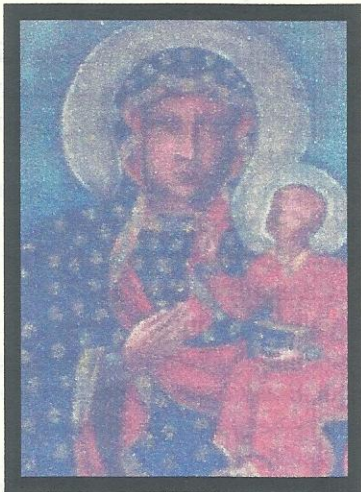




# OUR BLACK LADY FROM CZESTOCHOWA

**IN ST. PETER'S CHURCH IN GALLARATE**



## **THE PAINTING OF OUR BLACK LADY FROM CZESTOCHOWA IN ST. PETER'S CHURCH IN GALLARATE**

The citizens of Gallarate love this painting, placed on the left wall, near the altar, not only because it represents a holy picture, but also because it has an unusual origin.

The painting represents Our Black Lady from Czestochowa and it was a present for Monsignor Gianazza, Head Priest in Gallarate from 1955 to 1983, given to him when he went to Poland with Gallarate citizens as pilgrims in 1974.

The giver was very well-known: he was Monsignor Wojtyla. At that time he was Archbishop in Cracow and after four years he would become Pope John Paul II.

When Monsignor Wojtyla gave the gift, he praised the Head Priest, the pilgrims and the citizens from Gallarate, and he hopes for looking at the painting a day again, in Gallarate.

Our Black Lady from Czestochowa is a miraculous picture worshipped in Poland in a special way, and it is a destination for pilgrimages by kings and people during centuries.

The picture was painted, according to what people believe in, by St. Luke the Evangelist, and it was given by Prince Opolski in 1382 to the Paolini's order, and they are still the keepers.

Hussiti damaged the painting, so it was sometimes restored, from 1430 to 1926. In 1656 King Casimir proclaimed Our Black Lady "Queen of Poland", so that the sanctuary became a sign of national unity.

Pope Pius X was devoted to Our Black Lady and he established the holy day of Our Lady Queen of Crown of Poland.

## **THE PILGRIMAGE IN POLAND BEFORE THE HOLY YEAR 1975**

He travel took place from 22nd to 28th May 1974. 491 pilgrims took part in it. A lot of them lived in Gallarate or in the surroundings. There was the Syndic of Gallarate, Mario Pasta, and the Syndics of Ferno and Samarate, too.

As priests, Cardinal Colombo, Archbishop of Milan, took part in the pilgrimage, and Monsignor Citterio, too.

The pilgrims visited Cracow, Auschwitz, Czestochowa, Varsavia, and they felt very touched. It was the first pilgrimage with such a lot of people allowed in Poland after the second world war and thanks to their perseverance, the organizers could overcome the mistrustful communist regime in Poland.