

Corpus Christi Church

Monastery of Canons Regular of the Lateran



Kazimierz

Krakow

Historical Outline

Driven by an abominable greed for gold and incited by the devil himself, a large group of inhabitants of Krakow stealthily broke into the parish church of All Saints during the Octave of Corpus Christi and stole the copper monstrance with the Holy Sacrament, thickly coated with gold; its artful handicraft was even more valuable than the metal itself. Then, having discovered that their loot was in fact made of copper, and fearing a severe punishment if they were caught, they thrown the monstrance to the local Mate swamp overgrown with bushes. The marshes spread by St. Laurentius church which was at that time the parish temple of the village of Bawol, part of the Krakow Chapter where the king Casimir III the Great would establish the town of Kazimierz and grant it its charter. (...) Day and night, heavenly lights were then seen constantly burning on the marsh. When it became widely known, many considered it a miracle – which it was indeed – and reported it to the Bishop of Krakow, Bodzeta, and his venerable Chapter, and then to the Polish King Casimir II, a very devout ruler. These, having concluded that the appearance of so numerous and intense heavenly lights must have a good reason, organised a procession of all the inhabitants of the city to the swamp (...), with religious hymns and songs, and banners, and carefully inspected the mysterious lights. When they found that the lights adorned the stolen monstrance (...) they



The stolen monstrance is found (XVIII/XIX c.)



Procession with the recovered monstrance; below, the Corpus Christi Church is turned over to Canons Regular (XVIII/XIX c.)



carried it back to the church of All Saints, and His Majesty the King, recognising that such a memorable and extraordinary miracle had occurred for him, and because of him, made a pledge to found and build of brick a beautiful Corpus Christi church on the spot where this unspeakably precious Holy Sacrament had been found, albeit the ground was swampy and muddy.

So much of the origins of the Corpus Christi church says the Polish chronicler Jan Dlugosz, involuntarily giving rise to the legend that has been cited in every source ever since. His report cannot be given full credence, though, as it was based solely on oral tradition, which he had enriched with the popular beliefs and stories of extraordinary miracles that the medieval society cherished so much. In written documents there are no explicit data concerning the origins of the main temple of the town of Kazimierz. Still, some indisputable facts can be ascertained. For instance, it is certain that the new town of Kazimierz was granted the charter in 1335. Yet none of the existing churches could become its parish church as they were all too far from the main square. Therefore, a new, magnificent temple had to be erected, that could be the same for Kazimierz that St. Mary's Church had been for Krakow.

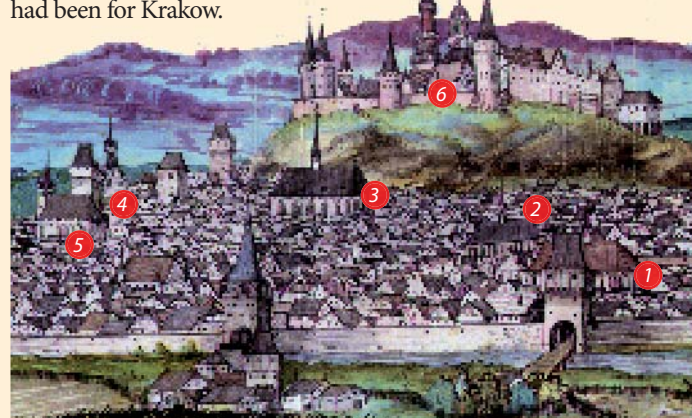
History of Kazimierz

9th-10th c. – Numerous settlements exist in the area of today's district of Kazimierz; the largest is clustered around the Romanesque rotunda at Skalka

1079 – St. Stanislaus the Martyr, the future patron saint of Poland, is murdered at Skalka

2nd h. of 13th c. – In the village of Bawół, near today's Szeroka Street, St. Laurentius church is built (pulled down after 1785)

Panoramic view of Krakow from the years 1536/1537 (Würzburg University Library). **1.** Corpus Christi Church **2.** Bernardines' Church (mistakenly situated) **3.** St. Catherine Church **4.** Skalka (The Rock) Monastery **5.** Unidentified church (perhaps repeated depiction of the Skalka temple) **6.** Wawel Castle



Rev. Konrad Aleman,
first provost of Ca-
nons Regular in Kra-
kow

Before 1313 – In the southern part of the future town of Kazimierz (by the exit of today's Ska-wińska Street) St. Jacob church is reared (pulled down in 1787); soon afterwards a small settlement surrounds the temple

February 27th, 1335 – King Casmir the Great grants Kazimierz the town charter

Before 1341 – Construc-tion of Corpus Christi Church starts

1363 – Augustinians are brought to Kazimierz, and granted the area where later St. Catherine church will be erected

before 1366 – construc-tion of a university by St. Laurentius church begins; works are discontinued due to the death of the fo-under

14th c. – A parish school is established at the Corpus Christi Church, with the masters of the Academy of Krakow (later the Jagiello-nian University) as teachers

1405 – Canons Regular of the Lateran become the custodians of Corpus Chri-sti Church

1414 – A new town hall replaces the ancient, woo-den structure

1419 – King Ladislaus Jagiello incorporates to the town of Kazimierz the set-tlement of Stradom, si-tuated between the Wawel Hill and the city walls



The construction works had been commenced before the year 1341. The church was built partly of stone and partly of wood, due to the lack of funds after the King's death. Perhaps the Dlugosz's legend and his de-scription of the solemn procession

can be explained best as a reminiscence of the definitely grand consecration ceremony of the new temple. Yet the construction works had taken a long, long time to finish... In 1370, the municipality took over the funding of the whole enterprise. Therefore, some information concerning its progress has been preserved in the municipal archives. The documents mention numerous donations of the inhabitants made for the benefit of this commendable underta-king. In 1401, the part of the church that had already been constructed – namely, the present-day presbytery furnished with three altars - was consecrated.

Four years later, Canons Regular of the Lateran were brought to Krakow to take care of the temple. Their first provost was Rev. Konrad Aleman (of German origins), who quickly attended to the further enlargement of the then still small church. The first thing to

be done was to take down the wooden part of the temple which was least durable and most vulnerable to fire, etc. In the area of Kazimierz, as well as in the estate of the Order in the vicinity of Krakow, there were quar-ries and brick-yards that provided the builders with construction materials. The works progressed apace. Already in 1410, the chapel of the Virgin Mary and the Magi was erected on the spot where today the Annun-ciation chapel is located. For some time, the holy services were transferred to that chapel. By 1432, the presbytery had also been finished. The works on the imposing three-aisle body of the church, the tower, roof and ceiling took much more time. They were funded by Casi-mir IV Jagiellon, who, shortly before his death in 1492, had pledged his successor to finish this commendable undertaking. The pledge was fulfilled. In 1500, thanks to the generous sup-port of the King John I Albert and his mother Elisabeth, daughter of Albert II of Germany, the church, by then almost finished, could be consecrated at last. The ceremony was presided over by the King's brother, Cardinal Fryderyk Jagiellon, who had also rendered valuable ser-vices to the cause of the Corpus Christi church constru-ction.



Coat of arms
of Canons
Regular
of the La-
teran

1471 – Death of Izaakz Boner, an Augustinian,

another inhabitant of Ka-zimierz to become a can-didate to sainthood dur-ing the *Golden Age of Kra-kow* beside the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz

1472 – Pauline Fathers arrive to Skalka

1489 – Death of the Bles-sed Stanislaus of Kazi-mierz

15th c. – St. Laurentius congregation is incor-porated into the Corpus Christi parish

1495 – King John I Al-bert orders the Jews of Krakow to move to Ka-zimierz, establishing the so-called Jewish town, centred in the north-east section of the city

16th c. – Prosperous pe-riod for Kazimierz; with nearly five thousand in-habitants, the town has its separate council and town hall, as well as va-rious trade guilds and fra-ternities

1655-1657 – Kazimierz is occupied by Swedish troops and suffers serio-us damage

1688 – Arrival of the Trini-tarians, who rear a church by 1758 (today's temple of the Order of St. John of God)

1733-1751 – Baroque church is erected at Skalka



View of the church from the cloister garden

1800 — Kazimierz becomes a part of Krakow

1822 — Walls dividing the Jewish town from the rest of Kazimierz are pulled down

1877-1880 — Old riverbed of Vistula is filled up. Today's Dietla Street and Dietl's park are created instead

1939-1945 — Nazis exterminate almost the whole Jewish population of Kazimierz

1947 — Town hall becomes the seat of the Ethnographic Museum

1978 — Historic monuments of Kazimierz are entered on the UNESCO World Heritage List

June 8th, 1979 — Meeting of the representatives of Polish academic circles and youth with the Pope John Paul II is held at Skalka

2000 — Miracle-working image of Our Lady of Grace in St. Catherine church is crowned with papal crowns

2004 and 2005 — Churches of St. Michael the Archangel and of St. Stanislaus the Martyr at Skalka, and of Corpus Christi, are elevated to the rank of a minor basilica

2007 — Coronation of the miracle-working image of the Madonna of the Apple from the Church of Corpus Christi

Subsequent fortunes of the temple were very dramatic and complicated. On the one hand, care had to be constantly taken for the interior furnishings, for the design and execution of the



altars, paintings and sculptures — all the elements that account for the unique appearance and atmosphere of the most prominent temple of the town of Kazimierz. On the other hand, the records of the church were always full of various historic cataclysms. In 1556, in a major fire the tower with its four bells was burnt down. In 1594, shortly after it had been rebuilt, another fire consumed the whole roof and the church organ. A very fortunate period for the temple came in 1612-1644, when the provost of the Canons Regular

Rev. Marcin Kloczyński. It was then that the imposing main altar was executed, as well as the canons' stalls, mausoleum of the Blessed

Stanislaw Kazimierczyk (Stanislaus of Kazimierz), and several side altars.

The Swedish invasion of 1655 put an end to this brief prosperous interval. Although the then provost, Rev. Jacek Liberiusz, had managed to take some valuables away from Krakow, the monastic treasury could not be emptied, as it would have imperilled the life of the monks themselves, for the Swedish soldiery, deprived of the expected loot, could have taken revenge on the canons. Therefore the majority of the valuables, left in the monastery, fell prey to the invaders' greed. Also the invaluable books kept in the library were stolen or destroyed. The Swedish King Carolus Gustavus resided in the provost's chambers, while his soldiers turned the church into stables and storehouses. The rebuilding of the damage caused by that barbaric invasion had started only after the liberation of Krakow in 1657.

The gradual deterioration of the international status of the Polish Commonwealth, general pauperisation of its society, and confiscations of monastic estates were also felt in the parish of Corpus Christi. However, large investments were still made in the church, such as the foundation of four side altars and the beautiful pulpit in 1740-1745, of the new tiling and organ-loft above the main entrance, or the execution of new sculptures in the rood-screen (1763-1766). Yet the partitions of Poland and the confiscation of the monastic estates precluded any major enlargements of the church and cloister for a very long time. To add to misfortune, in 1864, in requital for the active participation of the Canons Regular in the Polish

The Canons granted generous donations by Polish rulers, derived profits from various villages in the vicinity of Krakow, such as Niegowic. It was to the Niegowic parish that the young priest Karol Wojtyła was then sent as a vicar. It should also be noted that today's Wenecja Street in Krakow came into being thanks to their provost, Rev. Marcin Kloczyński, who, early in the 17th century, built several houses in that neighbourhood. As the buildings overlooked the Rudawa River that used to flow nearby at that time, he called the settlement *Venice*.



Above and on the preceding page: Corpus Christi Church in the second half of the 19th century (photo by I. Krieger); an Apostle falls asleep — a figure from the Garden of Olives





Contemporary mural painting from the sacristy depicting Jesus washing the Apostles' feet



A 15th-century antiphonal

January Uprising of 1863, all the monasteries of the Order in the area annexed by Russia were closed. On the other hand, a fortunate and honourable occurrence for the Krakow provostry was its elevation to the rank of an abbacy in 1861.

In spite of all the difficulties and obstacles, the custodians of the Corpus Christi church did their best to discharge their task with dignity. In 1897, the renovation works were commenced that were to last — with some intervals — for almost forty years. Also the pompous quincentenary of the monastery held in 1905 should be mentioned here. When Poland regained independence in 1918, the conservation works were intensified. The church altars, chapels and paintings were renovated, as well as the Garden of Olives and the roof and moistened foundations of the building.

The period of the communist regime, hostile to all forms and manifestations of religious life, was particularly hard on the Corpus Christi church. It was then that the person of Karol Cardinal Wojtyla, who presided over the canonical visitation during the Lent of 1969, provided a major moral support for the local parish. The Cardinal wished to participate in the visits paid to the sick in their homes. Sr. Irena Odoy, the then parish guardian of the sick, recorded: *We entered every house that I knew, and first of all the homes of the poor*

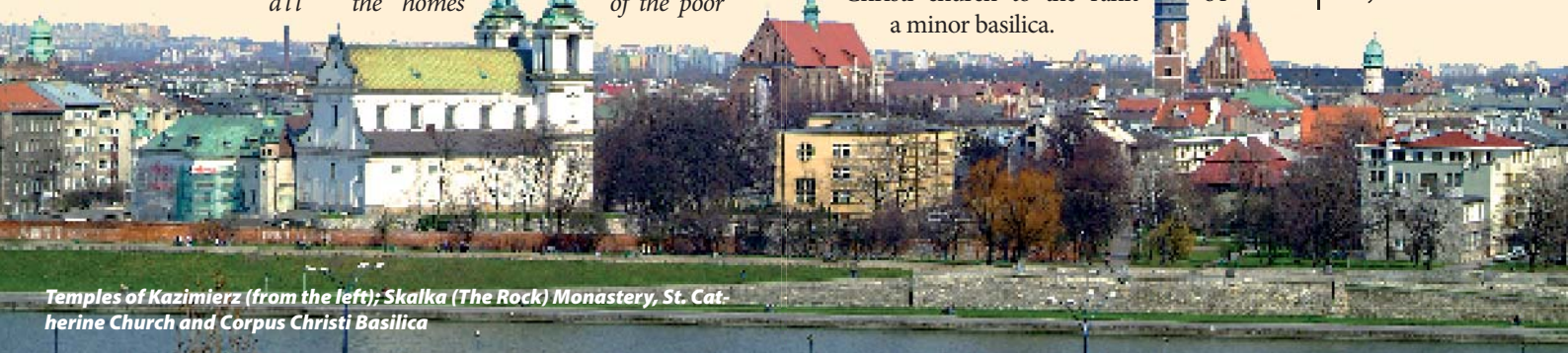


and the lonesome; we even ventured into the backyards that were usually unprepared for such a visit; into the basements and garrets; in a word, we visited all the bedridden, or unable to leave their lodgings. The Cardinal would sit very close to each sick person's bed and talk to him or her with fatherly goodness...

Since 1993, conservation works have been going on in the church and monastery. The 15th-century Gothic stained glass windows have already been renovated, as well as the chapels and their interior decoration, the canons' stalls and the western facade of the temple. A portion of the outside wall was cleansed, and the library books catalogued and set in order. On the 24th of January, 2005, the Holy Father John Paul II elevated the Corpus Christi church to the rank of a minor basilica.

Karol Cardinal Wojtyla in the Corpus Christi Church

During his visitation in the Corpus Christi church, Karol Cardinal Wojtyla used to address the lonely in these words: *Human life, even in solitude, if it is filled with God, is not empty. In fact, it can be full, even to the overflowing. Some of you, my brothers and sisters, know only too well of what I speak, from your own experience. (...) It is never the case that a human being is useless or superfluous. Everyone can be useful.*



Temples of Kazimierz (from the left); Skalka (The Rock) Monastery, St. Catherine Church and Corpus Christi Basilica

Corpus Christi Church



The church of Corpus Christi — once the most prominent structure in the whole town of Kazimierz — is situated by the Wolnica Square, the former main market square of Kazimierz. Its imposing, monumental form used to dominate the whole town; today it sinks into the scenery of the narrow streets of Kazimierz. Only the slender tower is visible from any point in the city. Soon it will be accessible to tourists willing to admire the panoramic view of this beautiful and slightly mysterious district of Krakow. The former parish temple of the

whole town of Kazimierz is a huge structure of a very elegant construction. It should be noted that it is one of the six churches in Krakow featuring the pillar buttresses that allowed builders to erect basilicas without the use of flying buttresses. The other five churches

of that type are such invaluable Krakow temples as the Wawel Cathedral, St. Mary's Church, and the churches of the Dominicans, Franciscans and Augustinians. The combination of brick and stone gives the church its interesting colouring, while the genius of the architects working in Krakow in the 14th and 15th centuries makes this monumental structure seem slender and light.

It is an orientated, three-aisled temple with an elongated, polygonal presbytery. Adjoining to the presbytery from the north, there is a sacristy, and from the west — the treasury and oratory. The four-bayed, three-aisled body

of the church is flanked with chapels — of St. Anne and the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary — and porches. Adjoining to the temple from the north, there is the tower with the Garden of Olives and the chapel of Our Lady of Loreto. The church is connected with the cloister by means of an arcaded passage. By the western porch with an entrance to the church, two small rooms stand out — the former dark cells, where notorious sinners were locked on Sundays and fest-days (usually the youth transgressing against the sixth commandment). Small windows in the presbytery walls, by the main altar, used to perform a different function: it was through them that the Holy Sacrament was distributed at the times of plague. times of plague.

Church and the monastery; to the left – Annunciation Chapel; in the background – Wawel Castle



We enter the church. In the first half of the 17th century, during the provostry of Rev. Marcin Kloczyński, most of its original,

medieval interior decoration was replaced by Baroque furnishings. Passing by the altar of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz on the left (see page 25) we approach the main altar. Impressive in both its size and handicraft, it was executed

around the year 1634 in the best wood-carver's workshop of the period — the atelier of Baltazar Kuncz. The central space is occu-

pied by Tommaso Dolabella's image of the Nativity, in the literature of the subject known as 'Adoration of the Shepherds'. As regards its composition, the picture is divided in two parts. The lower part depicts the shepherds gathered

around the manger with the newborn Saviour, while the upper part presents God the Father reigning supreme, surrounded by angels. In the coping of the altar there is an image by an unk-

nown painter — probably from Dolabella's atelier — depicting the Deposition from the Cross.

The altar is also adorned with statues of saints pointing to the biblical verses announcing the Conception of Christ, his death and establishment of the Most Holy Sacrament.

From the presbytery, there is a passage to the treasury. It leads through the Gothic

sacristy, where you can admire 18th-century paintings depicting the legends about the establishment of the feast of Corpus

Christi and the origins of the Corpus Christi church itself. In the treasury, beside the monstrances, chalices, chasubles and crucifixes, the monks also keep an extremely beautiful and valuable picture of Madonna with Infant Jesus,

attributed to Lucas Cranach the Elder, as well as a reliquary image of the Virgin Mary purchased in 1434 from the provost of Rudnica. According to the tradition, it was brought to Krakow in order



Madonna of Cranach the Elder

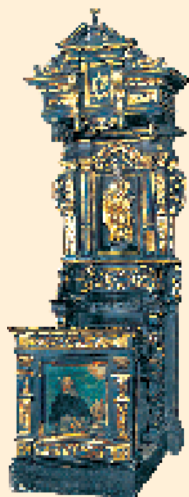


Reliquary image of Virgin Mary

1. Resurrected Christ
2. David
3. Zachary
4. Daniel
5. St. John the Baptist
6. Adoration of the Shepherds, by Tommaso Dolabella
7. Deposition from the Cross (attributed to the atelier of Dolabella)
8. Pictures with Old Testament scenes announcing the establishment of the Holy Sacrament
9. Jeremiah
10. Ezekiel
11. St. Christopher carrying Infant Jesus
12. St. Joseph with Infant Jesus
13. Baroque tabernacle (mid-17th century) with small statues of the Four Evangelists
14. Frontal with angels paying homage to the Holy Sacrament

Main altar





Provost's throne



St. Augustine and Ambrose



to save it from a profanation in Bohemia, where the Hussite Wars were raging. It was particularly venerated by the monks, as the legend had it that it had been painted by St. Luke the Evangelist himself; a gifted painter, attributed with the authorship of the images of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour and Our Lady of Czestochowa. It was also believed that the Madonna from that painting had the power to cast out devils from the possessed. Therefore the picture was called 'Madonna terribilis daemonibus'.

Back in the presbytery, it is worth while to spend some time contemplating the side altars and 17th-century pictures by Wojciech Podkora (see no. 4 on the church plan). Of special interest are also the richly decorated canons' stalls. Executed in 1624-1632, they feature the figures of the among the Popes from the Regular of the Canons of the Lateran,



Altar in the presbytery with the Deposition from the Cross

and pictures attributed to the atelier of Dolabella and depicting various scenes from the lives of the saints from that Order (for more information, see the section on the Canons Regular of the Lateran). Also some fragments of Gothic stained glass windows from around the year 1430 have been preserved in the presbytery. They are all framed in one of the church windows.

We move to the nave, passing under the 18th-century rood-screen. Here, right by the rood-screen wall, we stop for a while to admire the miracle-working image of Our Lady of Grace. The cult of the Madonna of that invocation originated in the Italian town of Faenza in the early 15th century. In Poland it gained numerous followers after the Polish victory over the Turks in the first half of the 17th century, as it was commonly believed that Our



Altar of Our Lady of Grace



Gothic stained glass window

**Altar of the Merciful Jesus;
in the background, altar of
Christ the Saviour**



Lady of Grace had helped the Poles to defeat their enemies. The Madonna is also believed to have the power to suppress the plague. A bit further on the same side of the church, by a pillar, there is the altar of the Merciful Jesus, with an interesting image. This representation of the Merciful Jesus differs slightly from the one that is famous worldwide; it should be noted, though, that it is the prototype of the image worshipped in the Sanctuary of Lagiewniki. It was painted for the Lagiewniki chapel by Adolf Hyla, as a grate-

ful votive offering for the saving of his family during the Second World War. In the picture, Lord Jesus, as the Divine Healer, walks through a meadow covered with flowers. The painting was originally exhibited in the Lagiewniki chapel, but its shape and size did not match the altar in which it was to be framed. In addition, the confessor of Sr. Faustina, Michal Sopoćko, found its background not liturgical enough and also asked its author to repaint some details in the personage of Jesus. Therefore Hyla executed another

image — the one that hangs today in the Lagiewniki Sanctuary — while the prototype became a votive offering to the Corpus Christi church, where it has been venerated ever since.

Among the rich furnishings of the church an imposing pulpit stands out, made in 1744-1750 in the shape of a boat with a mast and sails, supported by two mermaids. Its symbolic meaning is elucidated by a verse from the Gospel of St. Luke, in-

scribed in Latin on the sail: *And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's (...) and taught the people out of the ship* (Lk. 5.3). The pulpit, the place from which the Gospel is preached, is here a reminder of the Master Teacher; for the Canons Regular it expresses the predicant nature and function of their order.

Among the three chapels of the Corpus Christi church, the most elegant form distinguishes the chapel of the Annunciation of



Pulpit



**Altars of Christ the Saviour, of Crucifixion,
and of St. Michael the Archangel**

the Virgin Mary. It was constructed on the spot of its predecessor by the provost Jacek Liboriusz. Under the cupola, the chapel walls are decorated



Detail from the altar of St. Anthony

with paintings depicting various Old Testament scenes, such as expulsion of our First Parents from Paradise, the Flood, Jacob's dream, the burning bush, Jerusalem, lily among thorns, a boat at sea, and Jonah. The beau-



tiful cupola itself, modelled on the dome of the Sigmundus

Chapel of the Wawel Cathedral, is also covered with paintings, this time representing scenes from the life of Virgin Mary, including the Birth,



Detail from the altar of the Holy Trinity

Offerory - in the Temple, Engagement, Annunciation, Visitation, Dormition, Assumption and Coronation. The sumptuous architecture of the chapel does not leave much room for rich



Interior of the basilica; in the foreground, the altars of Transfiguration, and of St. Augustine

interior decoration; thus the real treasure of the chapel strikes the visitor right away: it is the miracle-working image of the Virgin Mary with Infant Jesus, framed into the Rococo altar.

On the same side of the church, there is also the chapel of St. Anne that has been under the custody of the Confraternity of the Most Holy Sacrament and the Five Wounds of Our Lord Jesus Christ since 1616. In the main altar of the chapel there is the image of St. Anne with the Virgin Mary and Infant Jesus, painted by Lukasz Porebski around the year 1619, and a painting representing the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary; in the predella there is the image of the Birth of the Virgin Mary. Of special in-

terest here are the wardrobes of the Confraternity dating from 1635, decorated with paintings representing its symbols and the robes of its members, and angels holding the instruments of the Passion of Christ.

The last of the three chapels, located under the tower, used to be dedicated to Our Lady of Loreto. Furnished around the year 1470, it was then the first chapel of that invocation in Krakow. In 1960's, after the festivities commemorating the Millennium of Christianity in Poland, during which Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński in the Vows of Jasna Gora had entrusted Poland to the Madonna of Czestochowa, the invocation of the chapel was changed to Our Lady of Czestochowa.



Chapel of St. Anne



Chapel of Our Lady of Czestochowa

Grace-working Image of the Mother of the Saviour



he face of the Holy Mother of God is oval, and her head bends slightly to the right. The visage is extremely beautiful and merry, suggestive of the internal joy and happiness. Her hair is flowing. The more you look at that countenance, the more beautiful it seems; joyful and wonderful, as if the Blessed

Virgin was about to speak to you. With her joy and glory, she encourages devotion and spiritual happiness in the spectator. Everyone who takes a good look at this image must admit that God has endowed it with some extraordinary and wonderful qualities. In her right hand, the Immaculate Virgin holds an apple — the sym-



bol of our First Parents' fall — which she shows to her Son. With her left hand she holds Infant Jesus, standing on her lap. The Son himself, in his tiny left hand, keeps a leafy bunch of grapes, to remind us that for our salvation he was to be squeezed in the press of the Passion on the Cross, and his dearest blood generously shed to redeem our sins...

This highly emotional, yet very accurate description of the image of the Virgin Mary was written by Rev. Jan Biesiekierski in 1624. Already at that time the painting was commonly believed to be a miracle-working image, and the chapel in which it was exhibited was adorned with numerous votive offerings. Unfortunately, most of these tan-



Chapel of the Annunciation

gible tokens of human gratitude for the graces obtained through the intercession of the Madonna have been lost or stolen during various invasions and cataclysms, so numerous in the history of Corpus Christi church. Today, only the beautiful and moving legends connected with the fortunes of the image remain. Such stories and traditions had been considered scientific truth for a long time. In the church and cloister of the Canons Regular there were at least several images of the Madonna, all of them coming from the same period, so the authors of various documents and accounts concerning the Corpus Christi church would often mix up the origins of particular paintings...

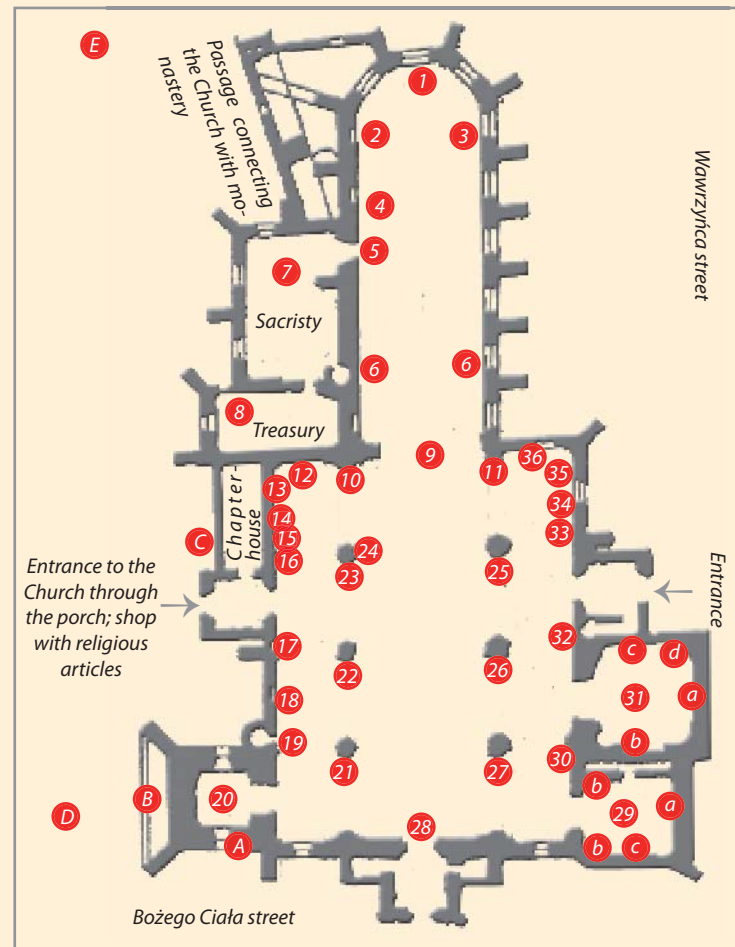
One of these legends says that the image of Madonna of the Apple, currently known as 'Mother of the Saviour', was brought to Krakow from Klodzko by the Canons Regular. If it were so, the picture would have to be painted before the year 1405 — the date that marked the arrival of the Canons to Krakow. Yet scientific research indicates that the image was created much later. What is then the explanation of this riddle? The image brought from Klodzko is the 'Madonna terribilis daemonibus' painting attributed to St. Luke, while 'Ma-

donna of the Apple' was painted around the year 1510 in Krakow atelier of Marcin Czarny, and was originally exhibited in the chapel of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Magi. After the provost Jacek Liberiusz had rebuilt the chapel in the Baroque strain, changing its invocation to the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, the image of the Madonna was framed in the altar consecrated in 1674 by Mikolaj Bishop Oborski. The image has been repainted several times, and the personages of Mary and Infant Jesus have been veiled with silver robes.

Whatever the exact origin and date of execution of the painting, it is certain, that the believers addressing the miracle-working image of the Madonna have always obtained comfort from her. Therefore the Canons undertook the efforts to get this grace-working image crowned in order to obtain official confirmation of the cult that had been spreading for centuries and pay homage to the Mother of God. The coronation ceremony, held in the Skalka (The Rock) Monastery on May 13th, 2007, was presided over by Stanislaw Cardinal Dziwisz, with the participation of the Polish Primate, Jozef Cardinal Glemp, and Franciszek Cardinal Macharski.

Plan of the Church

1. Main altar
2. Rococo altar of the Sorrowful Mother, with the painting representing the Deposition from the Cross (early 17th century)
3. Rococo altar of St. Mary Magdalene, with a painting from the early 17th century
4. Paintings by Wojciech Podkora (beginning of the 17th century), depicting the Nativity, Last Supper, Resurrection and Ascension, Descent of the Holy Ghost, Assumption of the Virgin Mary; below – Vision of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz and the picture of St. Ubald
5. Epitaph and portrait of the provost Marcin Kloczyński
6. Provost's throne and canons' stalls, executed in 1624-1632, with the figures of St. Augustine and St. Ambrose by the rood-screen
7. Sacristy
8. Treasury and oratory with the 18th-century image of the Bl. Stanislaus of Kazimierz
9. Rood-screen of 1763, with the figures of the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist, and St. Mary Magdalene
10. Altar of Our Lady of Grace, executed in 1623-24, with an image of the Madonna painted by Lukasz Porebski in 1624; on the altar veil: image of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary; the altar is further adorned with the statues of the Wise Maid and Courageous Maid; in the coping of the altar – the image of the Annunciation
11. Image of the Holy Saviour; on the veil, there is the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (painted by Adolf Hyla in 1940); figures of David and St. John the Baptist; in the coping – an image of the Doubting Thomas (same artist and date of execution)
12. Altar of the Holy Cross with the Crucifixion Group (19th century)
13. Altar – mausoleum of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz
14. Votive paintings depicting the healings and miracles obtained through the intercession of the Bl. Stanislaus of Kazimierz
15. The *Felix saeculum Cracoviae* painting
16. A plaque commemorating B. Berecki who is buried in the Corpus Christi church
17. Rococo altar of St. Jude Thaddeus, with an image by Astolf Vagiola
18. *The Judgment of Pilate* (17th-century)
19. *Ecce Homo* altar with an image by Astolf Vagiola
20. Chapel of Our Lady of Czestochowa
21. Altar to St. Anthony of Padua; in the coping – an image of Assumption; in the lining – an image of St. Mark
22. Altar of the Transfiguration, with the picture by L. Orlowski (1740-1750); figures of the Apostles Andrew, Jacob, Peter and John; in the lining: the images of St. Peter and of Christ handing over to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven
23. Rococo altar of St. Michael the Archangel, with the statues of Archangels Gabriel and Raphael; in the coping – a bas-relief of the Guardian Angel; in the lining – images of St. Lucas and of St. John
24. Pulpit
25. Altar of the Divine Mercy
26. Altar of St. Augustine with an image by L. Orlowski (1744); statues of St. Ambrosius and of the Pope Leo the Great; in the lining – images of St. Augustine with the Holy Virgin in front of the crucified Christ, of St. Augustine, and of St. Monica
27. Altar of the Holy Trinity; in the coping – image of the Ascension; Gothic mensa of the altar, decorated with arcades featuring the heraldic arms; in the lining – an image of St. Mathew
28. Organ-loft
29. Chapel of St. Anne
 - a) Altar with the image of St. Anne with the Blessed Virgin and Infant Jesus, and statues
 - b) Confraternity wardrobes
 - c) Tombstone of Bartholomeo Berecki
30. Altar of the Holy Family with the image by A. Vagiola (1615); the altar mensa from the second half of the 15th century; Renaissance niches from around the year 1615
31. Chapel of the Annunciation
 - a) Altar with the miracle-working image of the Madonna of the Apple
 - b) Altar of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
 - c) Altar of St. Joseph
 - d) 15th-century baptismal font



32. Altar of St. Charles Borromeus and St. Casimir, Prince of Poland, with an image by A. Vagiola (1615); altar mensa from the second half of the 15th century; Renaissance niches from around the year 1615
33. Tombstone of Augustyn Kottwicz
34. Pictures by T. Dolabella (1627): *Glory of the Order of Canons Regular and Martyrdom of St. Thomas of Cantuar*
35. Tombstone of Elzbieta Lexowa and her husband Marcin Haber
36. Altar of St. Joseph, executed in 1621; originally, the altar featured a painting by Wojciech Podkora, depicting the Saints: Barbara, Catherine, Agnes and Apollonia; since

1943, an image of St. Joseph by Adolf Hyla has been exhibited here, flanked with the statues of Moses and Aaron; in the coping – an image of the Resurrected Christ

A. Gothic tower, reconstructed in 1556-1558; heightened and topped with a dome in the second quarter of the 17th century

B. Garden of Olives from the middle of the 17th c., with a late Gothic crucifix and the Virgin Mary with St. John the Evangelist, and Baroque Christ with the Apostles and angel

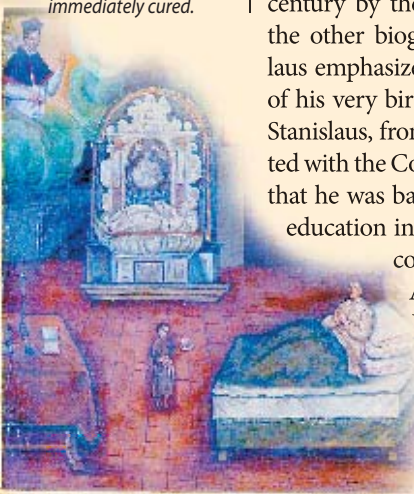
C. Dark cells

D. Former cemetery

E. Monastery



Regina, wife of a weaver named Klemens Niger, had long suffered from the haemorrhage and also from some other illness. The bedridden woman had a vision of Father Stanislaus, who said: 'Why do you lie helpless in your bed? Visit my tomb and you'll be cured. And don't forget to tell my brothers the Canons to cover my tomb with a rug.' Having risen, she went to the church, knelt by the tomb of the blessed monk and was immediately cured.

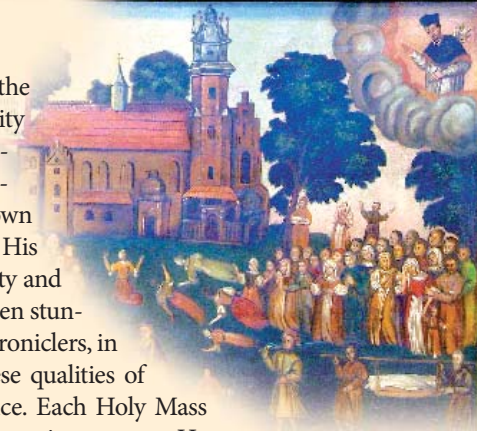


Stanislaus of Kazimierz – Worshipper of Madonna

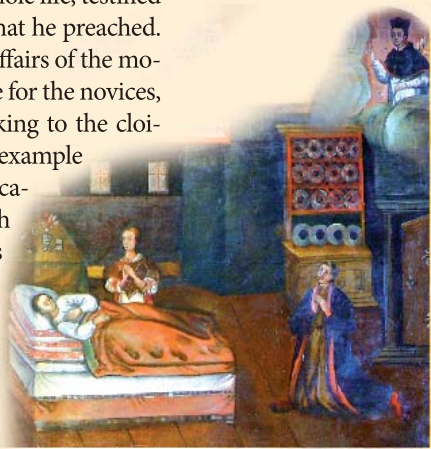


In the 27th of September, 1433, a pious woman named Jadwiga, the wife of a Kazimierz alderman, Maciej Soltys, in her old age gave birth to a son, who was then christened Stanislaus. In a way, he had brought this name along himself, as he came into the world on the anniversary of the transfer of the relics of St. Stanislaus the Martyr, Bishop of Krakow, from Skalka (The Rock) Monastery to the Wawel Cathedral. This child, obtained by fervent prayers of his devout parents in their old age, was to become a great worshipper of the Blessed Virgin. Since very early childhood, Stanislaus had shown a great veneration for the Virgin Mary. When he could hardly speak he would, unsolicited, follow the example of his God-fearing mother and kneel in front of the image of the Mother of God, and piously join his hands in prayer; and as soon as he had begun to learn to read, he syllabicated the name of Mary. This account of the childhood of Stanislaus of Kazimierz was written in the beginning of the 20th century by the Rev. Augustyn Blachut. Also the other biographers of the Blessed Stanislaus emphasize the almost miraculous nature of his very birth, and his extraordinary piety. Stanislaus, from early childhood, was associated with the Corpus Christi church. It was here that he was baptised; he also commenced his education in the local parish school. In due course, he entered the Krakow Academy (later the Jagiellonian University) in Krakow, and finished his studies at the age of twenty-three. Afterwards he decided to join the Order

of Canons Regular of the Lateran — the community which, as the parishioner of the Corpus Christi church, he had known almost from his birth. His humility, patience, honesty and modesty must have all been stunning indeed, for all the chroniclers, in unison, have praised these qualities of the pious monk ever since. Each Holy Mass was for him an event of great importance. He would start every day with this service, and during the distribution of Holy Communion his face was red-hot, like burning coal. and all his attention was focused on the holy service being officiated. He was also famous for his skill as preacher that enabled him, through his glowing and enthusiastic sermons, to reap a huge spiritual harvest of souls. A collection of his sermons had been preserved up to 1945, carefully kept in the library of the Branicki family in Wilanow, and then in Polish National Library. As the tutor of the Order novices, Stanislaus tried to instil into their minds the same affection for the Most Holy Sacrament that he had manifested himself. Young monks trusted and respected him, for he not only taught them, but also, with his whole life, testified to the truth and validity of what he preached. His deep involvement in the affairs of the monastery, his care and solicitude for the novices, as well as for the poor, knocking to the cloister gate, provided a perfect example to be followed by the young canons. The scrupulousness with which he would prepare his sermons, and the dedication, with which he would hear confessions, as well as his whole-hearted and ardent



A maid named Agnes fell ill with a high fever. (...) She was so weak and wasted that she could hardly speak (...) and her parents took her to the tomb of the blessed father Stanislaus of Kazimierz and offered a Holy Mass for her health (...) and she immediately began to recover; and soon, with God's help, she was in perfect health again.





A 17th-century book of monastic vows

For soon as a novice, too, he began to set an example for his equals, inspiring them and exerting a beneficial influence upon them. The Fathers of the Order, recognising this, began to expect much of him. Stanislaus would volunteer to perform even the lowest menial tasks and services, such as washing the feet of not only other Brothers, but also of every visitor, and washing the monks' frocks and kitchen dishes; and he would attend to the least of all in the monastery, and do it all with a happy and grateful heart. (Stanislaw Ranathowicz, a 17th-century annalist of the monastery)

A painting representing (from the left): the Bl. Michał Giedroyc, St. John of Kety, Bl. Stanislaus of Kazimierz, St. Simon of Lipnica and Bl. Izajasz Boner



piety, won him great admiration and respect, and created the common belief in his sainthood.

This opinion was firmly established after his death on May 3rd, 1489, since already during the following twelve months the congregation started to address God through the intercession of Stanislaus, and the monastery chronicles mention nearly two hundred graces obtained through his mediation, while his contemporaries, and near-contemporaries

wrote down testimonies concerning the perfect and exemplary nature of his life, and his extraordinary virtues.

Stanislaus was buried under the church floor, near the altar of St. Mary Magdalene, the patroness of weavers, as this was the profession of his father. In 1632, a special altar was

Virtue of temperance, symbolised by the unicorn

Statue of a woman with four attributes symbolising four virtues: hope (anchor), fortitude (column), faith (dog), and love and charity (child)

Virtue of justice symbolised by the sphere

Bas-relief of the Blessed Virgin with Infant Jesus

Virtue of fortitude symbolised by the dragon

Cross and lily — symbols of a life of relinquishment and chastity

Coffin with Stanislaus' relics

Virtue of kindness — or liberality — symbolised by the lamb



reared to keep Stanislaus' relics. Today, hundreds of small pictures depicting the life of the monk of Kazimierz hang by this altar; there is also a large painting representing his contemporaries — saintly men of *the felicitas saeculi Cracoviae* ('golden age of Krakow'): St. John of Kety, the Blessed Simon of Lipnica, and Michal Giedroyc and Izajasz Boner, commonly considered saints, though not canonised as yet. The altar was designed by the famous court architect of the Polish King Sigismundus I the Old, Bartholomeo Berecci, the builder of the Sigismundus Chapel on the Wawel Hill. Tho-

...whose eyes were seriously ill. One was already blind, and the other ached terribly, and his sight kept deteriorating. In his suffering, afraid of total blindness, he turned for help to the blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz. As he had been cured immediately, on the Monday after the feast [Whitsuntide of 1617] he asked to be led to the tomb of the blessed monk...



Vision of Blessed Stanislaus

Beside his great veneration for the Most Holy Sacrament and the Passion of Christ, the Blessed Stanislaus had a particular affection for the Mother of God. His biographers note that he had twice a vision of the Blessed Virgin. They say that when he was saying prayers by the tomb of his patron saint, 'the Blessed Virgin with Infant Jesus appeared to him, accompanied by St. Stanislaus the Martyr and a large host of angels, and thus she spoke to him: *I am glad, Stanislaus, my son, of this veneration that you have had for me and for your patron St. Stanislaus. Therefore I say unto you: be brave and constant, for a plentiful remuneration awaits you and other saints in heaven.*

ugh the Florentian did not live to see his work finished, the artistry of this distinguished sculptor, an inhabitant of the town of Kazimierz and parishioner of the Corpus Christi church, is apparent nonetheless.

Although Stanislaus of Kazimierz had been venerated as a saint already since his death, the Canons undertook the efforts aimed at his official canonisation only as late as 1773. Six years earlier, one of Stanislaus' contemporaries, John of Kety, had been canonised. It took them long years of endeavour, as the times were unpropitious for such undertakings, with the period of the partitions of Poland, two world wars and the decades of the communist regime. A great champion of Stanislaus' beatification was Karol Wojtyła, who, as the Bishop of Krakow, had repeatedly visited the Corpus Christi church. Celebrating a Holy Mass in the temple on March 3rd, 1969, he said: *This Stanislaus Kazimierz — that is, an inhabitant of the town of Kazimierz — by whose mortal remains we are here gathered, is surrounded with the nimbus of sanctity. It was here, at Kazimierz, that he was born, and spent his whole life. (...) We need to return to that subject; we need to ask for his canonisation, and most of all we need to continue the endeavours in the Apostolic See, to make sure that this cult and veneration that the citizens of Krakow, and especially his neighbours here at Kazimierz and in the parish of Corpus Christi have had for him, is officially confirmed by the Church, so that we can call him the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz, as we have already done in our thoughts and prayers...* The words of Bishop Wojtyła turned out to be prophetic. It was the Bishop himself, who, having ascended the papal throne, beatified Stanislaus of Kazimierz on April 18th, 1993, granting him, after centuries of veneration, the name of the 'Blessed' Stanislaus.

Corpus Christi – the Most Holy Sacrament of the Flesh and Blood of Lord Jesus



t the head of the procession, preceding the Most Holy Eucharist, members of various confraternities walked in a line. Then a six-horse carriage conveyed the artificially made Fruit of the Tree of Life, placed high, as if on a stage. It was surrounded by boys dressed as angels and our First Parents, and in humble adoration paying homage to the Aliment of the Eucharist. Then came the Ark of the Testament, flanked by two angels and two seraphim, and carried by priests wearing tiaras and dressed in ancient robes. They were followed by the Archpriest, carrying the Holy Book. A carriage drawn by angels brought up the rear, with the glory that becomes the Most Holy Sacrament. This was the Corpus Christi procession, as described by one of the 17th-century chroniclers.

This feast has been celebrated for ages, and with time it evolved numerous customs, traditions and beliefs. It was first held on the initiative of St. Juliana of Mont Cornillon, the prioress of the Augustinian Sisters, who, in 1245, had had a vision of Christ asking her to establish a special holiday in commemoration of the Most Holy Sacrament. Already one year later such a feast was celebrated locally, and in 1264 it was officially confirmed by Rome. The

The Corpus Christi Church has had this invocation from the very beginning of its existence. It was a kind of redress for the sacrilege perpetrated by the thieves who had stolen the monstrance with the Most Holy Sacrament, and then, having found that it was of little value, cast it into a swamp. It should also be noted that already at that time in the Franciscan church in Krakow there was a chapel of Corpus Christi. The Franciscans, at the king's request, changed its invocation for the sake of the new temple of Kazimierz.



Procession with Most Holy Sacrament



Various customs and beliefs were connected with the feast of Corpus Christi. They included the blessing of herbs that were to protect a house and its inhabitants from misfortunes. In Krakow, the pranks of the so-called Lajkonik – a hobby-horse rider in Tartar disguise – have been the local custom. Lajkonik appears in the streets of the city on the last day of the Octave of Corpus Christi. The legend says that this custom originated at the time of Tartar invasion of Krakow in the 13th century. It was then that the Krakow rafters, having defeated the invaders, rode into the city disguised as Tartars. The local people believed that the pranks of Lajkonik in their fields would bring good harvest, and a blow of his mace was a safeguard of good health.

Altar of the Crucifixion

immediate cause of its confirmation was a miracle that had occurred in the Italian town of Bolsena, near Orvieto. A priest celebrating Holy Mass accidentally knocked down the chalice, right after the Transfiguration, and a score of drops of wine were splashed on the corporal – the small altar-cloth laid under the chalice and paten – where they immediately turned into the Blood of Lord Jesus. The Pope was promptly notified of that miracle. He took the corporal to Orvieto, where it has been the most valuable relic of the local cathedral ever since. Then St. Thomas Aquinas prepared the liturgy for the Holy Mass on the feast-day of Corpus Christi. He is the author of the solemn Latin hymn *Tantum Ergo*, frequently sung up to this day in translations into national languages.

The custom of organising the procession to four altars symbolising the four Gospels developed in Germany in the 15th century. In Poland, the Corpus Christi feast was introduced already by Nanker, Bishop of Krakow; but it gained considerable popularity only after the Synod of Piotrkow of 1559. During the Reformation, it was meant to be a manifestation of the belief in the dogma of the Transfiguration, denied by the Protestants. Today, the feast of Corpus Christi is held on the Thursday following the Trinity Sunday, sixty days after the Resurrection.

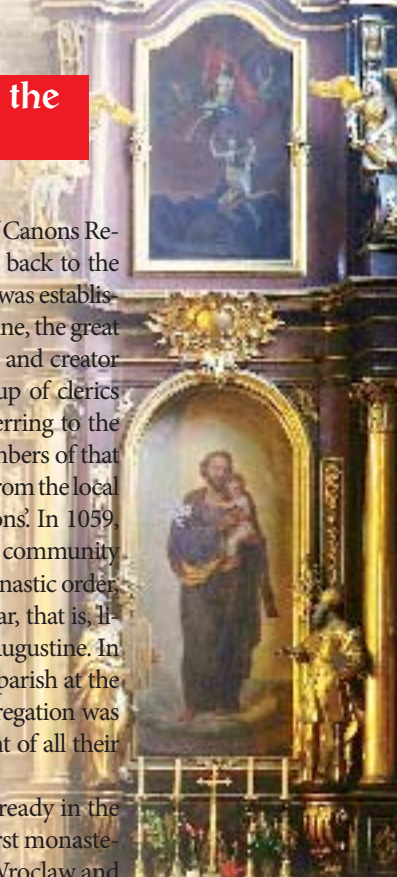
Canons Regular of the Lateran

The origins of the Order of Canons Regular of the Lateran date back to the end of the 4th century. The Order was established in Hippona, where St. Augustine, the great Christian philosopher, theologian and creator of monastic rules gathered a group of clerics and established a community referring to the ideals of the early Christians. Members of that congregation, comprising priests from the local churches, began to be called ‘canons’. In 1059, at the Lateran Synod, the canons’ community obtained the official status of a monastic order, under the name of Canons Regular, that is, living according to the Rule of St. Augustine. In 1105, the Canons were granted a parish at the Lateran, where the Lateran Congregation was established — the most prominent of all their communities.

The Canons came to Poland already in the 11th century, establishing their first monasteries in Trzemeszno, Czerwińsk, Wrocław and Mstów. In 1405 the Canons arrived in Krakow, where the Polish King Ladislaus Jagiello and Bishop Piotr Wysz gave them the Corpus Christi church along with the local parish. The Krakow canonry — ranked as abbacy since 1861 — was the only one on the area of the partitioned Poland that was not closed in 1864. Today in Krakow there is the Provincial House, the seat of the Polish Province established in 1962, as well as the novitiate and High Seminary. It should also be noted that the local monastery of Canons Regular can boast of an extremely rich library, comprising over two hundred incunabula and about eight thousand ancient publications.

Canons Regular of the Lateran are also the custodians of the sanctuary devoted to the cult of the Virgin Mary at Gietrzwałd, in the region of Warmia. The sanctuary is called the ‘Polish Lourdes’, for it was here that in 1877 – that is, nineteen years after the visions from Lourdes – the Blessed Virgin appeared to two teenage girls. The visions of Gietrzwałd are the only visions in Poland that have been recognised by Church authorities.

Altar of St. Joseph



Images of the Canons' Saints in the Stalls



1. St. Patrick (4th c.), the patron of Ireland, where he healed the sick, established monasteries, and, as the legend has it, chased venomous snakes away to the sea. 2. St. Laurentius (12th c.), Archbishop of Dublin, who is believed to have stopped a storm by his prayers during a sea voyage. 3. St. Saturnin the Martyr, a missionary and bishop of Toulouse; a contemporary of St. John the Baptist. He died the martyr's death, tied to a sacrificial bull offered to pagan gods. 4. St. Fredegand (6th c.), an Augustinian monk, and a son of an Irish king. When he died, a coffin was put on his tomb with the corpse of a girl who came back to life and asked to be transferred somewhere else, as she was not worthy of being buried by a saint. 5. St. Cerbonius (6th c.), an Italian bishop; after he had helped Roman soldiers, at the order of a king of Goths he was to be thrown to a pit with hungry bears; yet the animals came up to him and started to lick his feet instead. The saint was thus set free. 6. St. Amabilis (5th c.); as the legend has it, he chased away all snakes from Auvergne, and received the Holy Oils from an angel. 7. A group of Canons' saints murdered in England in 1572.



8. St. Herculan (6th c.), Bishop of Perugia, sentenced to be flayed alive by a king of the Goths; this was however done only after his torturers had beheaded the saint. 9. St. Theotonius (12th c.), a provost of Canons in Portugal, given the power to cast out evil spirits; here shown on his deathbed. 10. St. Aquilian (4th c.), a martyr from Milan, killed by heretics with a blow of a sword in the larynx. 11. St. John (14th c.), an English monk, given the power to resuscitate the dead and heal the sick. 12. St. Albin (5th c.), the bishop who participated in the defence of the town of Chalon against the invading army of the Huns. 13. St. Anianus, a disciple of St. Mark the Evangelist given the power to move mountains; here, depicted with a royal couple; behind him, two angels push a mountain. 14. St. Bernard (12th c.); according to the tradition, he expelled Satan from the mount of Jove in Switzerland; the summit has been called after him ever since.



Everyday Life of the Parish

Holy Mass

On Sundays: 6.30, 8, 9.30 and 11 a.m.; 12.15, 4 and 7 p.m.

On weekdays: 6.30 and 8 a.m.; 12.00, and 7 p.m.

Other services

Thursday — adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament from 6.30 a.m.

12.30 p.m. — rosary

1 p.m. — monastic prayers

3 p.m. — chaplet to the Divine Mercy

4 p.m. — Confraternity prayers

6.30 p.m. — Eucharistic vespers

Service to Our Lady of Grace: Wednesday, 6.15 p.m.

Way of the Cross:

Friday, 6.15 p.m.

Holy confession: during Holy Mass

Parish fair — on the feast-day of Corpus Christi

Parish registry and office opening hours:

Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday: 8 — 9.30 a.m.; Wednesday

and Friday: 8 — 9.30 a.m., and 4 — 5.30 p.m.

Confraternity of the Most Holy Sacrament and the Five Wounds of Our Lord Jesus Christ: <http://www.arcy-bractwo.republika.pl/>

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