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National pilgrimage to Saint Ludmila at the summer residence of the House of Přemyslid in Tetín (Central Bohemia) on the occasion of the 1100th anniversary of the assassination of the patron saint of the nation, the grandmother of Prince Saint Wenceslas, Saturday, 18th September 2021. The photo captures the representative of the Pope, Cardinal Christoph Schönborn OP, Archbishop of Vienna, to his right Cardinal Dominik Duka OP, Primate of Bohemia, to his left Jan Graubner, Metropolitan of Moravia. Photo Člověk a víra (Man and Faith).



Pastoral Care of Lawyers in Prague

16th September: Feast of Saint Ludmila, Mother of Nation, and National Pilgrimage to Tetín

In 2021, we remember that 1100 years have passed since *the martyrdom of St. Ludmila*, the first Czech and Slavic saint, the grandmother of St. Václav (Wenceslas). She herself came from a Slavic princely family ruling the territory north of Prague. Her husband was Prince *Bořivoj*, the ninth prince of the Bohemian House of Přemyslid, which was founded several centuries earlier by Princess and soothsayer *Libuše* and her husband, Prince *Přemysl Oráč* (*The Ploughman*).

Thirty Přemyslids ruled on the Czech throne. Two achieved royal title for themselves, and the last five ruled as hereditary kings. The Přemyslid dynasty ended in its main line after the assassination of King Wenceslas III in 1306 in Olomouc. However, the dynasty was still present in the House of Luxembourg, its members thus became descendants of St. Ludmila and St. Wenceslas. We mean Charles IV, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, first name Wenceslas, and his sons, i.e., King Wenceslas IV and Emperor Sigismund. The Přemyslids were also present in the blood of the ruling families in Poland, Hungary, Germany, and Austria. The left-wing line of the Přemyslids, princes of Opava in Silesia, ended only in 1521.

Prince Bořivoj was baptized with his retinue and his wife Ludmila in about 880 in Moravia by the Slavic missionary Archbishop St. Methodius, who is now honoured as one of the main patrons of Europe. Saint Ludmila was fascinated by priests who came to Prague Castle with her and experienced a deep conversion. Not only did she manifest her faith by zealously attending services and prayers, but she also spread the faith.

She raised her sons Spytihněv and Vratislav in deep faith, they both gradually became princes and founders of several churches after the death of their father. She raised her grandchildren Václav and Boleslav, the sons of Prince Vratislav and his wife Drahomíra from the princely family of Christian rulers of the Stodoran tribe from the Lutic tribe union, part of the Elbe Slavs living in the territory of today's Mecklenburg.

After the death of her husband and both sons, she was attacked by her daughter-in-law Drahomíra, who took over the regent's government. Her daughter-in-law blamed Ludmila for the pious upbringing of her grandchildren (that is, her sons) and her demands for the realization of the Christian faith in all areas of life. In this dispute, Ludmila withdrew and moved to the widow's residence in the Tetín fortress above the Berounka River, about 30 km southwest of Prague. But even that did not make Drahomíra satisfied. She ordered members of her armed guard, Tunn and Gommon (perhaps the Vikings), to assassinate Ludmila on *15th September 921*. Ludmila asked in vain to execute her with a sword. However, they insisted on strangling her with her own veil. The Church of St. Michael was built above her grave and her grandson St. Wenceslas had her body transferred to the Prague Castle a few years later, to

the Church of St. Jiří (George), where the oldest monastery of nuns in Bohemia was soon established. Saint Ludmila is honoured as the patron saint of grandmothers, mothers and Christian educators. In songs she is mentioned as the “*mother of the nation*”.



This year’s *national pilgrimage to St. Ludmila* to the village of Tetín was probably the most important spiritual event of this year and is the culmination of the celebrations of the Year of St. Ludmila. The program began on Friday, 17th September with the ceremonial arrival of the skull of St. Ludmila from Prague Castle to Tetín and a prayer for the homeland. On Saturday, 18th September, the National Holy Pilgrimage Mass was celebrated. Cardinal *Christoph Schönborn* OP, Archbishop of Vienna, member of the Bohemian count family, born on 22nd January 1945 in Skalka Castle in northern Bohemia, *direct descendant of St. Ludmila* (pictured left), celebrated the Mass and represented the Pope as his legate.

The mass was celebrated on a meadow on the outskirts of the village. Several thousand believers took part. In his sermon, Cardinal Schönborn reminded that St. Wenceslas became a saint who is a model of the Christian ruler, thanks to his grandmother St. Ludmila. He emphasized, among other things, the *importance of grandparents* and the need to pass on values from generation to generation. The Mass was followed by a number of other Masses and events until the end of the celebration in the late afternoon on Sunday, 19th September. A number of musical ensembles performed for the whole three days, and presentations, exhibitions and lectures were also on the program. Realistic participation in individual events was related to the hygienic limitations of today.



From the celebrations in Tetín: members of the Grand Priory of the Order of the Knights of Malta. Second from the right Mgr. Jan Czernin, judge, member of the administration of the Church Law Society. Photo Člověk a víra (Man and Faith).

Anthropological Conference at Prague Archbishopric



Simultaneously with the celebrations in Tetín, a scientific press conference was held in Prague in the Archbishop's Palace in Hradčany, during which anthropologists and other members of the scientific team published the results of their research on the skull of St. Ludmila, stored in the St. Vitus treasure room next to the skull of St. Wenceslas and St. Adalbert.

The Czech-Brazilian team of researchers managed to reconstruct the appearance of Ludmila's face (see photo). The team was led by the world-renowned facial reconstruction specialist Cícero Moraes from Brazil.

My Memories of Christoph Schönborn

The Archbishop of Vienna, Christoph Cardinal Schönborn OP, is one of the co-authors of the great edition of the Catechism of the Catholic Church of 1997. His great-uncle, Francis de Paula Count Schönborn, was the Archbishop of Prague from 1885 to 1899. Christoph Schönborn is a relative of today's Bishop of Ostrava-Opava František Václav Lobkowicz O.Praem. and the Abbot of Teplá monastery near Mariánské Lázně Zdeněk Filip Lobkowicz O.Praem.

I have many fond personal memories of Christoph Schönborn. We first met during the communist totalitarian era. Father Christoph, Professor at the Catholic University of Friborg (Switzerland) since 1975, was coming to teach us, who studied at the then secret General Study of the Blackfriars (Dominicans) in Prague, dogmatic theology after 1985.

But even after the Czechoslovak Velvet Revolution we met. We spent a few days together in August 1991 in the Dominican priory in Retz (Lower Austria), when I was visiting together with six novices from Prague. Father Christoph was then just before his episcopal ordination and was already nominated to the office of auxiliary bishop in Vienna.

We later met on 25th May 2002 in Prague, when he ordained Efrem Jindráček priest in the Dominican Church of St. Giles' in Prague. Efrem Jindráček was then young Czech Dominican, today he teaches philosophy at the University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome.

Jiří Rajmund Tretera OP

28th September: Feast of Main Patron Saint of Czech Nation, St. Wenceslas

On 28th September, the feast of St. Wenceslas, the main patron saint of the Czech nation, is celebrated in the Czech Republic. Many solemn Masses and many pilgrimages took place throughout the country. This day is a public holiday and a national holiday in the Czech Republic.

Prince St. Wenceslas, the icon of all Czech monarchs, was the son of Prince Vratislav I. He was born perhaps in 907. He was raised by his grandmother Princess Ludmila, in the spirit of Christian love and piety. Four years after her martyrdom, in 925, Wenceslas took over the government. He sought by decisive means the moral upliftment of all the people, the introduction of legal guarantees of life according to the Gospel, and the eradication of the remnants of paganism in the morals of chiefs and subjects. He preferred Christian service instead of serving idols, which was the practice of the large part of the country's population; he even made sacramental bread and communion wine with his own hands. He received the arm of St. Vitus as a gift from the Saxon ruler Henry the Fowler, originating from the remains of this Sicilian saint then preserved in the Corvey monastery in Weser in Lower Saxony. He had a third church built at the Prague Castle, the rotunda dedicated to St. Vitus, as part of the future cathedral of the Prague diocese, which he longed to establish.



The mosaic of Saint Wenceslas in the Czech Chapel in the National Shrine of Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. The request Do not let us, nor the future generation die is from the anthem Saint Wenceslas, Duke of Bohemia. Photo Zábaj Horák

Wenceslas punished the wickedness of the chiefs of the people; he corrected the social injustices they were committing. He took care of widows and orphans. He punished sexual incontinence, gluttony, and drunkenness, and sought to eliminate polygamy and expulsion of women.

This aroused the anger of the chiefs of the people and companions of Wenceslas' brother Boleslav. We can imagine that they urged Boleslav, the Prince's younger brother, to overthrow his brother and succeed him to the throne. Boleslav apparently longed to rule and eventually agreed. He invited Wenceslas to a pilgrimage to his fortress Stará Boleslav (Old Boleslav), which is about 20 km northeast of Prague, to honour the Saints Cosmas and Damian, to whom the local church was dedicated. The feast, which they celebrated on Sunday, was peaceful. But on Monday morning, it was 28th September 935, when Wenceslas wanted to go to church for a morning service, Boleslav attacked Wenceslas and tried to kill him with his sword without calling him to a duel. However, Wenceslas was stronger and defended himself, did not kill Boleslav, although he had the right to kill him in self-defence. He fled to the church to seek asylum. There, while holding on to the circle of the door to the church, he was murdered by three Boleslav's companions.

Boleslav (935–972) seized power, but soon repented. He regretted his deed and had his brother's body transferred to the Prague Castle after three years and buried him in St. Vitus Cathedral. Thus, he founded the thousand years long cult of St. Wenceslas. Prince Wenceslas I is called the "heir" of the Czech lands and its permanent protector. He owns the crown with which the Czech rulers are crowned. The Czech lands Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, which today form the Czech Republic, are called the lands of the Crown of St. Wenceslas.

National St. Wenceslas Pilgrimage in Stará Boleslav

As every year, the National St. Wenceslas Pilgrimage in Stará Boleslav was the main celebration of the feast of St. Wenceslas. The pilgrimage began on the evening of 27th September 2021 with the arrival of relics (sword and reliquary busts of St. Wenceslas) from the Cathedral of St. Vitus, Wenceslas and Adalbert in Prague to the Basilica of the Assumption in Stará Boleslav, prayer for the nation, concert and vespers.



28th September 2021: celebration in the Basilica of St. Wenceslas in Stará Boleslav.

Photo Lucie Horníková, Člověk a víra (Man and Faith)

On 28th September, several Holy Masses were celebrated in both basilicas in Stará Boleslav. The main Mass in the Basilica of St. Wenceslas was celebrated by Cardinal Dominik Duka, who blessed the newly reconstructed basilica. Dozens of members of the Church Law Society were among the priests and participants. The rich program was filled throughout the day with cultural events, such as an exhibition, lecture or organ concert.

The celebrations of St. Wenceslas also took place in other places in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia.

In the ancient town of Český Krumlov in southern Bohemia, which is considered one of the most beautiful towns in the country, the celebration took place from 24th to 28th September. The St. Wenceslas Holy Mass, celebrated in the local Gothic church of St. Vitus, was the main event. Prelate Dr Václav Pícha, chancellor of the Bishopric of České Budějovice, long-term member of the Church Law Society, is the superior of the local parish. The St. Wenceslas celebrations included sightseeing tours and the St. Wenceslas Fair.

Jakub Nagy



**Local group
in Brno**

27th Church and State International Conference

On 15th September 2021, the annual international conference *Church and State* took place in Brno. It is organized by the Faculty of Law of Masaryk University in Brno and the Church Law Society. Despite the ongoing Chinese virus pandemic, 30 participants attended the conference, two of them from neighbouring countries. The conference was presided by Ing. Mgr. Jaroslav Benák, Ph.D., and Mgr. Kamila Abbasi, both from the Faculty of Law of Masaryk University in Brno.

Prof. Jiří Rajmund Tretera from the Faculty of Law in Prague spoke on the topic legal and human provision of categorical pastoral care in healthcare. Sister Františka Jana Majerčíková, Daughters of Charity member, hospital chaplain from Brno, described the difficult work of chaplains during the Covid pandemic since spring 2020. JUDr. Tomáš Tuza, attorney-at-law and church law doctoral student at the Prague Faculty of Law, discussed spiritual care in hospitals in the USA. JUDr. Michal Lamparter, Ph.D., spoke about the unfortunate influence of the media, especially television, on human behaviour.

Associate Professor Záboj Horák from the Prague Faculty of Law spoke on the topic of spiritual care in emergencies such as floods, fires, serious traffic and railway accidents, and terrorist attacks. He commemorated the 20th anniversary of the attacks on New York and Washington on 11th September 2001. Associate Professor Jiří Dvořáček from the Catholic University of Eichstätt – Ingolstadt spoke about the Bahnhofsmmission in Germany.



*JUDr. Michal Lamparter, founder of the conference, gives a lecture on 15th September 2021.
On the left Sister Františka Jana Majerčíková, Daughters of Charity, hospital chaplain.*

Photo Zábaj Horák

The issue of property settlement with religious communities was the second topic of the conference. JUDr. Tomáš Mészáros, Ph.D., from the Faculty of Law, Comenius University in Bratislava (Slovakia), JUDr. Adam Csukás, Ph.D., lawyer of the Central Church Office of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, JUDr. ICLic. Ronald Němec, Ph.D., attorney-at-law, and Mgr. and Mgr. ICLic. David Kučerka, member of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star, presented their papers.

Jakub Nagy



Local group in Prague

Commemoration of Victims of Terrorist Attacks of 11th September 2001

American firefighters who died rescuing victims of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington were commemorated by a service celebrated on 11th September 2021, the 20th anniversary of the attacks, in the Baroque church of St. Nicholas in Prague on Lesser Town Square.

The service was led by Charles Daniel Balvo, Apostolic Nuncio in the Czech Republic, and Cardinal Dominik Duka, Archbishop of Prague and Primate of Bohemia. It was attended by members of the Czech government, representatives of both chambers of the Czech parliament, representatives of the United States Embassy in the Czech Republic and members of professional and volunteer fire brigades.



Apostolic Nuncio Charles Daniel Balvo during the service in the church of St. Nicholas in Prague.

Photo Milan Linhart



11th September 2021: firefighters during the service in the church of St. Nicholas in Prague.

Photo Milan Linhart

Services for living and deceased firefighters are regularly celebrated in the Church of St. Nicholas on Lesser Town Square in Prague, which is one of the most beautiful churches in the Czech Republic. On 4th May 2021, the Holy Mass was celebrated here in honour of the patron saint of firefighters and the protector against the fire of St. Florian, whose statues are located in almost every city in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia.

Jiří Rajmund Tretera, Záboj Horák

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