

# Catholic Pilgrimage Choir Tour to Poland

Standard Tour #2 (8 nights / 10 days)

## Day 1

Departure from USA via scheduled airline service to Warsaw, Poland. Enjoy full meal/beverage service and in-flight entertainment during this trans-Atlantic flight.

## Day 2 Warsaw

Arrive in Warsaw. Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will assist the group to the awaiting motorcoach for a panoramic tour of Warsaw's highlights. A late afternoon hotel check-in followed by a Welcome Dinner.

*Warsaw, the capital of recently-liberated Poland, was 75% destroyed by Hitler's armies in 1944, and it was rebuilt in the "functional" communist styles of the 1950s and 60s. The reconstructed areas of the city — the historic Old Town area, rebuilt brick by brick in the 1950s; the Royal Castle, the Ujazdowski Palace — are moving tributes to the Poles' ability to survive and preserve their history and traditions. Since liberation, Warsaw is quickly changing into a modern, cosmopolitan, major European capital.*

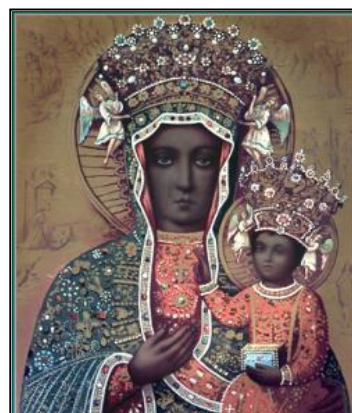
## Day 3 Warsaw / Czestochowa

Half-day tour includes entrance to the Royal Castle, seat of kings of Poland. It was here that the Third of May Constitution was promulgated in 1791, the second constitution in the world, next to the US Constitution. The interior (300 rooms!) was carefully restored to look as it did centuries ago. Continue on to the historic Rynek (Market Square) for time at leisure. Also visit St. John's Cathedral. **Participate/sing in a Mass.** Mid-afternoon transfer to Czestochowa for overnight.

*Czestochowa is one of the most important places of religious worship in the Christian world, with tradition of pilgrimages that goes back to the 14th century. In recent years, this place has been visited by 4 - 5- million pilgrims annually. The pilgrims come to venerate the miraculous icon of the Black Madonna, which since 1717 has held the official title of Queen of Poland, and is the most inescapable image in the country — at least one reproduction of it can be seen in virtually every Roman Catholic church in the land.*

## Day 4 Czestochowa / Auschwitz / Krakow

Half-day sightseeing includes entrance to the Monastery of Jasna Góra. There, a local monk will guide your visit to the Basilica of the Holy Cross and the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, which holds the Black Madonna, the monastery's most precious treasure. Also see the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin, Knight's Hall, Treasury, and Arsenal. Afternoon transfer to Krakow via Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The death camp at Oswiecim (known as Konzentrationslager Auschwitz) was in fact a complex of camps, the largest Nazi death factory, where four million people, mostly Jews, perished. **Participate/sing in a Mass in Auschwitz.** Continue to Krakow for overnight.

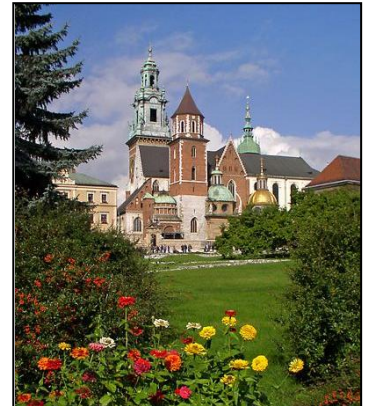


*Krakow (Cracow), seat of Poland's oldest university and once the nation's capital (before relinquishing the honor to Warsaw in 1611) is one of the few Polish cities that escaped devastation during World War II. Today Krakow's fine towers, facades, and churches illustrating seven centuries of Polish architecture, make it a major attraction for visitors. Listed by UNESCO in 1978 as one of the 12 great historic cities of the world, Krakow represents a great repository of Polish history, art and architecture.*



### **Day 5 Krakow**

Take a guided sightseeing tour of this ancient capital of Poland, a royal city on the Vistula, lying at the foot of Wawel, a limestone hill on whose peak raises a splendid royal palace and the Cathedral of Sts. Stanislaw and Waclaw. Start with the Royal Castle and Cathedral on the Wawel Hill, which were remodeled according to the new Renaissance taste in the beginning of the 16th century. It is the place where Polish Kings were crowned and buried. Also visit the Church of St. Mary, located right on the Main Market Square. Afternoon excursion to Wieliczka to see the underground world of the oldest salt mine in Europe. You will admire the gorgeous underground world of salt lakes, galleries and chapels created by many generations of Polish miners. We can see up to 20 excavated chambers on 3 levels, full of beautiful statues carved from salt. Also visit the Salt Works Museum. Return to Krakow for overnight. ***Participate/sing in a Mass in St. Mary's Church.***



### **Day 6 Krakow**

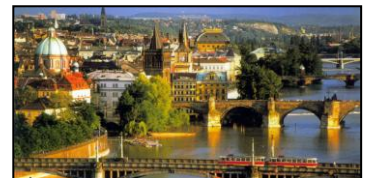
***Participate/sing in a Mass at the Shrine of Divine Mercy.*** Excursion to some of the most inspiring sites in the life of Pope John Paul II. Start in the outskirts of Krakow in Lagiewniki, location of the Sanctuary of Our Lord's Mercy, and the modern Basilica of The Divine Mercy, site of the Lord's Mercy icon created by the visionary Polish nun Saint Faustina. Continue on to Kalvaria Zebrzydowska, site of the oldest and most unusual Stations of the Cross in Poland, consisting of 40 chapels built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, planned to replicate the layout of Jerusalem. Continue on to Wadowice, where you will view the birthplace of Pope John Paul II and also the Church of the Presentation of the Virgin Mary, where he was baptized. Return to Krakow for overnight.



### **Day 7 Krakow / Prague, Czech Republic**

Transfer to Prague.

*Prague achieved much of its present glory in the 14th century, during the long reign of Charles IV, king of Bohemia and Moravia and Holy Roman Emperor. During the Middle Ages, Prague enjoyed a golden age - a time when Prague was larger than Paris or London! The Hapsburgs also left their artistic and architectural mark. Today, Prague is universally declared one of the most beautiful cities in Europe.*



### **Day 8 Prague**

Morning guided tour of Prague that includes seeing the Charles Bridge, Old Town Square with its Tyn Church and the Astronomical Clock, the Jewish Quarter. Also visit Hradcany Castle, including its St. Vitus Cathedral, the Old Royal Palace, the Golden Lane, and the Daliborka Tower. Afternoon at leisure for additional sightseeing, church visits, or other planned activities.



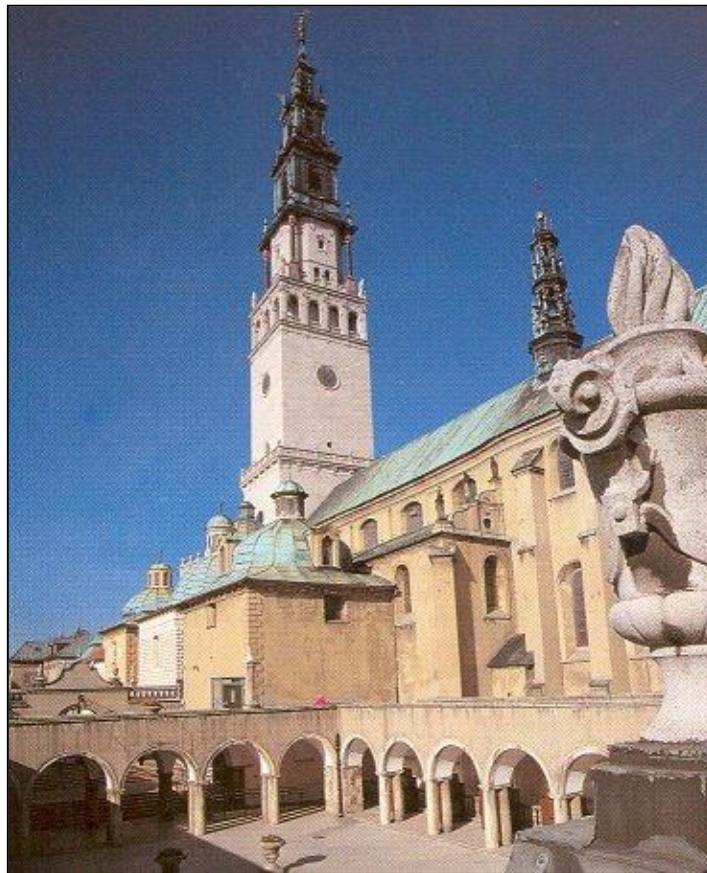
### Day 9 Prague

This morning our visit will begin in Mala Strana (Little Quarter) with ***Mass at the Church of Our Lady Victorious***, where we will view the famous statue of the Infant Jesus of Prague. Also visit “The Loreto,” an important place of pilgrimage since 1626. Loreto consists of a large pilgrimage area containing beautiful chapels and chambers, decorated with impressive statues and fountains. Entrance is included to the Loreta Church. Evening Farewell Dinner and overnight in Prague.



### Day 10 Depart for home

Transfer to Prague’s International Airport for return flight to USA. Arrive home in the evening of the same day.



Monastery of Jasna Góra