Apparition of the Virgin Mary at GIETRZEWALD

POLAND, 1877

In the parish church of the palish village of Giełtrzwald is preserved a copy of the icon of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa. In 1877 Our Lady appeared repeatedly to 13-year-old Jadwiga Sadowska, to 10-year-old Barbara Sadowska, and to a forty-five-year-old woman. The Virgin Mary spoke in Polish, a language that was banned since the abolition of this area was under the Prussians who imposed the German language and the Protestant faith. Our Lady presented herself as the Theotokos Conception, repeated the daily recitation of the Hail Mary and announced the end of the religious persecution.

Towards the end of the XIX Century, the Virgin Mary appeared several times in a small village in the north of Poland. They dated from June 30 to September 18, 1877. The two visionsaries were Barbara Sadowska and Jadwiga Sadowska, who later entered the Congregation of the Daughters of Charity on February 2, 1880. The Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Wrocław, Cardinal Venanzio Pasquale, the Bishop of the Diocese of Wrocław, Vincenzo Montana, and the Bishop of the Diocese of Giełtrzwald, established the process of the beatification of Saint Barbara Sadowska, who is next to St. Faustina, a little more than a century earlier, with her first vision received the appearance of Our Lady. At the time of the apparition, the region was under Polish and Russian rule. Poland was partitioned in 1815 and the Catholic religion was suppressed, except the mass that was taking care of the church, like the case of the Daughters of Charity. In this moral vacuum, the faithful of Giełtrzewalda prepared highly evolved sacred prayers of the church depicting the Mother of God with the Holy Jesus. It was precisely in these circumstances that Our Lady appeared in Giełtrzewalda on 1877. The pastor of the town, Augustyn Wierzbik (1813-1884), a German family, was convinced about the authenticity of the appearance since the beginning, based on good reasons. Also, the administrative authorities did not deny it to accept the testimonies of the apparitions. Two visionaries were both born in Martyr, a village from Giełtrzewalda. Jadwiga was born in 1864, Barbara in 1865. It was just after the Catholic Mass for their Pious Cenacle that Jadwiga saw the Virgin Mary on June 30, 1877, above a tree in front of the parish church near a fountain. At first, this lady was an extraordinary splendor in the sky, and then Our Lady dressed in white. From June 30 Barabara also saw the Virgin Mary together with Jadwiga. The apparitions continued daily until September 18, 1877, for a little more than three months. The Catholic population of the region was deeply moved and prepared each apparition as a gift of the Mother of God to her people, for penance in their fields as publicly permitted. The girl states the hasty plan did not have decided that it was the Virgin Mary and submitted requests and promises to the name of Our Lady. Jadwiga asked in the first apparition: "What do you desire, Mother of God?" The answer was: "I desire that you recite the Hail Mary every day." Barbara Sadowska, one of the apparitions, asked: "Who are you?" She obtained an extraordinary response: "I am the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, immaculately conceived." On the first of August Barbara asked: "Will the parishes without priests obtain them soon?" She received the answer: "If the people will pray with fervor, then the Church shall not be prevented, rather the parishes without priests will receive them." On August 11 Barbara asked: "Will the Church in Poland reign shortly?" Mary simply answered: "Yes!" The faithful emerged to the glee many requests for the Virgin. The answer was always along these: "Breathe the Hail Mary." Barbara Sadowska, on the first of September, asked the Virgin what she desired from the priest of Giełtrzewalda. She heard the following message: "Then I always try to invoke me, I have always been a protection for him and I shall be until the end!" Particularly touching were the words said to the girls: on September 6, day of the Nativity of Mary: "Do not grieve, because I will always be with you." On September 18 with a large procession of the faithful, the Virgin appeared for the last time, bared the spring that was located to the anchor, and comforted the last words "Breathe the Hail Mary." The confraternity established by the Bishop of Warsaw, already on the first of September declared: "We have come to the conclusion that the apparitions of Giełtrzewalda have a real and true foundation."

Under the arrangement of Bishop Theophilus Bosnjak, the girls were immediately appreciated by the delegates of the Papal Commission. To have these creatures of the children, that they ideally expressed the faith that has been attenuated by the part of the country and its people, they were each received by a different family, in two different locations. On August 30 Barbara was presented to the Warsaw Apostolic Nuncio. This opulence remained impressed by her warm nature, serious, honest, and straightforward. Spiritually received the attention of the confraternity, because she indicated a simple gesture to the education of the girls. Afterward, the two girls decided to become Daughters of Charity and were sent to attend the Interior Mission in the Mother House of Paris. Therefore, they entered the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul could operate. She returned to her homeland after almost 40 years, but to avoid the manner of being recognized and applauded, she did not go to Giełtrzewalda. Upon returning to Guatemala, she continued her work as always in secrecy. Sister Stanislaus, after a long period in a city mission, returned to the central hospital of Guatemala. There, after a life of devotion and beautiful witness of humility and charity, she died in the Lord on December 6, 1895, at the age of 81. She was welcomed by a crowd of 150 of her followers and 56 of her friends in Guatemala, upon among them the sick and the poor.