May 3, 1939

***A talk given by Fr. Justin at St. Patrick’s Cathedral on the day of the opening of the Polish Pavilion at the Worlds’ Fair***

“Queen of the Polish Crown, Pray for us!”

Words from the Polish heart

Today’s celebration reminds us of a day in the history of the Polish nation, which will never remain forgotten. In 1655, during the rule of King John Kazimierz, the entire nation was assaulted and Warsaw and Cracow was under siege; as a result the king had to leave the country to go to Śląsk. Worse than the occupation of the Swedes was the indifference of the nation, which abandoned the king almost without any battle at all, surrendering without objection so much so that only a miracle could save the country and awaken the people in their indifference.

The miracle occurred. General Muller, who was responsible for the siege of Jasna Góra, thought he could capture it easily, because, according to his estimation, it was a chicken coop. But it was to prove him wrong. Against a 10,000 men army stood a humble religious, Fr. Kordecki having only 140 soldiers and 70 religious. Faith, hope, and the manhood of Jasna Góra effected a miracle. The enemy backed off in chagrin; the Polish nation touched with a new spirit, won over the enemy. The miracle shook the Polish nation to the depth of its soul and stood against the enemy bravely. Czarnecki chased the Swedes to Denmark. King John Casimir in thanksgiving before the portrait of Mary and Mother, in the name of the nation made a contract in which he chose Mary as Queen of the Polish Crown. That same day, the Apostolic Nuncio, at vespers sang the Litany of Loreto and intoned three times the “Regina Regni Poloniae”, and those present responded three times, “Pray for us.”

Polish bishops in Rome have this confirmation and have instituted the title as a Church feast of the national Queen of the Polish Crown on May, 3rd.

The history of the Polish nation is the history of song and tears. Of Song, because the pages of history indicate an unequaled heroism in its national life. They are eternal examples of nobility and dedication. Youth has no need to imitate ideals of other nations, other ideals in the history of their pages. Poland’s history is one of tears, and it is said that God chastises those that He loves most. – The history of Poland is a history of an age-long bloody martyrdom.

St. Paul beautifully equates the Church as the mystical body of Christ. He writes how all the faithful brought to life through faith and warmed by the rays of one loving heart, and constitute one body of Christ. Let me expand and equate the same to the Polish nation as the daughter of Christ’s believing church. Our entire nation is made up of one living body, energetic, renewed by its resurrection. The soul of this mystical body is its Catholic Faith. Faith is the soul which gives life to the life of Poland from its beginnings when the saints Cyril and Methodius brought this faith as a gift from heaven to Poland. This holy faith spurred on all the heroes in their works – as a hero of the Polish nation to the Holy Church of Christ. All the persecutions of the Polish nation are necessarily joined to persecution of the Faith. There never were and never will be sufferings of persecution of Poland without sufferings for the faith. You cannot separate the persecution from the Polish person, you cannot separate the soul from the body – otherwise the flesh becomes cold and inert.

The heart of this Body of which we consist is our Polish language. A heart that is wounded, wounds the entire person. A heart crushed and beaten is indicative of death. If the Polish language, the Polish heart dies, its language dies and so does the Polack. We Poles are the organs of this body. Every Polack wherever he or she lives is an organ of the one mystical body. `

The members of this party are we Poles. Every Pole, wherever he or she lives is a member of this one Mystical Body. Just as one hand cannot harm the other, or the foot or even the small finger without doing harm to the whole body so also you cannot harm the most insignificant Pole without harming the name of the nation. The members of the whole body must cooperate and help each other under the care of the head, like all Poles each one must do their small part to achieve its goal. In time of sickness every member must do their bit – so to in the time of danger to the nation.

My friends. We know not what Providence has in mind for our Nation. Today behind the borders of Poland we can see the perils. We know not the future – we know the past – faith, hope and courage will take care of the future. A miracle happened at Jasna Gora – a miracle happened because of Faith. A miracle will happen across the ocean

What Poland accomplished with those years after its resurrection was not accomplished by any other nation. The best indication of that is among us.

From today on let us be Polish-like apostles. Let speak only the truth about our fatherland. Let us be teachers of the faith and good sons and daughters of Poland.