

DAY 4 | WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2026 | WARSAW • CZĘSTOCHOWA • KRAKÓW

Jasna Góra: The Mother Who Points to Christ

GRACE TO ASK

To let Mary teach us a love that gives itself wholly to Jesus.

Morning Prayer with the Church

Morning Prayer for the Memorial of Saint Pius of Pietrelcina, using the Proper of Saints with Psalter Week I, Liturgy of the Hours, Volume IV.

Additional pilgrimage intercessions

- For confessors, spiritual directors, and all who accompany wounded consciences.
- For pilgrims making their way to Marian shrines throughout Poland and the world.

After the Liturgy of the Hour

Father of mercies, through the prayers of Saint Pius, teach us to seek neither spiritual drama nor religious display, but conversion, reconciliation, and faithful prayer. Amen.

BEFORE WE STEP OFF

A Marian shrine can be approached as spectacle, as national symbol, or as a place of encounter. Let us choose Encounter. We will see banners, votive gifts, crowds, soldiers, families, religious sisters, and people carrying petitions that may be known only to God. Let Our Lady's hand in the icon redirect all our attention to Christ.



The place we are entering:

Jasna Góra, the Mother who Shows the Way

As we come to Jasna Góra, we enter a pilgrimage that has been unfolding for centuries. The Pauline Fathers established the monastery here in the fourteenth century, and the icon of Our Lady of Częstochowa has been venerated here since that time. Devotional tradition reaches even further back, associating the image with Saint Luke and Saint Helena. Art history cannot confirm those ancient origins, and our faith need not be troubled by that.

Tradition tells us how deeply generations have loved this image. History tells us what can be responsibly demonstrated. Reverence loses nothing when the truth is spoken honestly.

The icon is a *Hodegetria*, an image of Mary who shows us the Way. She holds the Child and directs our attention toward him. Christ raises his hand in blessing and holds the Gospel. Mary always leads us to Jesus.

The scars upon her face and the darkness of the image have become part of how the Polish people recognize their own story. They see sorrow that has endured without surrendering hope. The monastery's defense during the Swedish invasion of 1655 gave the shrine a lasting place in Poland's national memory. Since then, people from every part of society have carried their public suffering and private grief to this place.

Yet love of country always requires spiritual discipline. Patriotism can become gratitude, responsibility, and service. It can also become an idol. A Catholic shrine never declares that a nation is innocent. Mary's Magnificat humbles the proud, lifts up the lowly, and places every earthly power beneath the judgment of God. Devotion at Jasna Góra becomes mature when we allow the Gospel to judge our nation as well as console it.

Karol Wojtyła returned to this shrine many times. Here, he placed his *Totus Tuus*, "totally yours," within Mary's school of discipleship; the school of God's infinite Mercy. For Karol, entrustment to Mary led more completely to Christ.

As we stand before the Black Madonna, bring one wounded relationship, one fear for the Church, and one concern for our country. Do not tell God how each one must be resolved. Place them quietly and quickly before the Mother of God. Ask her to teach us how to remain faithful at the Cross, how to trust when the road is unclear, and how to say "yes" when obedience costs us something.

How we enter as pilgrims

- Let the icon look at you before you analyze or photograph it.
- Notice Mary's hand directing attention to Jesus.
- Bring one wounded family relationship without telling God exactly how it must be healed.

Polish for the day: Matka Boża — Mother of God.

Today's movement

- 7:00 a.m. breakfast; check out and drive to Częstochowa.
- 11:00 a.m. Mass at Jasna Góra Monastery; visit the Chapel of Our Lady and museum areas.
- Lunch on your own; continue to Kraków.
- Check in at Sheraton Grand Kraków; 7:30 p.m. included dinner.

PLAYLIST

TOTUS TUUS

Music by: Marco Drisina

"Jesus Christ, You Are My Life": La Musica di Karol

Scan me!



CATHOLIC DAILY MASS

MEMORIAL OF SAINT PIUS OF PIETRELCINA, PRIEST

11:00 a.m. • Jasna Góra Monastery • Częstochowa

Schedule marker only • Use the separate worship aid for Mass

Evening Prayer with the Church

Evening Prayer, Wednesday of Psalter Week I.

Additional pilgrimage intercessions

- For Poland and every nation tempted to confuse the Gospel with national self-worship.
- For mothers carrying fear for their children.

After the Liturgy of the Hour

Mary, Mother of God, point us again to Jesus. Teach us a love of country that serves truth, a devotion that produces obedience, and a tenderness strong enough to remain beside the cross. Amen.

Evening examen and pilgrim notes

Where did Mary direct my attention today?

What part of my life resists the words “Totus Tuus”: wholly yours?

PLAYLIST

Magnificat: My Soul Rejoices

Music by: Owen Alstott

Journey Songs, Third Edition

Scan me!



PLAYLIST

Czarna Madonna

Traditional Polish Melody

Mała Armia Janosika gra dla Papieża Franciszka

Scan me!

