

## FROM PARISH LIFE

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### **Sulkovec**

Archive resources mention a chapel in Sulkovec in the 17<sup>th</sup> century – it belonged to Olešnice and divine services were held there every third Sunday. A church dedicated to Saint Havel was built on the very site in 1736 by the owner of Kunštát estate, esquire Jan Theodor from Imbsen. In 1766, Marie Antonie, baroness from Imbsen, had a vicarage built – this was a branch office of the vicarage of Olešnice. In 1785, this branch office was promoted to an independent parish. Except for Sulkovec, the following villages Nyklovice, Veselí, Hluboké, Ubušín, Polom, Korouhvice and Chlum belonged to this parish.

The rectory was situated in Bystřice nad Pernštejnem. The vicarage in Sulkovec was one of the poorest in the Brno's Diocese and priests came and left very often. In 1782, almost all the inhabitants of the six villages were converted to the Helvetic faith (Hluboké, Veselí, Ubušín, Polom, Korouhvice, Chlum). In 1903 Jan Tenora wrote in his *Vlastivěda Moravská*, that there were 1,200 Evangelicals, who belonged under the clerical administration in Veselí.

### **Clergymen in Sulkovec**

(years of their function in the parish are in brackets)

#### **Jan Linhart 1766 – 1793**

Jan Linhart was probably born in 1734 in Radiměř near Letovice. After ordination in 1758, he served as chaplain in Soběchleby near Lipník nad Bečvou and later in Olešnice, from where he went to Sulkovec every third Sunday to conduct a mass. On May 1<sup>st</sup> 1765, he consecrated the foundation-stone of the future vicarage in Sulkovec where on October 12<sup>th</sup> 1766 he became its first priest. Under his leadership, the local churchyard was enlarged, the roof was re-shingled and painted red, the interior was changed and the old brick were replaced by a paving of arenaceous marl plates. Jan Linhart worked in Sulkovec until 1793, altogether 27 years – the longest of all priests in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. He retired to Olešnice, where he died in 1801.

### **Jan Nepomuk Fridrich, 1793 – 1806**

Jan Nepomuk was born in 1759 in Žďár. After ordination in 1784 he worked in Blansko and later spent 13 years in Sulkovec. He wrote his autobiography into the local chronicle along with a report describing the state of the parish. According to his record, of the 1379 inhabitants, only 300 were Catholics; further, that people were tolerant of each other, but only half-heartedly so. 21 former Catholics came back to Catholic Church. Parishioners loved their parish and their church. In 1795, the main altar was painted and gilded, but due to dampness did not last long. Jan Fridrich left for Olešnice in 1806. He lived through The Napoleonic War and died in 1809.

### **Karel Josef Pečený, 1806 – 1814**

Karel Josef Pečený was born in 1777 in Polička, where his father was the mayor. After ordination in Hradec Králové, he was sent to Polička and later to Sulkovec. He wrote into the local chronicle: *“Blessed is each shepherd, who has sheep from one sheep-cot and who lives peacefully among them. Even among Catholics, there is weed among wheat.”* His successor wrote into the local chronicle: *He searched for redemption with might and main vigor, and did attain it. Inclement climate, especially in winter, exasperated his illness - consumption ... tuberculosis... and he suffered for more than two years.* He died of his illness in 1814 in Polička and he was buried according to his wishes in Sulkovec. *He was mourned by all who knew him, especially by his parishioners.*

### **Josef Polnický, 1814 – 1820**

Josef Polnický was born in Bystřice in 1785 and ordained in 1808. He worked in Sulkovec for 6 years. During this period, the inhabitants were frantic due to the prediction that the world were to come to an in 1816. This was a year of bad crops and people were forced to eat bread made of bran. Josef Polnický left Sulkovec for Měříň, then went on to Střelice and finally to Zvole, where he died in 1852.

### **Václav Krener, 1820 – 1827**

Václav Krener was born in 1793 in Kostelec nad Orlicí. After ordination in 1816, he went to Olešnice for four years, then to Sulkovec for six. Thereafter, he returned to Olešnice, where he

stayed until his death in 1834. It was at that time the old church in Olešnice along with many houses burned down. A new church in Olešnice was completed and consecrated in 1831.

**František Persch, 1827 – 1835**

František Persch was born in 1795 in Jevíčko. After ordination in Brno in 1820, he worked as a chaplain in Olešnice and later in Sulkovec, where he started to write a parochial chronicle. He left for Ruda, then for Rokytnice near Moravský Krumlov. He retired and died three years later in Královo Pole in 1873.

**Vavřinec Paluda 1835 – 1850**

Vavřinec Paluda was born in 1800 in Habrovany near Vyškov. He was ordained in 1828. He came to Sulkovec from Doubravice and remained for 15 years. During the night of February 22<sup>nd</sup> 1843, thieves broke into the sacristy of the church, and stole a chalice with paten, chasubles, part of the ostensory, and the lid from ciborium. Torn parts of chasuble were found in the fields and in the forest. On August 3<sup>rd</sup> 1845, a thunderbolt struck the church and damaged the wall of the pulpit and the side altar. Vavřinec Paluda left Sulkovec for Hartvíkovice and later for Staré Hobzí. He died in 1872.

**Antonín Halla 1850 – 1866**

Antonín Halla was born in 1815 in Bosonohy near Brno. After ordination in 1839 he worked in Ivančice and Kunštát. At the age of 35 he arrived in Sulkovec; sixteen years he returned to Kunštát. He died in 1883. His mother had a cross built at place called “na Drahách”, on formerly municipal land, near the road to Bystré.

**Ignác Janoušek, 1866 – 1874**

Ignác Janoušek was born in 1833 in Velké Slatinice, he was ordained in 1860. He was a chaplain and later an administrator in Sebranice. After eight years in Sulkovec, he went to Nosislav and later to Uherčice, where he had helped in the construction of a church. He died in 1894.

**Karel Vosyka, 1874 – 1879**

Karel Vosyka was born in Pouchov in Bohemia in 1840, and ordained in 1867. After spending four years in Sulkovec and he left for Sebranice. He died in 1895.

### **Josef Haněk, 1879 – 1883**

Josef Haněk was born in Luleč in 1849, ordained in 1875. In the course of the four years of his work in Sulkovec, František Synek celebrated his first communion (1881). Later he worked in Starovice, Dolní Bojanovice and Velké Pavlovice. The date and place of his death is unknown.

### **Augustin Novotný, 1884 – 1885**

Augustin Novotný was born in 1852 in Bystré. After ordination in 1879, he worked as a chaplain in Mikulčice and Nemočice. He came to Sulkovec in 1884. Further data are unknown.

### **Martin Judas**

Martin Judas from Rovečné was an administrator in Sulkovec in 1886-87.

### **Jan Bílý, 1887 – 1896**

Jan Bílý was born in 1859 in Doubravník, ordained in 1883. He worked in Kobylí and later in Klobouky near Brno. He worked in Sulkovec for 9 years and he retired in 1896 due to his serious eye ailment. He died in 1931 and was buried in Kobeřice near Opava.

### **Josef Janíček, 1896 – 1913**

Josef Janíček was born in 1867 in Krhov, ordained in 1892. He was a chaplain in Blansko, Malešovice and Kunštát. After seventeen years in Sulkovec he returned to Kunštát where he died and was buried in 1943.

### **Jan Kittner, 1913 – 1923**

Jan Kittner came from Lomnice u Tišnova where he was born in 1869. He spent 10 years in Sulkovec. He died in 1939 in Deblín and was buried in his birthplace of Lomnice.

### **Osvald Šurý, 1923 – 1931**

Osvald Šurý was born in 1888 in Drnovice near Lysice. He retired after spending 8 years in Sulkovec. He died and was buried in 1952 in Drnovice.

### **Karel Kubeš, 1932 – 1934**

Karel Kubeš was born in Lhotky near Křtiny, ordained in 1925. Sulkovec was his last place of work. He died and was buried there in 1934. He was the very first priest, who died in Sulkovec.

For three months, **Rudolf Suchánek** from Prušánky worked in Sulkovec.

Administrators from Rovečné who served in Sulkovec: **Klement Lahodný** (1934 – 1937), **Jan Komon** (March 1<sup>st</sup> – Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> 1937) excurendo **Karel Válka** from Jimramov (until Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> 1938) and **Jan Bednář** (until Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> 1938). In 1942, he was appointed in Bystřice. In 1955, he left for Velké Bílovice, where he died and was buried in 1967.

### **Rajmund Klabeček, 1938 – 1955**

Rajmund Klabeček was a Dominican priest. He was born in 1894 in České Budějovice. After seventeen years in Sulkovec, he was assigned to Velké Bílovice, where he died and was buried in 1967.

### **Alois Pekárek 1955 – 1960**

Alois Pekárek was born in Radešínská Svratka in 1915. He studied at The Pontifical Theological College in Brno from 1933 – 1938, and was ordained in 1938. He worked as a chaplain and catechist in many places in Southern Moravia. In 1947 – 1949 he worked in Bořitov. Politically persecuted from 1949 to 1952, Alois Pekárek served time in prisons in Brno, in Prague (Pankrác) and in Mladá Boleslav. Afterwards, he worked as an administrator in Vysoká Studnice, Fryšava under Žákova Hora and in Vémyslice. In 1950s, he was incarcerated several times by the authorities with trials pending. He came to Sulkovec in 1955, later he went to Ruda and Velké Meziříčí. Currently he lives in Rajhrad. Parishioners in Sulkovec still remember him.

### **Vítězslav Grmela, 1960 – 1999**

*Vítězslav Grmela* was born in Protivanov in 1920 and studied at The Pontifical Theological College in Brno. Ordained in 1945, he worked as a chaplain in Klobouky u Brna (1945 – 48), as a chaplain in Třešť (1948/49), as an administrator in Starý Petřín (1949 – 54), and in Želešice near Brno from 1954 to 1960. From 1960 to September 1999, he worked in Sulkovec. He currently resides in Moravec. In 1995, he celebrated a triple anniversary: 25 years of priesthood, 35 years of dedication to the local parish and his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. Parishioners in Sulkovec believe that he will stay among them for years to come. Due to his efforts, a general reconstruction of the church was undertaken in the 1980s and 90s. These included static

reconstruction, new roofing, external rendering, new cemetery walls, the reconstruction of altars and other changes of the interior. The vicarage was repaired as well.

### **Polom**

*The man who is most responsible for the founding of the reformed church in Veselí is a native of Prosetín, Tomáš **Juren** ..... We must thank him for much news of that time. Until brethren in the area of Veselí had their own preacher, their leadership lay on already forgotten Tomáš Juren. ... He went there (into church in village Hluboká) together with many others and he preached there from Postilla and religious songs were sung, but shortly thereafter all this became forbidden, the church key was taken away from them and the chapel was later pulled down. .... Meanwhile, .... there was discussion about construction of a new church ..... after Tomáš Břeněk, yeoman from Veselí, had provided room for both church and cemetery. The construction was run by Jan Lukáš, yeoman from Veselí, a native Czech from the area of Litomyšl and Tomáš Juren, who became a teacher in Veselí at that time and who held the first public divine service under a huge cherry tree on Trinity Sunday in 1782. Many people took part.*

(Memorial of reformed Bohemian and Moravian Church, Prague 1881)

**Tomáš Juren**, teacher in Sulkovec and Veselí, was an important representative of the evagelic movement of the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He was born in 1750 into a farming family in Prosetín. At thirteen, he started his tailoring apprentice under Řehoř Jakub, who at the time was a teacher in Prosetín. In 1769, he was posted as a teacher in Sulkovec. In 1773, at the vicarage in Olešnice, he was arrested and imprisoned for writing prayers and for other illegal activities. He had to pass book *Jádro písma sv.*<sup>1</sup>, owned by family Dvořák from Sulkovec, to the Jesuits in Olešnice. He was dismissed from his teaching job in Sulkovec in 1774. He moved to Ubušíněk, where he worked as a tailor, bookbinder and devoted himself to music; he also taught reading and writing to children from several nearby villages. In 1776, he left for Saxon Zittau in order to engage in Evangelic prayers. In 1779, he left for Presspurk (Bratislava). In 1781, at the time of religious liberalization, he started Evangelic religious meetings in the Catholic chapel in Hluboké. After The Edict of Tolerance was issued, he paid homage to the emperor Josef II with a

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<sup>1</sup> Core of Holy Writ

poem; he advised his coreligionists on how to act in front of religious commission and which religion to chose. In 1782, he and his wife converted to Helvetian (reformed) Confession. In 1784 he was appointed an Evangelic teacher. He lived in Veselí, where a chapel along with a dwelling for a preacher and a teacher were built. In 1792, he was withdrawn from service due to disputes. He moved to Vítochov, where he died in 1827. He was buried in Veselí, but his grave has not been identified. His memories Paměti kantora Tomáše Jurna (1750 – 1827)<sup>2</sup> were issued by K. Čermák in Čáslav in 1904.

**Succession of priests in function in the parish of Evangelical Church of Bohemian Brethern in Veselí** (years of their function in the parish are listed after their names).

**Martin Elek, 1783 – 1784**

As J. Tould wrote, Martin Elek came to Moravia from Hungary. He was the fourth priest sent to this territory after the Edict of Tolerance was issued and he acceded to his office on Feb, 3<sup>rd</sup> 1783. Not satisfied with his new posting, a year later on April 6<sup>th</sup>, he left under the pretence of going for his wife to Transylvania never to return. Nothing more is known about him, except that he is listed on the List of prayers by Č Rychetský in Part I – Priests who after The Edict of Tolerance was issued were sent from Hungary.

**Aron Stettinius, 1785 – 1788**

Aron Stettinius is at times referred to a Štětina. He was born in Bedřichův Hradec in Prussian Silesia (date of birth and death are not known). His father was a vicar there. The family came from the area around Litomyšl. From Veselí, he moved on to Nové Město na Moravě, where he replaced his brother Jakub Bohumil; he later worked in Prosetín and in Německé (nowadays Sněžné). The Stettinius brothers were unique in that together with another two German born vicars, one serving in Prague the other in Brno, they were the only priests who came from Prussian Silesia.. The first priests came from Hungary or from Slovakia; locally born priests took up posts only in the late 1880s.

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<sup>2</sup> Memories of teacher Tomáš Jurna

### **Samuel Szallay, 1788**

Samuel Szallay was native of Hungary who he worked in Prosetín for several years. He was in Veselí from April to December. It is said that he secretly left for his country one night. The entry in Jubilejní kniha<sup>3</sup>, indicates that he worked in Prosetín from 1782 to 1786 and in Veselí in 1788. There is no evidence of his activities between these years. In the List by Rychetský one can read that vicar Samuel Szallay was born in 1751 in Varšany by Levice, that he worked in Prosetín (1782 – 86), in Javorník (1786 – 1812) and from 1812 on in Růžďka, where he also died. Another person named Samuel Szallay is referred to in the above mentioned list by Rychetský that he had ostensibly worked in Veselí in 1788. However, a note is enclosed stating that this man did not in fact exist.

### **Daniel Márton, 1788 – 1792**

Daniel Márton is sometimes referred to as Martoň. He was born in Vadna, Hungary, where he studied in Šarišský Potok. He came to Veselí from Borová; then he moved to Krouna in May 1792. He stayed there until 1827, and later moved to Sázava. He died in 1828.

### **Štěpán Vassarhélyi, 1792 – 1797**

Štěpán Vassarhély was born in Gál, district of Sečovec; the year of his birth is unknown. He studied in Šarišský Potok and started work in Horní Vilémovice; he left Veselí and went to Svratouch, Dvakačovice and Sloupnice, where he died in 1815. He is not listed in Toul's Jubilejní kniha, though one can read about him in Rychetský's List of prayers, where he is listed as István Vasárhelyi in Part I Priests h.v. who came from Hungary after the enactment of Edict of Tolerance.

### **Antonín Štorch, 1798 – 1809**

No information exists about this priest except for that he worked in Horní Vilémovice in 1796 – 1798. From there he moved to Veselí where he worked until his death in 1809. He was buried in Veselí.

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<sup>3</sup> Jubilé Book

### **Gedeon Šlachta, 1810 – 1831**

Gedeon Šlachta was sometimes referred to as Gideon. He was born in 1778 in Bánovce nad Ondavou, he studied in Šarišský Potok and in Leipzig. He worked in Nové Město na Moravě from 1804 to 1810. While there, the congregation must have stabilized as new congregational boundaries were drawn. A house that served as school was bought, local cemetery was enclosed, a new brick vicarage was built and new Table of the Lord and a pulpit were erected. Šlachta died in Veselí and is buried there. Gedeon Šlachta is listed in Rychetský's List in Part III – referring to preachers of Helvetic religion coming from our countries. Additional priests in Veselí were locally born.

### **Josef Totušek senior 1832 – 1840**

Josef Totušek senior was born in Pavlovice near Jimramov and studied in Komárno, Pápa and Debrecen. He started his career in Veselí and later worked in Klobouky u Brna; from there he held the office of senior vicar for the Western Moravian District. He died at his job in 1877. He looked favorably at the endeavors establishing the Evangelic school in the village of Polom. At this time, his son was a priest in Veselí. Although the correspondence between the priest representing the inhabitants of Polom and the senior clergyman is strictly formal and official, one can presume that he supported his son's efforts.

### **Josef Opočenský, 1840 – 1843**

Josef Opočenský was born in Klášter v Čechách in 1814. He started his clerical service in Veselí. An organ was purchased at this time. Josef Opočenský he left for Zádveřice and later to Miroslav. He moved to Amerika in 1856, thereby fulfilling his promise to his parishioners from Zádveřice – asking them to follow him into exile. After working in several different places he finally settled in Wesley, where he established a Czech congregation. He died in Wesley in 1870.

### **Jan Šolín, 1844 – 1847**

Jan Šolín was born in Ledce near Hradec Králové. He studied in Hradec Králové, Bratislava and Šarišský Potok. At the start of his career he was employed as a tutor in an aristocratic family. Later he became a vicar in Vysoké, in Libštát and in Veselí. In 1846, he caused the building of a vicarage and the establishing of a union of temperance. He went back to Vysoké,

where he died in 1890. He was literally active and wrote under the penname of Šolín Ledecký. Both his poetry and prose were published in magazines. He also wrote spiritual songs. As a patriotic Czech, he belonged to the founders of Matice Česká and was a member of Komenský association.

#### **Karel Molnár, 1848 – 1858**

Karel Molnár was born in 1820 in Sloupnice. He studied in Litomyšl, Bratislava and Vienna. His first posting was in Veselí, followed by Javorník, where he died in 1900. Karel Molnár was born into the large Molnár family; his ancestor Peter Molnár was one of the first priest to be sent to Moravia from Hungary after the enactment of The Edict of Tolerance. His predecessor stayed in Moravia and the ensuing members of this family continued to be engaged in the Evangelic Church.

#### **Josef Totušek junior, 1859 – 1868**

Josef Totušek junior was born in Veselí in 1836, a son of a priest. He studied in Těšín, Halle, Leipzig, Bonn and Vienna. He started as a vicar with his father in Klobouky u Brna, and later worked independently of his father in Veselí and in Jimramov. He died in 1899 in Olešnice, where he is buried. Josef Totušek junior was the 5<sup>th</sup> superintendent of Moravian reformed diocese. Many buildings were erected during the lifetime of this significant church functionary. For example, the vicarage was renovated in Veselí, a farmhouse was built and subsequently converted into a school, the cemetery was enlarged and a new one was built in Dalečín. He established a construction fund and fund for poor people. He championed the idea of establishing an Evangelic school in Polom. The school opened its doors in 1867.

#### **Jindřich Švanda, 1868 – 1924**

Jindřich Švanda was born into a priest's family in 1846 in Prosetín. He studied in Basel and in Vienna. In Veselí he worked both as an administrator and as a priest (1870). In 1877, he had the church repaired and the cemetery enclosed. During his tenure an additional storey was added to the vicarage. He died in 1926 in Veselí and likewise is buried there. He is a member of the large Švanda family, whose members have been active in the Church for generations.

From 1924 to 1929, the congregation was administered from Jimramov by **František Rozbořil**.

#### **Miroslav Růžička, 1929 – 1939**

Miroslav Růžička was born in 1904 in Dvůr Králové nad Labem. He started his career in Veselí as a vicar. A year later he became priest. He left for Třebechovice and in 1950 settled in České Budějovice where he remained posted until his retirement in 1966. In 1953 – 1964, he was a senior of South Bohemian Seniorate.

#### **Gustav Říčan, 1939 – 1949**

Gustav Říčan was born in Huslenky in 1912. He worked as a vicar in Jasenná (1936 – 37) in Mělník (1937 – 38), in Zádveřice (1938) and in Kutná Hora (with designation for Zruč nad Sázavou – 1938 – 39). He worked in Veselí during the difficult times of the war. In 1949 he left for Suchdol nad Odrou, where he died in service. Gustav Říčan was very popular and respected, especially for his braveness during the war and for his good disposition toward people. During the Second World War, partisans were hiding in the surrounding areas and it was a miracle that the village was not annihilated.

#### **Miloslav Hájek, 1949 – 1965**

Miloslav Hájek was born in Brno in 1923, where he later worked as a deacon. He studied theology in Prague from 1945 – 49. In Veselí he started as vicar, and in 1951 became a priest. He left Veselí for Zlín, (Gottwaldov). Later on he became synodic senior of ČCE. He died in Zlín, where after his retirement he had moved to from Prague. He suffered through the hard times with his congregation, especially during collectivization and the construction of Vír dam, when villages Chudobín and Korouhvice were flooded and many a member of the congregation were forced to move away (e.g. to Southern Moravia).

#### **Lubomír Hána, 1965 – 1986**

Lubomír Hána was born in Střílky u Kroměříže in 1922. He worked as a vicar in Vsetín (1951 – 2) and in Leskovec (1952 – 3). He came to Zlín (Gottwaldov) as a vicar; he passed his examinations for priesthood and stayed until 1965, when he exchanged posts with priest Hájek. He remained in Veselí until his retirement in 1986. The twenty years that he had spent at the head of

Veselí's congregation were not altogether peaceful ones, given the stifled expectations of the late 1960s and the so-called normalization that followed. Lubomír Hána is retired in Ostrava.

From 1986 to 89, the congregation was administered from Rovečné by priest **Miroslav Erdinger**.

**Jan Jún, 1989 – 1992**

Jan Jún was born in Vítkov near Opava in 1964. He studied at the Faculty of Theology in Prague. Starting his career in Veselí, he would move on to become a headmaster of one of the schools of the Evangelic Academy-Conservatory in Kroměříž. He has been working as the priest in Proseč by Skuteč since 1995. Jan Jún is responsible for the general reconstruction of the vicarage in Veselí.

From 1992 to 1994, **Jan Keller**, then mayor of the town of Jimramov worked part-time as a priest.

**Jan Plecháček, 1994 – to date**

Jan Plecháček was born in 1967 in Prague. He studied at the Evangelic Faculty of Theology at Charles University (UK) in Prague. From there he was sent to the congregation in Veselí, where he has been working as a priest. The church has been reconstructed; the improvements include a new roof, static reinforcement, and fresh coats of paint.