



# Alliance News

Toledo-Poznan Alliance quarterly newsletter

**Summer 2009**

## Tour of Poland - May 2009

By Kathy Grabel

From the Baltic Sea to the mountains in Zakopane we had an incredible journey with an incredible group of people. From the day the group and I met to plan our trip to Poland, all of us were from different walks of life, yet amazingly we all clicked very well. Our group of 16 included a City Councilman, a retired lawyer, a priest, a successful businessman and his wife (my cousin Stan and his wife Kathryn), a hospital administrator, several State of Ohio employees, a dental hygienist, and a few more happy retirees. Our journey began when we gathered at the University of Toledo parking lot to get picked up by an Airport Transport van and take us to Detroit Airport. Our celebration started in the van with a couple of bottles of wine, complements of my cousin Stan. We were a happy group when we got to the airport and departed Detroit without a hitch and flew to Amsterdam, where we connected with a flight to Berlin. Berlin was our final destination by air. We were immediately met by our tour guide from Polonia Travel, our travel agency in Szczecin, Poland. Szczecin is only about 2 hrs. away from Berlin by bus. We got to Szczecin where we met up with Piotr and Jadwiga Nowicki, owners of Polonia Travel who treated us to a lunch of platefuls of home made pierogi, many different kinds. No one does it better than people in Poland. This was truly a treat. After a quick tour of Szczecin, we were on our way East to Gdynia and Gdansk. But along the way we stopped in Slupsk, a quaint little town near the Baltic Sea, where my cousin Mirek and his wife Basia live. Mirek and Basia invited all of us to their beautiful home, treated us to wonderful Polish pastries, fruits, coffee, tea, juices and an unbeatable Polish hospitality. It was an opportunity for cousins Mirek, Stan and me to visit and catch up on family news. After this wonderful visit we were on our way to Gdynia

and Gdansk, where we toured the famous shipyard in Gdansk, where Lech Walesa started the Solidarity trade union movement, that ultimately put an end to Communism in Poland and the rest of Europe. We stayed outside the city limits in a resort called Lesny Dwor (Forest Manor). From there we journeyed to Torun, hometown of the Father of Modern Astronomy Nicolaus Copernicus (Mikolaj Kopernik), then another resort in Ciechocinek, where we were treated to a ride in a horse-pulled wagon, a bonfire, a scrumptious Polish dinner with Bigos, and for horse lovers, a ride on a horse inside a horse stable. Next stop was on to Lichen to visit the Shrine of our Lady of Lichen, the most beautiful basilica that sits almost in the middle of nowhere surrounded by forests. Then to Poznan, Toledo's Sister City, where we were greeted by the Deputy Mayor, Tomasz Jerzy Kayser and their City Councilmen, where Toledo's City Councilman D. Michael Collins had a chance to interact with his counterparts. They treated us with Polish pastries, fruits, coffee, tea and again a wonderful Polish hospitality. They all spoke very good English. Then we were on our way to Czestochowa and Krakow. In Czestochowa, at one of the most important places of religious worship in the Christian world, Jasna Gora Monastery, we were given a tour by a monk. There, we attended an old-fashioned Latin Mass celebrated by our own Fr. Gerald Kneuen, who was part of our group. Our tour guide arranged for us to sit right in front of the most beautiful icon of the Black Madonna. This was truly very special. After a tour of Krakow we drove to Lagiewniki and toured the Shrine of Divine Mercy, with the tomb of Sister Faustyna Kowalska. Then on to Zakopane, a resort high up in the beautiful Tatra Mountains, where a funicular railway took us to the top of Mount Gubalowka where we took delight in the spectacular panorama of the Polish mountains. In Zakopane during dinner we were treated to some local entertainment by Gorale (the

Highlanders). We all enjoyed the numerous flea markets and street vendors in Zakopane with whom I loved to haggle for a good price on souvenirs. After a couple of days in beautiful Zakopane, we had to leave and move on to our next destination, Wadowice, the hometown of our beloved and late Polish Pope, John Paul II. We toured his residence, now a museum, and his local parish church. Now we were turning West towards Berlin by way of Wroclaw, a beautiful city in western Poland. There, my cousin Stan and Kathryn and I took delight in a horse-drawn buggy ride around the City of Wroclaw. After that we had to say good-bye to my cousin Stan and Kathryn, along with John and Barb and Joe and Laurie, who were all meeting up with family members to extend their stay in Poland. Then on to Berlin to the airport to catch a flight back home. A fabulous trip that we all hated to end, but one that gave us an opportunity to make new friends and travel companions. The group is already talking about where we want to go next.



### **Father Paul Kwiatkowski – Retiring**

By Pat Konwinski

Sunday, June 28 Father Paul said his farewell Mass at 10:00 at Immaculate Conception Parish. Mass was in Honor of the Holy Spirit. He treated the congregation to a song he sang. Father Paul has been a priest some 44 years:  
 1965-67 Associate Pastor at Our Lady of Lourdes

1967-73 Associate Pastor at St. Joseph's Maumee  
 1971-81 Holy Spirit Seminary teaching Latin and Music  
 1981-83 Pastor at St. Mary's Bluffton  
 1984-94 Pastor at St. Hedwig  
 1994-2005 Pastor at St. James  
 1994 -2009 Pastor at Immaculate Conception

As you may know, Father Paul has been active in many organizations throughout his time. Among them a founder of the TPA, as well as, a trustee for several years. He was a special part of almost every one of our Dozynki celebrations. We hope that he will continue to be an integral part of our organization in the future as he has been in the past. After Mass a farewell reception was held at the Mayores Center from 11-3:00. Father Paul's mother, Evelyn (91 years young), was there to celebrate with her son.

### **St. Adalbert Bus Trip to Bay City, Michigan**

By Pat Konwinski

Once again, about 50 individuals set off on yet another remarkable trip this time to Bay City, Michigan. We departed from the PRCUA parking lot at around 8:15. It was a beautiful day. The trip took about 2 hours to reach Bay City. First stop was at the historic St. Hyacinth Church and then to Krzysiak's for a great meal. We certainly had our choice of soups, salads and various entrees. After that we stopped at St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Parish. Here Father Rich Philiposki celebrated Mass for us and we took Holy Communion. The group then got on the bus to Standish and on to the casino for a little winning and losing. After about an hour at the Casino we headed for our last stop, Frankenmuth. Some went off to eat a yummy chicken dinner, others to shop or just walk around. There was a small group playing polkas and it was nice just to sit and listen to them. We headed home around 6:45 back to Toledo. All I want to know is: Father Rich, when is the next trip? Soon, I hope!