Poland's first collector note

John Paul II

On 16 October 2006, the National Bank of Poland will issue the first Polish collector note depicting Pope John Paul II. The final design of the note and the distribution details were presented on Monday, 18 September 2006 at the office of Conference of the Polish Episcopate.

***

The issue of the collector note to mark John Paul II has been scheduled for 16 October 2006, i.e. the anniversary of Karol Wojtyła's election to the papacy. The works on the banknote's design started in 2005. The design was examined by Józef Archbishop Kowalczyk, Apostolic Nuncio in Poland, Józef Cardinal Glemp, Primate of Poland, Józef Archbishop Michalik, Chairman of the Conference of the Polish Episcopate and Stanisław Cardinal Dziwisz, Metropolitan of Cracow. They approved the design.

The face value of the note will be PLN 50 and the number of notes issued 2 million. The sale price at NBP, similarly to collector coins, will be higher, i.e. PLN 90. The difference encompasses, *inter alia*, the costs of design and manufacturing, the special packaging in which the note will be distributed and VAT. The note will be available for sale from 16 October in Regional Branches of the NBP in all provincial cities.

***

As of 18 September, the note will be available for subscription in all branches of Bank Pocztowy and all post offices countrywide. The subscription order deadline is 30 September 2006. Special subscription forms must be completed and followed by payment of the guaranteed price of the note of PLN 90. The forms can also be downloaded from the Internet (www.pocztowy.pl).

The subscribed notes can be collected in one of the three two-week terms: between 19 and 31 October, between 2 and 15 November and between 16 and 30 November. The collection date should be chosen while placing a subscription order. The notes can be collected at post offices and branches of Bank Pocztowy where the subscription order was placed by producing the subscription order acceptance and an identity document.

A portion of proceedings from the sale of the notes at post offices and in Bank Pocztowy will be passed on to the foundation "Dzieło Nowego Tysiąclecia" for the purpose of funding grants for exceptionally gifted young people from low-income families. The exact amount will be defined after the subscription has ended.

***

The note was designed by **Andrzej Heidrich.** The obverse of the note symbolically depicts a role of the Holy See and the Pope's mission in the universal perspective and the reverse features the pontificate of John Paul II from the Polish perspective by placing it in Poland's most recent history.

The face of the note contains a portrait of John Paul II holding his pastoral cross against the background of a stylised globe, which is a symbol of the pontificate's universal nature. The Pope is wearing his pontifical vestments and is performing a greeting gesture. In his hand, he is holding a crosier — a symbol of papal authority. The right-hand bottom side of the note contains the following inscription: *"John Paul II"* and the pontificate's term: *"16 X 1978 – 2 IV 2005."*

The reverse of the note shows an episode which occurred during the Holy Mass for the inauguration of the pontificate of John Paul II and depicts a special relationship between the Pope and Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński. As the Cardinal paid homage, John Paul II rose and performed a memorable gesture to express his respect to the Primate of Poland. On the right-hand side of the scene there is a quotation from *Letter to Poles* read out by John Paul II to his countrymen who congregated in Vatican Paul VI Hall on the day immediately following the event: *"There would be no Polish Pope on this Chair of St. Peter […] had it not been for your faith undiminished by prison and suffering, your heroic hope […]"*. The space under the quotation bears the Pope's facsimile signature and the date he uttered those words on, namely 23 October 1978. It is worth noting that in 2006 we celebrate the 25th anniversary of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński's death and the 50th anniversary of his release from prison.

An outline of the Jasna Góra Monastery and church under the text is to emphasise the role of the shrine of Jasna Góra in the history of Poland and life of the Holy Father and the Primate of the Millennium. The bands beneath their feet bear their Episcopal mottos, namely *Totus Tuus* — the motto of John Paul II and *Soli Deo* — the motto of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński.

***

The graphic design of the note is modern yet full of symbolic. A watermark depicts a papal coat of arms of John Paul II. In the background behind the pastoral cross guilloche lines were placed with repeating images of fish, cross and the letters RP.

On the note, microlettering was used five times, so it is possible to see the names of the states visited by John Paul II during his papal pilgrimages through a magnifying glass. They fill out the outlines of the continents seen on the globe.

Both sides of the note feature a theme of Peter's keys. On the face, white Peter's keys framed into a square and bound by a string can be seen. On the reverse they are presented in olive colour. It is the so-called see-through register (recto-verso) – where the elements on both sides on the note complement each other and create a unity seen at the light. The inscription *JP II* is seen on the note depending on the angle of viewing – it is the so-called angle effect.

Some graphic elements of the note can be seen only in ultra-violet light. For example, on the face of the note UV light reveals red and celadon green papal coat of arms of John Paul II on the right side of the Pope. On the reverse of the note, in the UV light, Peter's keys are seen, framed into a square and in the colour of orange.

All the notes bear the letter series of JP related to the Pope's initials.

The note was manufactured at the Polska Wytwórnia Papierów Wartościowych SA.

***

Additional information for the media:

Izabela Świderek-Kowalczyk
NBP Press Office Director
The National Bank of Poland
Tel. no. (48-22) 653 28 97

Mikołaj Karpiński
Bank Pocztowy
(48-22) 322 74 71