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|------------|----------------------------------|
| face value | 20 zł |
| metal | 925/1000 Ag |
| finish | proof |
| dimensions | square of a side 40.00 mm |
| weight | 28.28 g |
| mintage | 83 000 pcs |

Obverse: On the right side, a silhouette of John Paul II leaning on a crosier, ornamental branches in the background. Above, image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland; notation of the year of issue: 2003, below. Downwards inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA / POLSKA / 20 ZŁ. The Mint mark: $\frac{m}{w}$, under the Eagle's left talon.

Reverse: Portrait of John Paul II. Inscriptions: JAN PAWEŁ II (John Paul II), and: 25-LECIE PONTYFIKATU (25th Anniversary of Pontificate), along the edges of the coin, on the right side.



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|------------|--------------------------|
| face value | 2 zł |
| metal | CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy |
| finish | standard |
| diameter | 27.00 mm |
| weight | 8.15 g |
| mintage | 2 000 000 pcs |

Obverse: Against an ornamental crucifix: on the right side downwards, image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland; below in the central part, inscription: 2 ZŁ; above the Eagle, inscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA and notation of the year of issue: 2003. The Mint mark: $\frac{m}{w}$, under the Eagle's left talon.

Reverse: Against an ornamental crucifix: image of John Paul II leaning on a crosier; upwards on the right side, inscription: 25-LECIE / PONTYFIKATU (25th Anniversary of Pontificate); at the bottom, inscription: JAN PAWEŁ II [John Paul II].

On the edge: an inscription: NBP, eight times repeated, every second one turned by 180°, separated by stars.

Designer of the coins: Ewa Tyc-Karpińska

Coins struck by the State Mint in Warsaw.

Printed by NBP Printing Office

Collector's Coins



On 24th September 2003 the National Bank of Poland is putting into circulation collectors' coins depicting John Paul II, of the following nominal values:

- 20 zł – struck in gold, in proof finish,
- 20 zł – struck in silver, in proof finish,
- 2 zł – struck in standard finish, in CuAl5Zn5Sn1 alloy, the so-called Nordic Gold

A detailed calculation of the long, nearly bimillennial history of the papacy shows that recently John Paul II moved up into fourth place in the table of the longest pontificates. According to Proto-Christian tradition, St. Peter, whom Jesus invested with pastoral authority over the Church, held the office for about 33 years. Pius IX (1846-1878) is second with a pontificate, which lasted 31 years and 7 months; and Leo XIII (1878-1903) third (in office for 25 years and 7 months). As he

comes up to his Silver Jubilee, John Paul II has overtaken Number Five in the table, Pius VI (1775-1799), with a mere twenty-four and a half years. A record result – in view of the devastating assassination attempt of 13th May 1981, which was supposed to put an end to John Paul's II life.

The election of a man from Poland to the papacy in conclave on 16th October 1978 in the Sistine Chapel in Rome, came as the highlight marking Poland's thousand years of Christianity. The Polish nation, which by baptism in 966 became part of Christendom and joined the European family of nations, has traversed a long and extremely turbulent course of history. Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Primate of Poland, who was known as the "Primate of the Millennium," played a tremendous role in the latter half of the 20th century, following the profound devastation it suffered during the Second World War. A week after his

John Paul II
– 25th Anniversary of Pontificate –

election, the new pontiff paid tribute to him during a special audience for pilgrims from Poland. He said, "Venerable and dearly beloved Cardinal Wyszyński, allow me to say what I feel. There would have been no Polish Pope in the See of St. Peter, today starting his pontificate full of fear of the Lord but also in great hope, if it had not been your faith, never flinching in the face of imprisonment and suffering, your heroic hope, your infinite trust in the Mother of the Church in our native country, with which your pastoral care as Bishop and Primate has been associated." This moving declaration is perhaps the best and most profound explanation of the origin and meaning of the term "the Pope from Poland."

The quarter-century of John Paul's II work is made up of a variety of truly historic achievements. The most prominent have been his pontifical visits, both the international ones as well as those in Italy. John Paul II has made over 100 apostolic visits worldwide, to over 130 countries, to many of them several times; he has stayed in over 620 towns, in many on several occasions. It has been calculated that he has spent around 570 days outside the Vatican on his foreign visits; that he has covered over 1.1 million km, which is nearly three times the distance from the Earth to the Moon. He's also made over 140 visits to different regions and dioceses in Italy, on which he has spent around 390 days outside the Vatican and Castel Gandolfo his summer residence. "Been to Rome and not seen the Pope?" During the pontificate of the Pope from Poland this has happened all too often. But thanks to this, millions have met him who have never been and will never go to Rome.

John Paul's II visits to his native country are especially meaningful. The first was in June 1979, just months after his election; his most recent one in August 2002. Each time his countrymen bade him farewell with resolute calls, "Stay with us!" while he probably shared the same sentiment, voicing it on the last occasion with "Sorry to leave!" Each of his visits has been of great historic, religious, and political import. At the beginning of his pontificate his visits raised the nation's spirit, later confirming it and showing the right way to develop and strengthen the national identity; while recently one of the Holy Father's memorable achievements has been his very substantial support of the work thanks to which Poland is joining the European Union. Each of his pastoral visits has had its own legend grown up around it, evoked memories of appreciation, and brought the blessed fruit of renewal in hearts and consciences, generated invaluable inspiration and energy, and shown life – both private and public – as a great gift and challenge which has to be answered and met with courage. One of the great novelties of this pontificate have been the World Youth Days, attended by millions of girls and boys listening to John Paul II telling them, "You are the future of the world and of the Church!".

Another important part of John Paul's II extensive work has been what he has accomplished in the religious sphere. It includes an unprecedented number of canonisations and beatifications both in and beyond Rome – nearly two thousand men and women – more than by all of his predecessors put

together. Then there have been all the audiences, official ones with churchmen and representatives of state and social organisations, and meetings with millions of ordinary people, Christians and members of other religions. His numerous initiatives and statements addressed to all people of good will, in which he has followed the example of John XXIII the "Pope of Good" (1958-1963) have been very well received throughout the world. Their signs were the prayer meetings in 1987 and 2002 in Assisi. Of great import have been his meaningful meetings with members of the Jewish religion, notably on 13th April 1986 in the Roman Synagogue, and his visit to the Holy Land in March 2000, which have assumed symbolic significance. In Rome the Pope from Poland said, "You are our beloved brothers, in one sense – our elder brothers." In Jerusalem, at the Yad Vashem Memorial Institute, he said, "We are building a new future in which there will be no feelings of anti-Semitism among the Christians, and no anti-Christian feelings among Jews, but instead the mutual respect required of those who worship the One Creator and Lord, and who regard Abraham as our joint father in the faith." His teachings relating to Islam and other non-Christians have been equally profound. Yet another chapter of his work is the effort he has made on behalf of ecumenism, for the reconciliation of the Christian denominations, especially the Orthodox Christians, which have been divided for many centuries.

John Paul's II pastoral teaching makes up another important area of his work, comprising numerous encyclicals, adhortations, apostolic letters, addresses and sermons delivered on diverse occasions and in various places. From his very first encyclical *Redemptor Hominis* (Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of Man) the predominant message in the encyclicals has been that each human being marks out the way for the Church. The Pope's deeply sensitive humanism, firmly grounded in his faith in God and intense experience of God's presence in man and in the world, is an enduring feature of this pontificate spanning the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. A momentous characteristic of John Paul's II pontificate is his call to a new evangelisation, especially in the context of the preparations and celebrations of the Great Jubilee Year of 2000. His entire pastoral teaching is founded on the teachings of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), whereby it has been pursued as a great movement of renewal in the Church to meet the needs and expectations of the modern world.

The religious motifs which have been of paramount importance for John Paul II have been the Divine Mercy and the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

John Paul's II pontificate has been marked by a manifest streak of suffering. On 17th October 1978, the day after the conclave, he departed from earlier established customs to visit a seriously ill friend, Cardinal Andrzej Maria Deskur, in the Gemelli Clinic in Rome. Two and a half years later he was severely injured and himself became a patient of the Clinic. The entire world saw a photograph of the Pope in hospital. Since that time his pontificate has been marked by suffering. He has been seven times in the Gemelli Clinic and has had five major

operations. Perhaps it is precisely the mark of suffering which distinguishes this pontificate more than anything else from the ones before. John Paul's II suffering and illness has been manifest to the whole world, showing that suffering is an integral part of the human lot.

It would be impossible to enumerate all the things that make up the twenty-five years of the Holy Father's life and work. We shall need a lot of time and effort to give a full account of who he is, what he has achieved, and to present a true assessment of the outcome of his work. Anyway, the Silver Jubilee of John Paul II shall be celebrated by the Church and by all people of good will, by Poland and by all the Poles.

Holy Father, Ad Multos Annos!

Father Waldemar Chrostowski,
Professor of the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University

All collector's coins are legal tender in Poland.



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|------------|-------------------|
| face value | 200 zł |
| metal | 900/1000Au |
| finish | proof |
| diameter | 27.00 mm |
| weight | 15.50 g |
| mintage | 4 900 pcs |

Obverse: Silhouette of John Paul II leaning on a crosier, ornamental branches in the background. Above, image of the Eagle established as the State Emblem of the Republic of Poland. On the left side, semi-circumscription: RZECZPOSPOLITA POLSKA and notation of the year of issue: 2003; below on the right side, inscription: 200 ZŁ. The Mint mark: $\frac{m}{w}$, under the Eagle's left talon.

Reverse: Image of John Paul II seated in a chair. Above, inscription: JAN / PAWEŁ II (John/Paul II). Below, semi-circumscription: 25-LECIE PONTYFIKATU (25th Anniversary of Pontificate).