At the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries, there were some unfavorable changes in Silesia as individual branches of the Silesian Piast Dynasty had been dying out, and the local duchies came under the rule of foreign families.

In 1526, the King of Bohemia and Hungary, Ludwik II Jagiellończyk, died childless in a battle against the Turks. From that time on, Ferdinand I of the German Habsburg family became the ruler of Bohemia, and consequently the ruler of Silesia (based on the agreement of 1515, between the Jagiellonian Dynasty and the Habsburgs). The new ruler began quickly seizing the property in Silesia. He used the death of the last Piast of Opole, John II the Good, to his advantage, which happened in 1532, and with strenuous efforts, he took over the united province in 1556 (immediately after the death of Jan Opolski, the Brandenburg margrave, Jerzy Hohenzollern, became the owner of his lands).

Further, the Reformation initiated by Martin Luther in 1517 reached Silesia. Under the influence of his preaching, some of the Silesian princes and new landlords broke with Catholicism and adopted Protestantism. The main outcome of that was that church goods could that way be transferred onto the property of the secular rulers. Their subjects were also forced to accept the new faith, following that of the rulers.

As a consequence, Protestantism was spreading widely in Silesia, and it was even favored due to the zealous involvement of Martin Luther Jerzy Hohenzollern, the owner of a large portion of the local lands. Regardless, there were bastions of Catholicism in Silesia, such as the Abbey in Rudy and the City of Gliwice (Gleiwitz), whose councilors received praises from the Bishop of Wroclaw (Breslau), Andrzej Jerin, for not allowing Protestants to enter the city’s community.