

Pavučina Corner – By Tony Kadlec

**HISTORY OF ST. JOSEPH SETTLEMENT AND MONSIGNOR FRANTIŠEK TICHÝ PART 1 of 2**

Forward by Fr. Bob Mraz



I am pleased to present the following two-part series on Monsignor František Tichý and the early community of the St. Joseph Catholic Church, as contributed by Fr. Bob Mraz.

In 1909 the priests of Czech nationality serving in the St. Paul Archdiocese (now comprising the territory of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota and the Diocese of New Ulm, Minnesota - in which Silver Lake is located), formed the League of Bohemian Priests of the St. Paul Archdiocese (in Czech: "Vydala Líga Českých Kněží Arcidiecese St. Paulské"). They determined to write a book about the history of the Czech Communities in the Archdiocese of St. Paul including personal biographies of the Czech Priests.

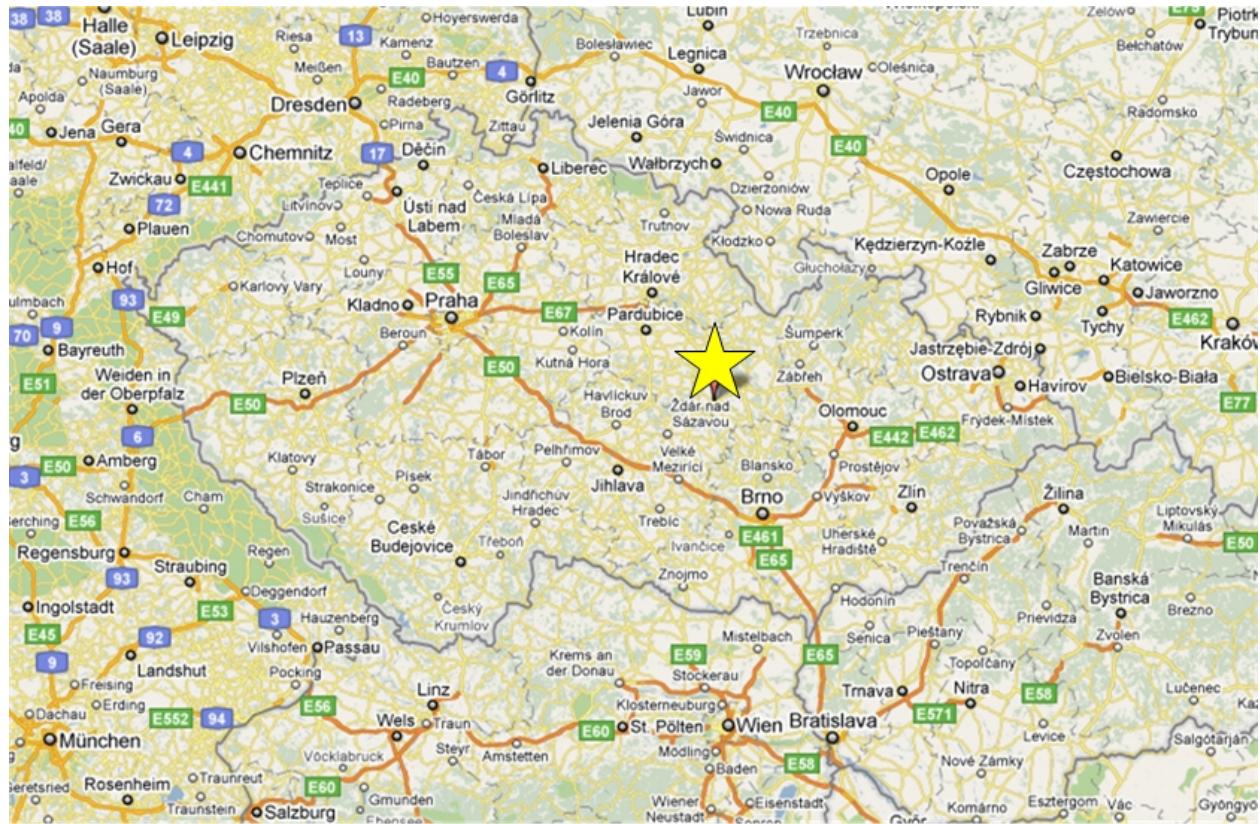
In 1910 they published a book in the Czech Language entitled Průvodce Po Českých Katolických Osadách V Arcidiecesi St. Paul, Minn. Ve Spojených Státech Sev. Amerických (A Guide to Czech Catholic Communities in the Archdiocese of St. Paul, Minnesota in the United States of North America).

We thank Jerome J. Michael, Rockville, Maryland who translated this book from Czech into English. Below is part one of this two part series, pertaining to the Czech community of Silver Lake, Minnesota as it was a century ago in 1910, by Rev. František Tichý.

**Biography of Rev. František Tichý**

"Rev. František Tichý was born September 21, 1847 at Polička in Bohemia. He attended elementary and middle school in his native town with honors. It was his father's wish to become an architect. Upon completion of his basic studies at the age of 15 he gave a graduation speech to which his mother was present. Coming home his mother made a statement which decided the course of his future life: "My child, I pray to God that I live long enough to see you giving a sermon!" He continued to study at classical middle school at Litomyšl and graduated in 1871. Following his graduation he was subject to military draft for two years, beginning in 1873. First, however, and immediately after the conclusion of his

studies, he had to take preliminary military exercise of eight weeks. Thereafter, prior to his conscription in 1873, he was admitted to a seminary in Prague for two years.



**Location of Polička, Czech Republic, village of origin of Rev. Tichý and also the Makovský, Krčil, and Vorlíček families who immigrated to Silver Lake, McLeod County, Minnesota.**

In the spring of 1874 Rev. Gartner traveled from America to Bohemia to sign up Czech priests for religious duties in the US. Rev. František Tichý decided to go. He completed his theological studies in St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1874 and was ordained July 24, 1874 by His Excellency Bishop Borgessa in Detroit, Michigan the same year.

He served his first mass the day of St. Anne at St. Wenceslaus Cathedral in Detroit where he then served for three more years. Upon invitation of his fellow student, Rev. František Přibyl, he requested relocation to St. Paul Diocese, Minnesota. Here he stayed for three years serving the Czech and Polish communities until 1880. From 1880 to 1906 he was in charge of St. Wenceslaus settlement In New Prague, Scott County, Minnesota. Currently (1910) he is at St. Joseph settlement in Silver Lake, Minnesota. where he was transferred at his request by His Excellency Archbishop Ireland.”

In 1913 he was appointed by the Pope as Domestic Prelate of the People of the Household, in recognition of his long service and pious devotion (Source: McLeod County History Book, 1914)

**HISTORY OF ST. JOSEPH SETTLEMENT**

By Msgr. František Tichý, Pastor - 1910

"Sixty miles west of St. Paul and fifty miles west of Minneapolis lies a lake over a mile long and in one area, one mile wide: its name is Silver Lake, the name most likely given by government geographers. The community of Silver Lake obtained its name from this lake. The surrounding countryside can be considered to be a plain; only occasionally can we encounter rising terrain with rich soil, luscious meadows and pastures, with underbrush and low tree growth ranging from weeping willow to linden to oak and to the so-called hardwood. Even here, as elsewhere in America, woodlands are rapidly disappearing. It is not known whether any pioneers settled here prior to 1875, although hunters and tradesmen shared in the products of the nature, albeit unequally, before this time. It was not until 1875 at several Frenchmen and Americans settled in this region. They were mostly soldiers from the Spanish (Mexican) war.

Czech immigrants began to enter the area toward the end of 1858 (sic), coming from Wisconsin, from the vicinity of Racine and Caledonia. I have been wondering why Czech settlers from the Chrudim and Jihlava regions began to move to Wisconsin after 1850 and did not stay - wishing to go west - in Illinois (in Chicago) or in Iowa, or why they did not settle in Minnesota, Dakota and Nebraska - not one of the old settlers I talked to could answer this question with certainty. Those who would have had experience from those days were either long gone and the living ones did not remember events dating fifty years or more back.

My impression is this: What remained of the Hussites, Calixtines, Czech and Moravian Brethren toward the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries, was driven from the center of Bohemia and Moravia into the mountains, mainly the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands. There our sinners, misled by Huss and his disciples, gradually sobered up from their religious fanaticism and returned to the true religion. To the misfortune of the Czech nation and its unification, so necessary and desirable at the time, there appeared in Germany a renegade monk Martin Luther who transformed half of the German nation to Protestantism and inspired many Czechs - not for the revival of Hussism and Ultraquism - but for conversion to German Protestantism. Czech Non-Catholics thus subjugated themselves to German Lutherans or Swiss (or Helvetic) Calvinists. These new seducers of our brethren, in my opinion, also advised, not without personal gain, their converted contemporaries to migrate to the new, strong German based and Protestant state of Wisconsin, if not directly to the German Athens (Milwaukee) then at-least to Racine, Wisconsin and Caledonia, Wisconsin. And since the inhabitants of the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands lived (and still do) in mixed Catholic and Protestant communities, all those wishing to emigrate to America, Catholic or not, moved together to Wisconsin. This migration was particularly heavy between 1852 and 1857.

Our countrymen in the Racine district, however, did not do well for themselves, and for a variety of reasons struggled for many years. Vaclav Kašpar in 1858 left Wisconsin to the heralded territory of Minnesota which became a State of the Union on May 18, 1858. Kašpar

was followed by Antonín Navrátil a few months later. Josef Vosmek, Josef Zicha, Antonin Nunvář and Jan Vaňous followed with their covered wagons from Caledonia across Wisconsin to Minnesota in 1859. In years following many other Czechs left Caledonia and Racine, Wisconsin for western Minnesota, settling mainly in the area of Silver Lake.

There was additional immigration from Wisconsin during the 1870 decade, but most of the inflow of new immigrants came from the Bohemian-Moravian Highlands (Česko-Moravské výsočiny), particularly from Polička, Litomyšl, Chocen, Vysoké Myto, from Ústí nad Orlicí, Czech and Moravian Třebon, Bystra, Skuč and Hlinsko, as well as from the small neighboring towns, specifically Široký Důl, Voldřiš, Borová, Telecí, Březiny, Svatky, Krouná, Kameničky, Herálec, Lezník, Sebranice, Horní and Dolní Újezd, Střítež, Mladočov, Seč, Novohrad, Lůže, Blatná, Bělá, Studnice, Košumberk, Rychnburk, Proseč, etc.; furthermore, from the Moravian side, Nové Město, Jimramov, Německé, and adjacent communities.

From southern Bohemia, from the Tábor area, there came a few settlers, specifically from Pacov, Cetoraz, Vodice, Hartlíkov, Chejnov, Bechyně, Radětice, and Ševětín. From 1880 to 1890 there was an inflow from southern Minnesota, from the areas of New Prague, Veseli, Montgomery, Hopkins, and also from Iowa and Nebraska. Immigration began to drop off beginning in 1890 until it came to a complete halt by 1900. After 1900 there was an out migration by young entrepreneurs and even old settlers from here westward to as far as Oregon and Washington in search of a new life."

**NEXT WEEK: Part two of this article, including a member listing of church counsels, associations, and families of the Church of St. Joseph in 1910.**

### **Mluvíte česky? Do You Speak Czech?**

**František Tichý** (FRAN-tih-shek TIH-kee)

**chrám** (KRAHM) - temple

**kostel** (KO-stel) – church

**Katolický** (KAT-oh-litz-kee) – Catholic (adjective)

As a rule, you should always stress the first syllable of a Czech word!

### **The Czech digraph, letter "ch"**

In the 15th century, the Czech language used to contain many digraphs (combinations of 2 characters used to make one distinct sound or phoneme) like modern Polish does but most of them were replaced by single letters with diacritic marks by the reform of Jan Hus.

Note "ch" is the only Czech digraph which is treated as a single letter. The letter Ch is equal to other letters of the Czech alphabet and comes between the letters H and I. Thus, the word "chemie" "chemistry" comes after "fyzika" "physics" in an alphabetical list. Names beginning with Ch are listed in the same way in a phonebook. In a crossword it takes only one square. (Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ch\\_\(digraph\)#Czech](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ch_(digraph)#Czech))

It is pronounced like *ch* in Scottish *loch* or German *Bach*; it is always an unvoiced sound in Czech; press the very back of your tongue against the sides of your palate and breathe out.

If you have any contributions or suggestions for topics for future columns, please contact me by email: [tkadlec@gmail.com](mailto:tkadlec@gmail.com) or call me: (651) 271-0422 or send your letters to my attention: 1408 Fairmount Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. Děkuji! Tony Kadlec