



## Nowe Skalmierzyce

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A legend about the creation of a Ociąża, tells that stepson, was fleeing from his stepfather, took refuge in the forest with an old hermit. The old man took him and then gave him a granddaughter of his wife. Young chose a piece of forest, there cut down trees and gave birth to the village Ociąż. So much said the same legend. Today there is no trace of the forest, and the role of the modern refuge for the wandering souls could play the church. Of course wooden! leaving the realm of folk tales and going to the historical facts, in the parish of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ociążu reaches XIIIth and XIVth century. Available sources mention the existence at the time of the temple, which for centuries served the faithful. Unfortunately, because of its wooden structure was destroyed by fire.

Works to bring the new church started a pastor Andrzej Cichawski together with the owners of the village - Lutomirscy. Another devastating fire broke out in 1785, but shortly after the disaster began to reconstruction. The present church was built between 1785-1786, and in 1927 conducted its expansion, as a result gained a distinctive front. Inside, a special attention deserves mural made by Victor Gosieniecki in 1929. This talented person who is a Polish painter, graphic artist, restorer and teacher. Besides the numerous paintings on the walls of churches of Wielkopolska and Pomorze, he also designed stained glass windows. There is also an exceptionally beautiful rococo main altar from the end of eighteenth century with a valuable picture of Our Lady in the type of the Snows from 1637 and the figures of the founders, by an unknown artist with the initials AS. Madonna entered the middle holding the Child on her right arm. Both characters are completely covered with dresses. Recent years are a complete renovation of the old walls of the temple, which was carried out thanks to the generosity of parishioners and parish involvement. The church is a wooden bell tower still pole construction, covered with shingles, dating from 1948. Despite his relatively young age is already in the register of monuments. After seeing the temple can draw attention to the surrounding cemetery. There are a few old graves and stone monument of the Countess Wanda Poniński Tyszkiewicz, with hardly legibly plaque bearing the inscription "Lady in Ociężu". This tomb is the entrance to the crypt under the church, in which are also buried Fabian (U1814.12.24) and Christine (U1831.08.27) Parczewskich. It is worth to mention that in Ociężu was born blessed of the Catholic Church, Father Władysław Mączkowski. During World War II, he held secret priestly ministry. He was arrested by the Nazis 26<sup>th</sup> August, 1940, and then transported to the concentration camp at Dachau, where he died on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1942. This was an extraordinary figure, supporting the spirit broken, directing their thoughts to the mercy of God. He died of exhaustion, relief of suffering and carried them share their hunger bread ration. He spoke to the prisoners of death as a joyful encounter with Christ. Father Władysław Mączkowski was beatified by John Paul II in Warsaw on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1999. In the presbytery of the temple in Ociężu is his portrait.

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