

THE CHURCH OF SAINT JAMES THE GREAT in ŠKOFJA LOKA

- Škofja Loka parish arose from the great parish in Stara Loka. It was founded as an independent parish in 1804 although it existed as a vicarage with its own priest in records dating from 1262. The first written records of the church date from 1271.
- The current church was built in the 15th century and represents a typical Slovenian Gothic church with nave aisles. The church belfry (1532) is 56 m tall and there are four bronze bells in it. In 1870, a pseudogothic shed was built as an extension on the west side, following the blueprint made by local Janez K Molinar.
- There is a mighty statue of the main patron saint James the Great, the Apostle, that stands out in the presbytery. His name day is celebrated on July 25th. The statue is surrounded by Saint Peter (with keys), Saint Mathew (with a book), Saint John (with a chalice) and Saint Paul (with a sword). The statues of Saint Roch (with a dog) and Saint Sebastian (with arrows) are hidden behind the arch.
- The vaulted ceiling of the nave, supported by arched diagonal ribs, dates back to 1471. There are images of saints, symbols of individual noble families and craftsmen(guilds), or just ordinary ornaments on the headstones in raised relief. Some fields between the ribs were restored in 1931 by academic painter Matej Sternen and others were painted with ornaments afresh by Ciril Križnar. On the arch at the entrance of the presbytery, there is a fresco of Christ the King, which was painted by academic painter Slavko Pengov.
- The side altars made of black marble (1700) are a work of Mihael Kuša. The painting on the left side altar represents Jesus on the Mount of Olives. Beneath it, there is a tabernacle, which was made of white Carrara marble around 1860. There is a depiction of Saint Catharine of Alexandria on the right side altar – on the sides there are statues of Saint Barbara (on the left) and Saint Lucia (on the right).
- The left side chapel with a baptistery, the tomb of God and all the chandeliers were made during 1951 -1954 following the blueprints made by the architect dr. Jože Plečnik, as well as the Crucified, surrounded by precious stones on the right side of the arch. Under the arch, there is a statue of Fatima Mary, which was brought from Fatima, Portugal in 2008.
- In the right side chapel, there is a big Missionary cross (1890) and the statues of John the Apostle and the Sad Mother of God. There is a statue of Saint Joseph above the confessional booth and a copy of a painting Mary Help of Christians from Brezje, a work of Mirko Šubic, opposite the booth.
- Stained-glass windows are the work of academic painter Stane Kregar. They were made during 1961 and 1975.
- The Stations of the Cross was painted by Jožef Plank from Viena around 1880.
- The organs (1932) with 23 registers are pneumatic and a work of Franc Jenko from Šentvid.

...and the most important thing: THE CHURCH IS POPULATED, BECAUSE JESUS LIVES HERE – A LIVING GOD IN THE HOLY SACRAMENT. PRAISE AND GLORY BE TO OUR GOD FOREVER AND EVER!
