



Historically, the Franciscan Friars contributed to the religious and cultural development of Zamość: Zamojski Academy professors, support for religious fraternities in the Franciscan Church, commissioning altars with Zamość embellishments. Sadly, the treasures from the Zamość Franciscan Church, altars, paintings, sculptures, robes, and liturgical vessels, were dispersed, stolen, or destroyed. Of the once

many sacramental treasures, only a monumental monstrance survives along with some extant paintings illustrating scenes from the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



The Franciscan Order, founded in 1209 by St. Francis of Assisi, includes St. Anthony of Padua, St. Bonaventure, St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe, modern day martyrs of Pariacoto in Peru, along with many prominent scholars, philosophers, and missionaries over the last 800 years. Franciscans first arrived in Poland in 1236, established a monastery in Wrocław, and then developed a network of monasteries throughout Poland which included Zamość. The Franciscans in Zamość belong to the Province of Mary Immaculate in which the main sanctuary was founded by St. Maximilian Maria Kolbe of Niepokalanów.



This renovation project involves considerable cost. We kindly ask for your support, both spiritual and financial. The Franciscan Friars of Zamość will be grateful for any contributions to this project.

For this purpose and the intentions of all donors, mass is celebrated twice a month, and prayer petitions every Tuesday to St. Anthony of Padua for intercession.

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ACCOUNT NUMBER

PLN:

76 1500 1807 1218 0002 6017 0000

EUR IBAN:

PL 85 1090 2590 0000 0001 3503 7599

SWIFT/BIC WBKPPLPP

Re: Church Reconstruction Project

Project:

"Revitalization of the Largest XVIIIth Century Baroque Church of the Franciscans in Poland – Zamość"

Number: POIS.08.01.00-00-1030 / 16 implemented within the framework of priority axis VIII - "8.1 Protection of cultural heritage and development of cultural resources"

EU Infrastructure and Environment Program 2014-2020

Total Project Value: 23,864,369.08 PLN

Including the Parish's contribution: 3,638,228.02 PLN



THE FRANCISCAN CHURCH IN ZAMOŚĆ

*Eastern Facade
of Franciscan Church.
Present view
and end of XIX century*



HISTORICAL RESTORATION PROJECT



Western Facade of Franciscan Church. Image fragment by M. Zaleski, 40s, XIX century

Peace and Goodness

Towering the Zamość skyline, the Franciscan Church stands as the largest, most magnificent Baroque church in Poland, denoting Poland's national birthright, Poland's Christian primacy, and a historical symbol for Zamość residents. Devastated, ravaged, and left to ruins by centuries of outside invaders desecrating the Sacred Church, stealing precious religious treasures, and executing whimsical building alterations, the Franciscans, in 1994 after 200 years of exclusion, regained rights to this Sacred Baroque Franciscan Church. Due to the Franciscan Church's unique character and indispensable contribution to Polish architecture, plus many years of detailed historical documentary preparation, partial funding has been received to restore this Polish cultural jewel. This pearl of Polish Baroque architecture having almost lost its sacred character and original architecture is now being rejuvenated to its former Christian glory.

This historical restoration requires significant resources to complete. The reconstruction project needs help from people who value Christian heritage, Polish culture, and a desire to preserve significant historic architecture. Let us restore this one and only church to its former magnificence.

***Father Andrzej Zalewski and the Franciscan
Monastery Fathers (OFM Conv),
Zamość, Poland***

THE FRANCISCAN CHURCH IN ZAMOŚĆ: PAST AND PRESENT

The Franciscan Order of Friars Minor Conventual (OFM Conv) in the Zamość region dates to the end of the fourteenth century when the Archbishop of Halickiego, Jakub Stepy, established a monastery in Szczepieszyn, a nearby village.

Later, the Franciscans responded to an invitation from the Zamość founder, Jan Zamoyski, first entailer, and first settled at the St. Cross Church near Lviv in 1589, approximately 130 km from Zamość.

In 1637, the cornerstone for the Franciscan Church was laid by Tomasz Zamoyski, second entailer, with the first mass celebrated eighteen years later. The once Zamość market square became the foundation for the largest three-nave Baroque church in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The church enjoyed generous benefactors to garnish the interiors with grand altars, paintings, and sculptures up till 1782 when the Franciscan Friars had to leave and the monastery was ruthlessly liquidated by partition occupiers. In the meantime, religious authorities intervened along with Andrzej Zamoyski, third entailer, resulting in the Franciscan Friars returning in 1787, only to leave the Zamość walls in 1794 for the next 200 years.



Adoration of the Mother of God by Jana Kantego; and St. Anthony of Padua viewing Zamość with silhouette of the Franciscan Church, circa 1660.



Zamość scene with side elevation view of Franciscan Church Image fragment by M. Zaleski, 40s, XIX century

At this time, the Austrian army confiscated this glorious Baroque treasure to store grain and use as an infirmary. And then in 1821 the insides were gutted and transformed into an army barracks. As if this dismantling was not enough, in 1887 the church had its soaring peaks destroyed, the majestic roof lowered, the meticulous polychrome vaulted ceilings demolished, and had a wooden ceiling put in place.

When Poland regained its independence in 1918, the church was transformed into a cinema; and in 1946 a former porch and upstairs were refurbished to facilitate a State Secondary School of Art.

Finally, after 200 years, in 1993 the church was returned to the Franciscan Friars. The Franciscan Friars have refocused the purpose of the building to its original intention of a sacred place to worship. The process of restoring its architectural glory began when the Franciscan Friars returned. After many conversions, plunders, and degradations, this sacred church is being graciously restored. With God's help and human intervention, this sacred majestic Baroque Franciscan Church will again adorn Zamość as a religious, historical, and cultural hallmark.



Franciscan Church after reconstruction, 1920s