

DAY 10 | TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2026 | WIELICZKA • KRAKÓW

Wieliczka: Salt, Angels, and Hidden Labor

GRACE TO ASK

To see the workers and unseen servants whose fidelity preserves life.

Morning Prayer with the Church

Morning Prayer for the Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels. Use the Proper of Saints in Liturgy of the Hours, Volume IV.

Additional pilgrimage intercessions

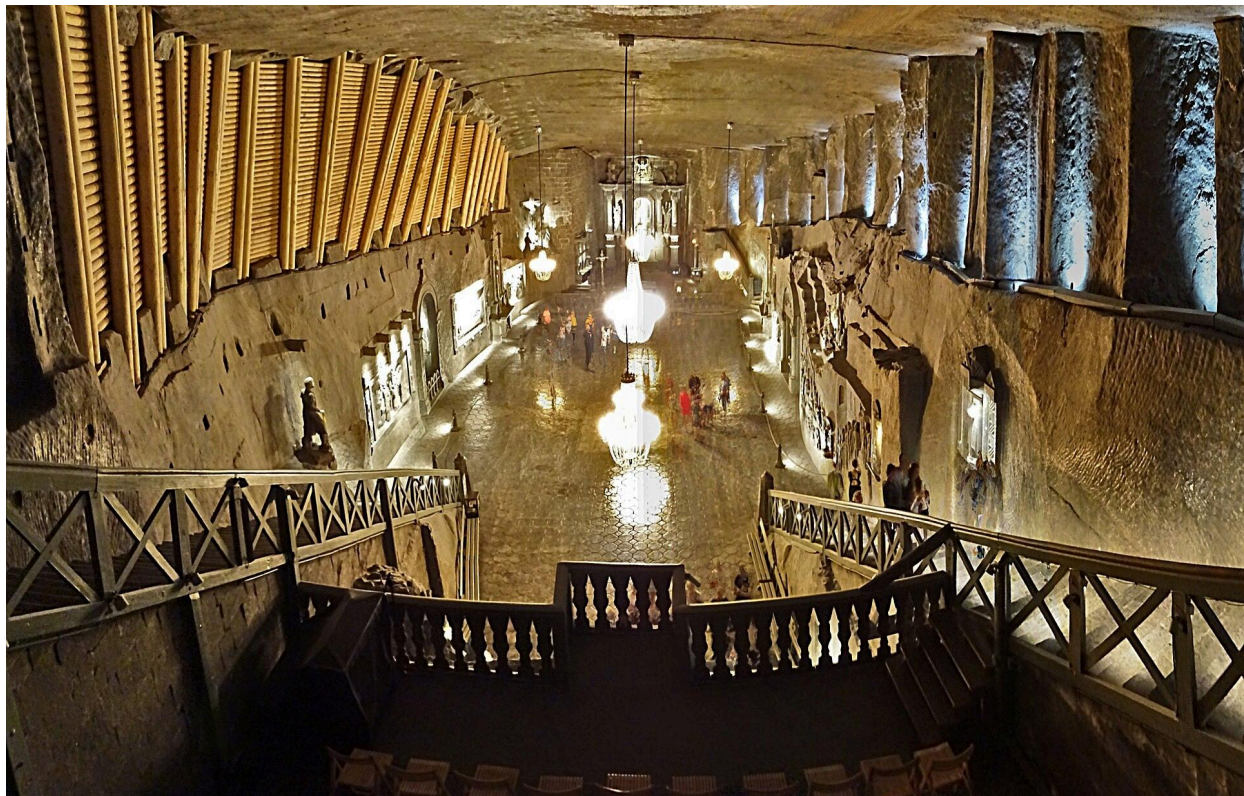
- For those who work underground, in dangerous trades, or without public recognition.
- For protection from evil, clarity in discernment, and healing for the wounded.

After the Liturgy of the Hour

God of hosts, send your holy angels to guard, announce, heal, and guide according to your will. Keep us from fascination without obedience, and make us ready servants of your purposes. Amen.

BEFORE WE STEP OFF

Today we descend to “an abyss”, beneath the surface. The mine may first appear as an astonishing human achievement, but I want us to notice what tourism can hide: generations of difficult labor, danger, faith, and skill. The chapels were carved where people worked. Holiness did not wait above ground for the shift to end.



Wieliczka: labor, preservation, danger, and devotion beneath the earth. [Photo credit](#)

The place we are entering

When we descend into the Wieliczka Salt Mine, the words of Jesus may sound different to us: “You are the salt of the earth.” Salt seems ordinary because it is always nearby. Yet for centuries it preserved food, supported trade, and helped families survive difficult seasons. Mining began at Wieliczka during the Middle Ages and continued until the late twentieth century. This ordinary substance helped shape the life and economy of Poland.

We still describe a good and dependable person by saying, “He is the salt of the earth,” or “She is the salt of the earth.” We mean someone honest, steady, humble, and willing to help. It is usually the person who shows up, does the work, and does not need to be praised for it. Jesus calls his disciples to be those people, too. Our presence should preserve what is good, bring kindness and healing into difficult places, and give the Gospel some flavor in the ordinary circumstances of life.

The miners of Wieliczka understood both the value of salt and the danger of finding it. They entered the darkness each day facing collapse, flooding, fire, injury, and sudden death. They carved chapels underground because faith belonged to their daily work. The Chapel of Saint Kinga, with its altar, reliefs, and chandeliers carved from salt, reveals their skill and their devotion. Their love for Saint Barbara, patroness of miners and those facing sudden death, also tells us how seriously they took the risks before them.

As we walk through the mine, I would like us to remember those whose names do not appear on plaques. Someone carried the tools, strengthened the passages, tended the horses, carved the images, and returned to work the next morning. These are the people we often call the salt of the earth. Our own lives also depend upon quiet and dependable people whom we may easily overlook. Faith asks us to notice them, thank them, and care whether their work is safe, fairly compensated, and treated with dignity.

Today, we celebrate the Feast of the Archangels. Michael protects, Gabriel speaks God’s word, and Raphael accompanies and heals. Their whole existence is given to the mission God entrusts to them. At our 5:00 p.m. Mass in the Church of Saint Barbara, I invite you to ask: How is God calling me to be salt for someone else? Who needs my protection, honesty, encouragement, healing, or faithful presence?

Tonight, as we gather for our farewell meal, let us recognize the salt-of-the-earth people who made this pilgrimage possible. Thank those who drove us, welcomed us, translated for us, opened churches, prepared rooms, cooked meals, cleaned, organized, and waited patiently for us. Most of their service was quiet, but our pilgrimage could not have happened without them. Before we leave Poland, let us make sure they know that we saw their kindness and received it with gratitude.

How we enter as pilgrims

- Look for marks of labor as carefully as works of art.
- Remember workers whose names were never recorded.
- How does God call me to mission at the end of our pilgrimage: am I called to protect? To speak the truth? To Teach? To heal, reconcile, or guide?

Polish for the day: *Szczęście Boże* — a traditional blessing and miners’ greeting.

Today's movement

- 7:00 a.m. breakfast; drive to Wieliczka.
- 9:00 a.m. guided visit to the salt mine and Chapel of Saint Kinga; expect substantial walking and stairs on the descent.
- Return to Kraków; lunch on your own and free afternoon.
- 5:00 p.m. Mass at the Church of St. Barbara, Mały Rynek.
- Included farewell dinner; final night in Kraków.

CATHOLIC DAILY MASS

FEAST OF SAINTS MICHAEL, GABRIEL AND RAPHAEL, ARCHANGELS

5:00 p.m. • Church of St. Barbara, Mały Rynek • Kraków

Schedule marker only • Use the separate worship aid for Mass

Evening Prayer with the Church

Evening Prayer for the Feast of Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels.

Additional pilgrimage intercessions

- For miners, artisans, engineers, preservation workers, and all whose labor sustains public life.
- In thanksgiving for the graces, friendships, challenges, and protection of this pilgrimage.

After the Hour

Faithful God, we thank you for seen and unseen companions, for the work of human hands, and for the ministries of your angels. As we share our farewell table, make gratitude deeper than nostalgia. Amen.

Evening examen and pilgrim notes

What hidden labor did I learn to see today?

Which grace from this pilgrimage must not be lost in the journey home?

PLAYLIST

Make Me A Channel of Your Peace

Music by: Sebastian Temple
The Prayer of St. Francis

Scan me!

