

Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria

Visitor Experience, #21 in Series

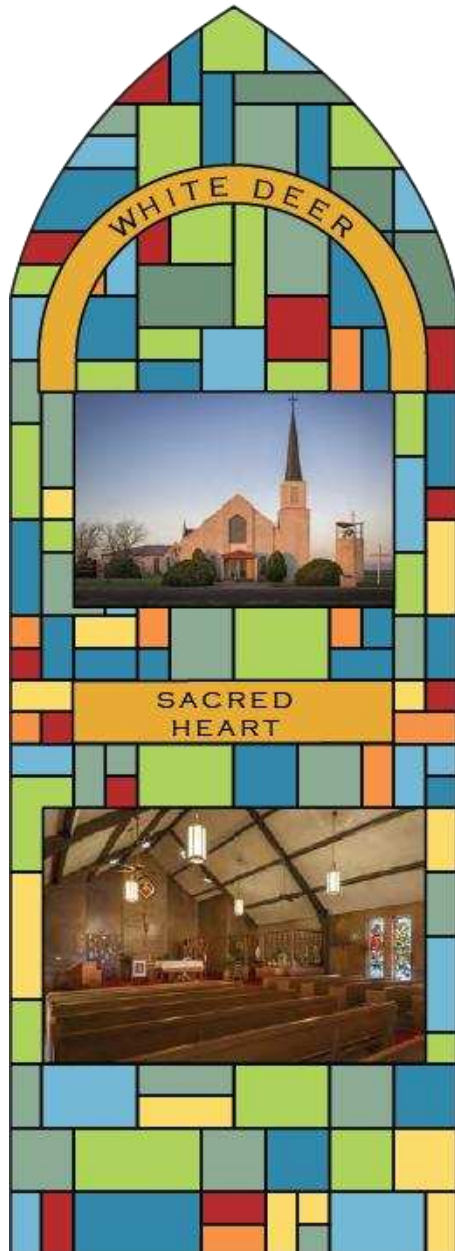
Sacred Heart Church, White Deer, TX

Excerpts and pictures from *ROOTS OF FAITH: The Story of Sacred Heart Parish, White Deer,*

Texas

1913 - 2013

By Proxie Haiduk Warminski, Eric Haiduk,
and Carolyn Anderwald Rapstine



History

Sacred Heart Parish of White Deer, Texas, has the distinction of being the only identifiable Polish settlement in the Texas Panhandle. Although poor and unable to speak the language of a new country, their first priority was to build a church and establish a community. The first known Poles to visit Northwest, Texas were five young men from the Panna Maria Community in 1900. On June 22, 1900, **John Kotara, Ed Gawlik, Frank Gawlik, Lewis Lyssy, and Moe Kopuli** left Panna Maria, taking with them nine horses and a farm wagon. On July 9, 1909, **Henry Czerner, John Krol, and Matt Labus** set out from Panna Maria, Texas, to see if they could locate a suitable



The Sacred Heart Church is dedicated on May 30, 1913

site for a Polish Colony in the northern part of the state. The Panna Maria Colony that was founded, in 1854, by the immigrants from Poland did not have enough good farming land for the descendants of the original group, and many were moving away in search of land. The **Urbanczyk** family moved to Knox County in 1902. The **Urbanczyk** family told **Czerner** that they had heard of large amounts of land available for purchase in the Texas Panhandle. On August 23, 1909, **Czerner** went with **Timothy Dwight Hobart**, agent for the White Deer Land Company in Pampa, to look at lands north of White Deer. **Czerner** liked the land, and **Hobart** promised to hold a large block north of the railroad for several years for a Polish settlement. **Crispian Czerner**, **Henry's** father, sold his land in Panna Maria and moved to White Deer in December 1909. He purchased 640 acres four miles northeast of White Deer on December 31, 1909. The second Catholic

family to join the colony was that of **John Urbanczyk**, who moved to White Deer from Munday, Texas, in September 1910. In October 1910, the **Vincent Haiduk** and **Demas Bednorz** families came from Panna Maria. During 1911, three more families were added to the White Deer community: the **Sam Bednorz** family from Stockdale, the **Ben Urbanczyk** family from Munday, Texas, and the **Felix Urbanczyk** family from Munday, Texas. The **John Kotara** family moved from Czestochowa, Texas, and the **L. T. Urbanczyk** family from Koscuisko, Texas. In March 1913, the **Jerome Rapstine** family moved from Panna Maria, via the state of California. In 1915, the **Charles Kalka** family moved from McLean, Texas, and the **Theodor Mazurek** family from Bandera, Texas. The year 1916 brought the **Edmund Jendrush** and **Ed Kotara** families from South Texas.

One of the first things the new colony thought of was the building of a Catholic church in which to worship. A block of land was purchased on June 29, 1911. From 1910 to 1913, Mass was celebrated about once a month in different homes. The group sang the *Kolendy* or *Piesna na Boze Narodzenie* at Christmas time and the *Piesne Wielkopostne* and the *Gorzkie Zale* during Lent.

The first child born in the Polish Colony was **Emil Urbanczyk**, son of **John** and **Rose Urbanczyk**, on August 19, 1911. On January 6, 1912, the first marriage of the community was solemnized, that of **Thomas Moczygamba** of Panna Maria and **Florence Haiduk**, daughter of **Vincent** and **Frances Haiduk**.

Plans for the new church were adopted on March 1, 1913. The site for the building was staked off on March 4, 1913. The first Mass in the new church, which still was not fully completed, was offered on May 30, 1913, the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

The first baby baptized in the new church by **Father Bier** was **Charles Casimer Warminski**, son of **Mr. and Mrs. John Warminski**. During the early years of the settlement in White Deer, the Silesian

Poles who came from Panna Maria and Central Texas were the dominant cultural force of the community. The first wedding in Sacred Heart Church was **Louis and Agnes Haiduk Bednorz** on August 18, 1914. On September 22, 1916, the parish experienced its first death, **Mrs. Jacob Tuleja**.



Present Sacred Heart Church

*As a God blessed coincidence, the large electronically illumined graphic appearing to be a beautiful stained glass window of **Sacred Heart Church in White Deer** has now been sponsored by the family of **John, Ethel, and Judith Urbanczyk** of Karnes City! Thank you so much for memorializing your ancestors who went to White Deer so many years ago!*

A Tribute Story by Al Notzon

Growing up in Laredo, I was well aware that my parents were proud Americans and Catholics. I was aware that an ancestor had founded the town of Laredo and that one grandfather was German and another grandmother was French, but we weren't really interested in ethnicity. I first learned I had other cousins outside of Laredo from



Al (Vice Chairman of the Board) & Angela Notzon

my uncle who lived in Houston. He was Msgr. Marcel C. Notzon, my godfather, and he told me of family in San Antonio and Yorktown. I did learn that Grandmother Notzon's maiden name was Zizik and she had two sisters in San Antonio. Bishop Yanta and then Father Kurzaj told me of my Polish roots, and I have taken a trip to Poland. I have been working with Bishop John Yanta and was privileged to be at his ordination as bishop in Panna Maria and Amarillo and have been involved in the Polish Heritage Center from its inception. I am so thankful that my Polish ancestors risked so much to come to America and am humbled by the sacrifices they made for their future generations. We have sponsored the St. Michael's Cemetery window representation since my great-grandfather and great-grandmother Notzon are buried there, and we want to honor their memories as well as all my Polish ancestors through our gifts to the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria.

Pastors who served Sacred Heart Parish, White Deer, Texas

Fr. C.J. Bier, 1911-Sept 1913; Fr. Hickey, Sept 1913-Nov 1913; Fr. Mezerwiski, Nov 1913; Fr. William Bender, July 1914-Nov 1917; Fr. Weher, Nov 1917-April 1919; Fr. Meister, Dec 1919-June 1922; Fr. Campbell, June 1922-Aug 1922; Fr. Boutich, 1922-April 1923; Fr. J.H. Krukkert, May 1923-July 1927; Fr. M. French, July 9, 1927-June 30 1928; Fr. Joseph Wonderly, June 30, 1928-Nov 1930; Fr. Edward Clinton, Sept 29, 1930-Nov 16, 1934; Fr. A.A. Boeding, July 1934-Nov 1934; Fr. Charles Dvork, Nov 1934-May 1937; Fr. Walter May, 1937; Fr. Michael French, June 22, 1937-Nov 1, 1937; Fr. Walter Wahila, Nov 1, 1937-Dec 31, 1937; Fr. Jerome Zienta, Nov 31, 1937-June 4, 1942; Fr. R.M. Schindler, Oct 1939-Aug 28, 1940; Dr. DeBruyn, Aug-Oct 1940; Fr. Jerome Zienta, June 4, 1942-Aug 16, 1943; Fr. James Hogan, March 1943-Aug 1943; Fr. Norbert Wagner, Aug 1943-Oct 1943; Fr. Peter Morsch, Oct 1943-May 1950; Fr. Fredric Hyland, June 1950-Oct 1952; Fr. Francis Kaminsky, Oct 1952-Feb 1955; Fr. Jerome Hancox, Feb 1955-July 1959; Fr. Stanley Crocchiola, July 1959-Sept 1960; Fr. Jerome Hancox, Sept 1960-Aug 1968; Fr. Gerald Lynch, Aug 1968-Oct 1968; Fr. Daniel O'Sullivan, 1968-1969; Fr. James Gurzynski, Aug 1969-July 1982; Fr. Peter Otto, July 1982-June 1983; Msgr. Clifton Corcoran, June 30, 1983-Feb 1988; Msgr. Kevin Hand, Feb 1988-April 2004; Fr. Mieczyslaw Przepiora, Apr 2004-2015; and Fr. Lurdu Marianna Yekkerala, 2015-present.



Photograph courtesy of: Rosa Warminski Bilderback, White Deer, Texas

Women Religious of Sacred Heart

Sr. Mildred Warminski, (CCVI) Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, seen left, (1927-2012), daughter of Edward Warminski and Helen Kalka.

Sr. Mary Dolorine Lopez,
(SSC) Sisters of St. Casimir. (1928-)

Please pray for vocations.

List of Donors since December 8th

We would like to express our thankfulness to those who have recently supported our Polish Heritage Center project:

Gregory Thomas/Daniel Labus, Joe M. Stanush, James & Barbara Britton, Cheryl L. Pruski, Leon & Joan Witte, John & Patricia Picacio, Anonymous, Antoinette M. Gustafson, Kocurek Charitable Foundation, Gertrude B. Mika, Randy & Debbie Pawelek, Dr. Martha A. Respondek, George & Betty Kowalik, Guadalupe & Carlos Ontiveros, Rev. Casimir Jarzombek, Susan B. Moczygamba McKinsey, Lorraine M. Pruski, Zygmund & Patricia Pruski, Robin Raquet, St. Francis Nursing Home, Donald D. & C. Varella, Anthony & Cynthia Bajdek, Jesse, Susie, Annette, Jeannette Estrada, Greg Dawson, Vincent G. & Mary Jane Janysek, LPJ Ranching Company LP, Ellen S. & Arthur R. Mika, Leo J. & Jeanette Winn Moczygamba, Clare & Kevin Smith, Emily J. & Rudolph Pollok, Adeline M. & Fernando A. Rodriguez, Richard C. & Judy S. Scheffler, Mrs. G.M. & George Shannan, Wilfred J. Yanta, Gerald L. Janysek, Alexander D. & Shelly C. Opiela, Jr, Hector & Amber, Joyce & Andy Rives, Jose A. & Terelyn Santos, Kenedy Memorial Foundation, Raymond & Patricia Hannigan, Eugene & Linda Snoga for Steve Skloss, Betty Lind, Karl P. & Stephanie Gager, John & Betty Kotara, Sam & Susie Kotara, Bishop John W. Yanta, Roberto & Armandina Ramirez, Sandra K. Yanta, Mary Ann Kotara Schirmer, Thomas J. & Mary L. Kean, Clem Bednorz, Sophie L. Imbody & Patricia L. Mounce.

Ways of supporting the Polish Heritage Center

In previous newsletters, we have mentioned a number of simple ways of supporting the ongoing project of the Polish Heritage Center. On December 19, 2017, **Sally Snoga Skloss** died in La Vernia seven days shy of her ninety-fifth birthday. In her obituary notice, it was the desire that any donations be made to the *Polish Heritage Center Foundation*. What a beautiful legacy! In this way, **Sally's** memory will continue to live on by those who loved and cherished her. And thank you for all that have responded so kindly to this appeal!

Polish History Lesson for today: courtesy of Dr. Jim Mazurkiewicz, Texas A&M

Saint Hyacinth, O.P., (Polish: *Święty Jacek* or *Jacek Odrowąż*) (b. ca. 1185 in Kamień Śląski* (Ger. Groß Stein) near **Opole** (Ger. Oppeln), Upper Silesia – d. 15 August 1257, in Kraków, Poland of natural causes) was educated in Paris and Bologna. Called the "Apostle of the North", Hyacinth was the son of Eustachius Konski of the noble family of Odrowąż. He was born in 1185 at the castle of Lanka, at Kamin, in Silesia, Poland. Hyacinth was canonized on 17 April 1594 by Pope Clement VIII, ^[1] and his memorial day is celebrated on 17 August. In Spanish-language countries, Hyacinth is known as **San Jacinto**.

The **Battle of San Jacinto**, fought on April 21, 1836, in present-day Harris County, Texas, was the decisive battle of the Texas Revolution. Led by General Sam Houston, the Texian Army engaged and defeated General Antonio López de Santa Anna's Mexican army in a fight that lasted just 18 minutes.

The Battle of San Jacinto was fought near the rain-swollen Buffalo Bayou in what is now Harris County during the 1836 Texas Revolution. The decisive victory gave rise to the Republic of Texas. The site is now a state historic park. The park is the site of the San Jacinto Monument.

Santa Anna, the President of Mexico, was captured the following day and held as a prisoner of war. Three weeks later, he signed the peace treaty that dictated that the Mexican army was to leave the region, paving the way for the Republic of Texas to become an independent country.

The **San Jacinto River** (/ˌsæn dʒəˈsɪntoʊ/ **SAN jə-SIN-toh**) runs from Lake Houston in Harris County, Texas, to Galveston Bay. In the past, it was home to the Karankawa and Akokisa tribes. It is named after Saint Hyacinth.

****These families originated in the Kamień Śląski parish according to Silesian Profiles books: Jaskowitz, Kowaltzyk, Morawietz, Pyka, Rudolf, Szodrok, and Tkocz.***

Our story in the exhibits is one-third finished

By Al Notzon and designer Steve Harding

As the impressive outer shell of the Polish Heritage Center nears completion, we next turn our attention to the building interior. It is here that the inspirational and educational exhibits will soon become a reality. These exhibits feature statues, paintings, large graphic presentations, representations of stained glass windows, interactive exhibits, and a hand-held audio communications system offering content in English, Polish, Spanish, as well as a youth focused track. The Polish Heritage Center's museum designer has produced and presented story guides, exhibit copy, video scripts, audio scripts, and exhibit graphics to guide the board of directors and decision makers through the project. Bishop Yanta has reviewed these elements along with designated editors, and the content is now in the final editing stage. All of the design elements are being prepared and the final artwork for the graphics is being completed. The final steps will be the fabrication of the exhibits and the production of the audio programs, videos, interactive exhibits, and special effects. We are approximately one third through the work that will need to be done to complete the project.

We have the resolve and the leadership in place to realize this incredible vision. All we are lacking is funds and with that we need your help. This project must be completed to honor our Polish heritage and to tell the story of those who came from Poland to Texas — making a new life but never forgetting their faith, culture and family. We are thankful for all the donors who are contributing to, and continue to endorse, the project and we look forward to others joining us with their support. This magnificent Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria will be a beacon to Polish Americans, tourists, school children, and all who recognize the importance of faith, family, community, and heritage.

Poland to phase out Sunday shopping by 2020

Article from the **Catholic Herald**, written by staff
reporter posted 25 Nov 2017

*The government and trade unions want workers to
spend more time with their families*

Polish MPs have approved a bill that will phase out Sunday shopping by 2020.

Initially proposed by trade unions, the idea received the support of the ruling conservative Law and Justice Party, who want to allow workers to spend more time with their families.

The Sejm, the lower house of Poland's parliament, passed the bill by 254 to 156 to restrict Sunday shopping to the first and last Sunday of the month until the end of 2018, only on the last Sunday in the month in 2019, and to ban it totally starting in 2020. It will still be permitted, however, on the Sundays before major holidays such as Christmas. Some bakeries and online shops will also be exempt.

The bill will now pass to the Senate, and then to President Andrzej Duda for approval.

In a statement, the Polish bishops' conference said the bill did not go far enough, and that everyone should be free from work on Sundays.

*In his Apostolic Letter, *On Keeping the Lord's Day Holy "Dies Domini,"* St. John Paul II wrote in 1998: Those who have received the grace of faith in the Risen Lord cannot fail to grasp the significance of this day of the week with the same deep emotion which led Saint Jerome to say, "Sunday is the day of the Resurrection, it is the day of Christians, it is our day."*



Monday Meeting: Bishop Yanta on the left, followed by: Barney Smith of SmithPrint, Joe Yanta, and Al Notzon

Thank you to God first for arranging all things so that we may pay prayerful tribute to our courageous, faithfilled ancestors who followed their leader, Fr. Leopold Moczygamba, to a new land that needed to be tamed, cultivated, and developed. They struggled with new ways and held to their old ways. Our Center is dedicated to their memory. May God bless You and Yours,

+Bishop John W. Yanta

EACH DAY, THE SHELL OF OUR CENTER DRAWS NEARER TO ITS COMPLETION!



Summary: Phase II – Construction of Exterior

Bid awarded to Boyle Construction:	\$3,373,000.00
20 th Month completed Construction Cost (April '16 – Nov'17):	\$2,669,203.49
8 Months payment by Polish Heritage Center:	\$1,114,376.21
12 Months payment by Falls City National Bank Loan:	\$1,554,925.55
Interest Payments paid to Falls City National Bank for loan:	\$56,558.62
Construction cost for first 21 months (including payment #21):	\$2,703,638.18
21th Month payment due February 28th, 2018:	\$34,434.69
Remaining Construction cost after 21 months paid:	\$669,361.82