

# Our Lady of Czestochowa



**Pax Christi Catholic Church**  
**4001 Victoria Way, Lexington, KY 40515**  
**859-273-9999**

**Wednesday, May 7th —Thursday, May 8th**

The traveling icon of “Our Lady of Czestochowa” (“the Black Madonna”) will be at **PAX CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH** in Lexington, KY, from May 7<sup>th</sup> through May 8<sup>th</sup>. The Icon will arrive at 2pm and depart for Ohio at 11am the next day. Prayer and worship services are planned throughout the 21 hour visit.

This Ocean to Ocean pilgrimage of the icon is an unprecedented effort for the international pro-life movement, Human Life International. Baskets for free will offerings will be available

The proposed program:

- 2:00 pm: Service of Expectation/Placement of the Icon in the Sanctuary  
Immediately followed by the Service of Welcome
- 3:00 pm: Praying the Diving Mercy Chaplet, and the Sorrowful mysteries of the rosary with litany and hymns
- 4:00 pm: Praying the Joyful mysteries of the rosary with litany and hymns
- 5:00 pm: Praying the Luminous mysteries of the rosary with litany and hymns
- 6:30 pm: Vespers with talk on icon by Fr. Peter West, the guardian of the icon, Reception**
- 9:00 pm: Night prayer  
(Church will be open all night (if we have guardians of the hours))
- 7:00 am Office of Readings, and Morning Prayer
- 9:00 am Praying the Glorious mysteries of the rosary with litany and hymns
- 9:30 am Mass followed by Service of Farewell

## Short History of the traveling icon of our Our Lady of Czestochowa

The Archbishop of Cracow celebrated a special Mass on January 28, 2012 to make a special act of entrustment to the cause of the defense of life and family to Our Lady of Czestochowa and pray for the success of the “From Ocean to Ocean International Campaign in Defense of Life.” During this entrustment, he also bless a replica of the famous icon. It is this replica of the famous icon which is being carried throughout the world. An icon, as opposed to paintings, sculptures or other artistic depictions of persons, is considered to be almost a living presence of the person or deity who is venerated. The pilgrimage, or peregrination, of the icon, is intended as a response to nearly a century of legalized abortion first imposed by the Soviet Union, then spread to other nations.

In the Old Testament, the Jews carried the Ark of the Covenant into battle. Many Fathers of the Church compare Mary to the Ark of the New Covenant. Saint Ambrose wrote “The Ark contained the Tablets of the Law; Mary contained in her womb the heir of the Testament. The Ark bore the Law; Mary bore the Gospel.” (Serm. xlii. 6)

The icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa has a fascinating history of its own, though there is some variation in the accounts. Tradition holds that St. Luke the Evangelist himself “wrote” the icon on a cypress table in the home of the Holy Family. St. Helena is said to have located the icon during her visit to the Holy Land and to have brought it to Constantinople in the fourth century. The painting was eventually owned by Charlemagne, who presented it as a dowry to Prince Lev of Galicia (present-day Western Ukraine), where it was kept for almost six centuries in the royal palace at Belz. In 1382, after invading Tartars attacked the fortress at Belz, the icon was taken to the Polish town of Czestochowa for safekeeping, and it has remained there ever since. The Icon was damaged by Hussite raiders in 1430, who slashed and attempted to burn the icon, changing the visage of what is now referred to as the “Black Madonna.”

Starting in Vladivostok, Russia, the Ocean to Ocean Campaign in Defense of Life has received the support and blessings of numerous bishops in Europe, as well as Metropolitan Hilarion of the Russian Orthodox Church, and is expected to circle the globe and enkindle a sustainable movement to build a culture of life. The campaign is based on the pilgrimage of an icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa which has already traveled over 40 thousand miles, traversed 24 countries, visited 75 cathedrals and 60 Orthodox churches in over 400 cities; and has been venerated by hundreds of thousands since the campaign began.

For more information about the peregrination of the icon, or the Ocean to Ocean campaign, visit <http://www.hli.org>.