

The crucifix on the rood beam of Saints Philip and James Church in Sękowa

The crucifix is mounted on the rood beam between the longer walls of the church, over the border between the chancel and the nave. The sculpture dates back to the early 16th century and was created by an unknown artist inspired by Veit Stoss.

The cross is 1.7 m high and almost 1.5 m wide. A white board is nailed to the upper section of the vertical beam, above Christ's head. There are four letters there: INRI. The figure of Christ is 1 m high and is made of wood and painted. The head is encompassed by a crown of thorns. It is a thick green-painted wreath made of supple twigs. Thick, sharp thorns stick out of it. His entire forehead covered in blood shows the pain endured by Christ. Wavy ringlets of brown hair flow down from beneath the wreath, reaching up to his shoulders. The head is slightly tilted to the right shoulder. Christ's face shows pain and some sadness. The eyebrows are pulled together. The closed eyelids obscure Christ's eyes. A trickle of blood flows down the left cheek and the pronounced nose. The lips are encircled by a brown beard.

The body of Christ is nearly naked, covered in skin-like beige paint. His hands are nailed to the cross with thick nails, which go through the middle of each hand. Torrents of blood flow out of these wounds. They flow along his arms, down to the armpits and then on to the side of the chest. The lines of ribs and abdominal muscles are clearly delineated. The blood from the head also drips across the chest. On the right side of the body, there is a wound inflicted with a spear, which produces plenty of blood.

The hips are belted with a piece of fabric tied in front. Its edges part sideways as if the wind is blowing. This element is painted with silver paint. Christ's legs show clearly delineated muscles. Here, too, light skin stands out from the red trickles of blood. They flow from under the fabric on the hips and reach below the knees. The right foot is set against the left one. Both are pierced with one nail. The wound bleeds around it.

The abbreviation on the board comes from the Latin words IESUS NAZARENUS REX IUDAEORUM [Jezus Nazarenus Reks Iudeorum]. This means: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. Lines 19-20 of Chapter XIX of the Gospel of St. John say that this statement was put on the cross in three languages: Hebrew, Latin and Greek. In this way, Pilate stated the reason for his decision to issue a death sentence on Christ.