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POLISH PARISH CELEBRATES 590TH ANNIVERSARY



The oldest Orthodox parish in the eastern Polish city of Siemiatycze has existed for nearly six centuries. The church celebrated its patronal feast on July 12, the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul.

This year marked the parish's 590th anniversary, joyously celebrated with hierarchical services and pilgrims from all across Poland. The first written mention of the church, from the 15th century, states that it was founded in 1431.

The festivities began with the All-Night Vigil on the evening of July 11, celebrated by His Grace Bishop Warsonofiusz of Siemiatycze with the clergy of the Siemiatycze Deanery, the Terespol Deanery of the Lublin-Chełm Diocese, and Hieromonk Kasjan from the Monastery of St. Onuphrius the Great in Jabłeczna, reports the site of the Polish Church.

Three Divine Liturgies were celebrated the next day, with the blessing of holy water following the early Liturgy, and an Akathist to the Holy Apostles following the

second Liturgy.
The main Liturgy was celebrated by His Grace Bishop Paweł of Hajnówka and Bp. Warsonofiusz, who were greeted by the local Brotherhood of Orthodox Youth and parish council as they entered the church. The homily was offered by Bp. Paweł, who presented the lives of the Holy Apostles, emphasizing the importance of the feast in the liturgical year, and pointing out the great labors with which the Apostles preached the Gospel.

We are all called to be apostles—messengers of God, His Grace emphasized.

The Liturgy was followed by a solemn procession, after which the hierarchs congratulated all on the feast and the parish jubilee. Bp. Warsonofiusz wished many years to Bp. Paweł on his name's day.
In honor of the parish anniversary, a number of ecclesiastical awards were presented to parish choir, the local church brotherhood, and honored parishioners who have labored for the good of the church. The church was also gifted a complete set of liturgical vessels and an altar cross.

"This year's jubilee celebration of the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul will be remembered for a long time because of the extraordinary prayerful atmosphere that accompanied all the services and the fact of the 590th anniversary of the community of Siemiatycze and its centuries-old history, through which many generations of believers passed, for whom faith in Christ was the deepest meaning of life," the Church report concludes.





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