The Last Supper—a polychrome in the church of St. Leonard in Lipnica Murowana

The painting was created in 1689. It is anonymous.  It hangs in the chancel on the southern wall. Standing opposite the main altar, it is on our right hand side.  It is around 6 meters long and 2 meters high. It occupies nearly the whole length of the chancel wall and reaches the bottom edge of the windows. Its composition is simple and symmetrical. It features Christ and the twelve Apostles.  The men sit around
a long table. The majority of them are opposite us. Two of them sit at the shorter side edges of the table. One figure is painted with its back turned to us. Almost all of the men are bearded. They wear simple robes with long sleeves. The folds of their robes are marked with dark lines. Cloaks hang down from the men’s shoulders. The figures are depicted from their waists up. The colours are dull, faded. White, yellow and blue are the dominant colours.

The central character is Christ. He sits halfway along the longer edge of the table. His fair hair reaches his shoulders. Clearly marked eyebrows lie above his widely open eyes. His thin mouth is surrounded with a fair beard. It covers his neck and reaches to his chest. Christ’s robe is dark-blue and his cloak is yellowish. He raises his arms bent in elbows. The palms of his open hands face us. The figure emanates metaphysical serenity. Above his head hangs a simple white curtain. It consists of two parts pinned up on both sides. The upper part of the curtain is decorated with a row of flowers.

A boy sits before Christ.  He rests his back on Christ’s chest. He is slight in build and much smaller than Jesus. The locks of his fair hair fall down onto his shoulders. He tilts his head to the right.  His face is sad, smooth and beardless. The young man wears a greenish robe. He rests his elbows on the table.

There are five Apostles sitting both on the right and on the left side of Christ.  Four of them opposite us, and the fifth at the short side of the table, depicted in a three quarter view. All of the men are bearded. Some of them have shorter and some longer hair. They all wear light-coloured robes. Their faces are painted schematically, with no characteristic features. They rest their arms on the table and press their hands to their chests.

Opposite Christ sits one men with his back turned to us. His red hair falls down onto his shoulders. He has a cloak on his back.

The table is covered with a white tablecloth. There are round blueish plates lying on it.  Yellow spoons rest on the plates. An Apostle who is the third person on the right hand side of Christ holds a goblet in his hand. Flat platters lie in front of Christ and on his right hand side. There are red globules resembling grapes on one of them. The bottom part of the table blurs away and the painting vanishes. It was washed away in the flood of 1997.

According to the tradition of depicting the evangelical scene of the last supper of Christ with the Apostles, it is assumed that the young beardless man is St. John. And the man who presents his back to the viewers is Judas. Although the scene is static and the characters simplified, the composition gives the impression of tension between these two figures. Christ’s face is turned to Judas. His inspired eyes are directed this way but as if above the traitor’s head.