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***For where two or three have
gathered together in My name,
I am there in their midst.
(Matthew 18:20)***

**MAY 2021
DEAR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS OF
THE REACH BEYOND MINISTRY
TO THE PEOPLES
OF CZECHIA AND SLOVAKIA**

LIVE, LOVE, CELEBRATE

To describe the days, we have been living in during the past 14 months, is like a tragicomedy script. War with an invisible enemy was raging. We learned to live in isolation, and under numerous "smart quarantines". We could not visit families and friends; school attendance



was replaced by 282 days of distance education. COVID-19 filled the news day by day and the number of casualties was rising.

Emergency quarantine mega hospitals were set up in large centers only to find out later that there were no doctors or personnel to attend to the patients. Later they were quietly dismantled.

Big vaccination centers were set up but there were no vaccines to administer. When vaccines started slowly to come in, there were no injection needles available; those from China were not suitable for inoculation.

Massive testing plans were set in place, only to find out that those tests are not reliable; again from China.

New questions and concerns were rising. Vaccination, yes or no? How safe is it? Registration was set up by age and categories. About 38% of people, mostly elderly, were vaccinated at least once. About 11% of people were vac-

minated once. Klara belongs to the second group. Daily increases in the number of coronavirus infections have been gradually decreasing since the beginning of March. The European Union is under partial lockdown as far as travel goes. All stores have been opened except restaurants.

THE NUMBER ONE ISSUE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

C-DAY is not COVID Victory from the COVID battlefield. New crises have appeared on the horizon. The Czech government has concluded that the explosion of the ammunition depot in Vrbětice (2014) in Moravia was carried out by Russian agents. This announcement hit the news like a bomb. The Russian terrorist act was carried out by the same two operatives who poisoned the Skripals with a Novichok nerve agent in Salisbury, UK. The European Security Services has been investigating a series of previously unexplained events.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time that Russia has carried out something like this on the territory of a foreign state, and it will certainly not be the last. However, that does not mean that we should get used to it as the norm.

In 2017, there were officially 140 Russian diplomats in the Czech Republic, which is a disproportionately high number considering the size of the Czech Republic compared to other countries, and compared to the 65 Czech diplomats in Russia. For example, the UK, which has six times the population of the Czech Republic, has 80 Russian diplomats. The Russian Embassy in the Czech Republic is, therefore, one of the largest in the EU, and the BIS (Czech FBI) estimates that one-third of official Russian diplomats in the Czech Republic are spies under the auspices of the Russian embassy. According to US sources, there are, in total, about 400 Russian intelligence spies in the Czech Republic.

The Vrbětice revelations have caused a storm on the Czech political scene, but we should not forget that this is, above all, a huge international scandal. The conclusion of it is as follows: The Russians do not see us as a threat, like the United States or other powerful countries. Russia sees us as prey. But that doesn't change their hostility. Russia has no partners. There are only three types of countries that Russian foreign policy distinguishes: targets, obstacles, and uninteresting countries. In the Central European area, the third type is missing.

As we are getting our newsletter together a primary US gasoline pipeline fell prey to a cyberattack. How vulnerable we all are. Now that the diplomatic crisis with Russia has quieted down, we are back to the Climate Control crisis. This one may be even worse for our future. All progressive ideas spell more control over any aspect of life.

HOWEVER, OPTIMISM REIGNS

We still live in peaceful days. Mother's Day and Victory Day came together this year. V-DAY is a national holiday commemorating the end of World War II. Most countries of the world participated in the Second World War. With more than 60 million casualties, it became the largest war to date. Czechs fought against the German Nazis on both the Western and Eastern fronts.

For the last two years, the commemorative events were held without the public. All official participants, including soldiers, wore respirators.

We attended an impressive celebration of the 70th anniversary in Pilsen: Convoy of Liberty in May 2015. This was one of the last major anniversaries attended by the original veterans.

The first YouTube is 11 minutes long, the second is 3 minutes short.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1IhSVqVmz0&t=27s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gl-NDSg1oc0&t=111s>

We sure live in exciting times. Internet, Facebook, and ZOOM keep us together. Our ZOOM bible study was joined by two Czech women from Canada.

DEEPL.COM

The latest translator tool we got hands-on. It is a new paid version worth every penny. It works like a dream in several languages.

Pavel first tested difficult theological texts; translated German text into Czech; next was a chapter from "Fearfully & Wonderfully Made" by Dr. Paul Brand and Philip Yancey into Czech. It is one of Klara's favorite books. She was working on translation just for fun. It does wonders, especially with all the medical terms.

This encouraged Pavel to translate his book "I will not give my glory to another" into the Polish language. Poland has 40 million people. What an opportunity. We have many contacts with Polish-speaking people in Moravia (trilingual area).

Who knows, maybe the English version of his book is on the horizon. E-books have great potential.

Translating written text is just an opposite method to speed reading;

reading over and over, examining the meaning of every word, looking for best expressions, understanding; proof-reading and editing takes their time

PRAISES

- Milan, Radio LOGOS in Slovakia wrote:

I very much appreciate you thinking about our work. I have tested your suggested translator "DeepL.com". It is good! It is much better than Google translator is. We will use it.

So far, we have translated about 200 reflections "Solid Joy"– Lasting Joy (?) by Piper. Some of the meditations are challenging to use the correct "Piper's" terminology – (experiential righteousness-positional righteousness...). Most of the theological terms we use from your book – "I will not give my glory to another" An excellent reference tool! We have a head full of Piper!!!

Praying for blessings from this difficult task. Milan

- After 30 weeks of virtual church, we had our first live sermon and worship service. We have to keep distancing, wear masks; however, it will take time before our get-togethers will be normal.
- After 286 days of distance education, some children are back in school. Businesses are slowly open-

ing; restaurants, movie theatres, and many public places remain closed.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

- We are looking forward to a few conferences and an annual summer recreational retreat with friends mostly from Brno.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS, SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION IN OUR LIFE AND THE CZECH & SLOVAK MINISTRIES

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

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