

2. THE FORMER CHURCH SITE IN BRUSNO STARE

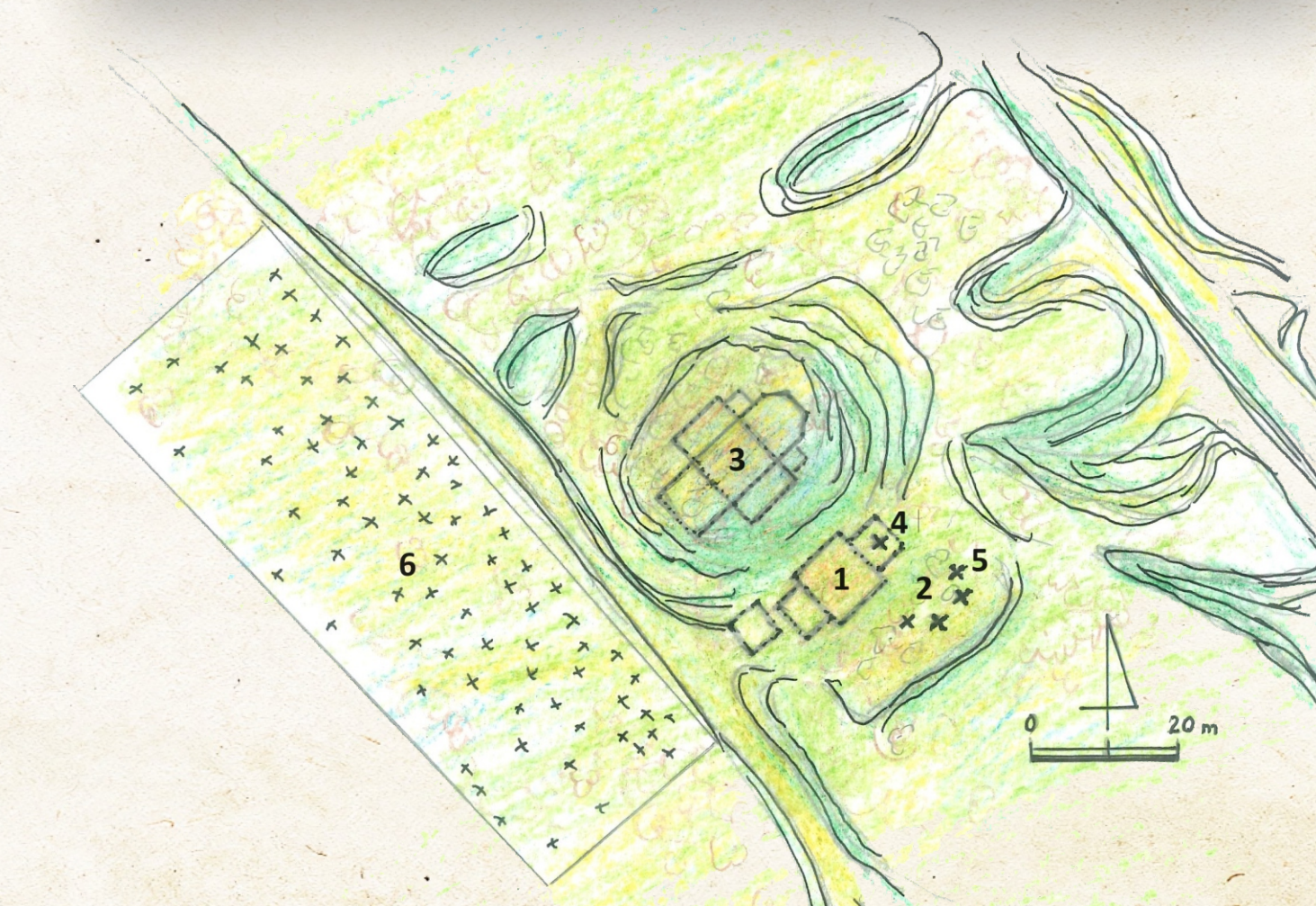
The Ruthenian (Ukrainian) community living in Brusno Stare belonged to an Eastern Rite parish established in the village before 1578. Endowment privileges for this parish were granted in the 17th and 18th centuries by the Lubaczów starosts and confirmed by the kings: John II Casimir, John III Sobieski, and Augustus II. From the end of the 17th century, the parish was associated with the Uniate (i.e., Greek Catholic) Church and formed part of the Przemyśl Eparchy and the Lubaczów Deanery. At the end of the 18th century, Brusno Nowe was incorporated into the parish, becoming the seat of the local pastor and hosting a branch church. In 1938, the combined number of the faithful in both villages was 1,556.

The first wooden parish church dedicated to St. Paraskeva existed in Brusno Stare as early as the end of the 16th century. According to local legend, it was located on the left bank of the Brusienka Stream. It was likely burned during the Tatar invasion of 1672. Not until 1716 was another wooden church built on the opposite side of the stream. Evidence of its existence can be found in the old church cemetery with three 18th-century stone cross-shaped gravestones. This church had a distinctive silhouette featuring a dome over the nave, accompanied on the west side by a bell tower. The nave's interior was decorated with paintings of saints and scenes from the life of Christ. On the exterior walls, beneath the overhanging eaves, epitaph inscriptions were displayed.

In 1906, due to the construction of a masonry church, the wooden one was dismantled. The new church was erected through the efforts of the local community and the parish priest, Father Piotr Kuzyk. It featured a cruciform plan with a tall dome where the arms of the cross intersected. The prominent sculptor and painter Grzegorz Kuźniewicz (1871–1948), who was from Brusno Stare, worked on its interior decoration. He also designed and helped create a stone cross commemorating both the parish's first holy missions (1925) and the site of the previous church. Next to it stood a smaller cross, founded in 1938 to mark the 950th anniversary of the Christianization of Rus'.

After the Ukrainian community was resettled between 1945 and 1947, the church was abandoned. It was dismantled before 1956. Today, on a small hill, the remains of its foundations can still be seen.

(compiled by: Janusz Mazur)



Christ Pantocrator and Mother of God Hodegetria, painted by Grzegorz Kuźniewicz, oil on panel, ca. 1930. Icons from Greek-Catholic Church of St Paraskeva in Brusno Stare, collection of the Museum of the Borderlands in Lubaczów

