

Celebrations for the 100th Anniversary of the Autocephaly of the Church of Poland



The 100th anniversary of the declaration of autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in Poland, granted by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople on 13 November 1924, marks a significant milestone.

This anniversary reflects the maturity and ecclesiological awareness of the local Orthodox community, shaped by its rich spiritual, cultural, and liturgical tradition, as well as the courage of its ancestors who sacrificed for the defense of their Church and homeland. The granting of autocephaly allowed for the revival of Orthodox identity among the citizens of Poland and affirmed Orthodoxy as an integral part of the national heritage and culture.

Exactly 100 years later, on 13 November 2024, official celebrations took place at the Cathedral of St. Mary Magdalene in Warsaw. Presided over by His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and All Poland, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated with the participation of members of the Holy Synod of the Polish Orthodox Church and a large number of clergy who had gathered to honor the anniversary.

Metropolitan Sawa greeted representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, the Churches participating in the Polish Council of Churches, the President of the Republic of Poland, central and local authorities, and all the faithful present. In his address, he thanked God for the gift of autocephaly and the blessings bestowed upon the Church in Poland over the years. He reflected on the roots of Orthodoxy in

Poland, linked to the missionary work of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. Citing the historical challenges faced by the Church on its path to autocephaly, he underscored the Church's continuing efforts to achieve canonical independence, despite the hardships.

According to Metropolitan Sawa, autocephaly brought internal stability to the Church and improved relations with the state. As a result, national Orthodox identity was strengthened, instilling in the faithful a sense of patriotic duty and commitment to the independence of their homeland. In heartfelt words, the Metropolitan emphasised the essential contribution of Orthodoxy to the history of Poland, describing autocephaly as a confirmation of the strong bond between Orthodoxy and the country.

During the Divine Liturgy, a special message from the Holy Synod was read, and thanksgiving was offered to both ecclesiastical and state authorities. Prayers were offered for the prosperity and blessing of the country and its people. The Cathedral Choir under the direction of Protodeacon Dr. Sergius Bowtruczuk and the Choir of the Warsaw Theological School under the direction of Professor Vladimir Volosiuk sang hymns. Following the Divine Liturgy, a prayer was offered for the Orthodox Church in Poland, its clergy, and the faithful.

At the conclusion of the festivities in Warsaw, Metropolitan Sawa addressed the younger generation with fatherly affection, encouraging them to draw wisdom from the lives of their ancestors and to seek support in Christ. He concluded his speech by thanking the bishops, the numerous clergy, and the pilgrims who had attended.

As part of the celebrations, an open-air exhibition dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in Poland was organized by the Museum of the Metropolis of Warsaw. In the evening, at 17:00, a commemorative concert was held at the Royal Castle in Warsaw, where Metropolitan Sawa emphasised the importance of sacred music as a form of spiritual expression. The concert featured works by Orthodox and Polish composers, as well as traditional Byzantine and Old Bulgarian music.









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