

The end of the Bohemian Circary*

Two hundred years ago, the last provincial chapter of the Bohemian Circary of the Premonstratensian Order convened at Hradiste Abbey near Olomouc Moravia. Sessions began on August 27, 1780 and terminated four days later on August 31 st. No decrees were promulgated, and the assembled prelates and delegates merely discusses the recent demise of Empress Maria Theresa and the accession of her son Joseph II. Concerning the latter, the prelates voiced deep concern that the new emperor and his blatantly anti-clerical government might soon suppress their cloisters¹). Unfortunately, their fears proved to be well founded. In 1782 the suppressions began, and by 1787 only 8 Premonstratensian Houses remained in operation. At the time that the chapter was convened, the circary numbered 18 cloisters — 15 for men and 3 for women. These were located in Bohemia, Moravia, Upper Austria, Lower Austria, Carinthia, Hungary and Silesia. The latter province was lost to Austria by its wars with Prussia. Nevertheless, the 2 cloisters in Silesia remained under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Bohemian Circary²).

In the National Museum of Czech Literature in Praha,

* Selected bibliography:

Catalogus Codicum Bibliothecae Strahoviensis in Litterarum Bohemicarum Museo Pragae Asservatorum (Litterarum Bohemicarum Museum Pragae: 1971). Volumen V, pagina 225.

Catalogus sacri canonici, et exemti Ordinis Praemonstratensis almae circariae Bohemiae, eidemque incorporatarum provinciarum autoritate Capituli Provincialis canoniae Gradicensis prope Olomucium Moravorum, M. DCC. LXXX. Die 31. Mensis Augusti terminati, Editus Pro Anno M. DCC LXXXI. Olomucii, Typis Josephae Hirnlianæ, Factore Josepho Francisco Loserth, 1781.

Grassl, Dr Basilius Franz. «Der Praemonstratenserorden, seine Geschichte und seine Ausbreitung bis zur Gegenwart». Analecta Praemonstratensia. Tomus X (1934), 129 pp. (Tongerloae: Typis Abbatiae, 1934).

Schematismus canonicorum regularium sacri candidi ac exemti Ordinis Praemonstratensis Regiae Praepositurae S. Joannis Baptistae de Castro Jaszo. Ad Annum Scholasticum 1891/2. (Cassoviae: Typis Ludovici Ries, 1891).

Schroll, P. Bede, O.S.B. «Das Prämonstratenser-Stift S. Maria zu Grifenthal». Archiv für vaterlandische Geschichte und Typographie für Kärnthen. 1886. (Klagenfurt: 16 Jahrgang., 166 pp.).

¹) Schematismus, p. 22.

²) Grassl, pp. 100-102.

Czechoslovakia (formerly the Abbey of Strahov), there is conserved a tome containing all the chapter records of the Bohemian Circary from 1691 until 1780. This volume is listed in the book catalogue of the museum as follows: «Catalogus Codicum Bibliothecae Strahoviensis in Litterarum Bohemicarum Museo Pragae Asservatorum (Litterarum Bohemicarum Museum Pragae: 1971) Volumen V, pagina 225: 2935 DU I 7 «Protocollum Sacri et Canonici Ordinis Praemonstratensis Circariae Bohemiae» pp. 9-895, Circariae Boemiae 1691-1780». At the end of that tome is a list of the Premonstratensians signing the chapter records of 1780.

DU I 7. PROTOCOLLUM SACRI CANONICI ORDINIS PRAEMONSTRATENSIS
CIRCARIAE BOHEMIAE.

Acta sunt in inclyta canonia Gradicensi die 31 Augusti 1780.

Paulus Ferdinandus Václavík, abbas Gradicensis, vicarius generalis

Wenceslaus Josephus Mayer, abbas Sioneus, visitator perpetuus

Gabriel Fliegel, abbas Siloensis, proprio et nomine procuratorio RR. D.
abbatis Gerasensis

Gregorius Lambek, abbas Lucensis, visitator, officio meo et RR. Domini
prelati Griffensis et praepositi Grabensis nomine

Christophorus Trautmannsdorf, abbas Teplensis

Michael Morava, abbas Zabdovicensis

Siardus Pengler, abbas Plagensis

Leopoldus, abbas Pernecensis

Josephus Winkelburg, abbas Doxanensis

Paulus Novák, abbas Chotěšovicensis

Josephus Pelikán, abbas Neoříšensis

Hermannus Josephus, abbas Czarnovacensis

Gerardus, abbas primus Jasoviensis

Daniel, praelatus Lelessensis

Augustinus, praelatus et praepositus Czornensis

Isidorus, praelatus et praepositus Turgensis

Edmundus Link, canonicus Gradicensis, secretarius provinciae et capituli juratus, SS. Theologiae doctor

Candidus Sathler, prior Sioeneus, SS. Theologiae doctor

Joannes Meltzer, prior Siloensis

Laurentius Gartner, prior Gradicensis, SS. Theologiae doctor

Carolus Seitz, prior Lucensis, SS. Theologiae Doctor
Mathaeus Köhler, prior Teplensis, not. apostolicus juratus
Sarcander Schellerer, prior Zabrdovicensis
Emanuel Wendelin, prior Milovicensis
Ignatius Hoestlhofer, prior Gerasensis
Candidus Obermüller, prior Plagensis
Florianus Alberth, prior Pernecensis
Clemens Mazek, prior Neorisensis suo et parochorum nomine
Nicolaus Hollaus, prior Sacri Montis, SS. Theol. doctor
Leopoldus Stöhr, prior Jassoviensis
Carolus Ptaczek, praeses Kyritainensis

Michael Los, consistorii Brunensis assessor, decanus foraneus et parochus Iglaviensis pro parochis Strahoviensibus

Quirinus Ferdinandi, proparochus Siloensis, SS. Theol. baccalaureus et professor

Constantinus Beran, professus Gradicensis, pro parochis

Godifridus Pahnost, pro parochis Lucensibus, protonotarius apost.

Georgius Mayer, professor theologiae, pro parochis, notarius apostolicus juratus (Teplensis)

Dismas Rupp, professus Zabrdovicensis pro parochis

Clemens Žatecký, parochus Milovicensis

Engelbertus Hoppel, professus et proparochus Gerusensis

Fridericus Frid, professus et proparochus Plagensis

Raphael Richter, professus et proparochus Pernecensis

Gabriel Schöttner, professus Sioneus pro parochis Doxanensibus

Salesius Wurnitzer, Secretarius Teplensis pro parochis Chotesov

Philippus Zinker, proparochus Jassoviensis, protonotarius, vice-archidiaconus super parochias Abauduennes

Ladislau Miklossi, proparochus Czornensis

It is indicated from the list of names that 45 Premonstratensians attended the Hradiste Chapter in 1780. Among this number were 13 abbots, 3 prelates, 13 priors, 1 praeses and 15 delegates.

The attendance by individual cloister is as follows:

Strahov = abbot, prior, delegate	= 3
Milevsko = prior, delegate	= 2
Tepla = abbot, prior, delegate	= 3
Chotesov = abbot, delegate	= 2
Doksany = abbot, delegate	= 2
Schlägl = abbot, prior, delegate	= 3
Pernegg = abbot, prior, delegate	= 3
Geras = prior, delegate	= 2
Hradiste = abbot, prior, delegate, notary	= 4
Svaty Kopecek = prior	= 1
Nova Rise = abbot, prior	= 2
Zabrdovice = abbot, prior, delegate	= 3
Krtiny = praeses	= 1
Zeliv = abbot, prior, delegate	= 3
Jasov = abbot, prior, delegate	= 3
Louka = abbot, prior, delegate	= 3
Csorna = praepositus, delegate	= 2
Türje = praepositus	= 1
Czarnowanz = abbot	= 1
Lelesz = Praepositus	= 1
TOTAL	= 45

An enduring accomplishment of the Hradiste Chapter of 1780 was the authorization of the publishing of a catalogus of the circary. It was completed during the succeeding year, and a copy of that catalogus is preserved today in the Museum of Czech Literature at Praha, Czechoslovakia. Its title is: «Catalogus sacri canonici, et exemti Ordinis Praemonstratensis almae circariae Bohemiae, eidemque incorporatarum provinciarum Autoritate Capituli Provincialis canonica Gradicensi prope Olomucium Moravorum, M. DCC. LXXX. Die 31. Mensis Augusti terminati, Editus Pro Anno M. DCC. LXXXI. Olomucii, Typis Josephae Hirnlianae, Factore Josepho Francisco Loserth. 1781». Presenting a comprehensive picture of the ancient Bohemian Circary in its final days, the catalogus consists of a title page and 103 pages of entries — the pages are not numbered. Pages 1-14 list all the prelates: 18 of cloisters, 1 of the order and the Praepositura of Lelesz has the word «vacat». Following these are the personnel of 15 canonicae, 2 praepositurae and 3 parthenons. pp. 15-27 — Canonica Strahoviensis
pp. 28-31 — Canonica Siloensis

- pp. 32-41 — Canonica Gradicensis
pp. 42-51 — Canonica Lucensis
pp. 51-53 — Canonica Vincentina
pp. 54-62 — Canonica Teplensis
pp. 63-68 — Canonica Zabrdoviensis
pp. 69-73 — Canonica Gerusensis
pp. 74-78 — Canonica Plagensis
pp. 79-81 — Canonica Pernecensis
pp. 81-83 — Canonica Neo-Reischensis
pp. 84-85 — Canonica Griffensis
pp. 86-91 — Canonica Jassoviensis
pp. 91-92 — Praepositura Csornensis
pp. 92-93 — Praepositura Turiensis
pp. 93-97 — Parthenon Doxannensis
pp. 97-100 — Parthenon Chotieschoviensis
pp. 101-102 — Parthenon Czarnovanc. (iensis)
p. 103 — Syllabus Defunctorum intra Tempus Compilati Catalogi

For the entries listing the prelates at the beginning of the catalogus, information given includes name, titles, birth, profession, first mass, election and installation. In the individual entries for each member of the circary, the catalogus has four columns on each page from page 15 to page 102 inclusive. Column headings for the male members listed on pages 15-93 are as follows:

Column 1 — Nomen, cognomen, patria

Here are listed family name, religious name, country of birth, birthplace, title and/or occupation. Entries for Canonica Gradicensis on pages 32-41 also include the baptismal name of each canon. Entries for Canonica Vincentina on pages 51-53 omit the country of birth and birthplace of each canon. Entries for Canonica Griffensis on pages 84-85 list titles or occupations only for prior, subprior, senior and novices.

Column 2 — Nativitas (date of birth)

Column 3 — Professio (date of solemn profession)

Column 4 — Primitiae (date of Forst Mass)

On pages 93-102 are the entries for all female members of the circary. The four columns have the following headings:

Column 1 — Nomen, cognomen, patria

This column lists family name (ending with «in», religious name, country of birth, birthplace, title and/or occupation. Entries for

Parthenon Chotiechoviensis (pages 97-100), and for Parthenon Czarnovanciensis (pages 101-102) *do not* include country of birth or birthplace.

Column 2 — Nativitas (date of birth)

Column 3 — Professio (date of simple profession)

Column 4 — Velatio (date of solemn profession)

In this catalogus are 812 entries (697 for men and 115 for women). Male Members include: 19 prelates, 567 priests, 29 solemn professed clerics, 41 simple professed, 27 novices, 3 conversi (simple professed), 1 conversus novice and 1 laicus. The Female Members include: 67 solemn professed (i.e. velatio), 29 simple professed (i.e. professio), 4 novices and 15 conversae (simple professed).

On the final page of the catalogus (p. 103) is a necrology of those members of the circary who died while the book was in preparation. These entries begin with 29 Januari and end with 29 Maji. Twelve names are in this short necrology: 1 prelate and 1 canon of Louka, 2 canons from Zabrdovice, 2 canons of Zeliv, 1 canon from Tepla, 1 canon of Geras, 2 canons from Strahov, 1 canon of Griffen and 1 canoness of Doksany.

As a conclusion to this study of the Bohemian Circary in 1780-1781, the author includes statistics of each cloister gathered from the Catalogus of 1781 and from other sources. The suppressions of Joseph II ended the old circary, and the surviving cloisters never regained the numbers in personnel which were reached at the conclusion of the Chapter of Hradiste. The old order ceased, and a new style of religious life began in 1802 for the extant cloisters of the Premonstratensian Order within the confines of the Empire of Austria.

A. Bohemia

1. Strahov (Mons Sion) in Praha was a male abbey of 101 members: 1 abbot of Strahov, 1 abbot of Doksany, 78 priests, 2 solemn professed clerics, 16 simple professed, 2 novices and 1 conversus. The abbot of Strahov was the perpetual visitator of the houses in the circary. The abbey had a dependent priory at Milevsko with 16 residents: 3 in the parish, 2 as normal school teachers and 1 as a normal school inspector. Assisting the abbot at Doksany were 7 priests (2 in the parthenon and 5 in its parishes). Nineteen priests served in other abbey parishes, and 2 had the special care of the Marian Shrine in the Sepekov Parish. The

abbey also operated the Norbertinum College in Praha which had 1 rector, 1 professor and 7 students from Strahov. Three priests were professors at the Charles University in Praha, and 3 others served as professors in the gymnasium at Zatec¹).

2. Tepla Abbey in Western Bohemia had a male personnel of 92: 1 abbot of Tepla, 1 abbot of Chotesov Parthenon, 79 priests, 10 solemn professed clerics, and 1 conversus. Residing with the Abbot of Chotesov were 8 Tepla priests to assist as chaplains to the canonesses and to care for the shrine to the Holy Cross at Kreuzberg. Chotesov had 7 parishes requiring 12 other Tepla priests to administer them. Tepla Abbey operated a Marian Shrine et Maria Stock requiring a staff of 4 priests, 1 priest was a professor at the Charles University in Praha, 33 priests staffed the other incorporated parishes, 1 priest and 4 clerics were students at the university in Praha²).

3. Zeliv (Siloe) was a male abbey in Southern Bohemia with 35 members: 1 abbot, 24 priests, 2 solemn professed clerics, 4 simple professed, 3 novices and 1 conversus novice. One priest of the abbey served as Circary Procurator in Vienna (+ 1781), and 10 were in the abbey parishes. The parish of Vojslavice had a famous miraculous Marian Statue³).

4. Doksany was a parthenon for Premonstratensian Canonesses and numbered 47 female inhabitants: 1 prioress, 28 solemn professed, 9 simple professed, 3 novices and 6 conversae⁴).

5. Chotesov was another parthenon of Premonstratensian Canonesses which had a population of 45 religious: 1 prioress, 22 solemn professed, 14 simple professed and 8 conversae. This parthenon owned Kreuzberg a shrine in honor of a miraculous crucifix; and 7 parishes⁵).

B. Moravia

1. Hradiste Abbey for men near Olomouc had a personnel of 84, which consisted of 1 abbot, 67 priests, 6 solemn professed clerics, 4

¹ Catalogus 1781, pp. 15-27. Grassl, p. 91.

² Catalogus 1781, pp. 54-62. Grassl, p. 91.

³ Catalogus 1781, pp. 28-31; Grassl, p. 91.

⁴ Catalogus 1781, pp. 93-97.

⁵ Catalogus 1781, pp. 91.

simple professed and 6 novices. Connected with this abbey was the dependent priory of Svaty Kopecek which was also a famous Marian Shrine. Sixteen priests were stationed there. One priest served as dean and professor of the University of Brno, another was stationed at Türje in Hungary and 27 served in pastoral assignments⁶⁾.

2. Louka Abbey for men was near Znojmo and counted 89 members: 1 abbot of Louka, 1 Titular Praepositus of Graba, 73 priests, 7 solemn professed clerics and 7 simple professed. One priests served as Circary Procurator in Vienna, 33 were in parishes, 4 served at Lelesz Praepositura in Hungary, 3 were at the Lechovice Marian Shrine, 3 at the Milfron Marian Shrine and 1 priest was administrator of Nagyvarad Praepositura in Hungary⁷⁾.

3. Zabrdovice Abbey for men was in Brno and numbered 52 in its personnel: 1 abbot, 44 priests, 3 solemn professed clerics and 4 simple professed. This abbey had a Marian Shrine at Krtiny where a praeses and 5 priests were in residence. Three priests resided at the Praepositura of Janoshida in Hungary, and 8 others were in the incorporated parishes⁸⁾.

4. Nova Říše Abbey had a personnel of 24 men: 1 abbot, 20 priests and 3 novices. Three priests served the incorporated parishes, 8 served as auxiliary assistants in various parishes and 1 was a normal school teacher⁹⁾.

C. Hungary

1. Jasov Abbey numbered 30 male members: 1 abbot, 26 priests, 2 solemn professed clerics and 1 simple professed. This cloister operated a gymnasium at Roznava where 7 priests served as the faculty in residence there. Another priest resided as a professor at the Royal Academy in Győr, and another priest served as a professor at the Royal Academy of Kassa (Kosice). Five other priests cared for the abbey parishes¹⁰⁾.

2. Csorna was an independent praepositura (provosty) with 10 male

⁶⁾ Catalogus 1781, pp. 32-41; Grassl, p. 91.

⁷⁾ Catalogus 1781, pp. 42-51; Grassl, p. 91.

⁸⁾ Catalogus 1781, pp. 63-68; Grassl, p. 91.

⁹⁾ Catalogus 1781, pp. 81-83.

¹⁰⁾ Catalogus 1781, pp. 86-91.

religious: 1 praepositus infulatus, 5 priests, 2 solemn professed clerics and 2 novices. This cloister had the parish of Csorna attached to it¹¹).

3. Túrje was another independent praepositura with 6 religious: 1 praepositus infulatus, 1 priest, 2 solemn professed clerics and 2 novices. To this praepositura was attached the parish of Túrje¹²).

D. Upper Austria

1. Schlägl Abbey near Aigen in the Mühlvertal, was the only Premonstratensian house in this province and numbered 46 male inhabitants: 1 abbot, 40 priests, 1 solemn professed cleric and 4 simple professed. The abbey also had a Marian Shrine at Maria Trost and 19 priests were staffing its parishes¹³).

E. Lower Austria

1. Geras Abbey for men possessed 48 in its personnel: 1 abbot, 43 priests, 3 novices and 1 conversus. There was a Marian Shrine at Maria Schnee, and 20 priests served the various abbey parishes¹⁴).

2. Pernegg Abbey numbered 20 male inhabitants: 1 abbot, 17 priests, 1 simple professed and 1 novice. One priest was vicar of the abbey church and 3 staffed the 2 incorporated parishes¹⁵).

F. Carinthia

1. Griffen near Klagenfurt was the only Premonstratensian Cloister in this province, and it had a population of 24 male religious: 1 abbot, 18 priests and 5 novices. This abbey had 12 priests in its incorporated parishes and operated a shrine to the Holy Cross at Heiligenkeuz¹⁶).

G. Silesia

1. Vinzenz-Stift (abbey) in Breslau numbered 36 male inhabitants: 1

¹¹) Catalogus 1781, pp. 91-92.

¹²) Catalogus 1781, pp. 92-93.

¹³) Catalogus 1781, pp. 74-78.

¹⁴) Catalogus 1781, pp. 68-73.

¹⁵) Catalogus 1781, pp. 79-81.

¹⁶) Catalogus 1781, pp. 84-85. Schroll, pp. 160-166.

abbot of Vinzenz-Stift, 1 abbot of Czarnowanz Parthenon, 32 priests and 2 deacons. Three priests assisted at Czarnowanz, 2 were in Beuthen (praepositus et vicarius) and 12 served the abbey parishes¹⁷).

2. Domus Dei Parthenon at Czarnowanz had 23 Premonstratensian Canonesses: 1 prioress, 14 solemn professed, 6 simple professed, 1 novice and 1 conversa. This parthenon had 2 parishes and a filial church. The Shrine Chapel of St. Ann on the nearby Annaberg was also under the care of Czarnowanz¹⁸).

St. Anna's Church

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¹⁷) Catalogus 1781, pp. 51-53.

¹⁸) Catalogus 1781, pp. 101-102.