

an essay, Our Lady of Czestochowa - Protectress & Queen of Poland,
Intercessor of Christian peoples & Christendom's struggle against Muslim
invaders – by Robert W. Baral



<https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/our-lady-of-czestochowa.html>

REVELATION 12:1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnz23vxZK8A>

And there appeared a great wonder in Heaven; a Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under Her feet, and upon Her head a crown of twelve stars:

I. The Background History

"Częstochowa," translated from Polish - "Our Lady of the Bright Hill (Jasna Gora)" - into English roughly means "the place of frequent hiding," is a small town northeast of Krakow Poland. On a hill in that town, known as Jasna Gora ("Bright Hill"), is a Monastery of the Order of the Monks of Saint Paul the Hermit.

Within the Monastery Church of "Mary's Sanctuary" is a revered Christian Icon of The Blessed Virgin Mary holding The CHRIST Child. It bears the title , "Our Lady of Częstochowa," Patroness and Protectress of the Polish nation and Queen of Poland. The Icon of Our Lady of Częstochowa embodies Poland and an Emblem of Faith of The Church Militant on earth through the centuries. [1, para 1]

II. The Holy Icon

"Traditional holds that this Picture of Mary was done by St. Luke the Evangelist on a piece of wood cut from the table of the Last Supper. It was the Christians of Jerusalem who presented this Picture to St. Helen, the mother of [St.] Constantine.

She in turn gave it to her son and so it was put in his palace at Constantinople. The salvation of this city while besieged by the [mostly Arab and Turk Muslim] Saracens was ascribed to Our Lady's intercession" beginning circa 654 AD.

"In 989, upon the marriage of Princess Anna, the sister of the Emperor, to Prince Vladimir of Kiev, the picture of Our Lady of Czestochowa was a wedding gift taken to her, to the Ukraine." [1, para 2]

III. The Muslim Scourge

Christian Constantinople withstood Muslim invaders and prevented Eastern and Central Europe's conquest by their bloody hands until 1453, when The Eastern Church's & nations' fell. In fact, beginning within just 2 years of the death of the false prophet Muhammad in 632 AD, until about 1700 AD, Islamic forces invaded, conquered, slaughtered, enslaved and oppressed Christian lands, nations and peoples across the Middle East, North Africa and into Europe.

"In a conversation that apparently took place on July 13, 634, just two years after Muhammad's death, an old man was asked what he made of "the prophet who has appeared among the Saracens?" He replied that Muhammad "is an imposter. Do the prophets come with swords and chariot?"

Another person agreed, noting, "There is no truth from the so-called prophet, only bloodshed." Several months later, in a sermon on Christmas Eve in 634, the patriarch of Jerusalem referred to the Muslims as "the slime of the godless Saracens [that] threatens slaughter and destruction." [2, para 1]

IV. Miracle of The Battle of Tours and Poitiers

In 732 AD, Charles Martel "The Hammer," outnumbered by Islamic armies, miraculously won stunning victory that prevented all of France from being subsumed by the bloody Muslim invaders.

"According to The Gospel of John, JESUS CHRIST celebrated the Festival of Hanukkah (JOHN 10:22). Hanukkah celebrates the heroic exploits of Judas Maccabeus and his battle for religious freedom. These events occurred during the four-hundred silent years between the Old and New Testaments.

The Seleucid Greeks that ruled over the Jewish people made observing Judaism a capital offense and ordered all copies of The Bible to be collected and burned. In the year 167 Before CHRIST, Judas Maccabaeus led the Jewish people into battle to preserve The Holy Bible and to [re]establish religious liberty. Judas was called Maccabeus which means "the Hammer" in Aramaic.

Centuries later, in the year 732 AD, Charles Martel, known as "Charles the Hammer," fought to defend the religious liberties of the Christians and Jews in Europe when an army of Islamic terrorists threatened to eradicate Christianity in France...." [3]

V. The Miracle of The Reconquest of Spain & Portugal

"La Reconquista" took over 700 years for the Spanish and Portuguese Christian peoples to expel Muslim Moorish invaders from the Iberian Peninsula, not being complete until 1492 AD under the devoutly Catholic King Ferdinand and Queen Isabelle of Spain.

Christopher Columbus, the famed "Admiral of the Oceans" who joined "The New World" to "The Old World" was a man of his day - and ours. His life and exploits inform our present topic: "Born in 1451, Columbus was two when Constantinople fell to the Turks. All his life, except in Spain, Islam was on the march and Christendom was under siege.

As a proud Genoese, Columbus grew up sailing in a Mediterranean increasingly dominated by Islamic corsairs and fleets. The sea routes to the East through the Mediterranean were blocked and the tiny Italian city states had embarked on a grim fight against the odds that would span over a century until Lepanto in 1571.

Throughout his writings Columbus emphasized that the purpose of sailing west across the Atlantic to reach Asia was to outflank the Islamic world and spread Christianity throughout Asia. Columbus was not insensible to the riches that could be gained with direct trade with Asia, but it was the desire to spread the Catholic faith that is always uppermost in his writings." [4, para 5-6]

VI. Miraculous Resistance & Tragic Fall of Constantinople

Emperors especially deeply venerated Holy Mary, as they were piously consecrated to our Lord JESUS CHRIST. Constantinople stood for a thousand years as a Christian capitol city and jewel, resisting Muslim Ottoman invasion for five hundred, and preventing Eastern Europe's subjugation to the heathen "sword of allah."

Muslim aggression in the Eastern Mediterranean world was actually a "500-year-long siege of Europe by the Ottoman Turks." Constantinople was conquered by them in 1453 AD, bringing with its fall the typical Muslim bloody benevolence, "The suffering of millions of Christian families in occupied lands - their children kidnapped and forced into Muslim armies and harems. The tragic fall of Constantinople, seat of Eastern Christianity - its people slaughtered, its treasures plundered, its sacred places befouled." [5]

The subjugation of much of southeasternmost Europe under the Turks did not fully end until the close of WWI, when the daring English General Edmund Allenby led Allied forces to the liberation of Jerusalem in 1918 AD. Constantinople, renamed "Istanbul" by the Turks, however never found its liberation from Muslim hegemony, in spite of Crusades by many Popes and Princes.

VII. Miracle at The Battle of Lepanto

The miraculous victory of The Holy League Christian navies over Muslim Ottoman Empire fleets at the Battle of Lepanto, who were attempting to gain control of the central Mediterranean Sea as a prelude to invading Sicily and the Italian mainland itself, was gained in 1571 AD. This victory was commemorated under Pope Pius V, who citing the cries of the faithful Christian warriors and peoples to GOD, wide praying in The Rosary and devotion to The Image of our Lady of Guadalupe, declared thereafter as "The Feast of Our Lady of Victory."

This battle is one of "the most important naval contest in human history... October 7, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, celebrates the victory at Lepanto, the battle that saved the Christian West from defeat at the hands of the Ottoman Turks." Had the Christian fleet been defeated, it is likely even Rome herself would have fallen to slaughter and desecration by the Muslims, along with Western Europe.

"That this military triumph is also a Marian feast underscores our image of the Blessed Virgin prefigured in the Cantic of Canticles: "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array? (SONG of SOLOMON 6:9)." [6, para 2-3]

VIII. Miracle at The Battle of Vienna

"The Battle of Vienna that marked the Muslim assault on [Central] Europe began in earnest on September 11th, 1683. The combined Christian forces of the "Holy League" were vastly outnumbered by the Moslem Turks and Tartars, who were confident that they would be able to breach the walls of the city with their cannon after weakening both the people and the walls of the city during the two months of the siege.

Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa celebrated the opening day of the battle for Vienna on September the 11th by executing 30,000 Christian captives. The Viennese forces managed to hold off the Moslems on the 11th, but the defenders of the city knew they could not survive another day of fighting.

The tide of the battle turned on September 12th with the arrival of the army of the Polish king, Jan III Sobieski. He had entrusted his kingdom and the success of his army to the protection of the Blessed Virgin, Our Lady of Czestochowa, whose icon was a Polish national treasure.

He accomplished the nearly impossible feat of securing the high ground on the mountain above the battlefield and positioned his cannon to fire down on the Ottoman camp..." [7, para 6-7] With this, the Muslim hordes were defeated in a miraculous turn of victory for Holy League forces, again delivering Christian Europe from enslavement and extinction by Islamic invaders.

IX. Ongoing Invasions of Poland

History records the further invasions of the Polish homeland by invaders, the suffering of the Polish people, their Christian Faith of iron forged in struggle and their enduring devotion to this Icon of Holy Mary.

"In danger from the Turks, [raiding Tartars,] during invasion by Swedes, under siege by Prussians, Austrians and Russians, after the partition of Poland in 1795, during the [brutal Nazi] German invasion of 1939, and.. " under the heavy hand of Communist Soviet invading occupiers for 4 decades, "the hearts of Poles have ever turned to Our Queen.

Her shrine at Jasna Gora is for them a Symbol of their Faith and Hope" in our Lord JESUS CHRIST, Divine Mercy, the intercession of our Lady, The Power of The HOLY SPIRIT and the hand of GOD's Almighty Providence and Deliverance, both personal [1, para 5]

X. Wounds on The Icon's Visage

"In the fourteenth century the picture was again in danger due to the Tartar raids. In a dream the wish of Our Lady was made known to Prince Ladislaus of Opol and in fulfillment of it, the Holy Image was taken to Jasna Gora," where the Fathers of Saint Paul the Hermit of Hungary became the Icon's guardians.

How did this Icon come to have the slashes on her Face? "During the Hussite persecution, heretics plundered the Monastery and the Church. They hurled the precious Image of Our Lady of Czestochowa to the ground and it was broken into three pieces. But when they tried to carry it off, the wagon bearing the image could not be moved.

In rage one of them drew a sword and struck Our Lady's cheek twice. As he raised his arm a third time he fell dead on the spot. Seeing this, his comrades fled in terror. Under King Ladislaus II of Poland a commission of artists restored the painting but no effort on their part could remove the sword strokes which remain to this day...."[1, para 3-4]

XI. Our Lady of Czestochowa Holds The CHRIST Child

First, notice The Image of Mary's Face is scarred by two cuts. In The Maiden Mary's "Yes" to the angel of The LORD, she became The Living Ark Who bore The Living Word, JESUS CHRIST:

LUKE 1:35&38

35 And the angel answered and said unto Her, The HOLY GHOST shall come upon Thee, and The Power of The Highest shall overshadow Thee: therefore also That Holy Thing which shall be born of Thee shall be called The Son of GOD.

38 And Mary said, Behold The Handmaid of The LORD; be it unto me according to Thy Word. And the angel departed from Her.

Second, Mary's Visage is dour but resolute. Her "Yes" brought both great joy and great suffering to Her Immaculate Heart. Her sorrow at The Passion and Cross of Her Son became Her joy at The Resurrection, Ascension and birth of The Church. Mary intercedes for us from Heaven that our sorrows may be turned to joy by GOD's Grace:

PSALM 27:1

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Third, Her hand is open and directing us to our Lord. Mary forever points us to Her Son, for He alone is our Redeemer, Whom we are called to trust and obey, as He loves us. Therefore, our Mother in Heaven continues to counsel us Her children, "Do whatever He tells you:"

JOHN 2:2-5

2 And both JESUS was called, and His disciples, to the marriage.

3 And when they wanted wine, The Mother of JESUS saith unto Him, They have no wine.

4 JESUS saith unto Her, Woman, what have I to do with Thee? Mine hour is not yet come.

5 His Mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.

Fourth, The CHRIST Child holds The Holy Gospels. The faithful Church, called into being by The Word and Sacrifice of our Deliverer JESUS CHRIST, holds The Words of salvation by which we may be redeemed to peace in this life and eternal life with GOD in the next:

I CORINTHIANS 15:1-2

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you The Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

Fifth, JESUS makes The Sign of Peace to us. All the works of the world, the flesh and the Devil fall away into dust. Only The Divine Mercy, for which our Lady prays for us to receive with joy and thanksgiving, fulfils our lives and souls:

JOHN 14:27

Peace I leave with you, My Peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

XII. In Conclusion

The emblem of national endurance and Catholic Faith of Poland is The Icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa. This Icon is the history of Christendom's centuries of resistance to invading oppressors against bloody Muslim intruders and other horrific tyrant's armies of earth and Hell. So, too, in our daily lives.

This Icon of our Lady is also a reminder of how Mary, in Her Immaculate Heart pierced by both wounds and joys, forever intercedes for us, GOD's Children of The faithful Church, ever pointing us to Her Son - our Redeemer Lord JESUS CHRIST. Our Lady of Czestochowa, pray for us! AMEN.

XIII. References

1. "Our Lady of Czestochowa." Author not identified. Roman Catholic Saints. 5/03/2011. https://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/our-lady-of-czestochowa.html?fbclid=IwAR2hBpqpVcxUOK-9uImfkyKF6XgiGjppjj4IYuppsiRuXBolxCzveu_rOE
2. "Godless Saracens Threatening Destruction: Christian Responses to Islam and Muslims. Daniel Pipes. Middle East Quarterly. Winter/Spring 2021. Daniel Pipes - Middle East Forum. <http://www.danielpipes.org/20040/godless-saracens-threatening-destruction>
3. "The Hammer of GOD." Rev. Stephen Andrew Missick. Google Books [book review]. Xulon Press. 2010. https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Hammer_of_God.html?id=N2E8m9tyJpsC
4. "Columbus, Catholicism and Courage." Donald R. McClarey. The American Catholic. 10/12/2014. <https://the-american-catholic.com/2014/10/12/columbus-catholicism-and-courage-2/>
5. "Islam at the Gates - How Christendom Defeated the Ottoman Turks." Diane Moczar. Sophia Press Institute [book review]. Undated. Retrieved 8/27/2021. <https://www.sophiainstitute.com/products/item/islam-at-the-gates>
6. Lepanto, "The Battle That Saved The Christian West." Christopher Check. Catholic Answers. 3/1/2007. <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-battle-that-saved-the-christian-west>
7. "The Historical Significance of the Date September 11." Michal Hunt. Agape Bible Study. 2014. <https://agapebiblestudy.com/documents/Sept%202011%20and%20the%20Battle%20of%20Vienna.htm>