

# St Margaret's Church

Minor Basilica

Sanctuary of the Transfiguration

In the beautiful Sądecka Valley, at the crossroads of ancient trade routes and in a place where many cultures combine, among many important historical events, there is a church devoted to Saint Margaret, which is located here since ages. Integrated inseparably with royal history of the Nowy Sącz city, it is the centre of religious life in the whole Sądecczyzna land, its treasure and cultural legacy.

There are many indications that before the location of the town there was a Romanian temple. After the location of the town, which was set in 1292, the St Margaret's Church became the main sanctuary of the fast-developing city. In this context, year 1448 is one of the most important dates, because back since, cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki elevated the church to a collegiate level, created a collegiate chapter and an archdeaconry. Through the centuries the collegiate chapter had a huge impact on a religious, cultural and intellectual development of the Małopolska province, enriching the society with many great people of the Church among the canon priests like bishops, lectors, Jagiellonian University professors, royal secretaries and advisers.

With the progressive fall of the Republic of Poland, the significance of Nowy Sącz was declining as well as the collegiate chapter to the moment of liquidation by the Austrian authorities at the end of the XVIII century. The increased importance of St Margaret's Church came with the growing cult of the miraculous painting of the Transfiguration of Jesus that was situated in the temple in 1785. The painting found a place of worship in the side altar and in 1971 was officially moved to the main altar with the participation of the Archbishop of

Kraków, Karol Wojtyła. The developing worship of the miraculous painting influenced the fact that St Margaret's Church became in people of Sądecczyzna land and pilgrims' opinion a living Sanctuary of Christ transfigured.

A further consequence of this fact took place on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1992 when Pope John Paul II elevated the parish church in Nowy Sącz to the rank of Minor Basilica and when Józef Życiński, the Bishop of the Diocese of Tarnow, restored the collegiate chapter on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1996.

## **The Miraculous Painting**

Those who entrance the Saint Margaret's Basilica might experience a look emanating with love and peace coming from the marvellous presence of the Lord Jesus transfigured. It is assumed that between 1350 and 1370 the painting was made in the Czech Republic in an artist's monastery workshop of Italian influences. The painting belongs to the Veraicon circle that is a representation which wishes to show the true face of Christ. It is related to the ancient tradition to which at the request of Abgar V, the king of Edessa, during the Christ's lifetime His Holy Face was painted. This image is so close to the images of the Holy Face of Jesus from the Shroud of Turin and the Holy Face of Manoppello. It is spread over the centuries throughout Europe, but probably in the fifteenth century it came to Nowy Sącz where forever inscribed in the spiritual landscape of the city and its region.

The gradual development of the cult of the miraculous image of Christ, already authenticated by certificates from the end of the sixteenth century, was strengthened by the church's fair that since the mid-nineteenth century lasted one day, then in the years 1936-1969 celebrations ran for three days so as to the beginning of 1970 it turned into an eight-day feast

continuing from the Sunday preceding the main celebrations on 6<sup>th</sup> August to the following Sunday.

The copies of miraculous image can be found in churches and chapels in South America, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and many places in Poland. One of the copies honoured the canonization of Blessed Kinga that was carried out by John Paul II on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1999. Another one is traditionally present at the Youth Meeting in the fields of Lednica.

An important place in St Margaret's Basilica is THE CHAPEL OF PERPETUAL ADORATION of the Blessed Sacrament that is located in the aisle on the right side of the main entrance to the temple. Each day from morning to evening the faithful may receive here the gift of adoration of Christ in the Holy Host. What is equally important is the fact that every day at 3 p.m., the Hour of Mercy, the Chaplet to the Divine Mercy is said.

Since 2009, in the old, former porch of the church, a new chapel has been opened to the public, devoted to the saint patron of Nowy Sącz and its parish. ST MARGARET'S CHAPEL is located on the west side of the chancel. Renovated in a gothic style interior, on the stone altar, a painting of St Margaret was rested – painted on a board from XVIII century. On each side of the painting there are antique reliquaries with the relics of the greatest saints of the Church. Noteworthy is also a renovated gothic portal with the stairs leading to the former St Andrew's chapel and wooden doors from XVII century. The stained-glass windows that are settled in those doors present an image of angels who are lost in contemplations, encouraging the faithful to pray.

# ROMAN-CATHOLIC PARCH

Dedicated to Saint Margaret in Nowy Sącz

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## **Masses and church services:**

### **Masses during common weekday:**

6.00 a.m., 6.30 a.m., 7.00 a.m., 7.30a.m., 8.00 a.m., 9.00 a.m., 6.00 p.m. ( from November to January 5.30 p.m.)

### **Masses during saint days:**

6.00 a.m., 7.30 a.m., 9.00 a.m., 10.30 a.m., 12.00 a.m., 2.00 p.m., 5.00 p.m., 7.00 p.m., (9.00 p.m. – in July and August)

### **Masses after Easter:**

6.00 a.m., 7.30 a.m., 9.00 a.m., 10.30 a.m., 3.30 p.m., 5.00 p.m., 7.00 p.m., (9.00 p.m.– in July and August)

## **Church Services:**

### **Novena to Transfiguration:**

Each Thursday at 5.00 p.m.

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