



OCTOBER 2018
DEAR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS OF THE REACH BEYOND
MINISTRY TO THE PEOPLES IN CZECHIA AND SLOVAKIA

EUROPE DESPERATELY NEEDS MORE
CHRIST-CENTERED EVANGELICAL MISSIONARIES

This time of the year, the Catholic part of Europe celebrates various religious holidays and saint related processions. German Bavaria, Austria, Italy, France, Spain, Poland, and of course even Czech Republic desperately need more Christ-centered evangelical missionaries. For example, a national German holiday commemorates “Mary’s ascension to heaven.” We witnessed several processions celebrating Virgin Mary in September while we were in southern Italy. From a tourist viewpoint, it was very interesting and photogenic. However, from a viewpoint of a born-again Bible believer it was quite scary. It reminds us of processions we saw in India and other parts of the world.

We were stunned how often we bumped into statues, paintings, and altars that depicted Padre Pio (1887-1968) in Italy and Spain. According to Wikipedia:

On September 20, 1918, while hearing confessions, Padre Pio had his first occurrence of the stigmata: bodily marks, pain, and bleeding in locations corresponding to the crucifixion wounds of Jesus Christ. This phenomenon continued for fifty years, until the end of his life. The blood flowing from the stigmata purportedly smelled of perfume or flowers, a phenomenon mentioned in stories of the lives of several saints and often referred to as the odor of sanctity. Though Padre Pio said he would have preferred to suffer in secret, by early 1919, news about the stigmatic friar began to spread in the secular world. Padre Pio’s wounds are said to have been examined by many people, including physicians. People, who had started rebuilding their lives after World War I, began to see in Padre Pio a symbol of hope. Those close to him attest that he began to manifest several spiritual gifts, including the gifts of healing, bilocation, levitation, prophecy, miracles, extraordinary abstinence from both sleep and nourishment (one account states that Padre Agostino recorded one instance in which Padre Pio was able to subsist for at least 20 days at Verafeno on only the Eucharist without any other nourishment), the ability to read hearts, the gift of tongues, the gift of conversions, and pleasant-smelling wounds.

Since year 2000, Czech Republic officially celebrates on September 28, a national holiday of Saint Wenceslas (svatý Václav), the patron and King of Bohemia. Wenceslas was born in Prague in 907, raised by his mother as a Christian. He ruled the Kingdom from 922 to

his assassination in 935. The relic skull of Saint Wenceslaus leaves Saint Vitus Cathedral, and is each year carried by the cardinal in office in public procession. The skull plays its role also at the time of presidential inauguration. On those occasions, devoted Catholics usually attend the special mass. Since most Czechs are secular, they spent the associated long weekend with their families and friends relaxing or traveling.

Moreover, what about the “protestant” part of Europe? It is mostly atheistic...
Europe desperately needs more Christ-centered evangelical missionaries.

PITTSBURGH AGREEMENT

October 2018 is the month of extended celebrations to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the foundation of Czechoslovakia. The Republic was founded as a sovereign democratic country in Central Europe on October 28, 1918.

An interesting historical part is that the United States played a major role in establishing and independent Czechoslovakia that left Austro-Hungarian Empire as many other central European countries after the WW I. Czech and Slovak representatives in the United States signed the Pittsburgh Agreement on May 1918. The Czechoslovak declaration was relying on President Wilson’s principle of self-determination. Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (his wife Charlotte was an American) with Edvard Beneš and Milan Rastislav Štefánik published the Czechoslovak National Council which led to creation of Czechoslovak democracy. Czechoslovakia was then formed by four lands. From west to east: Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, Slovakia, and Carpathian Ruthenia. It was a multicultural country: Czechs 50.3 %; Slovaks 15.2 %; Germans 23.4 %; Hungarians 5.6 %; Poles 0.6 %; Ruthenians 3.4 %; Jews 1.3 %; others 0.2 %.

SHORT HISTORY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

During the WW II from 1939 to 1945, it dissolved as follows: The German part of Bohemia and Moravia became part of the Third Reich called Sudetenland. Territory inhabited by Czech became “Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.” Slovakia was stripped of its southern flank inhabited by Hungarians and became an “independent” puppet state under German control. Carpathian Ruthenia was allotted to Hungary.

After the WW II from 1945 to 1948, Czechoslovakia returned to its prewar boundaries less Carpathian Ruthenia. Germans were expelled, Jews practically eliminated, part of Hungarians expelled to Hungary and Carpathian Ruthenia was annexed by the Soviet Union. Thus, Czechoslovakia became 95 % land of Czechs and Slovaks. This 3-year period was governed by a coalition with some communist ministers.

From 1948 to 1989, Czechoslovakia became a Socialist Republic, was a part of the Eastern Block and a satellite of the Soviet Union.

After fall of communism in November 1989, the country regained its freedom, which it lacked for 50 years since 1939.

On January 1993, Czechoslovakia was peacefully divided by parliament decree into Czech Republic (Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia) and Slovakia.

Imagine you were born in 1911 in Carpathian Ruthenia: (1) from 1911 to 1918, you were Austrian; (2) from 1918-1939 you were Czechoslovak; (3) from 1939-1945 you were Hungarian; (4) from 1945-1991 you were Soviet; (5) from 1991, when you are 80 you gained your fifth citizenship without moving from your birthplace—now you are Ukrainian!

BLESSINGS OF THE NEW COVENANT CONFERENCE

Each time Geoff Volker of Phoenix, AZ comes to Czech Republic we try to make a special outing. We had incredibly beautiful and colorful fall weather and this time we chose to tour of the medieval castle at Karlštejn. Charles IV, Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia founded the castle in 1384. The Chapel of the Holy Cross is the spiritual heart of Karlštejn Castle served as a place for safekeeping the Imperial Regalia as well as the Bohemian/Czech crown jewels, holy relics and other royal treasures. Unfortunately, this time we could not take any pictures.

The next day on October 13, was our conference day. The following topics covered by Geoff and translated by Jan and Pavel:

- 1. Promise of the New Covenant** – *“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days...”*
- 2. New Covenant and Law** – *“I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts”*
- 3. People of the New Covenant** – *“... they shall be my people”*
- 4. Blessings of the New Covenant** – *“I will be their God”*

About 50 people took part in the event. Those present were enriched by the teaching and opportunity to ask numerous questions. The Conference was videotaped and will be available to others online. Thank you Geoff for taking your time to share with us.

PRAISES AND PRAYER NEEDS

- Thank you for Klara's birthday wishes. How sweet to know that you keep us in your prayers and memories. Thank you Barbara and Ray, Lisa, Katie, Karl and Sandy, Greg and Shirley, Jon, and Santa Rosa Bible Church ... How blessed we are.
- Radio Logos in Slovakia is on the air.
- Housing for our pastor. Real estate market in Prague sharply increased. Those who do not own property by the time of retirement are not able to keep up with the cost of living. Health care for retired people is covered; however, Social Security (pensions) payments are very low. Our pastor needs to think of the future.

UNEXPECTED FAMILY REUNION

About a month ago, we received an email from America: „Hi Pavel, my name is Suzan C. I believe we are related. Either your father or grandfather was brother of Josefina. I remember a Czech family visiting us in Redwood City about 40 years ago ... I would like more info about my grandmother's side of family. ...“

This was a great reason to gather all living cousins of cousins on great grandparent's bloodline. We met in the village where this story started. Susan is the youngest of all of us. We were amazed how many ¼ blood relation came together. This time it was a joyful reunion since in our age group we usually meet at the funeral of those who are some years older. Boxes of photos were brought with all kind of old birth certificates and together we were identifying who was who. We were able to produce a family video from the village we took exactly 50 years ago before we fled to America. At this time, we could document back 5-generations. Young parents are now great grandparents. This means we made time leap of three more generations. We do not need millions of years of evolution to arrive to Adam.

**Thank you for your prayers
Support and participation
In our life and
Czech & Slovak ministry**

**In His Sovereign Grace
Pavel and Klara Steiger**

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