Grad Sinj



Točka:

Predmet: Prijedlog Odluke o uspostavljanju suradnje između Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska)

REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA
SPLITSKO-DALMATINSKA ŽUPANIJA
GRAD SINJ
GRADONAČELNIK

Klasa: _____
Ur.broj: 2175/01-03-16-___
Sinj, 17. lipnja 2016. godine

GRADSKO VIJEĆE GRADA SINJA
n/p predsjednica
Ivana Šabić, prof.

Na temelju članka 15. i 16. Zakona o lokalnoj i područnoj (regionalnoj) samoupravi (»Narodne novine« broj 33/01, 60/01, 129/05, 109/07, 125/08 , 36/09, 150/11 i 144/12), čl. 15. stavak 4. i čl. 53. Statuta Grada Sinja («Službeni glasnik Grad Sinja» br. 10/09 i 02/13), te čl. 70. stavak 2. Poslovnika Gradskog vijeća grada Sinja (Službeni glasnik Grada Sinja broj 02/10 i 02/13) prosljeđujem Gradskom vijeću Grada Sinja na razmatranje i usvajanje Prijedlog Odluke o uspostavljanju suradnje između Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska).

U skladu s člankom 72. Poslovnika Gradskog vijeća Grada Sinja («Službeni glasnik Grada Sinja» br. 02/10) na radnim tijelima objašnjenja i obrazloženja u ime predlagatelja davati će Mirela Mučelo, dipl.iur., voditeljica odsjeka u Uredu Grada dok će osobno biti izvjestiteljica ove točke dnevnog reda na 25. sjednici Gradskog vijeća.

Obnašateljica dužnosti gradonačelnika
Kristina Križanac, struč.spec.oec., v.r.

REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA GRADONAČELNIK SINJ SPLITSKO-DALMATINSKA ŽUPANIJA 1

O B R A Z L O Ž E N J E

uz prijedlog Odluke o uspostavljanju suradnje između
Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska)

1. Pravni temelj

Pravni temelj za donošenje ovog akta sadržan je u odredbi članka 15. i 16. Zakona o lokalnoj i područnoj (regionalnoj) samoupravi (»Narodne novine« broj 33/01, 60/01, 129/05, 109/07, 125/08 i 36/09), te članka 15. i 35. Statuta Grada Sinja (Službeni glasnik Grada Sinja broj 10/09 i 02/13), kojima je propisana nadležnost Gradskog vijeća Grada Sinja za donošenje ove Odluke.

2. Ocjena stanja, osnovna pitanja koja se uređuju ovom odlukom, te svrha koja se želi postići uređenjem odnosa na predloženi način

Gradonačelnica Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) Slawa Uminska –Duraj uputila je Gradu Sinju inicijativu za zaključivanje Sporazuma o prijateljstvu i suradnji, između Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska).

Inicijativu obrazlaže željom da se stvore povoljni uvjeti za razvoj naših društava, pri čemu ističe važnost internacionalnih kontakata država Europske unije, međuostalim i u projektima povlačenja sredstava iz EU fondova. Isto tako posebno ukazuje kako je slavenska ostavština platforma razumijevanja između naših gradova, a posebno ukazuje kako su Sinj i Piekary Slaskie hodočasničke destinacije te bi partnerstvo između gradova pomoglo očuvanju tradicije i razmjeni iskustava dvaju europskih centara religijskog turizma.

Slijedom toga priloženi tekst Sporazuma o partnerstvu i suradnji Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja rezultat je želje da se u duhu otvorenog prijateljstva, suradnje i povezanosti a polazeći od važnost internacionalnih kontakata država Europske unije, mogućnostima zajedničke suradnje pri povlačenja sredstava iz EU fondova, kao i zajedničkim projektima uspostavi suradnja i partnerstvo, te je u cilju promocije i boljeg korištenja komplementarnih resursa obaju jedinica lokalne samouprave da se intenzivira suradnja na polju aktivnosti suradnje unutar EU-a, turizma, kulture, sporta, obrazovanja, gospodarstva, poljoprivrede i sličnih područja.

Obzirom na značaj razvijanja daljnje suradnje između Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja, u nadi da će učvršćivanje međusobnih kontakata i razmjena među upravama pridonijeti povezivanju dvaju i njihovih građana, predlaže se Gradskome vijeću da donese Odluku o uspostavljanju suradnje između Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska).

3. Procjena sredstava potrebnih za provođenje Odluke, te način njihova osiguranja

Za realizaciju ove odluke nije potrebno osigurati sredstva u Proračunu Grada Sinja.

4. Tekst prijedloga Odluke s obrazloženjem

U prilogu se dostavlja tekst Odluke o prihvaćanju Sporazuma o partnerstvu i suradnji Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska).

5. Tekst važeće Odluke

---

6. Prilozi

- inicijativa gradonačelnice Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) Slawa Uminska –Duraj za zaključivanje Sporazuma o prijateljstvu i suradnji, te podaci o gradu

- prijedlog

Na temelju članka 15. i 16. Zakona o lokalnoj i područnoj (regionalnoj) samoupravi (»Narodne novine« broj 33/01, 60/01, 129/05, 109/07, 125/08, 36/09, 150/11 i 144/12), te članka 15. i 35. Statuta Grada Sinja (Službeni glasnik Grada Sinja broj 10/09 i 02/13) Gradsko vijeće Grada Sinja, na 25. sjednici održanoj 27. lipnja 2016. godine donosi

O D L U K U
o uspostavljanju suradnje između Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska)

Članak 1.

Utvrđuje se da su između Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska) započeti i ostvareni kontakti predstavnika gradova te je izražena zajednička želja za uspostavom prijateljskih odnosa i stalne suradnje.

Članak 2.

Gradovima Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Sinju (Republika Hrvatska) u obostranom je interesu uspostavljanje prijateljstva i suradnje među državama Europske unije, posebice u zajedničkim projektima i povlačenju sredstava iz EU fondova, kao i programima namijenjenim učenicima i mladeži, kulturi, sportu i obrazovanju, poticanju susreta građana i udruga, lokalnoj samoupravi, urbanističkom razvoju i brige za grad, zdravstvu, gospodarstvu, turizmu i poljoprivredi te podupiranju drugih vidova gospodarske suradnje.

Članak 3.

Utvrđuje se tekst prijedloga Sporazuma o suradnji između Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska), koji čini sastavni dio ove Odluke.

Članak 4.

Ova Odluka, sa tekstom Sporazuma, upućuje se Ministarstvu uprave Republike Hrvatske radi obavljanja nadzora zakonitosti.

Članak 5.

Temeljem ove Odluke o uspostavljanju suradnje Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska), ovlašćuje se O.D.gradonačelnika Grada Sinja za potpisivanje Sporazuma iz prethodnog članka.

Članak 5.

Ova Odluka stupa na snagu danom donošenja i objaviti će se u „Službenom glasniku Grada Sinja".

Gradsko vijeće Grada Sinja
KLASA: _____
URBROJ: 2175/01-01-16-__
Sinj, 27. lipnja 2016. godine

Predsjednica Gradskog vijeća
Ivana Šabić, prof.

SPORAZUM O PARTNERSTVU I SURADNJI IZMEĐU
GRADA PIEKARY SLASKIE (REPUBLIKA POLJSKA) I GRADA SINJA (REPUBLIKA HRVATSKA)

Gradsko vijeće Grada Piekary Slaskie (Republika Poljska) i Gradsko vijeće Grada Sinja (Republika Hrvatska) odlučili su uspostaviti partnerstvo između navedenih gradova s ciljem poticanja i jačanja razumijevanja i prijateljstva između dvaju gradova, razmjene i jačanja suradnje, te tako doprinositi razvoju i zajedničkom napretku. Suradnja će se odvijati na nivou škola, udruga, organizacija, institucija, manifestacija, gradskih vijeća, gradonačelnika i Gradske uprave, na području kulture, obrazovanja, gospodarstva, lokalne uprave, sporta, turizma kao i na drugim područjima društvenog života. Težište zajedničke suradnje utvrđuju se kako slijedi:

Članak 1.

1.) Suradnja među državama Europske unije, posebice u projektima povlačenja sredstava iz EU fondova

Obje jedinice lokalne samouprave će ulagati napore u razvoju konkretnih diplomatskih odnosa, a posebno sa predstavnicima država koji su svakodnevno prisutni u Europskom parlamentu i koji se nalaze na izvorištu informacija te su spremni pomoći u kreiranju lokalne politike na Europskom nivou. Isto tako suradnja će se odvijati na kontinuiranoj suradnji, zajedničkim projektima i razmjeni iskustava u projektima povlačenja sredstava iz EU fondova.

2.) Učenici i mladež

Oba su grada suglasna da je razmjena među učenicima i mladima od posebne važnosti, te će oba grada posebnu brigu posvetiti susretima učenika i mladih obaju gradova te će obostrano razmjenjivati iskustva u cilju poboljšanje života djece i adolescenata.

3.) Kultura, sport i obrazovanje

Kulturni susreti između dvaju jedinica lokalne samouprave trebaju doprinijeti boljem razumijevanju mentaliteta i kulture druge strane. Suradnja je moguća na svim razinama. Sve kulturne i obrazovne udruge pozivaju se da sudjeluju u razmjeni.

4.) Susreti građana i udruga

Obje jedinice lokalne samouprave su svjesne važnosti razmjene posjeta između grupa građana kako bi se na taj način učvrstila tolerancija i razumijevanje među građanima, te će u tom smislu poticati susrete između grupa građana i udruga.

5.) Lokalna samouprava

Obje jedinice lokalne samouprave teže aktivnoj razmjeni na području tema vezanih uz lokalnu samoupravu. Navedeni oblik razmjene odvijat će se prvenstveno na razini gradskih vijeća, gradonačelnika, te gradskih uprava.

6.) Urbanistički razvoj i briga za prostorno uređenje

Obje jedinice lokalne samouprave će razmjenjivati iskustva na urbanističkom, arhitektonskom i prostornom nivou te će surađivati na floorističkim i hortikulturnim uređenjima.

7.) Gospodarstvo, turizam i poljoprivreda

Obje jedinice lokalne samouprave će ulagati napore u poticanju suradnje poduzetnika na području gospodarstva, turizma i poljoprivrede s ciljem jačanja industrije, trgovine i turizma, a sve na osnovi sporazuma o partnerstvu gradova. Jedinice lokalne samouprave će nastojati u projektu o partnerstvu uključiti mjesne tvrtke, udruge i udruženja građana, kao i olakšati uspostavljanje kontakata na području trgovine, obrta i industrije.

8.) Zdravstvo

Obje jedinice lokalne samouprave će razmjenjivati iskustva u zdravstvu i zdravstvenoj zaštititi građana, a sve u cilju zadovoljenja potreba svojih stanovnika.

Članak 2.

Na osnovu ovog sporazuma o suradnji će se sastaviti konkretne smjernice za kontakte među gradovima, razmjena skupina građana i drugi oblici suradnje.

Članak 3.

Suradnja i susreti građana će se odvijati po principu uzajamnosti. U slučaju da ne bude drugačije dogovoreno, upravna jedinica u funkciji domaćina snosit će troškove u mjestu domaćina, a troškove prijevoza i puta snosit će gostujući grad, odnosno općina ili institucija.

Članak 4.

Obje jedinice lokalne samouprave – potpisnici, ovim sporazumom izražavaju svoju namjeru da i nadalje šire bilateralne odnose, kako bi dogovorena suradnja u okviru postojećih mogućnosti bila uspostavljena susretanjem velikog broja ljudi.

Članak 5.

Obje jedinice lokalne samouprave – potpisnici ovog Sporazuma se obvezuju poduzeti sve što je u njihovoj moći kako bi utvrđeno iz ovog sporazuma provele u djelo.

Članak 6.

Ovaj Sporazum o partnerstvu sklapa se na neodređeno vrijeme i sastavljen je na hrvatskom i poljskom jeziku te stupa na snagu danom potpisivanja.

U ime grada Sinja

_____

Obnašateljica dužnosti gradonačelnika
Zamjenica gradonačelnika
Kristina Križanac

U ime grada Piekary Slaskie

_____

Gradonačelnica

Slawa Uminska –Duraj

Klasa: _____
Ur.broj: 2175/01-03-16-6
Sinj, ___. _____ 2016. godine

Poštovana gospođo Kristina Križanac

U želji da stvorimo povoljne uvjete za razvoj naših društava, želimo istaknuti važnost internacionalnih kontakata između država Europske unije. To je razlog zbog kojeg ovdje izražavamo našu želju za uspostavom partnerstva između poljskog grada Piekary Slaskie i Sinja. Slavenska ostavština je platforma razumjevanja između naših gradova. I Piekary Slaskie I Sinj su hodočasničke destinacije, te bi partnerstvo između gradova pomoglo očuvanju tradicije i razmjeni iskustava između dvaju europskih centara religijskog turizma.

Naš cilj je stvoriti uvjete za početak obostrano korisne suradnje između naših naroda koja uključuje kulturu, obrazovanje, turizam i gospodarstvo.

Mi ćemo učinuti sve potrebno u promicanju i olakšavanju napretka spomenutih aktivnosti. Iskreno se nadamo našem sklapanju sporazuma o partnerstvu.

Više informacija o našem gradu pročitajte u prilogu.

Srdačan pozdrav

PREZYDENT MIASTA
PIEKARY ŚLĄSKIE

41-940 Piekary Śląskie, ul. Bytomska 84

Dear Mrs
struč. spec. oec. Kristina Križanac
Zamjenica gradonačelnika Sinj

Aspiring to create favourable conditions for the development of our societies, we acknowledge the import_ance of international contacts (and between the European Union member countries in particular). That is why we hereby express our will to establish a partnership between the Polish city of Piekary Śląskie and Sinj. The Slavic heritage, that ought to be cultivated, is the platform of understanding between the cities. Both Piekary Śląskie and Sinj are pilgrimage destinations and the partnership would foster the preservation of traditions and the exchange of experiences between the two European centres of religious tourism.

Our aim is to create conditions to start a mutually beneficial cooperation between our nations that would cover culture, education, tourism and economy. We will make every effort to promote activities facilitating progress in the above mentioned fields.

We count on your favourable inclination towards the conclusion of partnership agreement.

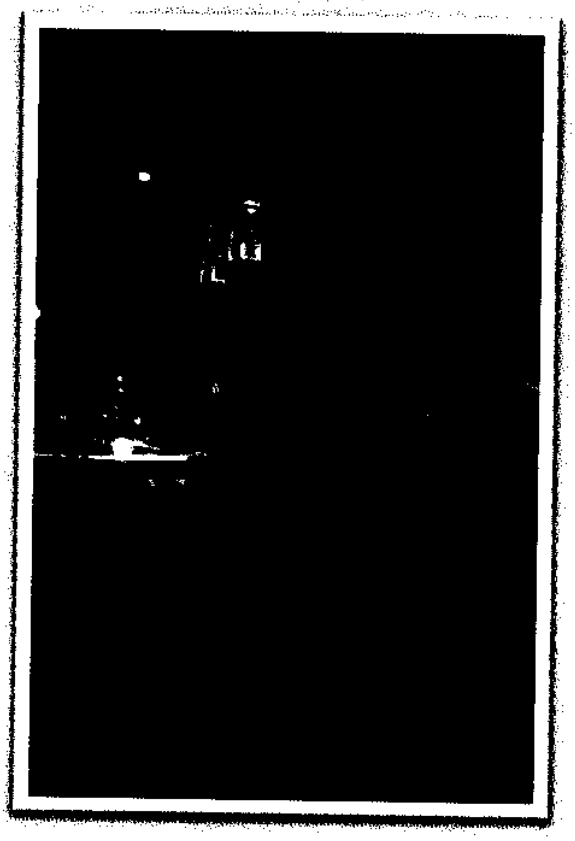
Please find some information about the city of Piekary Śląskie enclosed.

Sincerely yours

Sława Umińska-Duraj
Mayor of Piekary Śląskie

PIEKARY ŚLĄSKIE

Piekary Śląskie and its neighbouring cities of Bytom, Chorzów, Radzionków and Siemianowice Śląskie lie in a huge sprawling conurbation at the heart of the Silesian province, Southern Poland. For centuries the lives of their inhabitants have been determined by wider political, social and economic processes taking place in Upper Silesia. From the Middle Ages the region had been under the Czech, Polish, Hungarian and Austrian rules before it was captured by Prussia in the early 1740s. The land was divided between Germany and Poland in 1922 and after the Second World War it has belonged to the latter state entirely. As the region abounds in natural resources, the exploitation of lead, silver and zinc proceeded from the Middle Ages. Still the characteristic image of the region started to be shaped in the late 18th century, when the first modern coal mines and ironworks appeared. For 200 years onwards Upper Silesia was one of the largest European centres of heavy industry. The significant changes occurred as late as at the turn of the 20th century, when plenty of enterprises were put into liquidation due to rapid economic transformation that followed the collapse of the communist rule in Poland.



Numerous postindustrial places tell of the past glory of Upper Silesia. Some of them can be found in Piekary Śląskie and in its immediate proximity. The legacy comprises historical monuments and areas where natural succession (with its splendid diversity of plants and animals) has occurred. This guide offers a short introduction to the most interesting of them inviting the tourists to explore both popular and off-the-beaten-track locations. Some pieces of information contained in the book refer to the history, culture, sporting life and other tourist attractions of the discussed cities.

BASIC FACTS

Area:

ca. 40 km²

Population:

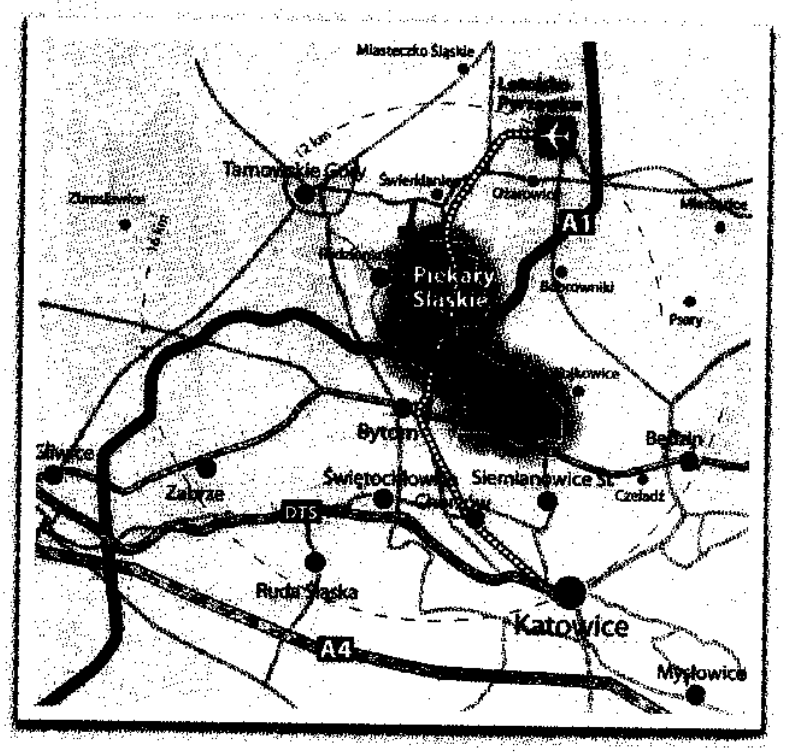
ca. 55 000

City status:

1947

Twin city:

Kroměříž (Czech Republic)



FAMOUS PEOPLE BORN IN THE CITY

• Blessed Józef Czempiel (1883–1942) – a Roman Catholic priest, martyr of the Second World War (murdered by the Nazi Germans in Dachau).

• Johannes Frenzel (1907–1945) – a Roman Catholic priest, martyr murdered by the Red Army soldiers in Stolarzowice.

• Józef Kupny (b1956) – the archbishop of Wrocław, since 2013.

• Nanker (*ca.* 1270–1341) – the bishop of Cracow (1320–1326) and Wrocław (1326–1341).

• Jerzy Polaczek (b1961) – a politician of the right-wing Law and Order party, Member of Parliament.

HISTORY

For the first time the village of Piekary (*Pecare*) was mentioned in a historical document in 1277. Still the present territorial shape of the Piekary Śląskie city was established not until the 20th century. In 1934 villages of Szarlej and Piekary amalgamated. Kozłowa Góra was incorporated in 1973, while Brzeziny Śląskie, Brzozowice, Dąbrówka Wielka and Kamień became districts two years later.



For several centuries different natural resources had been exploited in the area before coal mines started to be founded from 1826 (with *Henriette* as the oldest of them). Famous *Andaluzja* and *Julian* coal mines were established in 1908 and 1954 respectively. However, only one of such enterprises (Piekary Coal Mining Company) exists in the city nowadays. It has been a result of the 1990s transformation that led to the implementation of free market rules in Poland making plenty of Upper Silesian mines uneconomic.

Since the 17th century Piekary has also been an important religious centre for the Roman Catholics. In 1659 the cult of the Miraculous Image of Our Lady of Piekary started and it has been spreading so far. Every year thousands of pilgrims come to the city for worshipping

purposes. Special meetings for men are traditionally organized in May, and for women – in August.



The fame of the place has attracted plenty of the Roman Catholic Church emblematic personalities including Achille Ratti (later Pope Pius XI), Karol Wojtyła (later Saint Pope John Paul II) and Blessed Mother Theresa of Calcutta. Also Pope Benedict XVI on his visit to Poland in 2006 once asked the pilot of his helicopter to fly over the Piekary Śląskie sanctuary dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Bartholomew. For all the reasons the city is often described as the Spiritual Capital of Upper Silesia. In 2014 the Holy See officially declared Mother of God to be the patron of Piekary Śląskie.

INTERESTING DETAILS

• Among the most famous inhabitants of Piekary blind poet Wawrzyniec Hajda (1844–1923) is particularly worth mentioning. His works, noted down by his wives, included poems, fairy tales as well as some religious songs. He was also a co-founder of several Polish national, cultural and Roman Catholic societies in the period of the Prussian domination. In 2012 a monument was erected in the Bytomska Street (just opposite the City Council) to commemorate his contribution to the growth of Piekary Śląskie.

• The visitors to Piekary Śląskie have included kings of Poland: Jan III Sobieski, August II and August III, Prussian monarch Frederick Wilhelm IV, presidents of the Republic of Poland: Stanisław Wojciechowski, Lech Wałęsa, Lech Kaczyński and Bronisław Komorowski as well as Marshall Józef Piłsudski (the leader of the Polish Republic reborn after the First World War).

• Prior 2015 only five people were granted the freedom of the city of Piekary Śląskie: Pope John Paul II (1994), Władysław Student – former custodian of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Bartholomew's sanctuary (2001), Damian Zimoń – archbishop of Katowice (2005), Jerzy Buzek – president of the European Parliament (2010) and Bogdan Koczy – director of Janusz Daab Surgery Hospital (2010).

• Several literary works are set in Piekary with novels by Pola Gojawiczyńska (*The Elizabeth's Land*) and Krystyna Michna-Wrodarczyk (*A Forgotten Story: or, Ann Catharine of the Radzionków Forest*) as well as Eugeniusz Mieczowski's *Piekary: A drama dating back to the Jan III Sobieski's Relief of Vienna* among them.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

The Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Bartholomew's Basilica

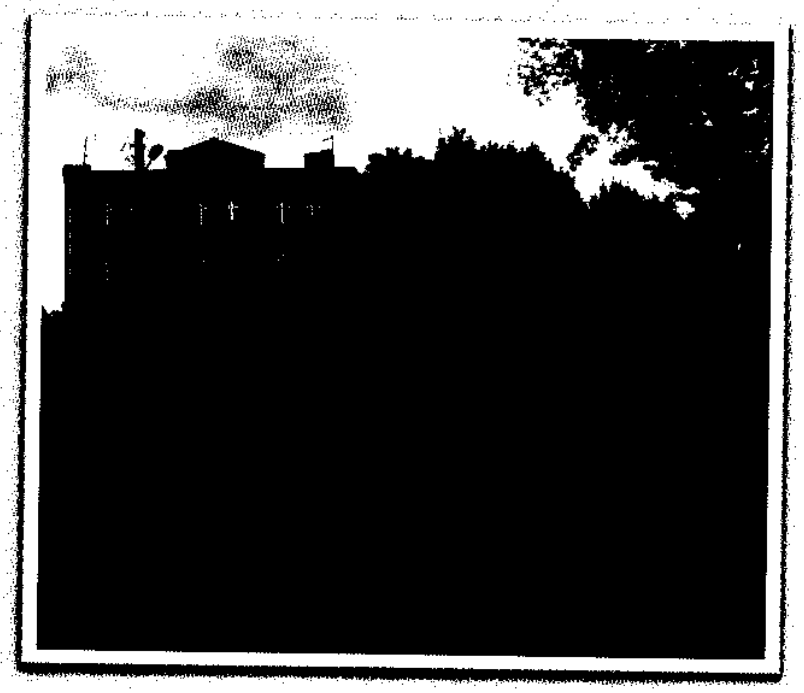


Address: 7 Ksiądz Jan Ficek St.
41-940 Piekary Śląskie
Telephone: 48 32 287 22 70
Website: bazylikapiekary.pl
GPS: 50°23'1" N, 18°56'39" E

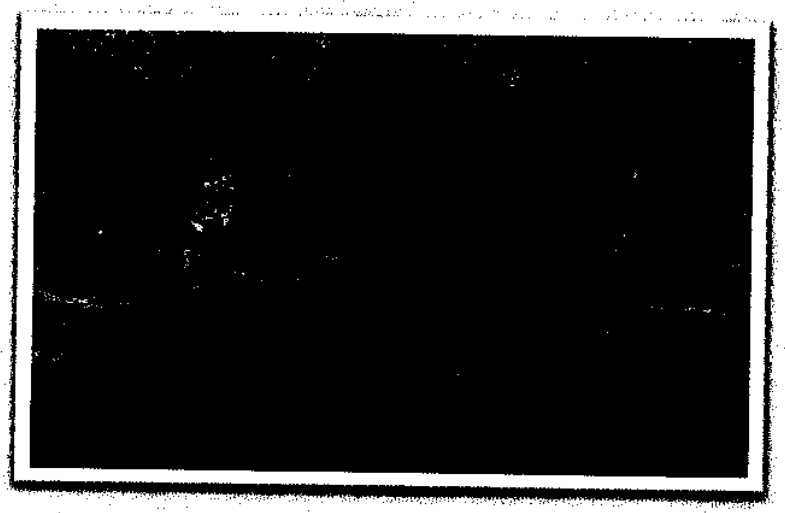
The Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Bartholomew's church was consecrated in 1849 by bishop of Wrocław Melchior of Diepenbrock (cardinal from 1850). The title of Basilica Minor was granted to the church by Pope John XXIII in 1962. The Miraculous Image of Our Lady of Piekary is the main object inside. Just in front of the high altar a tombstone marks the burial place of parish priest Jan Ficek (1790–1862) commonly respected for his charity undertakings. The fabulous wall and ceiling paintings were accomplished under Otto Kowalewski's direction in 1924 to mark the approaching coronation of the Miraculous Image (that took place a year later). Several plaques were affixed on the pillars to commemorate the victims of the leftist totalitarian systems of Nazism and communism.

Bunker of the *Silesia* Fortified Region

Address: Przyjaźni St. (near the western border of the Dąbrówka Wielka district)
Website:
www.profort.org.pl
GPS: 50°20'48" N, 18°59'11" E



The bunker was a part of the *Silesia* Fortified Region built in the 1930s along Polish and German border that divided Upper Silesia from 1922 to 1939. The aim was to prevent expected German invasion of Poland. The bunker was renovated by members of the *Pro Fortalicium* Society and opened to the visitors in 2014. Other military installations of that kind can be found in several districts of Piekary Śląskie as well as in other cities and villages of Upper Silesia and Zagłębie Dąbrowskie.



Calvary Hill

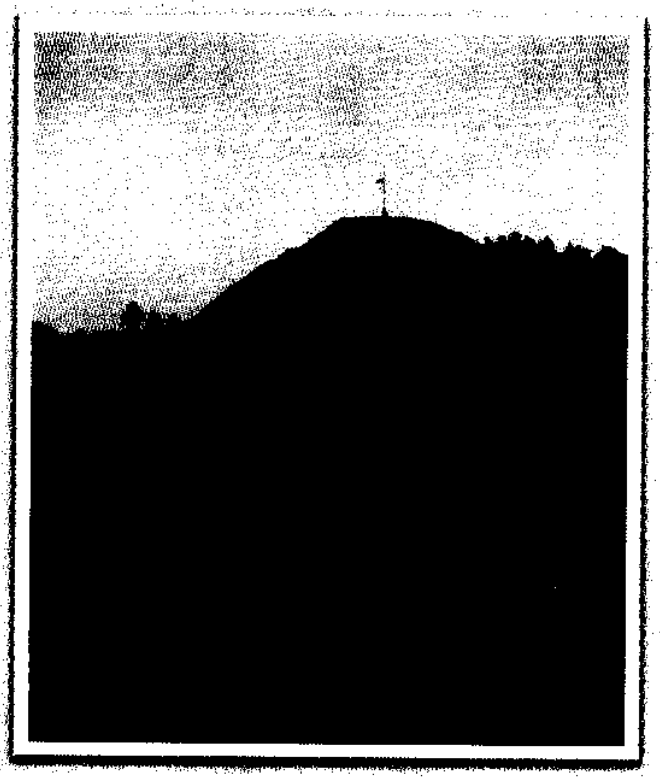
GPS: 50°22'55" N, 18°59'28" E

The Calvary Hill was consecrated by cardinal Georg Kopp, the archbishop of Wrocław, in 1896. The place reflects the

spatial layout of the Jerusalem Calvary. On the hill the rosary and the Via Dolorosa chapels were built with the Herod's Palace, the Cenacle and the Pontius Pilate's House as the most eye-catching of them. The Christ's Transfiguration church is the biggest building in the area. In the eastern part of the hill the Garden of Gethsemane was created where rare Mediterranean plants can be admired. Tens of thousands of men and women gather in the place every year (in May and in August respectively) to take part in the traditional pilgrimages.

Mound of Liberation

GPS: 50°23'28" N, 18°55'50" E



The Mound of Liberation was built in the 1930s to commemorate the participants of the anti-German Silesian Uprisings. The ceremony of its consecration took place in 1937. Józef Gawlina, the field bishop of the Polish Army and Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski, deputy prime minister participated in the event. Inside the mound several urns containing grasps of soil collected from the battlefields where the Polish people had fought for their freedom were placed. In the period of the communist rule the monument was gradually falling into decay. As late as in 1997 the Committee for the Mound's Restoration was set up. At the base of the Mound different patriotic and religious ceremonies, concerts and festivities are held and an open-air gym has been created there recently.

1. An Outline of the Piekary Śląskie Shrine History

The cult of Our Lady of Piekary dates back to the 1650s. The development of the Marian devotion in the place chosen by Her as a spring of God's grace on the Silesian land has been based on the Image depicting the Virgin Mary and Child. The Icon acquired a reputation for miracles, especially the curing of the sick during the epidemics. The news reverberated throughout the lands situated even far beyond Silesia and an increased influx of pilgrims led to the growth of popularity of the Piekary Icon. It also resulted in the 1680 Image's peregrination to the Czech cities of Prague and Hradec Králové.



Many people started to look for the intercession of Our Lady of Piekary. They included Kings of Poland: Jan III Sobieski, who in 1683 begged for Her help hastening with his armies to the relief of Vienna (the city being besieged by the Turks then) and later August II the Strong and August III.

In 1678 the Piekary parish was taken over by the Jesuits who run the Sanctuary for 100 years onwards. Significant changes took place between 1826 and 1862, however, when priest Jan Alojzy Ficek ministered to the Piekary parish. He built a new church (1849) and inspired numerous religious and social initiatives. In the discussed period Piekary became the Spiritual Capital of Silesia. The stability of the Marian devotion and its scope were confirmed in 1925 by special enunciations of Pope Pius XI and Cardinal August Hlond (issued on the occasion of the coronation of the Piekary Miraculous Icon). In 1962 Pope John XXIII decided to grant the Piekary church the title of Minor Basilica.

The Piekary Śląskie Sanctuary's spiritual significance for the religious and social life of Poland has been felt so far. Numerous pilgrimages coming there from the Homeland as well as from abroad are clear evidences of that statement.

Twice the Icon of Our Lady of Piekary was desecrated: the crowns were stolen during the Second World War (1940) and again in the period of the communist domination (1984). Still the love of the believers towards the Blessed Virgin Mary was so deep, that both the thefts were followed by re-coronations (in 1965 and 1985). Paradoxically, the anti-Christian limitations implemented by the communist regime led to the revival of the piety and religious life of the faithful. The traditions of annual pilgrimages of men and male adolescents (on the last Sunday of May) and of women and girls (on Sunday following the Assumption Day) were born. In the peak of the communist persecution around 200 thousand people used to participate in the events. Nowadays it is estimated that ca. 80 thousand men and ca. 60 thousand women take part in their annual pilgrimages.



The peculiar gatherings around the Mother of God won renown thanks to Cardinal Karol Wojtyła (later Saint Pope John Paul II), who sermonized in Piekary Śląskie on the occasions of the pilgrimages of men from 1965 to 1978. He used to touch difficult issues of the respect for a human life in all its stages and of the rights of working people.

To celebrate the Great Jubilee of 2000 Years of Christianity the silver covering was added to the Miraculous Icon. Also the Sanctuary complex refurbishment program was implemented. Thanks to these efforts, the buildings regained their original splendor and beauty.

Recently, the Sanctuary offer for pilgrims has been extended. Old outbuildings were adopted for the needs of the Visitor Centre. The bureau workers advise the pilgrims as far as the religious and tourist questions are concerned, while different souvenirs, devotional items and promotional materials being sold there as well. Numerous toilets were opened (including some for the disabled). The pilgrims can eat and regenerate in a café or in a garden full of greenery and flowers. A playground for children and teenagers was created as well. Finally, in 2009 Museum representing the legacy of the Sanctuary's past was opened for the public. The collection is exhibited in three departments that refer to:

- the history of the Shrine and of the Miraculous Icon (in the room you can also admire votive offerings made to the Virgin Mary);
- Piekary Śląskie strong connections to John Paul II (different Pope's memorabilia are displayed in the section);
- the history of the Calvary Hill (where the tourists can see several restored sculptures that had previously been placed in the Calvary Hill chapels).

On the first floor there is an auditorium where conferences, multimedia displays, concerts, shows and formation meetings are organized.

2. Piekary Śląskie as a Pilgrimage Destination

Prayers in front of the Miraculous Icon of Our Lady are the main purpose of pilgrimages arriving to Piekary Śląskie. The cult has lasted and developed there for 350 years. However, the character of pilgrimage and the type of a pilgrim have changed over time significantly. In the past the majority of pilgrims peregrinated on foot, in parish groups. Nowadays the majority of them arrive by car, by bus and by other means of transport to the Shrine. Big groups still come in a great number, but recently they have been giving way to smaller circles (families, couples, groups of friends) or even – to individuals.



The phenomenon makes the Sanctuary develop incessantly to meet the needs of pilgrims. Statistics show around 250 thousand of pilgrims paying visits to Our Lady of Piekary each year. First of all these include men and women taking part in their traditional yearly gatherings (in May and in August respectively). Not only Silesian people participate,

but also believers from other regions of Poland (as Pomerania or Lesser Poland) besides Polish emigrants to Texas, the Knights of Columbus and the Knights of Malta. Representatives of the international world of science have made their presence felt there as well (as American George Weigel and Italian Rocco Buttiglione who indefatigably propagate Christian values in the secularized societies of media and politics). Industrial traditions of Upper Silesia attract groups of miners, steelworkers, craftsmen, entrepreneurs and representatives of other professions to Piekary. They seek Mary the Mother of God's support in their enterprises and entrust Her their difficulties and concerns as e.g. fear of unemployment or poor work conditions.

The May pilgrimage of man is especially popular. Taking part in the religious event has become a tradition handed down from generation to generation. Frequently grandfathers, fathers, sons and grandsons make the pilgrimage together to maintain the tradition and to show their attachment to the Holy Roman Catholic faith. Sermons delivered by emblematic personalities of the Church have been characteristic elements of the celebrations. The most famous Piekary preacher was Karol Wojtyła who had participated in the gatherings in the 1960s and 1970s (as the archbishop of Cracow) before ascending the throne of Saint Peter in 1978. During the second papal visit to His Homeland (1983) the Polish Pope met with the participants of the Piekary pilgrimages (but the event took place on the Katowice Muchowiec airfield instead of the Piekary Śląskie Calvary Hill). Important elements of social teaching of the Roman Catholic Church (as e.g. issues of human labor and of inalienable dignity of the human being in all its stages) had been included in Karol Wojtyła's enunciations. They were later fully reflected in papal encyclicals. The Successor of Saint Peter remembered about the Piekary Śląskie pilgrimages of men until his dying day and every year sent words of greetings to the participants.

The pilgrimages are not only opportunities for the manifestations of faith and religious beliefs but also tools for Evangelization. That is why every year 'an hour for young people' (prepared by members of different Catholic groups and communities) is included in the program. That is also a time for joyful singing and worshipping in praise of the Lord. The elements impart a new features to the pilgrimages and constitute an answer for the changing mentality of (particularly young) people.

The vowed pilgrimages constitute another current of the Piekary Śląskie peregrinations. The tradition dates back to the 17th century, when Our Lady of Piekary became famous for her extraordinary interventions during the epidemics. The descendants of

miraculously saved inhabitants of Tarnowskie Góry, Bytom and Zabrze have made pilgrimages to Piekary since then.

Thanks to the modern means of communication (as the Internet and the social media) the knowledge on the Piekary Śląskie Sanctuary can spread worldwide. Radio Piekary play an inestimable role in propagating the place of cult broadcasting Sunday masses as well as other ceremonies and services. Thanks to the possibilities the number of pilgrims increases constantly. They come not only on Sundays and holidays but also on weekdays – practically every day. 500 groups of visitors are registered each year.

Piekary Śląskie is a destination for members of different Church organizations and societies (both deeply set in folk traditions and rapidly emerging nowadays). Among the pilgrims there are the representatives of Legion of Mary, the Living Rosary, Children of Mary, Oasis (a Catholic youth movement) as well as altar boys, children making their First Communions, recent secondary-school graduates or scouts bringing the Bethlehem Light of Peace to Piekary every year. Archdiocesan Festival of the Youth gradually acquires significance as well. For the first time it was organized in Piekary Śląskie simultaneously with the 2013 Rio de Janeiro Days of the Youth. Since then young people have been arriving to Piekary to participate in the events and to share their joy of faith.



It is very difficult to list all the categories of pilgrims that stay in Piekary Śląskie, however one fact remains indisputable. The recent development of the Sanctuary infrastructure encouraged new groups to visit the Heart of Silesia.

The proximity of the 'Piekary Śląskie' A1 interchange as well as of the Katowice Pyrzowice Airport is an important factor, too. Now it is much easier to get to Piekary Śląskie than it was two or three years ago. It takes less time to get there even from the distant provinces of Poland, so pilgrims from other dioceses come more willingly. Some pilgrims visit Piekary on their ways to Rome, Lourdes, Fatima and Santiago de Compostela. Unfortunately, they cannot

stay overnight as it is impossible to find a genuine hostel for the accommodation of pilgrims. So the visits restrict themselves to a Holy Mass celebration and a short refreshment.

Piekary Śląskie's inclusion to the Camino de Santiago Route (the Via Regia stage from Cracow) has also made an impact on the growth of the number of pilgrimages. The Way of Saint Jacob is particularly popular among pilgrims, so it seems obligatory to provide them with accommodation in Piekary Śląskie. That is another reason making construction of a hostel for pilgrims an urgent task. And finally, it is worth emphasizing that numerous personalities of social, political and religious life (including several Presidents of Poland, scientists, artists, Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Brother Roger of Taizé as well as Primates of Poland, Servants of God, Cardinals: August Hlond and Stefan Wyszyński) followed in the footsteps of countless visitors and came to Piekary to pray in front of the Image of Our Lady.