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Message of the Holy Father Francis to the archbishop of Poznań for the 100th anniversary of Polish independence

The following is the message sent by the Holy Father Francis to H.E. Msgr. Stanisław Gądecki, archbishop of Poznań, president of the Polish Episcopal Conference, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Polish independence tomorrow, 11 November, end of the First World War:

Message of the Holy Father

To the Venerable Brother

Msgr. Stanisław Gądecki

Archbishop of Poznań

President of the Polish Episcopal Conference

One hundred years ago, on 11 November, Poland regained her independence. With the end of the First World War there came to an end the period of Russian, Prussian and Austrian dominance over the nation that, before partition, had contributed to the development of the history of Christian Europe with all the wealth of her noble culture and spirituality. The regaining of sovereignty cost the sacrifice of many sons of Poland, who were willing to offer their personal freedom, their property, and even their life for the lost homeland. The struggle for freedom “was based on the hope that arose from a profound faith in the help of God, Who is the Lord of the history of people and of nations. This faith was also a support when, once independence was regained, unity had to be created despite differences, in order to rebuild the country and to defend her borders” (Saint John Paul II, 11 November 1998).

Along with the Church in Poland and all Polish people, I thank God Who has sustained the subsequent

generations with His grace and His power, and allowed them one hundred years ago to fulfil their hope of freedom and not to lose it, despite the further painful historical experiences related to the Second World War, the Nazi occupation and the communist regime.

Resuming once more the prayer of Saint John Paul II, exceptional witness of this century, I ask God for the grace of faith, hope and love for all Polish people, so that, in unity and peace, they may make good use of such a precious gift of freedom. May the protection of Mary, Queen of Poland of Jasna Góra, always accompany your country and all Poles. May Divine Providence grant peace and prosperity to the Polish nation now and in the future. May God's blessing be with you always.

Vatican City, 4 November 2018

FRANCIS
