

DAY 6 | FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2026 | WADOWICE • KRAKÓW

Wadowice: Holiness Begins at Home

GRACE TO ASK

To recognize the ordinary people, losses, sacraments, and joys through which God forms a vocation.

Morning Prayer with the Church

Morning Prayer, Friday of Psalter Week I, Liturgy of the Hours, Volume IV.

Additional pilgrimage intercessions

- For parents, grandparents, godparents, catechists, and parish priests who form children quietly.
- For families living through bereavement, especially children who have lost a parent or sibling.

After the Liturgy of the Hour

God of hidden beginnings, bless the homes, classrooms, parishes, friendships, and losses through which you form a vocation. Make us faithful in the years before anyone sees what grace is doing. Amen.

BEFORE WE STEP OFF

Before the world knew a pope, Wadowice knew a boy called Lolek. I love this part of the story because it rescues holiness-from-distance. We will enter a family apartment, stand near a baptismal font, and remember friendships, school, theater, sport, grief, and even cake. Do not rush toward the famous future of St Pope John Paul II. God formed Karol Wojtyła through the particular people and duties of a small town....



The parish basilica in Wadowice, where Karol Wojtyła received the sacraments and learned to pray. [Photo credit](#)

The place we are entering

Some of the greatest movements of grace begin in very small rooms.

Karol Józef Wojtyła was born here in Wadowice in 1920. His family lived in modest rooms beside the parish church, within a town shaped by Catholic and Jewish neighbors, schools, shops, soldiers, and the familiar rhythms of the market square. In the Basilica of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Karol was baptized, received his First Holy Communion, served at the altar, and slowly learned what it meant to belong to the Church.

The rooms were small. The life that emerged from them would be enough to touch the world.

His childhood also knew profound sorrow. His mother, Emilia, died before his ninth birthday. His older brother, Edmund, a young physician, died after contracting scarlet fever while caring for a patient. During the Nazi occupation, Karol's father also died, leaving him without his immediate family. Suffering by itself does not make anyone holy. It can close the heart as easily as deepen it. Karol carried his grief into prayer, friendship, study, work, and the sacramental life of the Church. Somewhere within that faithful carrying, sorrow became compassion and loss made room for vocation.

Wadowice also remembers something wonderfully ordinary. Years later, John Paul II fondly recalled the *kremówka*, the cream cake he enjoyed with his classmates after school. Let us receive that memory with humor. It is cake, after all. Yet such memories matter. A culture lives through its prayers and solemn anniversaries, and also through shared food, laughter, music, theater, sports, and the affectionate names by which people knew us before titles ever arrived.

Jesus asks his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" That question followed Karol Wojtyła through every season of his life: as a student, quarry laborer, clandestine seminarian, priest, philosopher, bishop, pope, and finally an old man whose suffering was visible to the world.

Admiring a saint is easy; following Christ requires an answer of our own.

When we stand before the baptismal font in Wadowice, let us give thanks for our own baptism. Then let us ask quietly: Who is Jesus for me now, and what answer are my present choices giving him?

PLAYLIST

Barka

Music by: Cesareo Gabarain

St John Paul II's favorite hymn

PLAYLIST

The Summons

Music by: John L. Bell

The University of Notre Dame Folk Choir

Scan me!



Scan me!



How we enter as pilgrims

- At the baptismal font, renew gratitude for your own baptism and those who brought you to it.
- In the family home, notice what is modest, unfinished, or marked by grief.
- Taste the local cake with delight; let ordinary joy remain ordinary and good.

Polish for the day: Kremówka — the cream cake associated with Wadowice.

Today's movement

- 7:00 a.m. breakfast; drive to Wadowice.
- 9:45 a.m. Mass in the John Paul II Museum/Papal Basilica area; exact worship site must be confirmed locally.
- Visit the basilica and the John Paul II Family Home Museum.
- Lunch and leisure on your own; return to Kraków; 7:30 p.m. included dinner.

CATHOLIC DAILY MASS

FRIDAY OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH WEEK IN ORDINARY TIME

9:45 a.m. • Wadowice • Exact worship site to be confirmed

Schedule marker only • Use the separate worship aid for Mass

Evening Prayer with the Church

Evening Prayer, Friday of Psalter Week I.

Additional pilgrimage intercessions

- For young people asking who Christ is and what their lives are for.
- For our deceased parents and family members, remembered with gratitude before God.

After the Liturgy of the Hour

Jesus Christ, you asked your friends for a personal answer. Receive the answer we gave with our words and the truer answer written by our choices. Deepen both into fidelity. Amen.

Evening examen and pilgrim notes

What ordinary person or place most formed my faith?

How is my life currently answering Jesus' question?
