

The church of St. Peter the Apostle in Wadowice



- A** Parish church
- B** Monument to St. John Paul II
- C** Monument to St. Peter the Apostle
- D** Christ the King Chapel
- E** Catechetical house and presbytery
- F** Golgotha - open-air Way of the Cross
- G** Church tower



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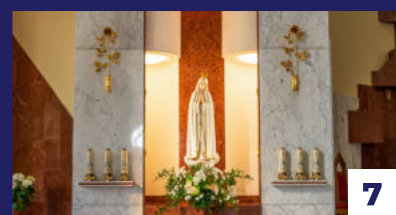
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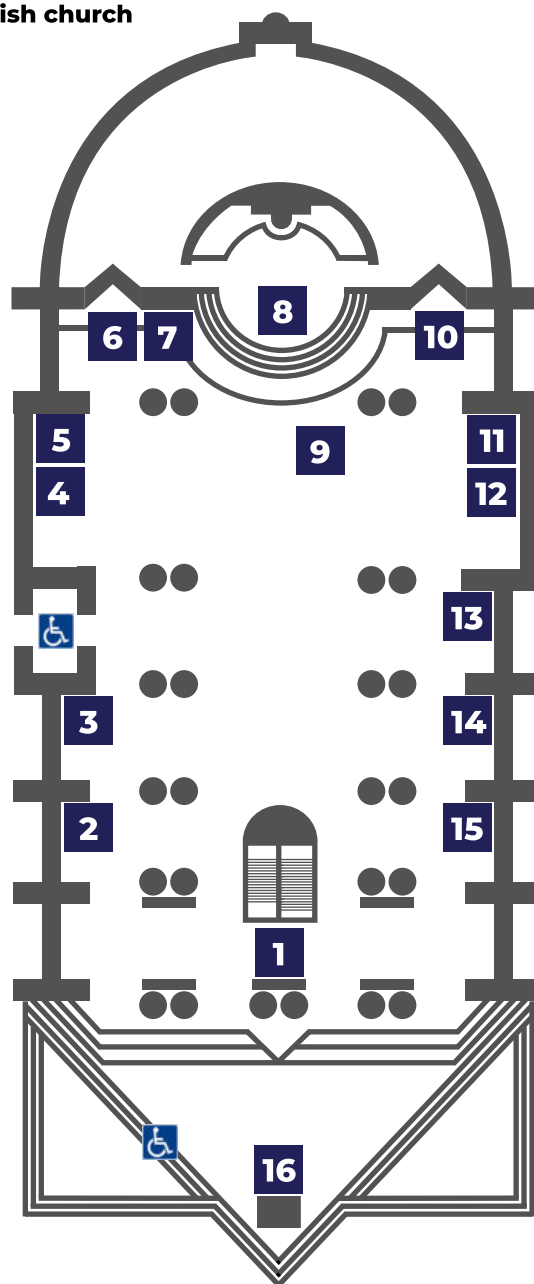


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A Parish church



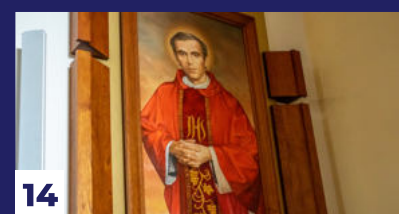
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1 Commemorative plates and the cornerstone of St. Peter Basilica in Rome

2 Picture of St. Zelia and Ludwik Martin, parents of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus

3 Picture of St. Brother Albert

4 Stained glass window with the image of Our Lady of Fatima and the children of Fatima

5 Picture of St. John Paul II

6 Baptismal font

7 Statue of Our Lady of Fatima

8 Main altar

9 A plate symbolically marking the location where the Pope was assassinated

10 Altar of Divine Mercy

11 Picture of St. s. Faustina Kowalska

12 Stained glass window with the image of St. Peter the Apostle and John Paul II

13 Picture of Archangel Michael

14 Picture of Bl. Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko

15 Picture of St. Juda Tadeusz

16 Monument to St. John Paul II

History of the church and parish

After the election of Karol Wojtyła on 16.10.1978 as the Pope, the idea of building a new temple in Wadowice arose as a vote of gratitude and commemoration of this important moment in history. During the first visit of John Paul II in his hometown in 1979, it was agreed that the new church would be erected at Zegadłowicz Street (today Aleja Matki Bożej Fatimskiej). After an attempted assassination (May 13, 1981), the new temple became a vote of gratitude for the Pope's election and saving him. The architectural and urban concept has been developed by a team led by Prof. Tadeusz Szafer (1920-2017) from Cracow. The construction of the temple lasted from 1984-1991 and was implemented by the effort of the residents of Wadowice. Parishioners not only gave money for the new temple, but also personally participated in the construction works. The effort of organization was undertaken by Michał Piosek - the future parson of the new parish. The solemn consecration took place on August 14, 1991, during the second visit of John Paul II in Wadowice. The pope carried out a solemn mass at the square in front of the church. The Procession of Offering was attended by delegations from various communities of Wadowice: church builders, teachers, health care, craftsmen, as well as delegations of miners and highlanders. The complex blessed by Saint John Paul II under the auspices of St. Peter the Apostle symbolizes the pope's path from Wadowice, through the cathedral in Wawel to the Holy See. It consists of a church **A**, a chapel of Christ the King **D**, a catechetical house with a presbytery **E**, and a free-standing tower **G**.

The builder of the church and the first parish parson

The organization of the new parish was entrusted to Fr. Michał Piosek (1944-1993), a long-time vicar of the Parish of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and later parson of the parish of St. Peter the Apostle. He completely devoted himself to this work, not sparing his energy, strength, and health. Fr. Piosek was the soul of all activities, encouraging and mobilizing parishioners to effort and generosity. He overcame bureaucratic barriers, obtained building materials, even though it was not easy at the time, and supervised the works. In 1985, together with parishioners he went on a pilgrimage to Rome and on May 29, during an audience with the Pope, he obtained a blessing for the new parish and the temple under construction. He died suddenly on November 25, 1993, at the age of 49. On the day of his funeral, John Paul II sent a mourning telegram. The funeral of Fr. Michał was attended, among others, by the Archbishop of Cracow Card. Franciszek Macharski, dozens of priests, and several thousand believers from Wadowice and the surrounding area as well as his native Orawa. The builder of the temple and the first parish parson was buried in the crypt of the new church.

The interior of the church

The form of the church refers to historical traditions, referring to the burly shapes of baroque churches. The interior has been designed in a similar manner, dominated by a three-nave basilica layout with two rows of double columns separating the main nave from the side ones. The church was built on a plan of a Latin cross with a separate transept.

The main altar **B** made of Carrara marble, has been designed on the floor plan of the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome. A gilded, semicircular tabernacle, which symbolizes the location of the tomb of St. Peter in the Vatican church called confession, constitutes the heart of the church.

The altar is crowned with a painting that is a copy of a 16th-century fresco by Perugino from the Sistine Chapel. It presents the scene of 'The delivery of the keys to St. Peter'.

Two strands of red marble 'flowing' from the main altar symbolize the streaks of John Paul II's blood during the assassination. On the floor of the main nave, they form a circle in the shape of St. Peter Square in the Vatican (outline of Bernini's colonnade). The place of the assassination **9** has been symbolically marked with a plate including the date May 13, 1981. At right side nave, looking from the presbytery, there are the altar of Divine Mercy with the image 'Jesus, I trust in You' **10** and pictures of: St. s. Faustina Kowalska **11**, Archangel Michael **13**, Bl. Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko **14**, and St. Juda Tadeusz **15**. Whereas in the left side nave, looking from the presbytery, there is a baptismal font **6** and a statue of Our Lady of Fatima **7**, which has been donated by Bishop Albert Cosme do Amaral, ordinary of the Portuguese diocese of Leiria-Fatima and Fr. Cardinal Maria Andrzej Deskur. In 1991, after consecrating the temple, John Paul II also crowned this figure. Today it is surrounded by numerous votive offerings and copies of gold papal roses. Next there are pictures of: St. John Paul II **5**, Saint Brother Albert **3**, and St. Zelia and Ludwik Martin, parents of St. Teresa of the Child Jesus **2**.

In the church vestibule there are numerous commemorative plates **1** concerning the history of the parish. Among them it is possible to find the one behind which the cornerstone from the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome has been placed.

The Chapel of Christ the King **D** along with the catechetical house and presbytery **E** were built in 1985-1986. The chapel has been consecrated on May 18, 1986, on the 66th birthday of the Pope, by Fr. Card. Fr. Macharski. Since then, parish services were held there until the construction of the church has ended. Inside the chapel, behind the altar, there is a painting which is a copy of Rembrandt's painting 'Apostle Peter'. Next to it there is a copy of the painting of Our Lady of Częstochowa. On the right wall of the chapel there is also a copy of the 'Ecce Homo' painting by St. Brother Albert. On the left wall it is possible to see the image of the Heart of Jesus.

On the left side of the church a free-standing tower **G** has been erected in 1992, which includes three bells named: St. Peter, John Paul I, and John Paul II. They were offered in 1985 by the hometown of Pope John Paul I - Vittorio Veneto. The Polish pope consecrated them in 1986 and handed them over to the parish of St. Peter the Apostle in Wadowice.

Church surroundings

Outside the St. Peter the Apostle church in Wadowice there is a bronze statue of John Paul II **16 B**, created by an Italian artist Luciano Minguzzi in the years 1980-1982. It is a gift from the Vatican and Fr. Card. Fr. Macharski for the new parish.

In 2015, sculptures of St. Peter the Apostle **C** were placed next to the church and chapel. The monument was created on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of establishing the new parish in Wadowice.

Behind the church there is Golgotha - an open-air Way of the Cross, consecrated in 2003 by Card. Fr. Macharski on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the pontificate of John Paul II. Apart from the stations of the Way of the Cross **F**, ending with the crucifixion scene, on its route it is possible to find plates with the Decalogue and eight blessings. The entrance to Golgotha leads through the church square, between the statues of saints and the blessed.