

DIOCESE'S INFORMATION CARD

DIOCESE OF BIELSKO – ŻYWIEC

- 100 km from Krakow, the place of WYD celebration.
- 40 km from Wadowice, the birthplace of John Paul II.
- 140 km from Czestochowa, the Polish National Shrine. place of 6th WYD in 1991.
- Charles Wojtyła used to return here often in the days of his youth. His family came from here (Czaniec).
- Bielsko-Biała is the city of John Paul's II brother, Edmund Wojtyła, who was a doctor. Later the hospital where he worked was named after him.
- Auschwitz concentration camp is the place where lots of people were martyred. Among them we can find the saints and blessed of the Church such as St. Maksymilian Kolbe, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edit Stein).
- Our diocese was visited by popes John Paul II (1979 Auschwitz, 1995 Skoczów, Bielsko-Biała, Żywiec) and Benedict XVI (2006 Auschwitz).
- The Beskids mountain ranges show beautiful landscape with majestic peaks, charming valleys and scenic forest paths. The magnificent beauty of the Silesian Beskids, Żywiec Beskids and Little Beskids is definitely worth seeing.
- There is rich folk tradition in Beskid villages and towns (music, costumes, cooking, craft, farming).
- Bielsko-Biała – the city with rich mercantile tradition is known for its textile and automobile industry, cartoon label and puppet theater.
- Cieszyn – historical town which unites Poles and Czechs, the birthplace of st. Melchior Grodziecki.
- Ustroń, Wisła, Szczyrk, Brenna, Istebna, Koniaków and Jaworzynka – recreation and spa resorts built in a beautiful mountain scenery, as local people say, created of God's smile.
- Żywiec and Auschwitz – historical princely towns.
- Skoczów – the birthplace of St. John Sarkander. Here, on Kaplicówka hill, John Paul II celebrated Saint Mass on 22nd May 1995.
- Kęty – the birthplace of st. John Kanty.
- Wilamowice – „the own” town of a small nation, the birthplace of St. Joseph Bilczewski.

- St. Mary's shrines in Halcnów, Rychwałd and Szczyrk, St. Nicolaus Shrine in Pierściec and other small shrines hidden in enchanting mountainous nooks.
- The paradise for sport pilots (Bielsko-Biała, Międzyrzecze Żywieckie).

DAYS IN THE DIOCESE

20 – 22 VII – Auschwitz, sightseeing, entrance to the top.

23 VII – Day of involvement in work of mercy.

24 VII – Devotion of sending.

25 VII – Departure to Crakow.

Framework plan for the day:

9:00 am – meeting in the church

9:30 am – departure to places included in the program

6:00 pm – return to home

9:00 pm – common Appeal of Jasna Góra

DIOCESE'S DATE:

Name: Bielsko - Żywiecka Diocese

Address: 43-300 Bielsko-Biała, st. Żeromskiego 5

Bishop: Ks. Bp Roman Pindel

Subsidiary bishop: Ks. Bp Piotr Greger

Number of inhabitants: 805.000 inhabitants, in this around 721.000 Catholics

Number of locality: 210 parishes

SOCIETY AND CULTURE:

Historical events connected with the city:

History of Bielsko-Biała is complex, because the city combines two cities. The older part of the “twin-city” is Bielsko arising in the end of the 18th century. Since the 16th century the city was developing as center of trade, drapery and ceramics, and also as the capital of the state, later transformed into the principality. Biała was formed around 1560 as weavers’ village. At the beginning of 19th century the industry started develop, and at the turn of 19th and 20th centuries district bielsko-bialski was one of the most important industrial center of Austria-Hungary. Then the process of growing together two organisms began, which ended in 1591 by connect them in one city - Bielsko-Biała. By centuries the characteristic feature of twin-city was also a diversity of nationalities (Poles, Germans, Jews) and religious diversity (Catholics, Protestants, Jews), interrupted by the Second World War (in which the city avoided damage luckily). In the postwar period Bielsko-Biała was still developing, in years 1975-1998 as a capital of Bielsko province, to became the most resilient economic Polish city today, and also an important cultural, touristic and academic center.

Places to visiting (monuments, churches, museums, places, castles...)

1. Pilgrimage places:

- saint Maximilian (in Polish: Maksymilian) – Oświęcim, connected with visiting extermination camp
- saint John Kanty (Jan Kanty) – Kęty
- saint John Sarkander (Jan Sankander) – Skoczów, Kaplicówka
- Hałcnów
- Rychwałd
- Górka in Szczyrk
- Przylęków
- Pierściec
- Cieszyn, Rotunda Church

2. Characteristic places for our region

- Żar Mountain – Power station

- Koniaków – The Lace Museum (Muzeum Koronki)
- Ustroń – The Surprises Forest Park (Leśny Park Niespodzianek)
- Inwałd – stronghold, old competitions
- Jaworzynka – Trójstyk
- Cieszyn - Song and Dance Ensemble (Zespół Pieśni i Tańca)
- Beekeeping apiary Bielsko/Żywiec/Strumień

3. Museums

- Saint John Sarkander's Museum in Skoczów
- Sułkowski's Castle in Bielsko
- Museum of Technology and Textile – Bielsko
- Weaver House – Bielsko
- Museum of Armored Vehicles and Military – Bielsko
- Adam Małysz' Museum and House – Wisła
- Bread House – Górki Małe
- Forts of II World War – Węgierska Górka and Żabnica
- Museum of 4th Regiment Podhale Rifles – Cieszyn
- Cieszyn Silesia Museum – Cieszyn
- Żywiec and Cieszyn brewery

4. Optional evening meetings

- deanery's fireplace
- international indoor football competitions
- participation in self-defense training in Skoczów and Bielsko

Important people connected with history of the city:

- Edmund Wojtyła – older brother of Jean Paul II

CHURCH AND RELIGION

Important historical events for diocese:

Pope Jean Paul II by Totus Tuus Poloniae Populus bull of March 25, 1992– from separated area of Archdiocese of Cracow and Archdiocese of Katowice created Bielsko - Żywiecka diocese.

Coronation of figure of Our Lady of Sorrows in Hałcnów in September 26, 1993;

Visiting of Holy Father Jean Paul II, who in May 22, 1995 – during his pilgrimage to Czech Republic, where 21 of May he canonized saint John Sarkander – visited Skoczów, Bielsko-Biała and Żywiec.

Canonization of saint Melchior Grodziecki coming from Cieszyn, performed by Holy Father in July 2, 1995 in Koszyce.

Visitation of figure of Our Lady of Fatima, from November 25 to December 2, 1995.

In May 28, 1996 Pope Benedict XVI visited Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz – Birkenau which is in area of Bielsko-Żywiecka diocese.

Figures of saints and witnesses of Christian life:

- Saint Maximilian Marie Kolbe
- Saint John Kanty
- Saint Melchior Grodziecki
- Saint John Sarkander

Catholic associations and movements in the Diocese:

Diocesan Institute of Catholic Action

The aim of Catholic Action is deepen of Catholic formation of members and cooperation of lay people with the hierarchy in realization church's mission. Deepen of religious life has to prepare members of Action to brave and competent performance on "Areopagus" of world, to penetration of the Gospel values of social life, deal in line with Church teaching positions in public affairs, especially there, where belief and Christian morality are damaged. An important task of Action is also educate social, economic, cultural and political activists.

Fund of Protection of the Life

It aims to help mothers in hard situations, especially in damage of life conceived child. Every woman can use of it irrespective of belief, marital status or bond with the Church. Assistance is provided once or periodically.

The Light-Life Movement

It form the young people in Christian values spirit, based on the rules created by priest Francesco Blachnicki.

The Home Church

The Home Church of The Light-Life Movement helps sacramental spouses derive from grace and power of The Sacrament of Matrimony, it learns how life with this sacrament and how to celebrate it lifelong. It connect charisms of The Light-Life Movement and International Movement of Catholic Marriage Equipes Notre-Dame, from which it took the ideal of marriage spirituality – the pursuit to God in unity with spouse.

Fund of the Light of Hope

Fund supports children and teenagers in their education process (scholarship program), and it promotes education of Holy Father Jean Paul II.

The Catholic Youth Association

It unites young people between 14 and 30 years old, who want to creatively and actively use their youth, wanting useful and for the glory of God to spend their free time.

ADOPTION THE PILGRIMS DURING THE WEEK OF WYD 2016

The type of accommodation during WYD:

- Accommodation with a family, also possible a group accommodation

Initiatives and programs for WYD:

- deanery's fireplaces
- "entrance" to the top
- visiting Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz
- international indoor football competitions
- day of involvement in work of mercy

PREPOSITIONS FOR THE PILGRIMS:

For all groups which reports to our diocese, we presents the same prepositions of places and events, but we still waiting for individual suggestions of groups, which we will try to take into account. We ask to know with our offer, and all questions you can direct to priest Tomasz Wojtyła: wojtyla.tomasz@wp.pl or to Diocesan Coordinator of WYD, priest Piotr Hoffmann: piotrhoffmann@e.pl, phone number +48 603778778.

THE NUMBER OF PILGRIMS, WHOSE DIOCESE MAY ADOPT:

- 10.000 people