula in 1920 when the Russian army turned away from invading Warsaw after this image appeared in the clouds.

Our Lady of Czestochowa is Queen of Poland. More than that, though, Mary is Queen of Heaven and Earth. Let us take all our praise and all our troubles to her so she may take them to her Divine Son.

# Prayer to Our Lady of Czestochowa

Mother of the Jasna Gora Church, with the choirs of Angels and Saints of our patrons, we kneel obedient at your throne. For centuries your miracles have shone at Jasna Gora, the capitol of Your Mercy. Look into our hearts that give you glory and love, and make our hearts awaken to become true apostles of faith. Strengthen our love for our Holy Church, and obtain for us the graces we desire. Mother with wounded face, I put into your hands myself and my loved ones. I trust in you. I count on your intercession with your Son, in the Glory of the Triune God. Amen.



## Pilgrim Virgin Statue Family Prayer Program



Remember, you may request to have the Legion of Mary's Pilgrim Virgin Statue brought to your home to honor her and pray for her intercession and blessing on you and your family.

You may request to have the Pilgrim Virgin Statue for 1-2 weeks. You may bring her into your home for any reason: a time for personal prayer or a novena, the anniversary of the death of a loved one, or the celebration of a marriage or birth. Please contact the parish office of Christ the King: (605) 332-5477 to reserve your time with the Pilgrim Virgin Statue.

Welcome Mary into your home. She is eager to lead you home to Jesus.

Produced by:

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