



ST. JOHN NEPOMUK
MESSENGER

Y. M. S. & Y. L. S.

65

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CHAS. J. HOŠEK,
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MESSENGER

OF
ST. JOHN NEPOMUK PARISH

A MONTHLY MESSAGE OF PARISH NEWS AND INFORMATION.

OCTOBER 1931



Monsignor Joseph Hessoun,

who 65 years ago organized the St. Aloysius Young Men's Sodality and the Blessed Virgin's Young Ladies' Sodality of St. John Nepomuk Parish.

Monsignor Joseph Hessoun was born in Bohemia in 1830. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1853, labored as a parish priest in Bohemia for 12 years, and finally came to America to attend to the needs of his fellow-countrymen across the sea.

He arrived at this parish October 4th, 1865 at the age of 35. Ten months after his arrival he founded the present Young Men's Sodality and the present Young Ladies Sodality.

He died as pastor of this parish on July 4th, 1906, at the age of 76 years. He is revered by all the Slavs of America as their Apostle in the new world.

Organization of the Young People's Sodalities

Y. M. S. July 8th, 1866. — Y. L. S. July 15th, 1866.

ARRIVAL OF FATHER HESSOUN.

Father Hessoun arrived at St. John Nepomuk Parish on September 30th 1865. He had been inspired to the noble calling of attending to the needs of his fellow-countrymen beyond the sea by heeding the appeal of his bishop for priests who would be willing to leave all and go to America. Sad reports were coming in about the emigrants from their native hills, who were falling away from the religion of their forefathers because of the lack of priests who could speak their language.

CONDITIONS AT THAT TIME.

When he arrived in this far Western land, he found that the reports had not been exaggerated. In his first letter to his folks, Father Hessoun wrote: "Words could not express the joy of these people in their reception to me. — They must have been waiting for me like the devout patriarchs of old awaited the coming of the Messiah. Our fellow-country men here were very unhappy, in regard to their spiritual outlook, and had practically given up every hope in this world and in themselves too; although under the circumstances you could hardly blame them.

There are here very many of those who totally dropped their Catholic faith; but at the same time there is a very encouraging number of those who have remained faithful —."

YOUNG PEOPLE IN DANGER.

The spiritual environment of his flock was truly deplorable at the time of his arrival. For 18 months previous to the arrival of the great Bohemian apostle, the church and school had been closed down. The former pastor, Father Francis Trojan did not understand the people, and the result seems to have been constant bickering between the shepherd and his flock. — The parish debts had been increased until they made a very heavy burden upon the people. Some quit going to church on that account, especially the lukewarm ones, who usually are only waiting for an excuse of some kind to give pretext for ceasing religious obligations. Some

parents sent their children to neighboring Catholic schools, but a number sent their children to the public schools.

During those 18 months, only twice did traveling missionaries stop off at the parish, Father A. Matousek, S. J., and Father Sulak, S. J.

Some of the younger generation, taking undue advantage of such conditions, fell away from their obligations, and mixed in with questionable company. Quite a few families had fallen away from their faith altogether. Surely the lambs of the flock, the younger generation, were in dire danger of being slaughtered by the wolf of irreligion.

Father Hessoun fully realized that he had no small task before him. He knew that it would tax all the resources of the stoutest spirit, as we glean from his writings at this time.

The first few months he spent in getting acquainted with his people, in visiting the families, in striving to bring back fallen families, and to put order into his work and parish.

BEGINS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.

As soon as it was convenient for him he began the work of solid organizing. Knowing that the future of any parish depends on the young people, and that they are the ones most in danger of losing their faith, his first interest was concerned with the young men and the young ladies of the parish. He determined to found societies for them.

Only ten months after his arrival, on Sunday, July 8th, 1866, he announced at the Benediction in the afternoon that he wished to see the young men immediately after services. The records show that 60 responded.

MINUTES OF FIRST MEETING.

The minutes of the first meeting, written by Monsignor himself, read as follows:

Sunday, July 8th, 1866, seventh Sunday after Pentecost. (All this is in Bohemian of course.) At the afternoon devotions the priest invited the young men to come to the class-room, for the purpose of organizing them into a Sodality.



Rev. Wenceslaus Linek,
pastor of St. John Nepomuk church

After the death of Father Charles Bleha in May, 1926, Archbishop Glennon simultaneously appointed Father Wenceslaus F. Linek as pastor, and Father Albert J. Prokes, as assistant pastor.

Following in the footsteps of Monsignor Hessoun, who was always keenly interested in his young people, the present priests of the parish have always diligently striven to keep the Young Men and the Young Ladies of the parish actively organized, zealous in their spiritual duties, and interested in the affairs of the parish.

For this purpose they have spared no efforts to afford proper facilities to their young people to keep them bonded together in the true spirit of brotherhood. The present state of the St. Aloysius Young Men's Sodality and the Blessed Virgin's Young Ladies' Sodality gives ample indication that God has blessed their efforts, and that the young people of St. John Nepomuk Parish appreciatively cooperate with their spiritual Directors.

A very encouraging number of youths answered the call. When the purpose of the Sodality was explained to them, sixty handed in their names. The Sodality was placed under the protection of the Most Sacred Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

NOTEWORTHY NUMBER.

It is noteworthy that such a large number of young men attended Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. It is good to compare that number

with the number who attend Christ's own personal blessing in these days. It also is indicative of the spiritual progress that Monsignor Hessoun had made with the young people of the parish by that time. Evidently he had been working on the younger set from the first days of his arrival.

Y. M. S. — A BLESSED VIRGIN'S SODALITY.

It is good to note also that the Young Men's Sodality was the Blessed Virgin's Sodality from the very beginning. In recent years, the Y. M. S. has been affiliated with the Prima Primaria, the official Blessed Virgin's Sodality throughout the world, and the chaplain has been impressing the boys with the idea, that the Y. M. S., just like the Y. L. S. is a Blessed Virgin Society. Hence, this is nothing new, for, as the first minutes read, the sodality of the boys was consecrated on the very day to the Most Sacred Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. However, from the very beginning, the Y. M. S. bore the name of St. Aloysius.

THE SECOND MEETING.

The minutes for the second meeting read as follows: Sunday, August 5th, 1866. 11th Sunday after Pentecost.

Once more the purpose of the Sodality was explained to those present, and other Christian instructions were given.

It was decided to divide the society into two parts, the junior division and the senior division. It was decided that on the following Sunday the senior division should go to Holy Communion in a body.

Eight members (8) were received into the Sodality.

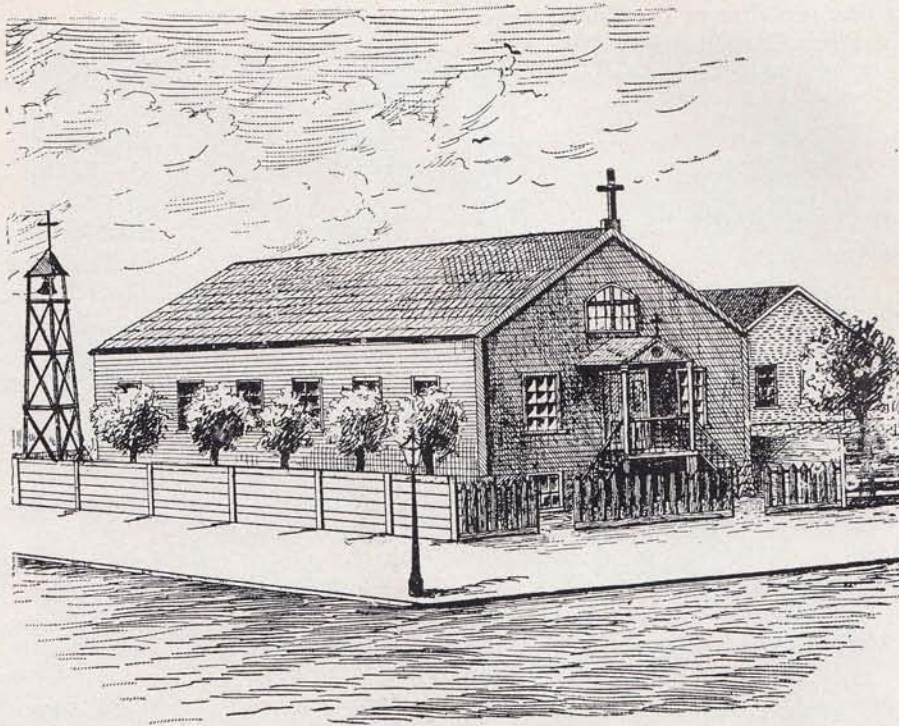
Thereupon, all the members marched over to the church, where they were officially enrolled into the Society of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and were given medals, and all made short consecration to the Blessed Mother.

DEVOTION TO MARY ESSENTIAL.

Throughout these early minutes of the St. Aloysius Sodality, true devotion to the Blessed Virgin is stressed as the basis of true Christian life. That must ever be the essential of the lives of our young people. — Monsignor Hessoun



St. John Nepomuk Church. The home of the Y. M. S. and Y. L. S.



Original wooden church of St. John Nepom., where the Y. M. S. and Y. L. S. were organized.

preached it then, and your spiritual directors ever insist upon it.

Whether or not this enrollment of the Sodality was with the Prima Primaria cannot be ascertained. Search was made at the Queen's Work, the headquarters of the Sodality in this district, but no record could be found. Perhaps the record was lost, as that was 65 years ago. However, it seems that the Y. M. S. must have already been enrolled into the Prima Primaria, for that has ever been for centuries the official Sodality for young people throughout the world.

THE THIRD MEETING OF Y. M. S.

Third meeting, September 2, 1866. — 15th Sunday after Pentecost.

Meeting took place in church. After the ordinary business, and short Christian instructions, a collection of 5 cents was taken up for the payment of the medals. The profits were to be used for the establishment of a library as the property of the Young Men's Sodality. Medals were placed around the necks of those who had not yet been enrolled. Seven new members were

received into the Sodality. It was announced that on the following Sunday, the Junior Division of the Y. M. S. should go to Holy Communion in a body.

INTERESTING NOTES FROM EARLY MEETINGS.

Monsignor Hessoun acted as Chairman at all meetings. He was the president.

The dues were 15 cents per month at first.

Frank Ott was chosen as the first secretary, for a period of 6 months.

At each meeting, the priest gave instructions on some point of Christian doctrine.

The second secretary was Joseph Urban.

On May 5, 1867, motion was made and carried that on the morning of the meeting of the Y. M. S., mass should be said for the members.

June 14, 1867. It was decided to open a bank account, and \$50 were brought to the bank.

The first donation of the Y. M. S. was \$25 for the establishment of a Catholic Bohemian newspaper.

October 13, 1867. Elections. Joseph Urban

was elected first president of the Young Men's Sodality, and Henry Marek secretary.

February 9, 1868. Motion made and carried to spend \$20 for a banner.

June 14, 1868. Motion made and carried to donate \$10 to the Holy Father.

LIST OF FIRST MEMBERS OF THE Y. M. S.
(Names of families still in this parish are in heavier type.)

Broz Jacob	Mares John
Broz Jos.	Mares John
Burian Anth.	Miller Frank
Bilek John	Miller Tom
Bartos Jos.	Martinek Wenc.
Burian John	Marsalek Chas.
Brcak Wenc.	Maruska Jacob
Baumruk Jos.	Moder Jos.
Bozdech Mat.	Marhart Jos.
Blahovec John	Ott Frank
Cervenka Mat.	Ouhrabka Chas.
Duba Frank	Ouhrabka Alois
Duba Jos.	Ouhrabka Albert
Duba Frank	Peleska Frank
Dvorak James	Peleska Jos.
Dvorak Frank	Pavelec John
Fiala John	Pavelec Frank
Hrdlicka Frank	Pavelec Jos.
Hlasivec Jos.	Pelikan Frank
Huber Frank	Pezl Frank
Hlavsa Frank	Rehacek Mat.
Jares Jos.	Rozenaur Mart.
Jirouch Jos.	Suda Chas.
Klasek Frank	Suda Anthony
Klasek Wenc.	Supitar Jos.
Klasek Frank	Smrka John
Kacer Mart.	Smat Jos.
Kurka Frank	Svoboda Fred.
Karhanek Chas.	Salek Tom
Karhanek Frank	Sosnovec Wenc.
Komeraus Jos.	Sramek John
Lukas Frank	Svantner Al.
Lesyna Frank	Steis Jos.
Mares Mat.	Stech Jos.
	Spelina Bern.
	Tringl Mart.
	Tichacek Wenc.

Tichacek John
Trefny Wenc.
Tintera Wenc.

Urban Jos.
Urban Wenc.

Votava Jos.
Votava Anthony
Votava John
Votava Frank

Within the next few months, we find these additional names:

Broz Pete
Blahovec John
Bakula Jos.

Cubert Jos.
Hynek Wenc.
Hejl Jos.
Havelka Mat.

Jansky Andy
Jiroush Frank

Kratky John
Kratky Bill
Kacer John
Kral Tom

Marek Henry
Masek Wenc.
Mrazek Frank

Novotny Jos.

Vokoun Mat.
Vesely Jos.
Vondraska Ign.
Vandas John
Vertych Adam
Vorel Mike

Zika Jos.
Zavrazdil Jos.
Zdvorak Mat.

Novotny Al.

Prokes John

Ruzicka Anthony
Smat John
Svehla Wenc.
Suchy Jos.

Turek John
Tichacek Pete
Trefny Karl
Trampir John

Uxa Chas.

Vilovec Wenc.
Vopalecky Frank

Wolf Chas.

Ziska John

Organization of Young Ladies Sodality.

It was at this time that Monsignor Hessoun founded the Blessed Virgin's Young Ladies Sodality. In fact, the Sodality of the boys is only one week older than that of the girls, for on the Sunday following the first meeting of the Young Men's Sodality, Monsignor Hessoun requested that the young ladies of the parish meet in the class room for the purpose of getting organized into a parish Sodality.

MINUTES OF FIRST MEETING.

"July 15th, 1866, eighth Sunday after Pentecost. — At the afternoon devotions, Father



Our Young Ladies' Sodality in 1894.

invited the young ladies of the parish to congregate in the classroom for the organization of a Young Ladies' Sodality. A large number responded, and after Benediction, eighty-two (82) young ladies came. The purpose of the meeting was explained to them."

SECOND MEETING.

The minutes of the second meeting of the Young Ladies Sodality read as follows:

"August 12th, 1866. — Once again the purpose of the Sodality was explained to the Young Ladies. It was determined to divide the Sodality into two sections, the seniors and the juniors; that they should go to Holy Communion in a body once every two months, beginning with the coming month. After that, they marched to church, where they were enrolled into the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and consecrated themselves to her.

INTERESTING NOTES.

Here are some interesting notes taken from the minutes of ensuing meetings during these early days of the Young Ladies Sodality.

Sept. 9, 1866. — Motion made and carried to have a library.

Oct. 14, 1866. — Dues to be 10 cents per month. Motion carried.

Father Hessoun acted as president pro tem for the first few months.

Mary Malecek was chosen as the first secretary, for a period of 6 months.

Mary Haisman was the first treasurer.

Spiritual instructions were given at every meeting.

It was determined to spend the money taken in for a library, and for donations to the church whenever seen fit.

Motion made and carried to have Mass on the morning of the day on which meeting is held.

October 6, 1867. **Mary Karhanek** was chosen first president of the Young Ladies Sodality. — \$25 were donated for a Catholic newspaper. (This was the first donation of the Young Ladies Sodality.)

February 2, 1868. — \$20.00 were to be spent on a Sodality banner.

LIST OF Y. L. S. MEMBERS.

We present a list of the original 82 members

of the Young Ladies Sodality. Names of families still in this parish are printed in heavier type.

Benda Barbara	Kratky Mary
Benda Philomena	Krehlik Anna
Broz Barbara	Kadlec Anna
Broz Mary	Kristof Rose
Broz Catherine	Kara Barbara
Bakula Mary	Koska Barbara
Baumruk Barbara	Kaspar Emily
Bilka Rose	Kalal Mary
Baekel Frances	Komrska Anna
Babka Anna	Kutheis Anna
Babka Elizabeth	
Boska Mary	Lukas Barbara
	Lukas Mary
Cibulka Mary	Lukas Anna
Cab Anna	Lastofka Mary
Cab Teresa	Langmeyer Mary
Cerny Anna	Lenz Philomena
Cezak Magdalen	
Chlanda Teresa	Masek Mary
	Marsalek Frances
Dvorak Josephine	Marsalek Mary
Dvorak Anna	Marsalek Frances
Duchek Anna	Mares Mary
Daniel Johanna	Mika Anna
	Mojka Mary
Feidler Catherine	
	Novotny Josephine
Ghan Barbara	Novotny Mary
Hrdlicka Mary	Ouhrabka Mary
Hrdlicka Teresa	Peleska Mary
Hubak Anna	Poradek Mary
Hubak Elizabeth	Pavelec Mary
Haisman Mary	Pokorny Mary
Hlavsa Anna	Pasek Mary
Hornik Anna	Panuska Rose
Halada Barbara	Palecek Aloisia
	Polacek Christina
Jerabek Mary	
Jonak Mary	Reznicek Elizabeth
	Rehacek Anna
Kurka Petronilla	
Kristoff Anna	Slezak Josephine
Kolsa Mary	Slezak Anna
Krejci Mary	Sosnovec Mary
Kneisel Catherine	Sykora Mary
Konba Mary	Sladek Mary
Kochman Barbara	Sindelar Mary
Kocejdel Philomena	Saska Anna



In the golden days of yore — physical culture training was one of the Y. L. S. activities.

Sefron Anna	Urban Catherine
Suda Anna	Urban Mary
Stodola Anna	Uxa Frances
Spelina Rose	
Svehla Mary	Vodicka Anna
Sedlak Catherine	Vodicka Eleanore
Steska Philomena	Vitovra Elizabeth
Sedlacek Magdalen	Vitka Mary
Smat Barbara	Votava Anna
	Vilovic Rose
Tikwart Anna	
Tikwart Catherine	Wolf Rose
Trefny Helen	Wolf Anna
Tintera Johanna	
Trcka Mary	Zelenka Mary
Toman Mary	Zauf Josephine
Tringl Magdalen	Ziska Barbara
	Zamrazil Anna

OLD FAMILIES.

It is interesting to note from these lists of the young men and young ladies which are the oldest families in the parish. We wish that it were possible to gather together again these members who are living to this day.

INTERVENING HISTORY.

We did not have the time or opportunity to study the history of our Sodalities during the years intervening from the foundation to the present time. We hope that some of these who were formerly members during these days will give us some of the details. Perhaps this would be an interesting topic at the banquet, and we invite the older former members to speak at our jubilee.

As far as we have been able to glean from conversation with old members, the Sodalities progressed wonderfully during the days of Monsignor Hessoun, and the friendships cemented and the good times enjoyed in the old days form some of the best memories of life. God alone knows how much good these Sodalities did in preserving the faith among the young people, thereby enabling them to hand down the cherished heritage to their children and children's children.

After the death of Monsignor Hessoun, there seem to be periods of depression in the Sodalities. Sometimes they seemed to be merely holding on. This is the case more with the boys than with the girls.

When Father Nauman was appointed assistant to Father Bleha, he took active interest in the Sodalities, and once again some of the old spirit was seen to flourish.

REVIVAL.

Father Linek and Father Prokes were appointed the spiritual guides of St. John Nepomuk Parish in 1926. Their principal concern was with the young people of the parish, because it was evident at once that while the married people were duly organized in the Parish Societies, there were many youngsters to whom the Y. M. S. and Y. L. S. did not appeal. They realized, as the Holy Father has pointed out so often, that where young men and young ladies get away from the influence of the Sodality, they are in danger in more ways than one.

Father Prokes was appointed chaplain of the Sodalities. His first work was a drive for membership. In June, 1926, there were 42 members in the Y. M. S. A year later there were 130.

The Young Ladies Sodality had not dwindled so, but the girls too put on a drive for membership, and their numbers were proportionately increased.

The Young Ladies Sodality for many years followed the rule of monthly Communion, and it must be said, always were faithful to their rule. Prior to 1926, the boys' rule of Communion was once every four months. The young men readily responded to the efforts of their chaplain, and now both the Young Men's Sodality and the Young Ladies' Sodality go to Holy Communion in a body together at their special Mass on every third Sunday of the month.

CLUB ROOM FOR YOUNG MEN.

The Young Men of the Parish sent a committee to Father Linek shortly after his appointment, requesting him to give the boys a Club Room. The pastor was glad to acquiesce, and told the young men that they could have one of the upper classrooms in the east building. The same was announced at the meeting in September, and a collection was taken up among the boys for a recreation room. The enthusiasm with which the members received the news is seen from the fact that at that meeting, \$160.00 were pledged for the new room.

Evening after evening, the boys got to work.