

## Polish Orthodox Church decided on canonisation of the Katyn Martyrs



On 18 March 2025, under the leadership of His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and All Poland, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church convened in Warsaw for its spring session. Among the key decisions made during the assembly was the canonization of the Katyn Martyrs.

### Honoring the Katyn Martyrs

This year, as the Church marks the 100th anniversary of its autocephaly, the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325 AD), and the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, the Holy Synod, after thorough examination of historical records, has formally recognised as saints those Orthodox clergy and faithful who were martyred in Katyn and other sites of execution and forced displacement.

### Declaration of Canonization

The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church has resolved to canonize and inscribe in the diptychs of the saints:

- Protopresbyter Colonel Szymon Fedorenko
- Protopriest Lieutenant Colonel Viktor Romanowski
- Protopriest Major Włodzimierz Ochab

Other clergy and laity, both known and unknown, whose names are recorded only by Almighty God.

### Commemoration and Canonization Ceremony

The official canonization service of the Katyn Martyrs will take place on 17 September 2025, which will be established as their annual feast day of remembrance. Their memory will also be honoured on other days associated with their lives and martyrdom, as determined by local diocesan bishops.

The Holy Synod has also approved:

- A troparion in honour of the Katyn Martyrs.
- An icon depicting them as saints.
- Official notification of their canonisation to local Orthodox Churches.

As the Orthodox Church in Poland celebrates this historic moment, the faithful are called to seek the intercessions of the Holy Martyrs of Katyn for guidance, strength, and divine mercy.

Read the Resolution of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church on the Canonisation of the Katyn Martyrs:

The Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, called into being by Him, has throughout its history endured trials and persecutions. Yet it has always been strengthened by the martyrdom of Christ's faithful disciples. Each drop of martyr's blood serves as the foundation for new ecclesiastical life.

The Orthodox Church in Poland has shared in these trials throughout its history. For this reason, our generation bows its head in reverence before their martyrdom and proclaims them as saints. In the course of history, we have already recognized many who suffered for their faith—martyrs of the time of the Union of Brest, those of the First and Second World Wars, and those who endured forced resettlements of the faithful of our Church.

Today, as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the autocephaly of our Church, commemorate the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea (325 AD), and mark the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, having examined the materials concerning the lives and deaths of our Brothers and Sisters who perished in Katyn and other places of martyrdom and exile, and in accordance with Holy Tradition:

The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church, in the name of the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—hereby includes in the ranks of the saints and records in the Diptychs of the Saints of the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church:

Archpriest Colonel Szymon Fedorenko,

Protopriest Major Wiktor Romanowski,

Protopriest Major Włodzimierz Ochab,

Clergy and laity, both those whose names are known and those known only to Almighty God.

The canonisation celebrations of the Katyn Martyrs shall be held on 17 September 2025, and this date shall be established as a day of their liturgical commemoration.

Their memory shall also be honoured on other days associated with their lives (e.g., the feast day of their patron saint), as determined by the diocesan bishop.

The apolytykion in their honour is hereby approved.

The icon depicting them is hereby approved.

The local Orthodox Churches shall be informed of the canonisation of the Holy Katyn Martyrs.

Holy Katyn Martyrs, pray for us!

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