

## **“The Heritage of Lipnica Murowana” - a Thematic Walk**

### **Introduction**

In our everyday life, not only do we seek a sense of security, but also a sense of belonging, which enables us to understand both our own selves and the surrounding reality of ‘here and now’. This is possible if we reach to the past, which surrounds us everywhere. It manifests itself not only through material objects, but also through stories, memories, everyday life routines, and rituals related to special events. Buildings are durable traces of the past, while immaterial resources constitute the binder that fills whole narrative with a content and anchors it in the present.

Lipnica Murowana is a unique, although a small town in the centre of the Małopolska Region. Lying in the heart of Wiśnickie Foothills, it is a never ending treasury of cultural and tourist attractions. Situated in the Wiśnicz-Lipnica Landscape Park in the South East area of the Bochnia district, it is a special place not only for its inhabitants, but also for a broad circle of recipients, due to the abundance of traditions and world-class historical monuments. Hence, it is frequently referred to as the land of saints, monuments and Easter palms.

In a moment, you will embark on a journey that will acquaint you with the heritage of Lipnica Murowana. You will learn the history of this place, but—first of all—the people who inhabit it, their stories, traditions and customs. During some stages of this journey, you will be accompanied by several specific persons who are particularly remembered by the citizens of Lipnica and who played an important role in the building of their identity. On each stage, you will be able to discover this little town with your own senses: to smell the wood of which the oldest buildings here are built, admire the colourful flowers that

decorate the famous Easter palms, listen to the conversations of the locals, or touch the oldest historical monuments in Lipnica.

The route you enter will allow you to discover Lipnica as seen by its inhabitants every day. Plots concerning the history and heritage of Lipnica Murowana and motifs related to the local saints and their cult places interweave during this walk. The route and the stories of the places you will visit should take you around 1.5 h. You will walk about 2 km.

### **The monument of Władysław Łokietek (1)**

You will begin the walk at the monument of Władysław Łokietek. Although the history of Lipnica reaches back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when the first parish was enacted here, it was formally established by the king in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The legend has it that the king founded the city as a thanksgiving for the miraculous recovery, as he had got lost in a wood during a hunt.

*(...) The king was exhausted with the chase, so he summoned his courtiers with  
his horn,*

*He tooted the horn as a bugler before a battle and the wind carried the call  
away.*

*However, the deafening silence prevailed, there were no courtiers, no trace of  
the dogs,*

*But a beacon of hope lightened, when the king found a trail through the woods.*

*And in that spot where a lime tree greeted the king, it spoke to him in the  
following words:*

*“I want Lipnica to become a city”, and he marked the tree with his sword.*

*The king wrote down town privileges and rights, and granted his demesne,*

*And thus the new Lipnica was founded and since then also masoned.*

The importance of Lipnica in the Kingdom of Poland grew quickly, which was vastly due to its favourable location. It lay at one of the most important political and trade routes in the Kingdom, the so-called Hungarian Route.

Since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Lipnica developed brightly, and being a typical town of crafts and trade, it was famous for its numerous markets and fairs.

It thrived, especially in the middle ages, which brought the influx of new inhabitants. This naturally resulted in a change in the spatial design of the city. There was also life going on outside the city walls, whose minor debris are still visible on the outskirts of the main market square. The city began to develop in two directions. Toward Wiśnicz, along the so-called Górzeński Brook, emerged Przedmieście Górne (or the upper suburb). Looking to the left from Władysław Łokietek's monument, beyond the Uszwica River, one can see Przedmieście Dolne (or the lower suburb). Over time, these two suburban areas developed into separate villages.

### **St. Szymon's church (2)—St. Szymon: an eager speaker and a pleasant preacher<sup>1</sup>**

Turn in the direction of St. Szymon's church. The object you see now is currently the only sanctuary in Poland dedicated to this patron. St. Szymon was born in Lipnica around 1435 in a poor but hardworking and pious family. His parents, Anna and Grzegorz, were local bakers. He was baptized in St. Andrew's church, in a stone baptismal font, which we can observe today. Although no documents relating to his youth have been preserved, the local tales describe his great piety and eagerness to help others. According to a legend, he put out a fire destroying the city with his prayer. His father's purse was always filling up despite the fact that St. Szymon used to give bread loaves to the poor.

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<sup>1</sup> R. Gustaw OFM, K. Grudziński OFM, supplements W. Murawiec OFM, *Święty Szymon z Lipnicy (1435–1482)*, Cracow 2007, p. 46.

He is also said to have had the ability to talk with the saints depicted in St. Leonard's church.

His fame of sanctity lasts since his death in 1482. Until his last days, despite the associated danger, he helped the sick and dying in the royal city grasped by the epidemic of cholera. He died from the disease five days after he caught it, on July 18. He was buried in the crypt under the altar in St. Bernard's church in Stradom. In 1685, that is almost 200 years after his departure, he was declared blessed on the base of the immemorial cult. There are texts describing visits paid to the suffering by Bernardines from Stradom with the cloak and belt of St. Szymon. Upon touching the relics, the sick were healed. Although efforts leading to the canonization of Szymon were undertaken in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, he was raised to the altars yet by Pope Benedict XVI in 2007. The miracle enlisted in the canonization documents consisted in the healing of a Cracow pharmacist, Maria Piątek, originally from Lipnica, who suffered from cerebral congestion, was paralysed and lost the ability to speak. St. Szymon, the worshipper of the Mother of God, is particularly venerated in Lipnica Murowana and Cracow. The attributes with which he is commonly depicted include the cross, a loaf of bread and the Holy Scripture. The day of his death is the memorial of the saint. On that day, the faithful may taste the bread rolls of St. Szymon, which he once gave away in Lipnica. The church fair, organized since 1990, includes a Review of Religious Songs with a reward in the form of St. Szymon's figurine.

If the church is open, go inside. Before entering it, notice the relief of St. Szymon above the door and the stained-glass window depicting Holy Mary of Częstochowa.

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Enter the church. St. Szymon's church stands on the site of his former family house. It was built in 1636 thanks to the efforts of Stanisław Lubomirski, according to the order of King Władysław IV, who attributed his victory over the Turkish army in the battle of Chocim to the support of this saint. He ordered

the erection of the church in the saint's hometown as a votive offering. The temple was built in the baroque style, on a rectangular plan with two chapels. Take a look at the main altar made in 1860 in the rococo-neo-gothic style. It depicts St. Szymon in the company of his confreres. The church was rebuilt in the 1960s thanks to the generosity of Lipnica citizens living in America. The pipe organ inside comes from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### ***THE SONG DEDICATED TO ST. SZYMON OF LIPNICA***

*1. Dear St. Szymon, a noble Bernardine  
From Lipnica, famous for its many saints.  
You are famous for your apostolic eagerness.  
Teach us to pursue noble aims.*

*2. You gathered students around your person  
Giving them knowledge and a role model.  
The royal city of Cracow took pride in you.  
Now lead us with the example of your virtues.*

*3. A plague got the better of you in your prime  
And cut the thread of your life.  
Protect us from sins, as the insult to God  
Can close the doors of heaven for us.*

*/Words and music: Stanisław Ziemiański, priest/*

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Find the thanking plaques embedded in the church's wall. They tell about the contribution of Lipnica citizens living in America in the reconstruction of St.

Szymon's church. They are to the left from the entrance. The Lipnica diaspora in America is quite big and does not forget its roots, generously co-funding noble initiatives undertaken in their little homeland. The plaques embedded in St. Szymon church's wall bear a testimony of this. One them, made out in 1934, says: *"In the honour of the children living across the ocean for their attachment and generosity. Macierz Lipnica, 1934"*. And the other one reads as follows: *"This little church was rebuilt in the years 1964—66 thanks to the generosity of the inhabitants of Lipnica living in America and the contribution and efforts of Prelate Franciszek Bardel. This plaque is embedded here for future generations by thankful compatriots and inhabitants of Lipnica on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his priestly ordination in the 1966 year of the Lord."*

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Leave the church and stand by the well with the monument of St. Szymon nearby. The spring that emerged in the 16<sup>th</sup> century is ascribed wonderful qualities due to St. Szymon. It is said to heal various conditions of the eyes and throat, and even infertility. St. Szymon is a patron of mothers awaiting their offspring.

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Before leaving the church's area, look up and observe the bell-gable, which is also the entrance gate. Maybe you will enjoy the opportunity to listen to the melodic voice of the bells, which are called after the Lipnica saints: Szymon, Urszula and Maria Teresa.

### **The medieval market square (3)**

Facing Władysław Łokietek's monument, look to the right. At the end of the street, you can see a square. Since the middle ages it was the local market square. Let's go there. There is a column with a monument of St. Szymon in the centre of the square. The city's coat of arms is presented at the foot of the column. When you turn your back to it, you will see what remains from the medieval architecture of Lipnica. Slightly to the left stands the house of Starosta,

or the governor of Lipnica, built from sandstone, which was a popular material in the middle ages. The builders used stones obtained from the debris of the city walls.

Although since the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Lipnica was called Murowana, that is masoned, due to its architecture, it is worth noting that the vast majority of the oldest buildings (apart from churches, defensive walls and the manor house) was built of wood. It consisted of minor one-storey log houses with whitewashed or timbered walls, the most handsome of which surrounded the square. These houses had deep arcades supported by massive pillars. They thus formed long communication routes around the square.

However, the oldest buildings in Lipnica preserved until today were built in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, because the former development was almost completely destroyed in a fire in 1828. The citizens rebuilt the burnt houses in an almost unchanged shape. The masonry arcaded governor's house standing in the north west corner of the square and built in 1685 is a good example of that reconstruction.

A nearby building, just at the street, houses the famous traditional ice cream parlour "u Szymona", which attracts gourmands not only from Lipnica, but also from the neighbouring Bochnia and even from Cracow.

From among 15 wooden arcaded houses only one has been preserved in its original structure and form. It stands in the western part of the northern frontage of the square. Built in 1848, it is probably the oldest wooden house of the type in the Małopolska Region. It represents a wooden construction characteristic for the development of Lipnica, in which only the cellar vaults were made of stone. Take a look at the beams that support the ceiling and the deep arcade with three decoratively carved wooden pillars. This house was rebuilt in 2011, but elements of the previous architecture were preserved.

There is a reminder of the great fire of 1828 in the shape of the statue of St. Florian, the patron of firefighters, raised at the spot where the square of the new city was planned to be located. The saint was supposed to protect the city from fires. The historical figure stands on a plinth, which features a relief depicting King Casimir III the Great. It was founded by the inheritor of the Lipnica estate, Kazimierz Bzowski. The inscription on the plinth reads as follows: “To commemorate the establishment of this square, 1837”. Eventually, the new city was not built, but part of the municipality of Lipnica Dolna kept the name Nowe Miasto (which means a new city).

### **Lipnica – a city of merchants**

Standing on the square in Lipnica, let’s imagine what this place could have looked like on a typical trading day. We are surrounded by the hubbub of talks between the inhabitants and the arrivals, the scents of products for sale and the creak of merchants’ carts filled with whatever they sell. The Lipnica square was not only a marketplace. It also hosted all city celebrations, including trials held by the public court.

Fairs and markets were an important element of the life of Lipnica and its inhabitants. Privileges concerning the organization of trade on the square were granted to the city together with the location charter in 1326. They contributed to the intense development of trade and craft in the whole region. It should be noted that medieval fairs often lasted several to over a dozen days, because people’s mobility was much more restrained than today. In these terms, Lipnica was a special city because it had the privilege to organize as many as four fairs a year: two were allowed by the location charter, and further two were added by King John III Sobieski in 1684.

It is particularly important that the inhabitants of the city also received the right to launch butcheries, stalls for shoemakers and bakers, as well as to build mills



and cultivate fish. Additionally, Lipnica also obtained the favourable staple right, which obliged merchants travelling through via Lipnica to display their goods for sale, for which they were properly charged by the city.

The singularity of trade spectacles that took place in Lipnica on trading days was remembered and passed on in many legends and tales.

*The spirit of time made himself comfortable in the Lipnica square; he took a  
look at the arcades and the roof tips,  
Counted the tenement buildings; he came here to see the famous fair.*

*When the morning came and the night ghosts vanished, he jostled crouching  
shadows, awaking them from their dream,  
He accosted people at the stalls that stand here on trading days; he lured the  
buyers and enticed them with rewards.*

*Wandering among the stalls, he turned off the sand glass of time.*

*It is busily and teeming in the market square,  
Logs of canvas and leather lie on the stalls,  
Plum vodka flows in the inns to confirm the transactions made,  
And cartloads stand waiting on a side.*

*There are loafs of white bread, cakes and puppets lying in half-baskets,  
Geese, ducks and chickens cowered together,  
Diary: eggs, cheeses and butter.*

*Lard, smoked meats and large rings of sausages.*

*Shoemakers: boots, sandals and leather shoes,  
Locksmiths and blacksmiths with hoes and horseshoes,  
Potters with enormous bowls and painted tiles.*

*They buy, sell, and spend money.*

*A spectacle, a play, an audience and a theatre,  
A price, a fair, a pay, onlookers, a fair again,  
It is the art of buying and selling,  
A hand clasps a hand, a head nods to their rhythm.*

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*Hermes sums up the profits and losses in excitement,  
The fair is over, the pubs are full till the morning,  
The spirit of time vanished in the fog, the sand glass turned on itself.*

Unfortunately, the events of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries related to the gradual loss of independence by Poland had an adverse effect on the further development of Lipnica Murowana, which found itself on the outskirts of the Austrian Empire. The year 1846 was particularly severe for the citizens. The city was repeatedly flooded and suffered from crop failures, which led to the outburst of an epidemic that decimated the population. Further devastation was brought on by the I World War, during which Lipnica became the arena of fierce fights.

The splendour of this mercantile city has been impossible to return after Poland regained independence and consequently Lipnica lost its town privileges in 1934.

It should be emphasised, however, that the inhabitants tried to preserve the trading tradition in Lipnica Murowana. And they eventually succeeded, although nowadays trade is here conducted on a much smaller scale. The largest fair is held on Palm Sunday, accompanying the Lipnica competition of Easter Palms and Artistic Handicraft. Traditionally prepared food products and hand-made goods prevail during the fair. It is quite popular both among the locals and tourists coming to it from all over Poland.

## **Lipnica – a city of palms**

It has been almost 60 years that Lipnica revives with a feast of colours of locally hand-made Easter Palms, which are often taller than St. Szymon's monument of the main square. According to a popular verse, *with his finger will Szymon point which of the palms does he anoint*, thus indicating the tallest palm and the winner of the competition. Every year, thousands of guests from all over Poland come to cheer on the competitors striving to put their Easter palms in a standing position on the square, and then to honour the winner.

The custom of making Easter palms is one the oldest in Lipnica Murowana. It is passed down from generation to generation in all local families. The palms are usually thin enough to fit in a hand. They are traditionally made of wicker sticks and tied with withe every 20—30 cm, depending on the palm's height. Their tops are decorated with multicolour ribbons and pussy willows.

Formerly, a palm's height reflected the size of a household and the wealth of its maker. Householders made the palms because their work on Palm Sunday was supposed to bring them luck and good harvest in the coming year. According to a local belief, the palms were supposed to protect their makers and their crop from diseases and plagues. Having no palm was considered a bad omen and an uncertain fortune for the next year.

In 1958, a poet from Lipnica, Józef Piotrowski, decided to organize the first Easter Palm competition to revive the disappearing handicraft skills among the inhabitants of Lipnica. The aim of the competition was to select the tallest palm. The competition was welcomed by the locals with huge interest and its popularity increases year by year. It developed from a minor local event to an all-Poland phenomenon that attracts tourists not only from all over the country, but ever more often also from abroad.

The typical height of the palms is around 25 meters. The tallest palm ever made was prepared by a multiple winner, Zbigniew Urbański, whose work in 2015 measured 39 meters and 40 cm. It should be noted that a palm entering the competition needs to be set in a vertical position with human hands, ropes and supporting sticks only. The use of any lifts or cranes is forbidden. Only the tallest palms may lean against a tree to which the base of the palm is tied for security purposes.

Today, the competition is organized by the Municipal Cultural Centre, which cultivates this tradition preparing plenty of workshops, exhibitions and meetings dedicated to the Lipnica palms each year.

On the competition day, there is a number of accompanying events: artistic performances, tasting of regional delicacies, and exhibitions displaying the works of folk artists, which make Palm Sunday a major festivity in Lipnica.

*“It is a beautiful custom, where does it come from?”*

*It is the farmer’s effort, it comes from Lipnica.*

*A grandfather passed it down to his son,*

*Who will in turn pass in on to his grandson.”*

*/Józef Piotrowski/*

### **The Shrovetide Review of Roma Groups**

Another interesting tradition in Lipnica relates to the Carnival season. The Carnival customs developed in Poland since the middle ages. One of them consists in disguising in different costumes. In Lipnica, the masquerade takes place on the last day of the Carnival, called *zapusty* (Shrovetide). Men disguise as Roma or Jewish men, peasants, or beggars, while women accordingly as Roma, Jewish or countrywomen, imitating their language and gestures. Groups

of people disguised in such a way visited houses and received money and food for the Shrove party, if unrecognized.

What remained from the old custom is not much, but the citizens of Lipnica Murowana are persistent in keeping it alive. Each year, a Shrovetide Review of Roma Groups is held in the Rural Community Centre in Lipnica Górna, during which various Roma groups present themselves and many competitions and plays are organized.

#### **The monument of St. Szymon (4)**

Go to the monument of St. Szymon of Lipnica, which stands in the square. It is one of the most characteristic points in Lipnica Murowana. Look up: the saint is represented in a characteristic pose, while giving a vivid sermon. The monument was ordered by the Lipnica community (including countrymen living in the USA) and made in 1913 by the sculptor Henryk Kunzek. There are four reliefs on the plinth depicting St. Szymon helping the poor, as well as the Polish and Lithuanian coats of arms and the coat of arms of Lipnica. It also features the following inscription: *To God and the Homeland, for future generations as an example and encouragement. To our holy compatriot—the citizens of Lipnica.*

St. Szymon's decision to be a preacher was inspired by St. Jan Kapistran, the founder of the Bernardine branch of the Franciscan order, whom Szymon met in Cracow in 1454. Following his example, Szymon undertook preaching, which required broad erudition, excellent knowledge of the Holy Scripture and Christian philosophy, as well as charisma that can move the people. St. Szymon possessed all these qualities. Apparently, "there was no sinner impenitent enough not to return home with a resolution of improvement"<sup>2</sup>. This is why he advanced from the rank of a common preacher to the cathedral preacher: his

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<sup>2</sup> R. Gustaw OFM, K. Grudziński OFM, supplements W. Murawiec OFM, *Święty Szymon z Lipnicy (1435–1482)*, Kraków 2007, s. 41.

sermons were attended by kings and courtiers, professors and students, as well as the whole population of Cracow. Following the example of his master, St. Jan Kapistran, Szymon often interrupted his sermons exclaiming “Jesus, Jesus, Jesus”, for which he was accused by the Cracow Chapter of abusing God’s name; fortunately the accusations were dismissed.

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### **Lipnica—the monuments of the canonized and beatified (5)**

Stop for a while at the monuments of the saints and blessed connected with Lipnica Murowana: St. Szymon, St. Urszula Ledóchowska and Bl. Teresa Ledóchowska. Their figures were made by the students of the Fine Arts High School in Wiśnicz at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The saints of Lipnica play a very special role in the local Catholic community: the inhabitants of Lipnica turn to them with their requests, raise their statues and churches, write pleading and thanksgiving prayers and songs; they are the foundations of the local pride and patriotism—all in all, not every town can take pride in a connection with as many as three persons raised to the altars.

### **St. Andrew’s church (6)**

Walk around St. Andrew’s church and stop at the entrance. Meanwhile, listen to the recording. St. Andrew’s church in Lipnica is over 650 years old. It was erected by a decree of King Casimir III the Great in 1363. The 14<sup>th</sup> century was a period of intense development for Lipnica Murowana. Therefore, the church of St. Leonard was not spacious enough to accommodate the needs of the thriving local community and a bigger, masonry one was built. Despite numerous fires and damages, the church retained its gothic shape. Its walls made of sandstone are whitewashed on the outside. You can see it for yourself taking a look at the outer buttresses, called *szkarpy*, that support the whole structure. The wall reaches 210 cm at its widest. The roof was shingled, and is now covered with tiles. It is finished with a ridge turret and a clock tower with a campanile. During

the II World War, the original bells were taken by the occupants. The local community founded two small bells just several years after the war was over. The currently largest one was presented by the President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Kaczyński, in March 2010 and is named “Maria”. The contemporary appearance of the church is the result of multiple actions concerning its reconstruction. It is also a symbol of the constant efforts of subsequent generations of the citizens of Lipnica, their generosity and hard work for the local community and its temple.

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Enter the vestibule. Take a look at the baptismal font, which currently serves as a vessel for holy water. It was made in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and was part of the equipment of the old church. This is the font in which St. Szymon was baptised. Touch the rough stone, observe its decorations and ponder about the stories of people who joined the Catholic Church in this parish church in Lipnica.

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From the vestibule, move to the main part of the temple. Upon entering turn your head upwards and examine the polychromes painted in the years 1893—1896 by Aleksander Mikłasiński. In the main nave, there are scenes depicting the Ascension of Christ. Note the lancet shape of the rood beam separating the nave from the chancel and the shapes of the windows in the chancel: this is what remained from the previous gothic temple, which burnt. In the rood beam, there is a cross from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Come closer and take a look at the vault in the chancel. Here you can observe a depiction of the Assumption of Mary, also referred to as the Mother of Mercy. Now move your sight a bit down to the main altar. It was made in 1887 in the neo-baroque style. The central painting presents the martyrdom of St. Andrew. Above the painting, there is a relief of St. Michael the Archangel. Look to the right and to the left from the altar. You will see the figures of the following saints: Peter, Paul, Adalbert and Stanisław.

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Take a few steps to the left and observe the pulpit. This neo-baroque element and the main altar probably come from the same period. It features the images of the four Evangelists and the patron of the church. Move a few steps backward. You now stand in front of an eclectic side altar dedicated to St. Joseph with the Child. The upper part of the altar houses a painting of St. Szymon of Lipnica.

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Move left to the so-called “potters” chapel. You can now admire a neo-baroque altar dedicated to Holy Mary, made in 1896. Formerly, a figure of Mary Immaculate was here, but after the beatification of John Paul II both the chapel and the altar were dedicated to him, as he was significantly connected to the Lipnica region and repeatedly visited this temple while still a cardinal, which is commemorated on a plaque embedded in the outer wall of the church.

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Now, go across the nave to the side altar on the right side of the church. It is dedicated to the Heart of Jesus and features a painting representing Bl. Karolina Kózkówna. The altar was founded in 1895 by Jan Pisz of Podgórze near Kraków. Take a few steps to the right.

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You can see a wooden baroque altar dedicated to Jesus Crucified, which is the oldest and most valuable altar in this temple. The precise date of its origin is undetermined, but we know that it existed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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Walk along the nave toward the exit, turn left at the matroneum and go to the side chapel separated with a grating. Enter it. You can now see one of the most precious treasures of sacral art in the Małopolska Region. It is the figure of the Beautiful Madonna and Child from 1370, a gift from King Casimir III the Great for the parish in Lipnica. Art historians call it the predecessor of all other Madonnas<sup>3</sup> in the Małopolska Region because it is much older than the majority of medieval representation of the Mother of God preserved in the region. It is

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<sup>3</sup> *Lipnicka fara: rewitalizacja XIV-wiecznego kościoła parafialnego św. Andrzeja Apostoła w Lipnicy Murowanej, poprzedzająca jubileusz 650-lecia jego powstania*



older even than the famous Madonna of Kruźlowa kept in the collection of the National Museum in Cracow. The sculpture is placed in a shuttered recess in the rococo altar made in 1866. When the shutter is down, one can admire the likeness of the Holy Family with St. Anne and St. Joachim. Two characters stand at both sides of Mary: St. Hyacinth and St. Dominic. Since 2011, a Rosary Procession of Light is held in Lipnica, during which a copy of the figure you are looking at is carried through the streets. The parishioners pray for their needs and a recoronation of Mary's sculpture in Lipnica. On the opposite side of the altar stands a figure representing the Dormition of Holy Mary, probably one of the oldest elements in the church's equipment, dated back to the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

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Before you leave the church, you can sit on a bench under the matroneum and read the text about the Beautiful Madonna of Lipnica.

### ***WE, YOUR SERVANTS IN OUR GLOOMY DAILY LIFE***

*1. In our gloomy daily life, your figure shines like a crystal.*

*Mary, you are the beam of light in our lives on the days of uncertainty.*

*Chorus: Oh, our Mother, the Lady of Lipnica,*

*Who resides in this altar.*

*We are your servants, lead us,*

*And support us in hard moments. (...)*

*3. Oh Mother, give us your goodnight blessing, it is time to leave your chapel.*

*The week will soon be gone and we will venerate you again all together with our songs.*

*Chorus: Oh, our Mother, the Lady of Lipnica,*

*Lead us home.*

*And for those who cannot be with their families*

*Shorten the time of separation.*

*/Words: Krystyna Michalska; music: author unknown/*

If you look above, you will see a pipe organ from 1851 made by Stanisław Baranowski of Stary Sącz. In 1991, its condition was so bad, that its use was ceased and it was decided that it is not fit for further repairs. Fortunately, the opinion of experts changed in 2007 and in the years 2009—2011 the organ was thoroughly renovated, so today it can play songs to the glory of the Lord and the local saints again. Now, leave the church.

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***FROM THE LIPNICA REGION***

*1. God has chosen you, who come from the land of Lipnica:*

*You, our countryman, Szymon, Teresa, and Urszula.*

*To make you the spokespersons in heaven*

*Of our needs, both in the times of happiness and sorrow.*

*2. Let this land that fed you*

*Have a powerful representation before God.*

*So that it will always be loyal to Christ,*

*And keep the heritage of its grandparents.*

*3. Always guard the city, Szymon,*

*Protect the faith, Blessed Teresa,*

*Mother Urszula, you know the sorrows of this land,*

*Put in a word for us at the throne of God.*

*4. Oh, the Land of Saints, how happy you are!*

*God looks upon you with such love.*

*May the stream of grace always fall upon us,  
Support us in heaven, you the Saints of Lipnica.*

*/Words: sister Pawła Świerkosz, SJK; music: author unknown/*

### **The parish school building, currently the Regional House (7)**

Now, go to the former building of the parish school attended by St. Szymon of Lipnica. Since he was a child, Szymon displayed fondness of learning. His parents wanted him to become a baker like them, but noticing the great talent of their son they decided to send him for further education in Cracow. In 1454, Szymon was enrolled to the Department of Liberated Arts at the University of Kraków, from which he graduated three years later obtaining the title of Bachelor. He could have become a physician or a theologian, but he chose the brown habit with a white rope, joining the Order of Bernardines, located near the Wawel castle, in a quarter of Cracow called Stradom, at the church of St. Bernard of Siena. After one year of novitiate and theological studies, he was ordained. He was then sent to Tarnów, where he served as the guardian, that is the superior of the religious house. Around 1467, he returned to Cracow, where he remained until his death, apart for a break during which he made a pilgrimage to Rome and the Holy Land.

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### **The artisans of Lipnica**

The former parish school is currently the Regional House. It keeps a collection of exhibits that bear a testimony to the past of the region. There are cabinets

with important documents and photographs, as well as old agricultural tools and pieces of household equipment that are no longer used today. In the House, you can also find memorabilia of the artisans' fraternities that operated in Lipnica—the evidence of the intense development of the town, particularly in the middle ages.

The House is opened upon booking at the Municipal Cultural Centre. If you wish to visit it, it is recommended to contact the Centre in advance.

According to the chronicles, the oldest and largest craft guild in Lipnica Murowana was established by shoemakers. The guild of blacksmiths and tailors also plays an important role in the life of the town. In the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century, as chronicles have it, there were as many as 26 craft guilds gathering artisans of different specializations.

*„(...) Guild fraternities, the echo of the power of artisans,  
Emerged at the workshop from the effort of handicraft,  
Statutes, privileges written in books  
And the common meetings in the fraternity—Sunday.  
A long candle made of bees' wax,  
First, rolled from wax lumps,  
So that when the last service comes  
It was lightened at a “sister” or “brother” (...)”*

*/Czesław Anioł/*

The affiliation at a guild entailed not only the opportunity to learn a chose profession, but it also enabled one to join a larger community, which enjoyed respect among other citizens. The education of an artisan was hard, long and accompanied by a number of ceremonies. It was crowned with the receipt of the

status of a master, which allowed an artisan to launch his own workshop. The candidate for a master had to prove not only the skills he acquired, making, for instance, a pair of lady's shoes, which was generally considered more difficult than men's shoes. He was also obliged to meet a number of formal requirements, that is having the citizenship of Lipnica and a promise of marriage, should he be yet unmarried.

Unfortunately, over the course of time and the advancement in technologies and their products, the importance of artisans diminished and handicrafts eventually died out. It influenced the change of the traditional guild functions, which assumed a religious character developed particularly vividly in the last period of their activity. Their important role was to serve the Church, as the guilds constituted a type of religious fraternities. Each guild was assigned specific tasks that it was supposed to realise every day. These tasks included taking care of churches. "The shoemakers' guild looked after St. Leonard's church, blacksmiths maintained the church of St. Urszula, which stood in Lipnica between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, according to the entries in the guild's statute from 1683. Additionally, a chapel that stood on the site of the contemporary shrine in Podlesie, belonged in the years 1596—1730 to the blacksmiths' guild. In the parish church, blacksmiths took care of the altar dedicated to the Heart of Lord Jesus and had its own flag. Other activities (rituals) pursued within a guild included firing (smoking) the cross on the crossbeam on the Candlemas day and carrying candles during processions, adorations etc., as well as funerals of the guild's members, which is more heard of"<sup>4</sup>.

For a long time, craft guilds were also responsible for the town's defence. Each guild was assigned to a particular section of town walls. What is more, they were obliged to gather weapons, maintain fighting condition, and take part in a

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<sup>4</sup> An outline of the history of the blacksmiths' guild in Lipnica Murowana:  
<http://lipnicamurowana.pl/archiwum/cechkowalski.htm>

battle, should the need be. These duties were treated as one of the most important privileges because they almost ennobled the craftsmen.

### **The congregation of Ursuline sisters (8)**

Now, go to the congregation of Ursuline sisters.

### **St. Urszula Ledóchowska—the mother of orphans, carer of youths, ambassador of Polish culture<sup>5</sup>**

You are now in front of an orphanage opened in 1938 by Mother Urszula Ledóchowska for the Ursuline sisters (called grey due the colour of their habits), that served as a religious house at the same time.

Urszula, or actually Julia Ledóchowska, moved to Lipnica with her parents and her nine siblings in 1883 from Loosdorf, Austria, when she was 18. Upon her arrival in her father's homeland, she helped her parents manage the household, took care of the sick and poor, assisted in the preparations of boys who wanted to enter a clerical seminary. Three years passed and she entered the congregation of the Ursuline sisters in Cracow, where she served for the next 21 years, gaining recognition as a wise and demanding pedagogue. In the subsequent years of her service as a nun, she run Catholic orphanages around Europe: first in Russia, and after the outbreak of the First World War, in Sweden, Denmark and Norway, mainly providing help for Polish emigrants. She also engaged in the Relief Committee for War Casualties established in Switzerland by Henryk Sienkiewicz. When Poland regained independence, she returned to her country and settled in Pniewy near Poznań. She launched the Congregation of the Ursuline Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Agony, which worked in the field of education and evangelisation, and helped the poor. The congregation grew very quickly: new religious houses were established not only in Poland, but also in Italy and France. Sister Urszula Ledóchowska died in Rome in the

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<sup>5</sup> *Saint Urszula Ledóchowska*

fame of sanctity on May 29, 1939. She was remembered to be always serene and helpful, a loyal follower of Jesus, providing help to those most in need. She was beatified by John Paul II in 1983. 50 years after her departure, in 1989, her mortal remains were moved from Rome to Pniewy. Lipnica Murowana was among the parishes via which the relics travelled there. Urszula was canonized in Rome in 2003.

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Now go to the most important monument in Lipnica: the church of St. Leonard.

### **The church of St. Leonard, a UNESCO World Heritage Site (9)**

Before you walk down from the little bridge, notice the stone that lies near the church's fence in the centre of the road: a rhombus inscribed in a circle. This sign is a symbol of the World Heritage Site list kept by UNESCO since 1978. The first 12 entries of a "particularly common value" included two places in Poland: the Cracow Old Town and the Wieliczka Salt Mine. In 2003, the wooden churches in the southern Małopolska Region were also entered on the list. The church of St. Leonard in Lipnica Murowana is among these six sites. The justification says that they constitute a unique example of different aspects of the medieval church construction traditions in the Roman-Catholic culture.

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Find the board with the information about the Wooden Architecture Route in the Małopolska Region to the right from the church. St. Leonard's church in Lipnica Murowana is one of the historical monuments included in this largest cultural route in Poland, which connects over 250 sites. The most important ones are included in the Open Route of Wooden Architecture, which means that there are guided tours available on chosen days and times from May to September each year. A festival Music Enchanted by Wood is hosted by various sites of the Route every Sunday from June to August. The festival concerts take place also

in January (Christmas carols) and in November (All Souls' Day). We recommend visiting the [www.drewniana.malopolska.pl/?l=en](http://www.drewniana.malopolska.pl/?l=en) website.

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Walk around the church and listen to the information about it. The church you see is a typical example of medieval temples in the Małopolska Region from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is, however, unique because unlike other churches from that period in our region it is preserved in its original shape. The first church on this very site was erected in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Before that, a pagan temple stood here. The church was dedicated to St. Leonard, a popular saint in those days, who was the patron of prisoners, captives, sick and endangered with an assault, as well as of an easy labour. In the middle ages, around 600 temples erected by Bernardines were dedicated to him, while the sanctuary of St. Leonard in Bavaria was the fourth most popular pilgrimage destinations after Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostela. Three centuries later, a new wooden church dedicated to the same patron was raised in the same location and stands here today. Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the temple served as the cemetery church, which is evidenced by the graves surrounding it. Its enlargement was not crucial, as it was not used too often.

St. Leonard's church is a log construction: it is built of horizontally laid beams ended with a sort of locks, that is special cuts that allow to connect them. No nails are used. It consists of two rooms: the nave and the chancel, covered with a common shingled roof topped with a 18<sup>th</sup>-century ridge turret. No tower has been ever added to the church, although it was a common practice in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the so-called *soboty*, which translates to Saturdays, that is an arcade supported on wooden pillars was added around the church. In the old days, it served the faithful as a refuge, because they often arrived for the Sunday service already on Saturdays.



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Enter the church through the south entrance. Notice the characteristic portal: its shape resembles the back of a donkey. When inside the church, breath in the characteristic smell of old wood saturated with resin. Let your eyes get accustomed to the semi-darkness. There are only four small windows in the church, so only a limited amount of sunlight is provided. On your right side, there is a baroque painting of St. Nicholas.

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Go forward and find a stone plaque embedded in the floor. Under your very feet, there is the burial place of the mortal remains of Antoni and Józefina Ledóchowski, the parents of St. Urszula and Bl. Maria Teresa.

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Look up. The vault is decorated with particularly refined stencil paintings. This term refers to the manner of painting: the artists used stencils, that is templates with floral ornaments, that they put to the wall or the ceiling, and next covered them with paint. The vault decorations are around 500 years old. Let your eyes enjoy the abundance of colours and shapes.

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Now, go to the side altar dedicated to St. Nicholas. We celebrate his memorial on December 6. The central part of the altar features St. Nicholas presenting a dowry to three poor women. Take a closer look at it. In the left upper corner of the triptych, there is a depiction of St. Margaret and St. Dorothy (with a key), below, there are likenesses of St. Peter and St. Paul, to the left: St. James and St. John the Evangelist; in the upper right part: St. Catharine (with a cogwheel) and St. Barbara (with a tower). When the altar's wings are closed, we can see the images of the following characters (enlisted clockwise): Ecce Homo (Christ presented to the people), St. Hedwig of Silesia, St. Odile of Alsace, and Our Lady of Sorrows. Unfortunately, in result of a robbery and the later recovery of all the three altars in 1992, due to security reasons, the original altars are kept in the Diocesan Museum in Tarnów, and you can only observe their copies. The original altar of St. Nicholas was made in 1525.

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Go farther and stand against the windows. The polychrome under the windows represents the last supper; above are the images of Holy Mary and St. Szymon. It was the so-called *Biblia pauperum*: back in the days when literacy was not common and Masses were celebrated in Latin, the faithful learned the scenes from the life of Jesus and other saints from this type of paintings.

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Stand in front of the main altar. The original kept in the aforementioned museum was made in 1500. The central part of the triptych features St. Leonard accompanied by St. Lawrence (to the left) and St. Florian (to the right). The wings of the altar house paintings presenting the life of the church's patron saint (at the top): a liberation of a prisoner, the royal family at prayer, and the foundation of the monastery in Noblane. In the left bottom corner, we can find the images of St. Valentine and St. Stephen, while in the right bottom corner: St. Nicholas and St. Stanisław. In the bottom part, the predella, there is the so-called Misericordiae Group, that is from the left: St. Martha, St. Lucia, Holy Mary, Christ with signs of passion and saint Johns: the Evangelist, the Baptist, and the Merciful. The Archangel Michael is depicted above them with a sword and a scroll. When the winged altar is closed, we can see (from the right upper corner) St. Sebastian, Our Lady of Sorrows, Christ and St. Roch. Try to go behind the altar: on the wall, you will see a polychrome depicting the crucifixion. Find a massive oak pillar. According to a legend, this is the Światowid pillar, which was originally kept here in the pagan temple.

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Go a bit farther. Take a look at the wall on your left with the depiction of the Last Judgement. This remarkably colourful "altar" is actually a feretrum, that is a double-sided relief presenting the Holy Trinity and Mary Immaculate, carried during church processions.

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Walk under the rood beam, take a few steps back and look up. In the rood beam separating the chancel from the nave, there is the scene of crucifixion with a

crucifix and baroque sculptures of Holy Mary and St. John. On your left side, there is a copy of the oldest altar in the church; the original kept in the aforementioned museum was made in 1482. Its central painting depicts the Adoration of the Child Jesus. The characters depicted on the wings are St. Paul (right upper corner), St. Catharine, St. Barbara, and St. Peter. When the altar is closed we can observe the scene of the Annunciation.

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Turn more to the left. On the wall you are facing now, there is a polychrome from 1711. Medallions decorated with floral motifs are filled with the scenes of Christ's Passion, resembling the Way of the Cross. The pulpit contains portraits of the four Evangelists.

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Turn your back to the main altar. Despite its modest size, the church also contains a matroneum decorated with depictions of God's commandments. Observe them carefully and think what kind of acts committed by the medieval citizens of Lipnica they condemned. On the left side of the matroneum, there are baroque paintings of the Virgin and the Child with Saint Anne and the patron saints of the guilds of shoemakers and weavers: Saints Crispin and Crispinian. The polychrome on the right side of the matroneum presents the stigmatization of St. Francis and the images of the patrons of Poland: St. Adalbert and St. Stanisław.

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The church of St. Leonard hosts concerts performed on a positive organ. An audio description has been prepared for this instrument.

*A positive organ is a portable instrument. It is very similar to a regal. From the outside, it has the form of a wooden coffer or chest, hence its other name: chest or box organ. The casing is 70 cm long, 45 cm wide and 45 cm high. It contains a keyboard, a system of pipes and two bellows. The instrument in the Lipnica church is dated back to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. It is still in full working order today.*

*The outer side of the casing has the colour of brown wood. Both longer sides contain little doors with two panels. The hinges are made of a dark forged metal. The doors are locked with a key. In the middle part, there is an openwork. It takes the form of a lattice of diagonally arranged slats of wood.*

*Upon opening the doors on the one side, there is a wooden keyboard followed by three rows of metal pipes. The first row contains 45 pipes, the second—36, and the third—29.*

*They are arranged by size from right to left. The smallest one on the right is about 10 cm and the largest one is about 30 cm high. The shorter the pipes, the thinner they become. The thinnest of them have a diameter of around 1 cm, while the thickest ones—of ca. 2 cm. The keyboard consists of 45 black and light keys. The light ones are in the colour of brown wood and are about 10 cm long. The black ones measure around 6 cm.*

*Opening the door on the other side reveals three rows of wooden pipes in the shape of cuboids. They are used to tune the instrument. In the first row, they are positioned vertically. There is 36 of these pipes in this row. The shortest, of about 10 cm, are on the left. They gradually become longer until they reach 20 cm. Wooden pegs are stuck in their upper ends. Moving these pegs up and down enables the tuning of the instrument. In the farther two rows, the pipes are positioned horizontally. There are 8 pipes in the second row and 7 in the third.*

*The lid of the casing is divided into two longitudinal parts. They can be lifted on one side to reveal two bellows. Their fanfold construction is made of wooden strips joined with leather stripes. When the bellow is up, viewed from the side it resembles a half-open book. This is why this type of positive organ is sometimes called a bookcase. Lifting and lowering the bellows causes the flow of air inside the pipes and thus the production of sound. Hence, when a musician plays the keyboard, another person lifts and lowers the bellows.*

*The positive organ in St. Leonard's Church in Lipnica Murowana is one of seven working instruments of such type in Poland. From time to time, concerts presenting its timbre take place here. It was played, among others, by a Japanese pianist Mariko Kato and Professor Elżbieta Stefańska, a great figure of Polish and global harpsichord music.*

Stay in the temple a little bit longer. Let your eyes enjoy the polychrome in the shades of green, blue, white, and red. Take one more look at the equipment of the church. Appreciate over 500 years old decorations. Its beauty delighted also two young students from the School of Fine Arts in Cracow who came here to spend their vacation in 1889: Józef Mehoffer and Stanisław Wyspiański.

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Leaving the church, stop on the river bank. If you think that Uszwica's current is calm and harmless—you are wrong. The river overflowed and threatened the locals and their buildings many times. In 1997, the citizens fought a heroic battle, striving to save St. Leonard's church. They managed to do this thanks to a clever solution: the temple was tied with ropes to a nearby oak. Its 400-year-old roots resisted the surge of water, but the interior of the church and its structure were seriously damaged. Its renovation ended in 2000 and today it shines with its former splendour.

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### **The Ledóchowski manor house(10)**

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Now go to the manor house of the Ledóchowski family. It was built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century by Kazimierz Bzowski. Its style referred to French countryside palaces. It was designed as a one-storey neo-classical building. In 1883, the estate was acquired by Count Antoni Halka Ledóchowski, the father of St. Urszula (Julia) and B. Maria Teresa. Beatification procedures concerning their two brothers: Włodzimierz (a General in the Society of Jesus) and Ignacy (a divisional general in the Polish Armed Forces, soldier in the Home Army),

are in process. Until the Second World War, the building belonged to the Ledóchowski family. It was later nationalized and in the 1980s presented to the Diocesan Curia in Tarnów.

We should definitely mention here the person of Maria Teresa Ledóchowska. She was two years older than her sister Urszula. They both displayed extraordinary literary talents since they were children. In 1885, she fell seriously ill with pox and fought for her life for many weeks. This illness consolidated her decision to sacrifice her life to God. Upon recovery, her parents' efforts resulted in her being nominated by Emperor Franz Joseph I a lady-in-waiting at the court of the Tuscan Duke and Duchess Maria and Ferdinand I, residing at the time in Salzburg. One day, she received a leaflet promoting a Catholic Church mission in Africa, which read: May those whom God gave a talent for writing use it for this cause, to which none is superior. Maria thought it to be the sign of God and decided to dedicate her life to missionary activity. She soon terminated all her social relationships and contacted African missionaries. She joined the order in 1896. Before that, in 1890, she began to publish a journal "The Echo from Africa", which after 20 years was issued in 12 languages, and at the end of her lifetime had a circulation of 100 thousand copies. She also helped the missionaries in Africa printing the Holy Scripture in vernacular languages. In 1894, she launched a sodality of St. Peter Claver: a society propagating the idea of the mission. Its centres soon began to emerge around Europe and were often accompanied by African museums. The main seat was moved to Rome and opened a novitiate. Maria Teresa was a fervent supporter of the mission. She travelled and gave numerous lectures on Africa and actively helped the missionaries. She died in 1922 and was beatified in 1975 by Pope Paul VI. She is now the patron of missions in Poland. Her iconographic image presents her in the habit of St. Peter Claver's sodality or surrounded by African children. She

was given the alias of the Mother of Africa, although she never visited the continent. Her memorial is on July 6.

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Find a shrine on the bank of Piekarski Potok (which translates into a bakers' brook). Sit at the Grotto of Our Lady on the brook bank and listen to the swoosh of water. This was the favourite contemplation place of St. Urszula Ledóchowska. Listen to her words.

### ***SOME THOUGHTS OF ST. URSZULA LEDÓCHOWSKA<sup>6</sup>***

- *We need to be able to show to people that piety does not make us growlers.*
- *Let be good for animals, flowers, all the creatures; God made all of them out of his kindness, so we should worship Him in each of them.*
- *Serenity takes us closer to God, to the virtue; just like sorrow, bad mood, gloomy disposition draws us away from piety.*
- *Mercy begins only when we give what is dear and pleasant to us, when we give making a sacrifice.*
- *The greatest act of love of neighbour consists in constant radiance of the soul sending its bright and warm beam everywhere.*
- *May we learn to be silent, then it will be easier for us to learn the hardest things: to speak in a proper, saintly manner.*
- *There is no day off in the inside work.*

This way you learned about the most important places, people, traditions and customs practiced in Lipnica Murowana, which determine the uniqueness of this region not only from the perspective of tourists, but first of all for the citizens. All these elements interweave and together create the cultural heritage of Lipnica. It should be remembered though, that heritage does not only include

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<sup>6</sup> Kilka myśli Urszuli Ledóchowskiej, <http://bog-w-moim-balaganie.blog.onet.pl/2010/05/29/kilka-mysli-urszuli-ledochowskiej/>

historical monuments and the remembrance of the past. It also consists of the constant presence of people whose knowledge, practices, actions, and relationships shape the space for cultivating the heritage and fill the surrounding objects with a meaning. In these terms, the citizens of Lipnica are special, because they cultivate the remembrance of their heritage, taking pride in it and making it the basis for their contemporary lives.

Each community has its heritage, which determines the identity of its members, shapes bonds between people and their attachment to a place. However, we are not always aware of these relations. We hope this walk will inspire you to reflect on your own heritage and encourage you to discover places, objects and people important for your local community.



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