



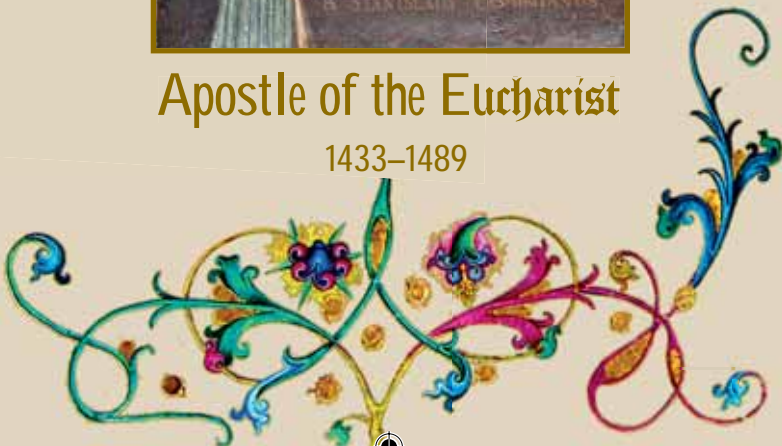
Saint. Stanislaus of Kazimierz

from the Church of Corpus Christi



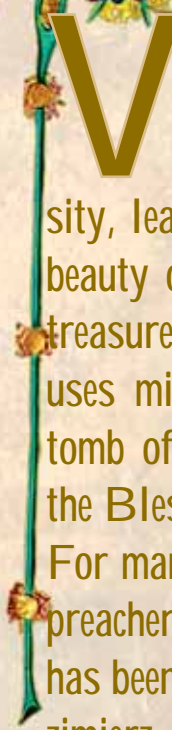
Apostle of the Eucharist

1433–1489





Saint Stanislaus of Kazimierz – Apostle of the Eucharist



Visitor! You, who have been led here by your piety, thirst for knowledge, or mere curiosity, learn, while paying tribute to the beauty of this temple, that beside the treasures of art and culture it also houses miracle-working images and the tomb of the wonder-worker himself - the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz.' For many centuries, the person of this preacher, confessor and tutor of novices has been venerated in Kraków and Kazimierz, and particularly in the Canons Regular monastery. In 1993, he was officially included among the Blessed and raised to the altars.



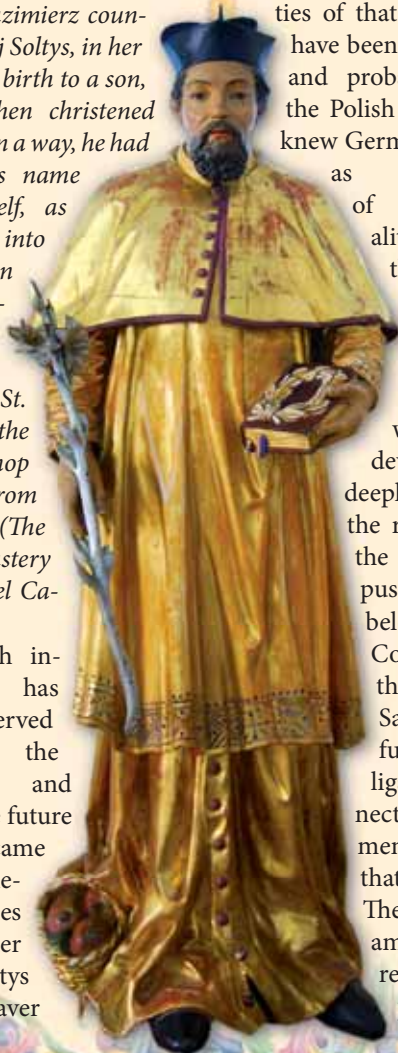


A child obtained through prayers by God-fearing parents in their old age...

On the 27th of September, 1433, a pious woman named Jadwiga, the wife of a Kazimierz councillor, 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.

Not much information has been preserved concerning the childhood and youth of the future saint. He came from middle-class circles and his father – Maciej Soltys – was a weaver

with a many years' experience as the chairman of municipal court. In order to perform duties of that kind he must have been well-educated, and probably – beside the Polish language – he knew German and Czech, as representatives of these nationalities inhabited the 15th-century Kazimierz. Stanislaus' mother, named Jadwiga, was a devout person, deeply involved in the religious life of the parish of Corpus Christi. She belonged to the Confraternity of the Most Holy Sacrament and fulfilled the obligations connected with her membership in that organization. These included, among others, regular participation in the



Confraternity services, systematic reception of holy sacraments and showing particular veneration for the Virgin Mary. Having experienced the joy of motherhood in a relatively advanced age – as can be inferred from the notes of the

produced the desired effect, as the hagiographers emphasize the extraordinary worship for the Virgin Mary on the part of the little Stanislaus, who could not speak, and yet, following the example of his God-fearing mother, would willingly kneel



On the 10th of September, 1631, the Honourable Gentleman Nolan Bosowski, a courtier of His Highness the Royal Prince Ladislaus, together with his wife, resorted to the tomb of Stanislaus of Kazimierz where they were praying for two days and three nights in succession, for blood had been running thro-

ugh their daughter, Jeausia's eyes. Then, having returned home from the Corpus Christi church, found the girl in good health by the grace of God, through the intercession of the same Blessed Stanislaus, the saintly man from Kazimierz, for which everlasting praise and glory be to Our Gracious Lord.

early biographers of St. Stanislaus – Mrs Sołtys strove to rear her only child, obtained by prayers to the Most Holy Mother of God, in deepest reverence and affection for Mary. Her endeavours must have

before the picture of Our Lady and piously join his hands in prayer, or later, while learning to read, syllabicate the name of Mary. Beside his home circles, the Church and parish life exerted predominant influence



on the boy's spiritual formation. He was baptised in the Corpus Christi church, where he eventually commenced his education and began to participate in holy services. Doubtless it was already then that he had begun to follow a path which, few years later, would lead him to the steps of the altar in his parish church and among the congregation whose monastery adjoined the temple.

Before all this could happen, however, the young man had to finish his studies. Around the year 1450 Stanislaus started the first phase of his higher education, i.e. he began to study the seven liberal arts, considered an introduction to the proper academic learning. The Krakow Acad-

emy flourished in that period and among its professors there were eminent scholars who rendered invaluable services to Polish science – for example, Pawel Wlodkowic or Stanislaus of Skalbmierz – or future saints such as John of Kety. Given the piety of young Stanislaus, it was no wonder that from the four faculties functioning at the Academy at that time – the departments of philosophy, law, medicine, and theology – he chose the last one. According to the Rev. Augustyn Blachut, already quoted above, he had made such a progress in his studies that he received the degree of Doctor of Theology, which is confirmed by his 17th-century biographers. He was, however, even more famous for his worship of the Virgin Mary.



Contempt for the world...

Finishing the Academy with the degree of bachelor of theology put Stanislaus in the circles of the well-educated. Thus a career in the secular clergy, or at court, with privileges and riches, stood wide open for him. Yet the young theologian did not choose to follow any of these alluring prospects. Instead, at the age of twenty-three, he joined

any services, and also excelled in prayer and mortification. Diligent and decent-mannered, determined to keep silent, from the compline up to the prime in the morning he would not talk to anyone, absorbed in contemplation of heavenly matters. Although he was older and better educated than some of his brethren, he never swaggered. Having completed the noviti-



Her Highness the Princess Czartoryska, the wife of Krakow's Chamberlain, had a light and speedy delivery and brought forth a son through the in-

tercession of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz, to whose care she had been commended before the childbirth approached; Anno Domini 1672

the Kazimierz congregation of Canons Regular of the Lateran and started living in the monastery in whose shadow his childhood had passed and his spiritual formation had begun. Before taking the monastic vows he had to go through a one year's novitiate and already in that period he distinguished himself with modesty, humility, and willingness to render

ate, Stanislaus took the monastic vows, and after another year or two he was ordained priest. In accordance with the custom of his monastery, a newly-ordained priest had to prepare himself for five years before assuming his pastoral duties. The budding saint had probably spent that period in the monastic scriptorium where his knowledge of Latin made



A maiden named Agnes, the stepdaughter of the famous Gentleman Alexander Manikowski and daughter of his wife Yanna, in the nineteenth year of her life fell ill with a very high fever. She was so weak and wasted that she could hardly speak. Having lost any hope of her recovery, her parents asked for the application of the holy oil. Yet as soon as they had a Mass said for her at the tomb

of the Blessed Father Stanislaus of Kazimierz, with candles held by the poor who were kneeling by the altar, she began to recover and was presently cured with God's help in the year of Our Lord 1665, on the 4th of July. Then, after a couple of weeks, also the same Manikowski fell ill with a high fever but once he had also had a Mass said for him, he instantly recovered.

him a valuable employee. Also, being well-educated in theology, he probably taught young monks the basic principles of the consecrated life — Christian dogmas, Latin language and church singing. In the meantime, he would carefully prepare himself to assume the priestly duties, studying the

works of the Fathers of the Church, the monastic rule, and other religious writings. As all of his biographers unanimously acknowledge, he attached great importance to the Holy Mass. He would begin each day with this service, always being a thoroughly involved participant.

Stanislaus collects new merits to deserve heaven. . .

After the five-year preparatory period had passed, Stanislaus was assigned new tasks and took to them with his typical commitment and care. In the Corpus Christi church, he was appointed to the post of a preacher and confessor, while in the abbey he was to teach the novices and act as a substitute of Father Superior. All these occupations required a lot of time, consideration, devotion and zeal. His duties of a preacher were of particular importance here, as words uttered from the pulpit had a great impact on the congrega-

tion, for whom sermons were often the most important explanation of dogmas, source of information concerning the lives of saints, and guidelines related to their own life. Being fully aware of all this, Stanislaus would always prepare his sermons with the utmost care. It is lamentable indeed that the collection of his sermons kept in Polish National Library was burnt in 1944 – an irreparable loss, given that biographers of the saint describe how he would win great admiration and reap a plentiful spiritual harvest of souls, for *every word he*



In the year of Our Lord 1671, the Honourable Lady Anna Jagodyńska was suffering from severe pain in the lungs, to which nagging cough had recently been added. The pain had already lasted for more than four years, but when she visited the tomb of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz and was listening piously to Holy Mass there, suddenly it went away as if by magic, which the thankful Lady, in her gratitude, asked us to record here.



The lame, deaf and blind are cured thanks to the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz



He visits the bed-ridden brother Nicolaus and rescues him from death



Every day by frequent self-flagellation he wipes out the blemishes of his former life

uttered brightened up the soul and inclined it to pious virtues. [...] He did not preach to flatter but boldly condemned human vices and sins.

If St. Stanislaus exerted a significant influence on his the religiousness of the inhabitants of Kazimierz by means of his sermons, he also nurtured the spirituality and trained the intellect of the Order novices as their guardian and tutor. It was his task to instruct the young candidates to priesthood in the history of the Order, its monastic rule and charisma. He discharged it with joy and earnestness, all the time showing good judgement and respect for his younger brethren, who greatly admired Stanislaus, and trusted him. First of all,

their confidence was due to the fact that their tutor's life was the best example of what he taught and preached.

It should also be noted that St. Stanislaus of Kazimierz was a confessor and deputy of Father Superior, although there is little evidence concerning his work in those capacities.



The dying and the sick are rescued from the grave by his voice alone



Imitating the Holy Mother of God, he imitated Her beloved Son...

From the early childhood, St. Stanislaus' whole life was permeated with a deep faith in, and adoration of, the Most Holy Sacrament. This particular cult was instilled in him by his mother, a devout woman who belonged to the Confraternity of the Most Holy Sacrament. This organisation specifically emphasised the worship of Corpus Christi. Sta-

nislaus, brought up in a family where such a type of religiousness was professed, had a great veneration for the Cross and devotion for the Passion of Christ. These feelings could have been one of the reasons that made him choose the Order of Canons Regular as the community where he would fulfil his mission, as the worship of Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament is





Virgin Mary with St. Stanislaus the Martyr appears to him during prayer



Virgin Mary with St. Stanislaus the Martyr appears to him during prayer

a matter of crucial importance among the rules of this congregation.

St. Stanislaus was also an ardent worshipper of the Holy Mother of God, and of St. Stanislaus the Martyr, Bishop of Krakow and his patron. He developed a pious habit of visiting each Friday the church at Skalka where he would recommend himself to the Virgin Mary and to his namesake saint. Once, when he was praying there fervently, it seemed to him that the vaulting of the temple had opened and the church was filled with heavenly light. Suddenly the Most Holy Virgin Mary with Infant Jesus appeared to him, accompanied by St. Stanislaus the Martyr and a great host of angels, and spoke to him in these words: *I am most glad, Stanislaus, my son, of this*

great reverence that you constantly show me and St. Stanislaus, your patron. Therefore I say unto you, proceed with courage and be staid, for plentiful abundant remuneration awaits you with other saints in heaven.

Stanislaus was astounded at first, but soon his heart filled with blissful happiness and a sigh burst from his lips as he whispered: *'How come that the Holy Mother of my God calls on me?'* This occurrence is described by all the biographers of St. Stanislaus, as well as depicted in the paintings featuring the saint from Kazimierz.

One of the aspects of St. Stanislaus' religiousness was constant care for the poor and the sick, in accordance with these words of Christ: *Whatever you did for one of the least of these*



brothers of mine, you did for me. According to his hagiographer, the Rev. Stefan Ranathowicz, Stanislaus was singularly merciful towards the needy, never scorned even the poorest creature and, being free from worldly solitudes, he did not flatter the rich. During the Lent, he would yield most of his provisions to the destitute, ready to content himself with the simplest food while spending all nights on fervent prayers. With his own life he set an example for all those around him, remaining at the same time so modest, kind and thoughtful a person that he did not arouse envy in his contemporaries.

Leading a very active and even strenuous life and exposing himself to intensive ascetic practices, St. Stanislaus had weakened relatively quickly. When he was fifty-six his health broke down and soon it became evident that he would not recover from his illness. Yet, according to his hagiographer Krzysztof Loniewski, even on his deathbed he did not forsake his ardent faith: *In a fervent prayer, he began to commend himself to Our Lord's unbounded mercy so that forthwith his sincere call was answered and Jesus Christ Himself with His Five Sacred Wounds, as if right*



A. D. 1681, Die 2 Mai, the Honourable Lady Teresa Nantela, the wife of a Krakow's councillor, brought her little son Anthony to the tomb of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz, asking earnestly for the Holy Mass to be said so she could thank the Lord for His blessing and mercy shown in a miraculous healing of her child who had been on the verge of death. Our resident priests had already said their masses, therefore we sent for a Bernardine monk. And so the grey-headed Father Ludwik Łatocki came and confessed that already he had tried to say a mass several times but was always distracted by some important considerations. When he saw the child in perfect health in the Corpus Christi Church, he said full of wonder: 'This is indeed a good reason to thank Our Lord. This child here I saw but yesterday and it was dying, while now that it has been brought to the Blessed Stanislaus' tomb, it is as fit as a fiddle again.'

after the Resurrection, appeared to him with the Holy Virgin in brilliance, accompanied by a great number of Polish saints, and brought him sweet comfort.

St. Stanislaus died on May the 3rd, 1489. He was buried in the presbytery of the Corpus Christi church, by the altar to St. Mary Magdalene, where the canons' stalls are located today.



News began to spread about miracles at his tomb

Already in his lifetime Stanislaus enjoyed the reputation of a saint. After his death various people who believed that the grace of obtaining miracles had been conferred upon him began to address him in their prayers. All the miracles were then recorded in a special volume. In the twelve months following his death there were as many of them as 176, which suggests that the cult of the monk from Kazimierz was already widespread and lively. Because of that, pretty soon his body was removed from the original grave

and placed in a new coffin displayed on a special platform. In a way, all this meant that the cult of St. Stanislaus was recognized by Church authorities. In 1632 the Rev. Marcin Kloczynski, the prior of the monastery, raised a magnificent altar into which the mortal remains of St. Stanislaus were then transferred. This mausoleum is decorated with sculptures symbolising the four cardinal virtues – prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude – and a life of chastity and self-denial. The centrepiece of the altar, just above the richly decorated coffin, is a



During the plague that raged in the town of Kazimierz, near the city of Krakow, for three long years, ie. in the years of Our Lord 1677, 1678 and 1679, many people of both sexes, divine persons as well as laymen, were all seeking rescue and comfort at the tomb of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz. Through his intercession, and because of his merits, Our Merciful Lord had not only preserved them all from this pestilence, but also re-

stored their former good health to the plague-stricken, who had been dying in despair. Afterwards they all testified to that of their own accord when they streamed to the tomb of the same Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz with candles to have many a Mass said and for the graces they had received, brought with them votive offerings, some of silver and some of wax, for which eternal praise be to Our Lord in His Unbounded Mercy!

beautiful low relief of Our Lady with Infant Jesus, as St. Stanislaus showed a special veneration for the Virgin Mary. By the altar, there are small votive pictures from the 17th and 18th century, illustrating the miracles obtained through the intercession of St. Stanislaus. Some of them depict people squeezed together on a graveyard and terrified by a fire in the city, or by a deadly plague; the whole crowd expects some

rescue and comfort from the saintly monk. Others represent interiors of small rooms where the sick are struggling against death while all members of the household, in humble prayer, are hoping for some help from the pious miracle-worker. The next paintings feature various disabled people; and everywhere the Blessed monk of Kazimierz appears among white clouds and comes to their rescue. There is no

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





doubt that all these pictures are the best evidence of the believers' worship that has surrounded St. Stanislaus for many centuries; they also show the most typical situations in which people have addressed him in their prayers.

The 17th and 18th centuries were the period when the first biographies of St. Stanislaus were published. His name began to appear in various collections of the lives of saints, which testified

to the fact that although the monk had not been officially canonized as yet, his cult was already reaching far beyond the city limits of Kazimierz, or even of Krakow, and spreading ever wider. For a period of time, St. Stanislaus of Kazimierz was even considered a patron of Poland.

In 1625 the Pope Urban VIII issued a bull regulating the principles of beatification and canonization processes. The papal edict said that a person who had been venerated from time immemorial – that is, for at least one hundred years before the publication of the document – could be recog-

nised as blessed if it was possible to gather, and present to the Apostolic See, suitable documents testifying to the existence and continuity of the cult. In the case of St. Stanislaus, such endeavours

most likely date back to 1780, when his tomb was formally opened for the second time.

The date was no accident, as thirteen years earlier St. John of Kety had been canonised, one of the five pious men who lived in 15th-century Krakow.

His elevation to the altars caused an increased interest in the posthumous fortunes of the pious monk of Kazimierz as well. Therefore the Canons from his monastery began to collect various documents and testimonies necessary for the Apostolic See to give its official sanction to the cult of the deceased member of their congregation. The believers, likewise, in ever greater numbers streamed to the altar - mausoleum of St. Stanislaus, in order to deposit their intentions or supplications, and have a Mass said. On the anniversary of the pious monk's death – on the 3rd of May



Tomb of St. Stanislaus in a 17th-century votive painting



In the year of Our Lord 1667, with the peril of the war declared on Poland by the Turks, and of other domestic disorders, His Eminence the Bishop of Krakow Andrzej Trzebnicki issued a printed order to the whole Diocese of Krakow, and particularly to the congregations in Krakow, for the faithful and clergy alike to offer various supplications in the temples, celebrate daily expositions of the Most Holy Sacrament, and fast on bread and water every Saturday, and also for the people to humble themselves before the clergy each Wednesday during the supplication. He also ordered them to visit the miracle-working images in Krakow's churches, each picture on a

particular day, as well as the tombs of the saints and the blessed that existed in the city. Among others, he commanded the people and clergy to visit on Palm Sunday the mausoleum of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz in the local church of Corpus Christi. Under the Bishop's stamp, the original printed order is subscribed by the deputy judge, the venerable and commonly respected Master Jan Chryzostom Bodzanta, doctor of canon law from Krakow. The document is preserved among church regulations as a reminder for future generations and to-ken of eternal glory and reverence for the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz, Canon Regular of the Lateran.

– solemn votive Masses and trid-uums were celebrated to honour his memory.

The efforts aimed at raising St. Stanislaus of Kazimierz to the altars gathered momentum in the early 1970's. It was then that Karol Cardinal Wojtyła, at the request of the Visitor of the Canons Regular of the Lateran, the Rev. Henryk Walczak, created a Historical Commission charged with finding out and collecting documents related to St. Stanislaus' life or testifying to the continuity of his cult. On the

grounds of these documents, the beatification process was then commenced that lasted, roughly speaking, from 1987 to 1992. In the decree on heroic virtues of St. Stanislaus of Kazimierz and his continued veneration, issued on December 21st, 1992, in the presence of the Holy Father John Paul II, the following words were also included: *'Being guided by his deep faith and burning with affection he was content to serve God, officiate His mysteries, contemplate divine matters and redeem his monastic vows. He had a par-*



ticular veneration for the Crucified Christ and the Most Holy Virgin Mary. He subjected his own will to that of God, and of his superiors. He subjugated his body by fast and mortification. He learned to love silence and self-communion. He was concerned for his congregation, obliging for his brethren, and helpful towards the poor and the sick. Moved by pastoral care, he was an eager champion of the Gospel, spiritual guide and experienced confessor; therefore many believers from Krakow and Kazimierz addressed him with the utmost confidence.

On the 18th of April, 1993, the Holy Father during a solemn ceremony in Rome officially beatified Stanislaus. The monk from Kazimierz attained that honour together with Sr. Angela Truszkowska, the foundress of the Felician Sisters, and Sr. Faustyna Kowalska, the advocate of the Di-

vine Mercy, who is now counted among the saints. During the ceremony, the images of the three, including the picture of St. Stanislaus kneeling before the Mother of God, were hanging on the front elevation of St. Peter's Basilica. In his homily, John Paul II said: *I salute you, Stanislaus of Kazimierz, priest of the Canons Regular of the Lateran. Your life was inseparably linked with Krakow, its glorious Academy and the monastery at the Corpus Christi Church at Kazimierz, where your vocation matured and evolved. (...) The memory of the sanctity of the Venerable Stanislaus still lives and bears fruit even today. The people of Krakow, and particularly the inhabitants of Kazimierz, have constantly testified to that through their prayers by his relics up to the present time. As the former Archbishop of Krakow, many a time had I myself presided over their invocations.*



Which is proved by the miracle and the votive offering by his tomb...

Immediately after Stanislaus of Kazimierz had been beatified, his congregation commenced the efforts aimed at his canonisation. Usually, a miracle obtained through the intercession of the blessed person is necessary in order to take up such activities, but in certain circumstances the Apostolic See can depart from that principle. It was so in the case of the monk from Kazimierz, which does not mean, however, that there have been no such miracles: their most eloquent evidences are the votive pictures and offerings hanging by the saint's tomb. Yet the particular miracle that set the canonization process in motion was the healing of Piotr Komorowski, the starost of Oswiecim and

owner of large estates at Sucha Beskidzka, around the year 1617. The nobleman's eye was sore and the disorder was very dangerous since it could result in complete blindness, as Komorowski had already lost the other eye. As a frequent visitor to Krakow, the starost heard about St. Stanislaus and numerous graces obtained through his intercession. Therefore, after ineffective medical interventions, he turned for help to the pious monk from Kazimierz. According to Andrzej Komoniecki, the annalist of the town of Żywiec, *The Honourable Gentleman Piotr Komorowski suffered severely and dangerously from a sore eye (...), and yearning for comfort in his illness he would devote himself to*



With a candle in his hand, he appeared to the ailing Catherine from the town of Męparz and cured her of her illness



Votive offering to the tomb of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz from a possessed man who has been exorcised



In the year of Our Lord 1630, His Lordship Piotr Komorowski, holder of Liptow and Orava and the starost of Osowiecim, had a severe and strange eye disorder; namely, the eye-ball had begun to start out of its socket so that it had to be bound up. When he was sleeping in his tenement house in Krakow, the Blessed Father Stanislaus appeared to him in his monk's frock. As soon as the starost had woken up, he realised that he was already much better and the pain in the eye had almost gone. Therefore early in the morning of the following day, although he was still very

weak, he told his servants to carry him to Stanislaus' tomb, where he had a Mass said. Afterwards he discussed with the then provost of the parish of Corpus Christi, the Rev. Marcin Kloczowski, the matters concerning the endowment for the monks, i.e. the Canons Regular, in his ancestral estate at Sucha, in the mountains two miles beyond the town of Kalwaria. Then, thankful for the graces received in his illness, he made this donation, which is clearly stated in the foundation charter of this monastery as a blessing obtained thanks to the merits of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz.

prayers through the intercession of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz, whom he chose as his particular patron. And so, when Master Piotr had fallen asleep, the same Stanislaus, moved by his reverence for him, promised to bring him comfort as long as the starost endowed a monastery for his brethren, the Canons

Regular, at Sucha Beskidzka. And so Komorowski resolved to establish the abbey, accomplished what he had resolved to do, and kept in good health ever since. The story of that miracle, and of the foundation of the Canons Regular monastery, is illustrated in the painting displayed by St. Stanislaus' tomb

in the Corpus Christi church in Krakow. It was also represented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints as part of the efforts aimed at the Kazimierz monk's canonisation. The canonization process at the diocesan level was opened in 1995. When it was completed, the files concerning St. Stanislaus were transmitted to Vatican, where they were favourably received by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. At the end of September 2009, the Cardinals present at the consistory in Rome also expressed a propitious opinion concerning the canonisation of St. Stanislaus. Therefore, on the 26th of October, 2009, his reliquary was officially opened in the basilica of Corpus Christi. The relics removed from the coffin were put into smaller reliquaries that would go to numerous churches and congregations for the



Painting from Corpus Christi Church, representing the Blessed Michal Giedroyc, St. John of Kety, St. Stanislaus of Kazimierz, St. Simon of Lipnica and Bl. Izajasz Boner

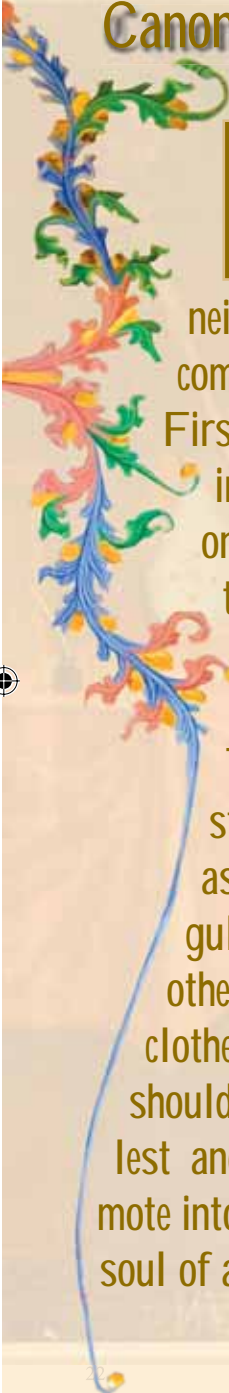
faithful to worship them and pray for various graces through the mediation of St. Stanislaus. On December the 19th, 2009, the Pope Benedict XVI officially confirmed a miraculous healing obtained through the intercession of the Blessed Stanislaus, thus clearing the way to the canonisation of the monk.



Coffin with St. Stanislaus' relics is opened (2009)



Canons Regular of the Lateran



Before all things, most dear brothers, we must love God and after Him our neighbour; for these are the principal commands which have been given to us. First, that you dwell together in unity in the house and be of one mind and one heart in God, remembering that this is the end for which you are collected here. Be constant in prayer at the appointed hours and times. Tame your flesh with fast and abstinence from food and drink so far as your health will allow. Avoid singularity in dress, and strive to please others by your conduct and not by your clothes. Have no disputes, but if any should arise, bring them to a speedy end, lest anger should grow into hatred, the mote into the beam, and should give you the soul of a murderer.

(from the Rule of St. Augustine)





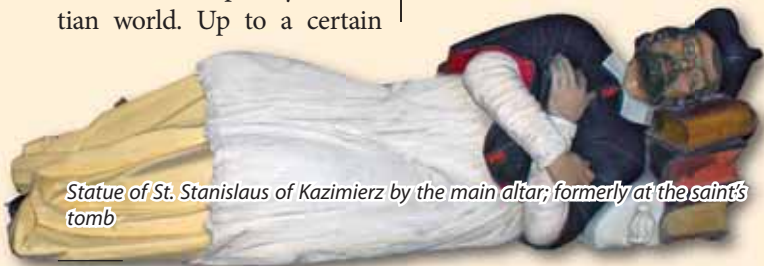
Canons acquired renown for their piety and monastic discipline...



The origins of the Order of Canons Regular of the Lateran go back

to the town of Hippo in Numidia (today Algeria), where the first community of clerics was drawn together by St. Augustine towards the close of the 4th century. Its members, referring to the ideals of the early Christians, combined asceticism of monastic life with missionary responsibilities. With time, their movement spread to envelop the whole of the contemporary Christian world. Up to a certain

moment, each of the newly established congregations was governed according to its own rules. In order to avoid excessive freedom and variety of those observances standing in individual monasteries, it was decided then to give them all a uniform rule, which was effected at the Lateran Synod of 1059. All congregations of the Canons received the Rule of St. Augustine, comprising a set of principles governing the life in each of the monasteries. That event marks the beginning of a great rise of their communities, and the 11th and 12th centuries are sometimes called the 'age of the Canons Regular'. In 1105, they received a basilica at the Lateran in Rome, where the Lateran Congregation was established, whose tradition is continued, among others, by the Krakow community of Canons Regular.



Statue of St. Stanislaus of Kazimierz by the main altar; formerly at the saint's tomb



Basilica of Canons Regular in Rome



During the Middle Ages, the time of the peak spread and development of the Order, the number of Canons' monasteries in Europe reached 2.5 thousand. Among the members of their congregations, there were many saints and scholars who exerted a significant influence on the religious and scientific life of contemporary Europe; for instance, St. Bernard of Aosta, St. Ubald, Thomas à Kempis, and Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam.

The Canons came to Poland already in the 11th century, establishing their first provostries, and later abbeys, in Trzemeszno, Czerwinsk and Wrocław, then the largest of Canons' seats in that country. According to the Rev. Kazimierz Latak, a historian of the Order, *the Canons' communities*

in Poland represented two distinct directions of development: 'Early foundations (...) joined the generally understood ministration already in the 14th century. Working in rural parishes (...) the Canons formed teams of two or three monks, usually with one of them acting permanently as the parish-priest and two curates replaced from time to time by their congregation. A slightly different kind of activity evolved in congregations associated with the Krakow provostry of Corpus Christi. Their well-prepared members established exemplary urban parishes, took care for schools or hospitals, and devoted themselves to preaching.

This provostry of Corpus Christi was precisely the home congregation of St. Stanislaus of Kazimierz, who joined the





A. M. D. G. et Sanctorum eius honorem, in the year of Our Lord 1672, the Rev. Jan Brodowski, a monk from this monastery, had been so severely afflicted by God that he lost his health and was bed-ridden for six months, unable to move any of his limbs. Others had to feed him and give him water to drink, and he could not sleep at all because of the terrible pain. Yet when he had had a Mass said

for him by a priest from the same congregation at the tomb of the Blessed Stanislaus of Kazimierz, and had sent a votive offering of waxen arms and legs to the monk's mausoleum, he soon felt much better and, having eventually recovered, had hung here this metal plaque in eternal remembrance of the blessing received through the intercession of the saintly Canon Regular of the Lateran.



Reliquaries of St. Stanislaus





A very important centre of the canonical life is the sanctuary at Gietrzwałd. Since time immemorial, the cult of the Virgin Mary has been deep and animated here. At first, the object of particular veneration was a small Gothic Pieta; then, in the 16th century, the local church acquired a painting of Mother of God that soon became famous as a grace-working image. Yet the Gietrzwałd sanctuary really came to prominence in 1877 as the place of sightings of Virgin Mary, the only visions in Poland that have been officially recognised by the Church. It was here that the Mother of God appeared to two girls, giving them advice, asking for the Rosary to be said, and answering their questions. She also gave Her blessing to a springlet that had miraculously burst forth; therefore, Gietrzwałd has been called the 'Polish Lourdes'. On February 2nd, 1970, the Pope Paul VI elevated the local church to the rank of a minor basilica. The grace-working image



of Our Lady of Gietrzwałd is also venerated at Kiry, in a chapel by the entrance to the Chocholowska Valley that is also under the Canons' care. In the chronicle kept in that chapel, numerous cases of physical and spiritual cures have been recorded.

Also in Mstow, one of the earliest centres of human settlement on the area of Poland and a seat of Canons Regular of the Lateran since the beginning of 1140's, the cult of the Virgin Mary has continued for many centuries. Here, the object of particular veneration is Her grace-working image which is an engraved replica of the painting of Our Lady of Czestochowa. This picture was famous for numerous graces even before it had been delivered to the church at Mstow in 1647. In 1993, in recognition of the cult of Our Lady of Mstow that had been lasting for more than three hundred years, the Bishop of Czestochowa elevated the local church to the rank of a Marian shrine.

Order shortly after the Canons had been brought to Kazimierz in 1405. The Polish King Ladislaus Jagiello and Bishop Piotr Wysz had then transferred the Corpus Christi church to the monks arriving from Roudnice in Bohemia. From then on, successive provosts of the congregation were taking care for further extension and embellishment of this temple. It should also be noted, that although over the centuries the number of Canons' monasteries in Poland had reached an imposing level, the Krakow

canonry – ranked as an abbacy since 1861 – was the only one to avoid the dissolution of monasteries ordered by the powers partitioning Poland in 1864.

Today, in Krakow there is the Provincial House – the seat of the Polish Province established in 1952 – as well as the novitiate and High Seminary. All in all, there are thirteen Canons' monasteries in Poland, organised into five canonries, i.e. the canonry of Krakow, Drezdenko, Elk, Gietrzwałd and Mstow.







Basilica of Corpus Christi

Among the numerous churches of Krakow, there is one of impressive dimensions and majestic beauty and clarity of style, plenteous with memories and works of art, yet rarely visited by the pious burgher from the city centre, though the glory of God flourishes here now as it did of old, and the body of the wonder-worker Stanislaus is waiting for his beatification. Let us be frank, however, and admit that, if not every church interior equally inclines to prayer, it is precisely the church we are to speak about – this lofty, Gothic temple, full of historic monuments and tokens of our ancestors' piety, by the patina of many centuries harmonised with the walls warmed by the breath of devout prayers of many generations – that has an interior singularly disposing man to elevate his soul towards God.

Wladyslaw Luszczkiewicz, 1898



Magnificent Corpus Christi Church in the Suburb of Kazimierz...

According to the legend recorded by the peerless chronicler Jan Długosz, it was a theft of a monstrance from All Saints church (non-extant today) that contributed to the emergence of Corpus Christi church. The thieves, having realised that the monstrance was in fact made of copper and not, as they had surmised, of gold, cast it away on the marshes by St. Lawrence church in the village of Bawol on the area of the present-day Kazimierz. Before long, mysterious blue lights began to appear over the monstrance, therefore a solemn procession was soon organised to explore the place. And when the monstrance was discovered, King



The stolen monstrance is found



The Corpus Christi Church is turned over to Canons Regular



The Corpus Christi Church in XVII c.

Casimir the Great pledged himself to erect on the same spot a church under the invocation of Corpus Christi to expiate the sacrilege that had been committed.

The legend cannot be given full credence, though, as in the surviving documents there is no information concerning the origins of the temple. It is certain, however, that its construction must have begun about the year 1347. Apparently, the works took a long time, since the first finished part of the edifice – present-day presbytery – furnished already with three altars, was consecrated as late as 1401. Soon



afterwards – in 1405 – the Canons Regular of the Lateran were brought to Kazimierz in order to take charge for the temple. The basilica had acquired its current shape before the year 1500, when – thanks to the generous support of King John I Albert and his mother Elisabeth of Austria – it was at last possible to consecrate the well-nigh completed church. The ceremony was presided over by the King's brother, Cardinal Fryderyk Jagiellon, who had also made significant contributions to the construction of the temple. In the following years it was necessary to see to suitable interior decoration, and take care for the design and execution of the altars, including the most beautiful among them – the main altar, reared during the provosty of Rev. Marcin Kloczynski (1612-1644). Also the mausoleum of St. Stanislaus of Kazimierz, and richly decorated canons' stalls featuring the saints from the Order of Canons Regular of the Lateran, come from the same period.

The temple sustained severe losses during the Swedish invasion of 1655. Some portion of the treasury had been successfully removed to a place of safety, yet anything of value that remained in the church and

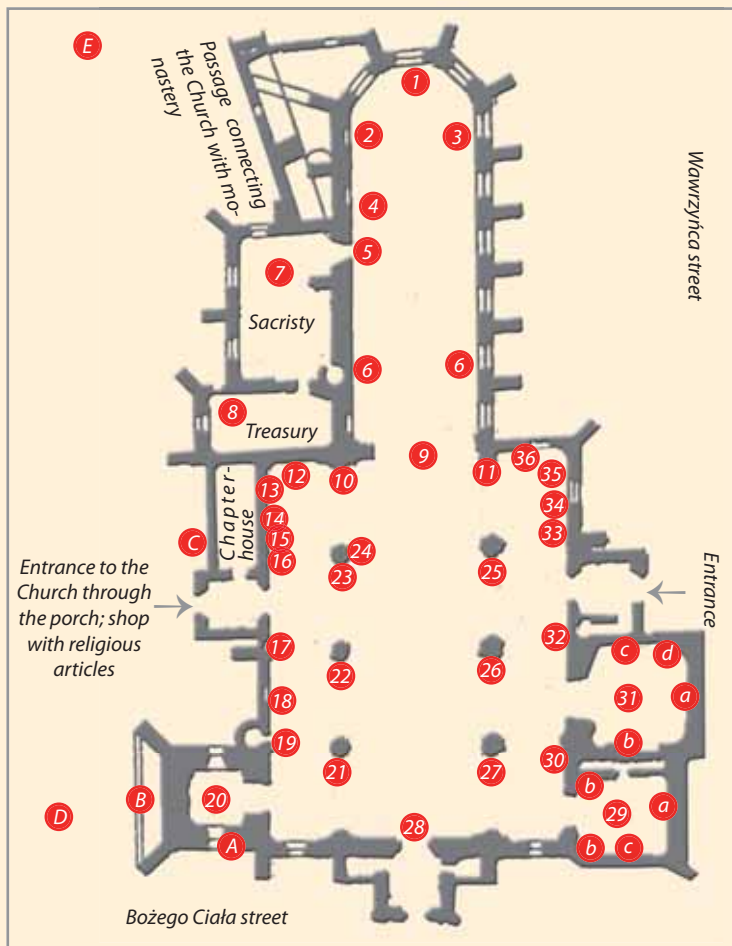
monastery, fell a prey to the invaders. The rebuilding of the damage caused by that barbaric invasion had started right after the liberation of Krakow in 1657 but, because of the poor condition of the whole country, the more substantial reconstructions had to be postponed to some better days. Yet the partitions of Poland and subsequent seizure of monastic property had for a long time stopped any significant investments. On the other hand, a fortunate and honourable event for the Krakow provosty was its elevation to the rank of abbacy in 1861.

In 1897 a renovation of the church was commenced and lasted – on and off – for almost forty years. Also today, conservation works have been going on in the church and monastery since 1993. 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 has been 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 minor basilica.



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. Berecci 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 Czeszochowa
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. Orłowski (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. Orłowski (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 Berecci
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 Elżbieta 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



What a splendid interior!

The interior of the basilica of Corpus Christi entrances the visitor with its expanse and variety of treasures of art and culture. The admiring gaze

wanders among its numerous altars, sculptures, paintings, and chapels. Undoubtedly the greatest impression is made by the Baroque main altar constructed in 1636. Its centrepiece is the Nativity painting by Tommaso Dolabella,

in the literature of the subject known as 'Adoration of the Shepherds.' Very interesting

are also the richly decorated canons' stalls, executed in 1624-32 and featuring the figures of popes from the Order

of the Canons Regular, as well as paintings

– probably from Dolabella's atelier – depicting various scenes connected with the lives of saints from the same congregation. In the presbytery, some fragments of Gothic stained glass windows from around the year 1430 have been

preserved. They are now all put together and framed into one of church windows.



Obraz z ołtarza głównego





Madonna terribilis daemonibus



Madonna Łukasza Cranacha St.

Just by the rood-screen wall, to the right, there is the miracle-working image of Our Lady of Grace, from all accounts the unfailing spokeswoman in the event of a plague coming. The cult of the Madonna of that invocation, initiated in 15th-century Italy, had intensified in Poland after the victory of Polish army over the Turks in the first half of the 17th century, commonly attributed to Her intercession.

A bit further on the same side of the church, by a pillar, there is an altar with the painting of the Merciful Jesus by Adolf Hyla – the prototype of the image worshipped today in the Sanctuary of the Divine Mercy at Lagiewniki.

Three chapels adjoin the body of the church. The invocation of the most beautiful among them, erected by the provost Jacek Liberiusz, is Annunciation of the Virgin Mary. Its walls are decorated with paintings depicting various Old Testament themes, while the cupola, modelled on the dome of the Sigismundus Chapel of the Wawel Cathedral, is covered with scenes from the life of Virgin Mary. Another prominent feature of the chapel is a Rococo altar with the miracle-working image of the Mother of the Saviour. Actually, it is a replica (c.1510) of a much older painting brought to Krakow by the first Canons Regular who came here before the year 1405. For many centu-

ries it has been venerated and enjoyed the reputation of a grace-working image; therefore, in recognition of that cult, Stanislaw Cardinal Dziwisz, crowned it with papal crowns on May 17th, 2007.

Beside the above paintings of Our Lady of Grace and Mother of the Saviour, in the Corpus Christi church there is one more grace-working representation of Madonna. It is a

reliquary image purchased in 1434 and stored in the monastic treasury. The Canons have always regarded it with great reverence, owing to a legend that it had been painted by St. Luke the Evangelist himself. In addition, this image of the Virgin Mary was said to have the power to expel devils from the possessed; therefore it has also been called *Madonna terribilis daemonibus*.

