

Polish church ready to unveil world's largest Christ statue

by [Jonathan Luxmoore](#)

November 17, 2010

Warsaw, November 17 (ENInews)--A Polish bishop has invited fellow Roman Catholics at home and abroad to attend an unveiling on 21 November of the world's largest statue of Christ.

The statue stands in a town on the plains near the German border. On its mound, it rises to 65 metres (213 feet), and is visible for at least 16 kilometres (10 miles) in any direction.

"This is an act of homage, through which we seek to honour the saviour, and recognise his universal reign," Zygmunt Regmunt, bishop of Zielona Gora-Gorzow, told members of his western diocese.

"Being full of trust in Christ, the faith cannot remain only an internal act. It should also be expressed externally; firstly, through a life worthy of the Gospel. The faith also needs certain material signs to give it testimony, and this monument is just such a testimony of faith."

The bishop issued his invitation in a pastoral letter as final work was being carried out on the statue at the Divine Mercy parish in Swiebodzin, 32 kilometres from Poland's border with Germany. The reinforced concrete statue will be at least 40 feet (12 metres) higher than that of Brazil's famous 80-year-old Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro.

Regmunt said the new edifice, to be dedicated on 21 November, had been a personal project of the local parish rector, Sylwester Zawadzki, to commemorate the town's dedication to "Christ the King" in 2000. Some reports indicate that originally Zawadzki had wanted a "small garden sculpture" but over time his ambitions grew.

The bishop said that he wished to thank Polish Catholics at home and abroad who had donated money, as well as municipal and county officials who had supported

the venture.

Controversy has accompanied the building project, with some Catholics claiming the statue is a waste of money. There have also been worries about the sculpture's safety, and a crane collapsed when builders tried to place the head. As it fell, the head crushed a builder's foot, leading some sceptics to call the accident a sign of God's disapproval.

In his invitation to the dedication service, Regmunt said, "After overcoming many impediments, the installation of this figure is now happily complete. Let participation in the ceremony of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, be a challenge to our faith and an expression of our will to build our lives on the foundation of Christ's gospel, in order to help us submit ever more deeply to the royal power of Christ."

Poland's Catholic information agency, KAI, said installation work was still being done in early November on the arms and 15-ton head of the gigantic figure, which has already attracted sightseers to the small town of 20 000 inhabitants.