

Parish of Vratislavice nad Nisou

# CHAPEL of the RESURRECTION Vratislavice nad Nisou



Václav Vaněk  
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## THANKS

*"Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain."* Psalm 127: 1

The Pastoral Center of the Vratislavice Parish – the Chapel of the Resurrection (2001), the parish hall (2000) and two apartments for the needy (2006) were built according to the design of the architect Pavel Vaněček (1942-2016). The subject of the resurrection fascinated him, he worked on it for free and said that in the Chapel of the Resurrection one looks past the cross at the top of the roof's glass pyramid into the heavens. He was a member of the Church of the Brethren, and so the work took on an ecumenical dimension from the very beginning. The theme of Jesus' resurrection is universal, uniting Christians of different faiths. In the chapel the theme is artistically expressed in "The Way of the Resurrected One" consisting of 8 paintings and 7 stained glass windows by the academic painter Petr Veselý from Brno. Liturgical items made of fireclay were designed by Pavel Vaněček and made by Iva Ouhrabková from Liberec. Pavel Hřebíček from Ketkovice created a procession cross, a candlestick holding the paschal candle and little bells for the chapel.

Deacon Václav Vaňek from Vratislavice should be named as the main initiator of the whole construction project. He chose the unusual theme of the Resurrection, which was accepted by both the architect Vaněček and other artists. Through his many years of efforts, he was responsible for completing the work.

Above all, we are grateful to God that the work has succeeded. For their financial help we thank the German organizations Renovabis (CZK 5 million), Kirche in Not (CZK 500,000), the Czech-German Fund for the Future (CZK 1.5 million), the American Bishops' Conference (CZK 2 million), and friends from Germany, the Netherlands, Bohemia and Moravia (CZK 2 million). Another thank-you should go especially to those who donated a "widow's penny" from their modest funds. We thank Pastoral Assistant Evelyn Bernard of the Secular Institute of St. Boniface for arranging financial assistance from Germany. Thank you to everyone who worked on the construction and who prayed for the success of the work.

We ask that the words of the psalmist apply to all who enter the Chapel of the Resurrection: I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of LORD."



Deacon Václav Vaněk



## HISTORY

The first mention of a church in Vratislavice is from 1260. The church probably stood on the left bank of the river Nisa. The second church was built on the site of today. The construction of the Baroque Church of the Holy Trinity, designed by the Italian architect Marco Antonio Canavalle, began in 1700 and was completed in less than a year.

Vratislavice became a parish in 1764. The parish consisted of citizens of German ethnicity until 1945. After the establishment of new political conditions, the rectory building was leased to the National Committee for CZK 50 per year. It fell into disrepair in its care for 45 years. The building housed house administration, a gas station office, a florist and a library. Over time, water leaked into the building to such an extent that soaked books from the library ended up in the trash.

The Velvet Revolution brought new opportunities for Vratislavice parish. The first major event was the replacement of the roof of the rectory building, followed by its gradual renovation. The restored premises made it possible to develop the life of the parish outside of worship. Spiritually, the parish was taken care of by the Franciscan community from Ruprechtice. In mid-1991, the position of parish administrator was entrusted to the deacon Václav Vaňek. A few months later, the team was joined by Sister Evelyn Bernard of the Secular Institute of St. Boniface. In 1992, 42 school children were baptized at Easter, who asked for the baptism themselves.

In 1996, the renovation of the parish building was completed. At a conference, we were told that parishes could apply for financial aid from abroad, specifically from the German organization Renovabis and others. The experience that space can help develop the life of the parish made us consider building a pastoral center, which was to have three basic parts - a worship area, a meeting room for parishioners and a room for charitable services, including two small apartments for temporary accommodation.





## CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHAPEL

The Chapel of the Resurrection is a modern sacral building, one of the few new sacral buildings in northern Bohemia. The years of its creation were exceptional due to the conditions just after the Velvet Revolution.

The chapel was built according to the design of architect Pavel Vaněček. The foundation stone of the building was consecrated in 1997 by Pope John Paul II. during his spring visit to the Czech Republic. After confirmation of the contribution by the Renovabis organization, the construction began during the holidays of 1997, when the youth of the parish demolished the dilapidated farm buildings.

In 1998, a large construction company cast the concrete parts of the building. After that, the construction was taken over by a small Liberec company, under Mr. Vratislav Cvejn, which was supplemented by young men from the parish, who thus performed alternative military service. Under the leadership of one of them, they managed to build the trusses and prepare them for roofers. The contribution of the Czech-German Fund for the Future enabled the completion of the hall, which was blessed on September 28, 2000. Thanks to the generous donation of the American Bishops' Conference, it was possible to complete the chapel, which was consecrated on December 29, 2001, on the 300th anniversary of the consecration of the church, by Bishop Josef Koukl of Litoměřice:

*The pastoral centre is to support the life of the church in northern Bohemia. The work, which wants to help others in need (a charity with a clothing store and the possibility of short-term accommodation), invites unbelievers to joint cultural events in the hall and bears witness to the living Christ in the Chapel of the Resurrection. We feel how little still the belief that the resurrection affects also us has "got under our skin." Our sorrows, closedness, worries about the future of ourselves and the church, as if we have never had the experience of Easter morning. It is true that the resurrection - the centre of our faith - remains a mystery. But the Risen One sets out on a journey. Mary Magdalene suddenly knows who is calling her by name, the disciples in Emmaus know why their hearts are burning and who is breaking their bread, and Peter knows from the look of the Resurrected One that Jesus has forgotten the crowing of the rooster. Our path to the Risen One is not easy and straightforward. What do we have to go through in our lives to make it become a reality?*

*Even to us, when we are shut down and full of fear, He says just like He did to the disciples in Jerusalem, "Why..... can't you see it's me?" He tells us as he did to Thomas "Do not doubt..." and He brings the Holy Spirit to the whole church and peace to the whole world. It is enough to listen to Him when, after our many failures, we hear Him repeat "Throw the net" and "Come and eat." The Way of the Risen One in the chapel should tell us in its fourteen stations about all of this as well as about the empty tomb and the mission "Go, and make me disciples." Just as some non-scriptural stations appear in the Way of the Cross, the Way of the Resurrected One is complemented by one encounter that is not mentioned in the Bible i.e. the meeting of the risen Jesus with his mother Mary. It follows Jesus' encounter with Magdalene at the empty tomb: "Do not touch me, I have not yet ascended to the Father." Jesus, Father and Spirit, unity and love. Another encounter is with the one who conceived from the Holy Spirit, who sometimes did not understand, who carried everything in her heart and the dead one on her lap. The meeting of the Risen One with Mary – the fullness of understanding and joy.*



## INTERIOR EQUIPMENT

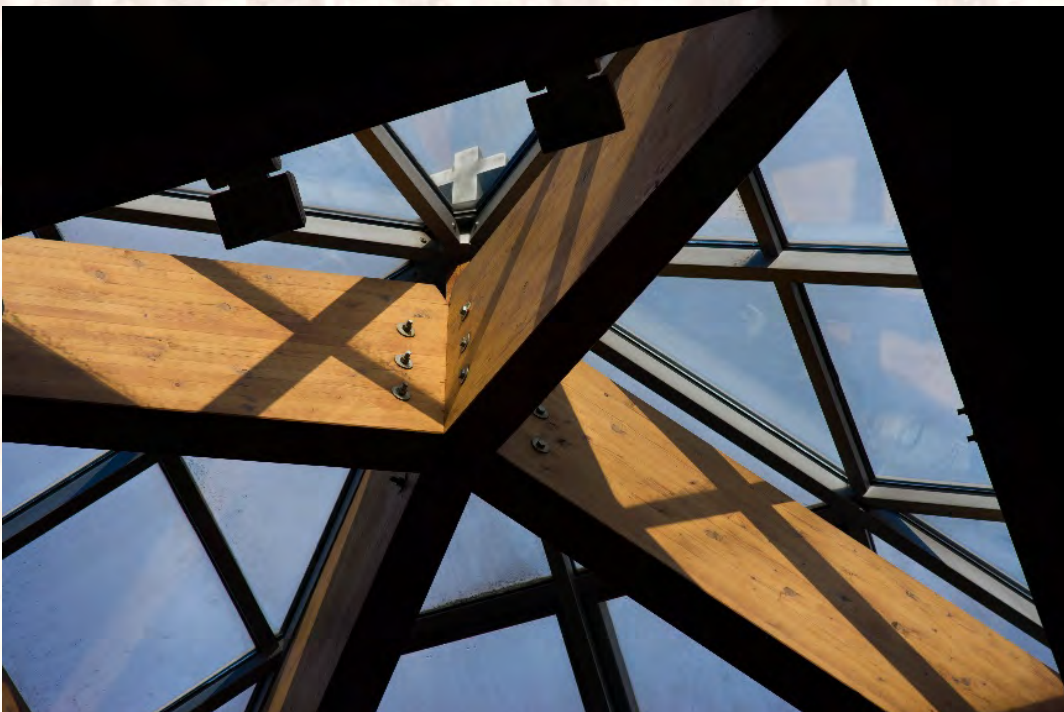
The chapel forms a whole together with the building of the old rectory and the new building of the pastoral centre.

The main area of the Chapel of the Resurrection arises from a square base. The north wall bears the main image of the risen Christ. Its creator and the designer of the stained-glass windows is the academic painter Petr Veselý from Brno. The painting intentionally has no frame to evoke a relationship with the typical Czech Gothic murals. It captures the resurrected Christ, only angels are witnesses to his resurrection. Christ is setting out on a journey to man.

The east wall is formed by a glass retractable wall, which allows us to separate or interconnect the main worship area (large chapel) and the smaller space (small chapel) and the confession room. Where these three spaces meet, there is a tabernacle that is accessible to store the Eucharist from the large and small chapels. In the confession room we can only see a fireclay slabs column interrupted by a wooden panel at the level of the tabernacle. The presence of the Eucharist is indicated by the eternal light of ruby glass.

The southern and western walls are formed by niches with stained-glass windows, the colours of which always enter the chapel in a different form according to the amount of light, time of day and time of year. During the day they are visible from the inside, at night under artificial lights all six windows glow when viewed from the outside.

Behind the main entrance, at the point where the south wall joins the west, there is a foundation stone consecrated by John Paul II.



The basic form of the roof is a pyramid, which is glazed at its top and finished with a small cross.





The benches in the chapel are made of beech wood. The floor tiles have a neutral "desert" colour with a plastic stone structure of matte glaze. The floor is elevated in height only in the presbytery area. In the small chapel, the benches are replaced by chairs. This makes it possible to prepare its liturgical space in a way which helps to create a community feeling with fewer people.

The liturgical equipment of the chapel - the altar, the pulpit, the baptismal font, the tabernacle and the sprinklers - was designed in fireclay by the artist Iva Ouhřabková from Liberec. All these elements are characterized by vertical lines, which should remind us where we should be heading in life.





The processional cross was created by the artistic blacksmith Pavel Hřebíček from Ketkovice. The cross itself is the branch of a vine cast in a bronze mold. Christ is alive on it, looking up to heaven with the cry, "My God, why have you forsaken me?" The two wings on the back of the cross indicate that the Father and the Holy Spirit were with him. On the cross we read the words: Hope, Journey, Truth, Desire, Love, Strength, Loyalty.



The play of light and colour due to rays of light passing through the stained-glass window in sunny weather.





The figure of Christ, now located in the small chapel, was found in the attic of the parish Church of the Holy Trinity and restored. It forms a symbolic spiritual link between the old church and the new chapel.



The wood of the cross in the confession room comes from a tree that grew on the site where the chapel now stands. The torso of Christ's body is from the cross that used to stand behind the church. It survived the time of totalitarianism, but was only destroyed in the time of freedom.



The baptismal font with seats (Latin: sedes) made of fireclay and beech wood is complemented by a glass stand under the Easter paschal candle.



*The architect Pavel Vaněček also created designs for the liturgical equipment of the chapel for Iva Ouhřabková. The design of the altar on the front had the letters alpha and omega formed in a circle. Mrs. Ouhřabková did not manage to embed these letters in the fireclay board, so eventually replaced them with a circle. To her surprise, after firing, the fireclay of the circle took on a different shade than the surrounding material. All lines in the fireclay furnishings of the chapel except the sedes have a vertical direction from bottom to top.*



The altar, pulpit and sedes are made of fireclay in combination with wood.







The tabernacle is accessible from two places - from the large and the small chapel. In the confession room, it is only indicated by a wooden panel in a fireclay column and eternal light. A ruby glass flower under the tabernacle door replaces the flame of eternal light.



The stone was blessed in Prague on April 27, 1997 by John Paul II



## THE WAY OF THE RESURRECTED ONE



Deacon Václav Vaněk tells how the idea for the construction of the Chapel of the Resurrection and the unusual Way of the Resurrected One came about.

"The idea of the Way of the Resurrected One gradually evolved. I first heard about it from priest Jan Mikula, who worked in Vratislavice during the Prague Spring, in 1968–1970. He said that the idea of the Way of the Resurrected One was voiced during the negotiations of the Second Vatican Council. This was reflected in the realization of some of the new Stations of the Cross, which end with the 15th station - the resurrection of Christ.

When we went with the children from the parish on a spring school holiday, which often coincides with Lent, the children could paint the individual stations of the Stations of the Cross, but they usually knew nothing about what followed after Jesus' resurrection. Many adults are in a similar situation. Therefore, I have definitely come to the decision to combine the idea of the Way of the Resurrected One with the construction of the Chapel of the Resurrection. It was necessary to select from the New Testament events dealing with the resurrection of Jesus and to adapt the architecture of the chapel to the planned artistic intention. The number of stations has stabilized at 14. "



The main work of art is the altarpiece of the Resurrection. Other events are processed in the form of 6 stained glass windows in the niches of the large chapel and one in the ceiling of the confession room; the remaining 6 events are paintings on wood in the small chapel in the form of a triptych; the seventh is displayed on the canvas in the confession room.

The main altarpiece – the Resurrection: Where the Stations of the Cross end, the Way of the Resurrected One begins. The image of the risen Christ is intentionally painted on a frameless canvas to resemble medieval frescoes. The resurrection takes place without any witnesses but angels. One of the angels holds the Scriptures as if checking to see if events are going according to it. Jesus is leaving the tomb, not to go to Pilate or the chief priests, but to each of us, to everyone who would like to meet him.

The triptych in the small chapel shows the first six stations of the Way of the Resurrected One. On the closed wings we see the empty tomb and his meeting with Mary Magdalene, on the open picture we see the mystical embrace of Jesus and his Mother, Jesus and the disciples on the way to Emmaus, his disappearance after breaking bread at dinner in Emmaus and his meeting with Peter.

Stained-glass windows in the large chapel: While the triptych introduces us to Jesus' encounters with individuals, we follow Jesus in his meetings with the apostles, first in Jerusalem and then in Galilee. The stained-glass windows are abstract, they speak mainly through colours and symbols.

Individual stations of the Way of the Resurrected One and texts from Scripture:

1. Empty tomb, angels, women. "Why are you looking for the living among the dead?"
2. Jesus and Mary Magdalene. "Jesus said to her," Mary! "
3. Jesus and his mother Mary. (Mother and son embrace.)
4. Road to Emmaus. "Didn't our hearts burn?"
5. At the table in Emmaus. " But he disappeared from their sight."
6. Jesus and Peter. "He appeared to Simon."
7. Jesus and the disciples. Jesus shows the wounds to the disciples. "It's me."
8. Jesus gives the disciples the gift of the Spirit. "Peace be with you!"
9. Jesus with the disciples and Thomas. "Blessed are those who have not seen and believed."
10. Jesus teaches fishermen to catch fish. "Throw the net."
11. Jesus invites the disciples to breakfast. "Come and eat."
12. Jesus sends disciples to all nations. "Go and baptize, I am with you."
13. Jesus' ascension. "He was lifted before their eyes."
14. Sending the Holy Spirit. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit."



**"MEDITATION by Marion Remestová - Polívková (MR) and Aleš Profeta (AP)**



The empty tomb

Station 1: Why are you looking for the living among the dead?

Luke 24: 6-7. The women were overwhelmed with fear and bowed their faces to the ground. But two men in dazzling white robes told them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here; he has been resurrected. Remember, as he told you when he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, crucified, and rise on the third day. "

MR: We are looking for Jesus Christ just like the women who wanted to anoint his body. We often have an idea of where to find him. We focus all our efforts on this, we try, and then we don't notice that he's been standing next to us all the time. LORD, thank you for never



leaving us. Teach us to live so that we can see you around us and be able to look for you in our neighbours.

AP: What comes to mind when we hear an "empty tomb"? A cold, dark place. Much of today's world is like this place and most people live in that darkness. Therefore, as the Lord has risen from the dead, let us rise every morning with him in our hearts, and let us show to others every day the gift, the light in us. Let's go and roll away the stones from the hearts of other people.

Christ has risen from the dead, alleluia.  
He has truly risen, hallelujah, hallelujah.



Jesus and Mary Magdalene

Station 2: Jesus said to her, "Mary."

John 20: 11-18. Mary Magdalene stood outside the tomb and wept. As she did so, she leaned over the tomb and saw two angels in white robes sitting where Jesus' body had previously been. They asked Mary, "Why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." After these words she turned and

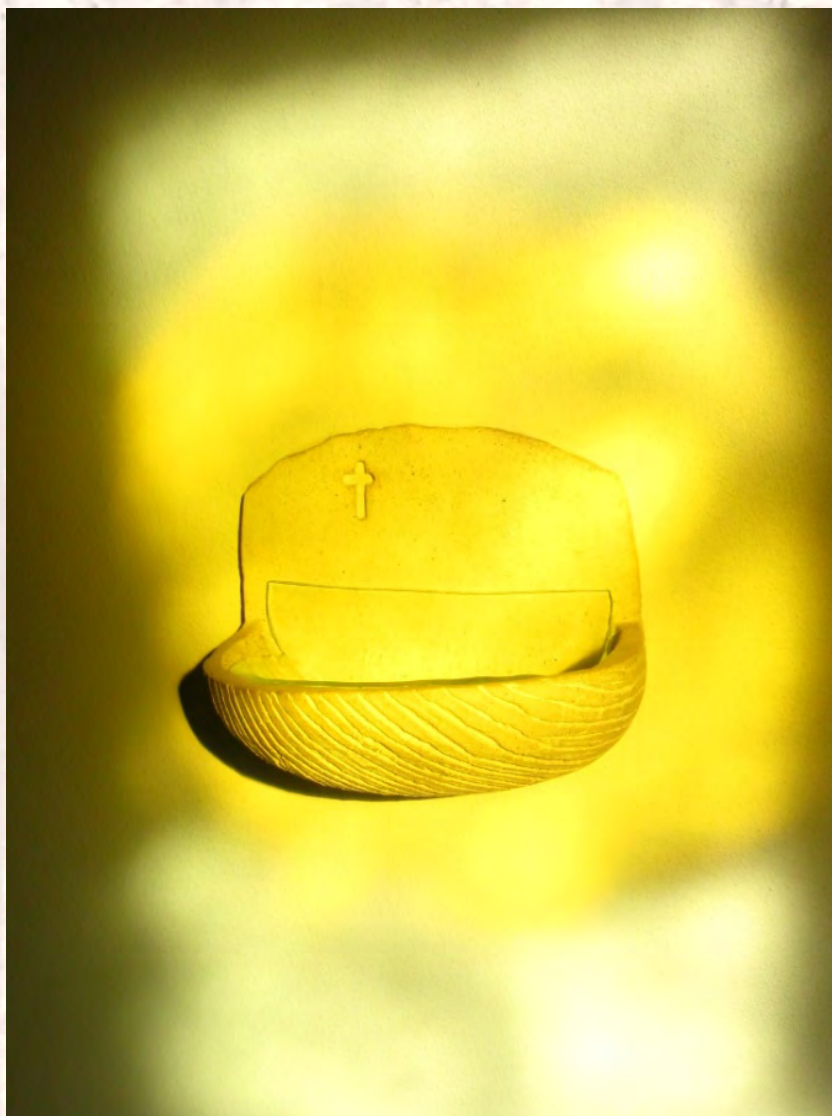


saw Jesus behind her, but she did not know that it was him. Jesus said to her, "Why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?" Assuming he was a gardener, she replied, "If you have taken him, Sir, tell me where you have laid him and I will go for him." Jesus said to her, "Mary! "She turned and she shouted "Rabbuni" in Hebrew, meaning "Master." Jesus said to her, "Don't touch me, I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brethren, and tell them that I am going up to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God. Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

MR: Mary Magdalene did not recognize the risen Jesus because of her crying. Only when he called her by her name. God will address us by our first name. Like someone who knows us intimately, who cares about us.

Thank you, Lord, for accepting us in our diversity, as we are, each as a unique and distinctive human being.

AP: For each of us who has lost someone, it is a very painful experience. We see the pain of Mary Magdalene, who lost someone she loved very much. Here Jesus gives us clear evidence that by faith in him and love for him, death can be overcome. Therefore, let us dry our tears and love the one who proved to us that death is not the end, but a beginning.







The embrace of the Mother and the Son

Station 3: Jesus and his mother Mary (according to tradition)

MR: Mary accompanied Jesus all his life and as a mother she was subjected to the most difficult trial because she saw her son die. Surely she must have been the first person the risen Jesus went to, to strengthen and comfort her. And their meeting must have been the most beautiful moment for Mary. Then she saw that all that had been written was fulfilled in her son.

Lord, may we also experience the wonderful feeling that our life built on you is the only way, the right way, and the best way, even if it is not always direct and unobstructed.

AP: Let's leave this station to St. Francis of Assisi, who expresses in a poetic form the deep contemplation of the divine motherhood of Mary. Hail Holy Lady, Blessed Queen, Mother of God, Mary. You, forever virgin, chosen by the Most Holy Father from heaven, sanctified by



your most beloved Son and Comforter Spirit, in you was and is the fullness of grace and all good. Hail his palace, Hail his tabernacle, Hail his home, Hail his robe, Hail his maid, Hail his Mother. And Hail, all holy Virtues, who, by grace and inspiration of the Holy Spirit , are poured into the hearts of the faithful so that from their faithless state, they may be made faithful servants of God through you.



Road to Emmaus

Station 4: Didn't our hearts burn?

Luke 24. On the same day two disciples went to a village called Emmaus. As they discussed things, Jesus himself joined them. And one of them, named Cleopas, said to him, You are the only one from Jerusalem, who does not know what has been done there. He asked them what it was. They replied, "How they sentenced Jesus of Nazareth to death and crucified him. And we hoped that he was the one who would redeem Israel. And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke!"

MR: Two disciples are walking together to a village near Jerusalem. They talk about what had happened, but they fail to recognize the risen Jesus who joins them. We also follow



our life path. We also talk about Jesus, we can think about him, discuss him, we look for evidence of his existence. And we all forget that the most important thing is to meet Jesus himself.

So let's try to talk to Jesus without words, just by meeting him in our hearts.

AP: This station shows us how important it is to take scripture with reverence and seriousness. Let's not be uncomprehending or hesitant. After all, the risen Jesus himself shows us the way.



At the table in Emmaus

Station 5: But he disappeared from their sight.

Luke 24: 30-33. When they were near the village they were going to, he seemed to want to go on. They began to persuade him, "Stay with us, for it is evening." So he went in and stayed



with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; but he disappeared from their sight. They said to one another, "Didn't our hearts burn when he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?" And they got up at that hour and returned to Jerusalem where they found the eleven disciples and their companions together.

MR: Jesus makes himself known to us. He does not appear and disappear like an illusion or a ghost. He is always with us, as our dearest companion. The great guest who has come into our lives nourishes our souls and will never leave us.

AP: Here comes the most important moment for the frightened disciples. It is the recognition of Jesus in the breaking of bread. Finally comes the precious moment when all fear and doubt burn the heart with the heat of love and faith.

Let us always keep in mind when we are about to receive the Body of the Lord that we are receiving a great power from the Lord, which we are obliged to spread.



Jesus and Peter

Station 6: "He appeared to Simon."

Luke 24:34. When they returned to Jerusalem, they found the disciples, who said to them, "The Lord has really risen and appeared to Simon."



MR: Peter was an ordinary fisherman who probably couldn't read or write. And yet he became the rock on which the whole church stands. Let us not be afraid that we are imperfect for the Lord Jesus, that we do not know something well enough. He doesn't mind, because the better he can prove his grace to us. As he proved it on tax-collectors, sinners and people lame in body and soul.

AP: The most significant meeting is the dialogue with Peter, whose tears have washed away all his denials. For Peter and the other disciples their short-lived, humanly mundane and time-limited ideas had been destroyed. Only now did they begin to understand that Jesus truly has our paths in his hands and that the end of our lives is far from being the final end of our spiritual existence.







**First stained-glass window: Jesus shows his wounds to the disciples. The whole stained-glass window is made in shades of red, the colour of love. Four ruby-coloured glasses, embedded in stained glass, symbolize Jesus' wounds on his hands and feet.**

Station 7: "It's me."

Luke 24: 36-44. And as they talked, he stood alone in the midst of them. They were terrified and afraid because they thought they saw a ghost. He told them: "Why are you so confused and why do such things come to mind? Look at my hands and my feet: it's me. Touch me and make sure: a spirit doesn't have flesh and bones, as you see in me." He said this and showed them his arms and legs. When they couldn't believe it, for the sake of joy and wonder, he said, "Do you have anything to eat?" They handed him a piece of baked fish. He took it and ate in front of them. He said to them, "This is what I meant when I was with you and told you that everything that is written about me in the law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

MR: Jesus comes among the apostles, who are certainly going through difficult times. The true extent of the Easter events is obscured to them by their grief, pain, and fear of persecution. Jesus knows that what they need now is the most tangible proof. Something to really grasp. And so he comes among them in the most human form, shows his wounds and demands food.

Lord, teach us to know you in all the needs of our neighbours.

AP: Let us ponder at the fact that even when Jesus himself stands before the disciples, they still have doubts. Is it a ghost? Again, they need tangible evidence. There is a piece of baked fish to eat. They will believe, yes, our Lord is really here with us. However, his body had different characteristics than before and was no longer subject to the laws of matter. For example, he could walk through a closed door, make himself invisible. Even today, Jesus is here with us and we often see him in various situations of our lives. So let us be sensitive and listen to the words of our beloved Lord, who is constantly speaking to us.





**Second stained-glass window: Jesus passes on the Holy Spirit to the apostles. The first sending of the Spirit is indicated by the symbol of the golden circle and the flying dove. The colours of the Earth (brown, green, blue) refer to the presence of the Spirit in creation.**

Station 8: "Peace be with you."

John 20: 19-23. That evening, on the first day of the Sabbath, when the disciples were gathered behind closed doors for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst of them and said, "Peace be with you. "After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you. "After these words, he breathed on them and said, " Receive the Holy Spirit. To whomsoever you forgive sins, they are forgiven; to whom you forgive not their sins; they are not forgiven.

MR: God is generous. Not only does he give us his only-begotten Son, Jesus, but through him also the Holy Spirit. He shares everything with us. Jesus Christ became the connecting link, the cornerstone, the one that connected us to the Father once and for all. He says, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." So let us partake of it and be happy to be an instrument of God's will.

AP: Receive the Holy Spirit. Jesus thus gives us a jewel. A relationship with the Holy Spirit is the best solution for everyone's life. We try to live holy, but we fail. We try not to sin, but we can't. We strive to live the requirements of Scripture, to live the gospel, but we fail. We try to be good mothers, good fathers, good workers, but without success. The reason is very simple, we try to do it ourselves, in our own strength. We do not ask for the help of the Holy Spirit to come and give us the strength to do what we lack. So, let's ask, and ask again.





**The third stained-glass window: Jesus with the disciples and Thomas. Purple is the colour of waiting (Advent and Lent.) Thomas had to wait seven days to meet Jesus - purple. The stained-glass window is filled again with the red colour of love and the golden colour of the Spirit, the blue colour of vision appears ("Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.")**

Station 9: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

John 20: 24-29. Thomas, one of the twelve disciples, was not with them when Jesus had come before. And the rest of the disciples said unto him, "we have seen the Lord". But he replied, "Unless I see the wounds from the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will never believe it!". Eight days later the disciples were again together in the house, and Thomas with them. When the door was closed, Jesus came, stood in the middle, and said "Peace be with you". Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, look at my hands, and put your hand in the wound in my side. Do not doubt but believe!". Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God". Jesus said to him. "You have seen me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe".

MR: The doubting apostle learns his life lesson. Jesus fulfils every word of his request: "Until I see traces of nails on his hands and until I put my finger in them and my hand in the wound on his side, I will not believe."

Jesus knows different ways to bring us to him. Someone just needs an incentive, a direction. Someone has to be shaken by life, he has to go blind like Saul or put his hand in Christ's side like Thomas.

AP: It is Thomas who, thanks to his doubts, shows the blessings of those who have not seen and believe. We no longer need any tangible proof, we have received the gift of faith, and we can personally cling to God, who reveals himself in deeds and words. God is everything and is with us everywhere.





**Fourth stained-glass window: Jesus teaches fishermen to catch fish. An empty net that will be filled at Jesus' command. On the stained-glass window, we recognize the net on the right side of the ship's keel (brown), the blue colour represents Lake Gennesaret.**

Station 10: "Throw the net."

John 21: 3-7. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you too." They went and got into the boat. But they caught nothing that night. When dawn broke, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not know that it was him. Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have anything to eat?" They said, "We have not." He said to them, "Throw the net on the right side of the boat; you will find the fish there." So they threw the net and were not able to pull it in because of the large number of fish. The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "This is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he threw on his cloak, for he was wearing little, and waded toward him with water.

MR: When Peter heard that Jesus was standing on the shore of the lake, he threw on his cloak and waded through the water. He who once wanted to walk on the surface, but because of his doubts, he had sunk. He who denied Jesus three times. How much joy it must have given him now? And when Jesus asks him, "Do you love me?" Peter replies, "Lord, you know everything." Jesus knows our heart like no other. He sees failure and love in it. Let's ask for more love and let's try to fail less.

AP: In the morning after the failed fishing, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not know that it was him. Here we see that it is really important to be able to listen. Jesus can speak to us through other people. It is also about looking not only with our eyes, but mainly with an open heart, because love sometimes sees more than our senses.





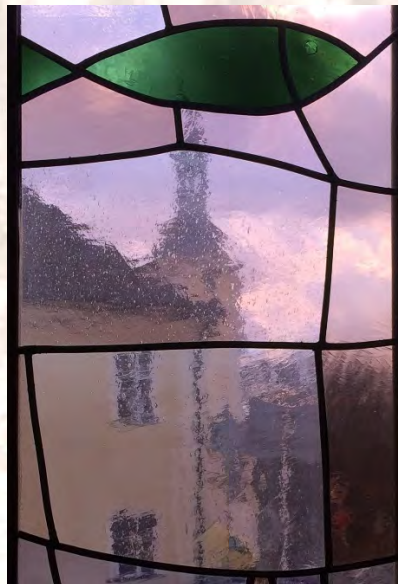
**Fifth stained-glass window: Jesus invites the disciples to breakfast. Red fire, green fish and above it on the left brown bread.**

Station 11: "Come and eat."

John 21: 9-14. And when they had come ashore, they saw a fire, and fish and bread thereon. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have caught." Simon Peter went and pulled out a net full of big fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net did not rupture. Jesus said to them, "Come and eat." And none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus went and took bread and gave it to them, as well as fish. This is how he appeared to the disciples for the third time after his resurrection.

MR: Jesus made breakfast for the disciples, and no one dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. We know a lot of things too. We do not have to be clueless and confused. It is enough to live as Jesus teaches us, according to the love of God and for our neighbour. Then we will not miss the rich catch or breakfast on the shore.

AP: Let's stop here with the fish in the net. There were one hundred and fifty-three. Jesus hereby tells us that he wants us to be his fishers of people, to immerse the net of our faith in the dark waters of today's world and fish in places that He himself will show us. There are many different people who need to be fished out of the dark depths and pulled onto our Lord's ship.







**Sixth stained-glass window: Jesus sends disciples to all nations. The apostles are sent among all nations to make new disciples for Jesus. The triangle – the sign of the Trinity, the red heart - Jesus' love for us, the golden circle of the Holy Spirit.**

Station 12: "Go and baptize, I am with you."

Matthew 28: 16-20. The eleven apostles then went to Galilee, to the mountain that Jesus had appointed for them. They saw him and worshiped him; but some doubted. Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go to all the nations and make disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to keep all that I have commanded you. I am with you all the days until the end of time.

MR: Jesus assures us, "Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of this age." What great news! Not only did Jesus redeem us from our guilt, he rose from the dead, but he stays with us. He does not leave us after fulfilling his mission. He does not leave us alone; he is not distant or absent. He wants to be here and with us.

So let's not drive him away, but invite him in.

AP: Jesus gave us something wonderful, and it is our duty to spread it. So let's go among other people, get them to be disciples, make them Christians who will worship and serve the Holy Trinity. Brothers and Sisters, the mission of our lives is to spread love into our surroundings every day. Let us be the church of love, and obey our beloved Lord Jesus Christ.





The image of the Ascension

**Jesus says goodbye to the apostles, goes to the Father, leaves traces behind.**

Station 13: "He was lifted before their eyes."

Mk 16:19. And when the Lord had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God.

MR: Jesus was exalted before everyone. Not somewhere in secret, or aside, but with complete publicity, with all glory, as the true and only Son of God. Let us hope that God will also lift us up to Him, in front of everyone and in spite of everything we do against it. And it is not our business to know the time and the deadline, but it is our business to persevere and tirelessly look out for Him.

AP: The Lord Jesus was taken up to heaven, He did not leave us, He left so that we could experience His love even better. He left so we would long for him and live our lives for him. Jesus left this world as a man; it is up to us to live out the extended humanity of Christ. Jesus lives in us, making us children of God who can build God's kingdom here on earth. Jesus left out of love for us so that we could be born again.





Ceiling stained-glass window The Descent of the Holy Spirit

**The last stained-glass window is atypically hung under a skylight and brings to the space the theme of the Descent of the Holy Spirit. The second sending of the Spirit - the golden colour of the Spirit.**

Station 14: The Descent of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2.1-4. When the day of Pentecost came, they were all gathered together in one place. Suddenly a roar came from the sky, like a strong wind, and filled the whole house where they were. And there appeared unto them tongues of fire, and they parted, and there fell one of them; they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit spoke to them.

MR: Jesus keeps his promise. The Holy Spirit comes, breaks the door and fills the whole house with the roar of heaven. It sounds in hundreds of languages and yet it connects and



unifies. Nothing is an obstacle. Not even your different language, your different culture or the country you come from.

Lord, may the Holy Spirit break open the doors of our hearts and fill them all.

AP: On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit fills the disciples. Jesus gives us his Holy Spirit to live according to him. If we give our lives to Christ, he will give us his. The Heavenly Father puts the Spirit of His Son in our hearts. He who has the desire to live for Jesus has the Holy Spirit working in him. We are called to have the Spirit of Christ and to live our daily lives from him, and they who are guided by the word of God release the Holy Spirit within themselves.





## TEXT AND PICTURE DOCUMENTATION.

Interview with Václav Vaňek, published in Zdislava magazine in 2015

### VRATISLAVICE NAD NISOU PARISH

The Church of the Holy Trinity was completed in 1701. The parish was established here in 1764, when the rectory building was built. The predominantly German population lived here and social life in the parish flourished. After the Second World War, the German population was expelled, which was completed in 1946. The village was consequently inhabited by Czechs from various parts of the then Czechoslovak Republic. Several clergy took turns here, the last German pastor was Fr. Josef Augst. After his departure to Germany, a Czech priest, P. Karel Vítek joined the parish. He was evicted from the rectory in 1960 and the parish came under the administration of Liberec. The revival of parish life took place after 1989, when the administration of the parish was taken over by Franciscan Fr. Pavel Antonín Kejdana. In 1991, a permanent deacon Václav Vaněk was appointed administrator of the parish. From 1992, Franciscan Radim Jáchym commuted to the parish for 20 years. He died on December 7, 2013 and is buried in the local cemetery. P. Kejdana returned to the parish. In addition to the Church of the Holy Trinity, the parish includes the Chapel of the Resurrection with its pastoral center and the Chapel of St. Zdislava in the local retirement home.

### Visiting the parish of Vratislavice nad Nisou

By appointment, we visited the local parish on Sunday so that we could experience Holy Mass there. We were surprised by the beautiful space of the Chapel of the Resurrection. The chapel was almost full - young families with children predominated, but there were believers of all generations. In the procession with the cross came the altar servers, they were all girls. Father Antonín Kejdana celebrated the Mass, the permanent deacon Václav Vaněk gave a sermon. It was beautiful to spend Easter Sunday in the white and bright Chapel of the Resurrection. I enjoyed some unusual moments during Mass. At the beginning of the sermon, Václav spoke to the children, asked them a few questions and suggested what they could draw from the Scriptures. The children, accompanied by two mothers, went to the hall, which is located under the chapel. Just before the procession with the gifts, the children returned again, refreshed and satisfied, and enthusiastically joined the procession. Each child carried his own picture and received ears of corn. The children placed the pictures in front of the altar and handed the ears of wheat to the priest. Before holy communion, four people came forward from the congregation, the priest blessed them, and they, together with the priest and the deacon, served the Body and Blood of the Lord to the believers. Mr. Pavel Fišer accompanied the service on the digital organ and also sang a psalm. Several songs were sung with the guitar. We felt great here, it was obvious that people here were happy together.

This was confirmed even after Mass, when many parishioners moved to the hall with a kitchen, where thermoses with tea and coffee and trays of cakes were already prepared. People spent almost two hours here in a friendly conversation. Whatever I asked, they always



talked about Václav. This or that succeeded thanks to the Lord and Václav. I noticed that Václav really knows his parishioners and he can inspire them exactly to the kind of service to others for which they have the greatest talents. Everyone's commitment here is staggering. Snacks and cleaning the kitchen are always taken care of by the family, who sign up for this service. The organist is in charge of parish holidays, the youth is led by a very likeable bricklayer Aleš Profeta, whom Václav sent on a catechetical course and who, as he himself says, encounters God through nature, goes on long hiking trips with young people and can listen to and understand teenagers, because he himself has a colourful past. Pastoral assistant Veronika Havlínová leads the preschool children, the summer camp for school children is run by Kryštof and Eva, and the laity, who offer holy communion, were sent by Václav on a course for Eucharist ministers. Among them is, for example, Mr. Miloš Zástěra, a carpenter who was in the local parish together with four other young men in civilian military service. They worked with other youths and parishioners to build the Chapel of the Resurrection to reduce the cost of building this beautiful and vibrant chapel. Assistant Vlastimila Vaňková is in charge of the financial and practical operation of the parish. The parish council meets regularly and participates in decisions on important matters in the parish. The list of events that believers experience in Vratislavice is really long. The next one will be a joint three-day trip to the new church architecture and historical gems of South Moravia, the Pentecostal hike and Children's Day, which they organize with other parishes of the city of Liberec. Among other things, the children from the individual parishes draw a biblical theme and present it to others in pantomime. This is followed by the end of the school year, summer camps and joint holidays. During the year, they organize adult education here, to which they also invite representatives of other churches. Before Advent and during Lent, they have a spiritual renewal in their schedule. As a parish, they also remotely sponsor Indian children, whose photos can be found on the notice board. There are always pictures that the children painted during the sermon after the Mass. The hub of all these activities is Václav, as we learn again and again. The chapel was consecrated in 2001, so those who helped build it as young people have their children today, and because they themselves have become part of the local community not only through the work of their hands, they pass this bond on to their children as well. I took my husband and two teenage children with me on this visit. We all felt like visiting a family, where everything works properly, where people love each other and have understanding for each other.



Václav Vaněk (1952)

The permanent deacon is ordained to assist priests and to serve in the Christian community. The word deacon itself means the servant of all. There are currently 200 deacons throughout the Czech Republic. One of them is Václav Vaněk, who is celebrating twenty-five years since his ordination this year and has worked twenty four years in the parish of Vratislavice nad Nisou as an administrator. From the beginning of the conversation with Václav, it was clear that he did not intend to talk about himself. He spoke with great enthusiasm about his ministry and the construction of the Chapel of the Resurrection. But when we talked to the parishioners, everyone talked with respect about how many things they owed to Václav.

HOW SHOULD I ADDRESS YOU?

I got used to all sorts of addresses. If someone calls me Father, I say yes, a father of four children. So just call me Václav.

WHAT LED YOU TO PRIESTHOOD STUDIES?

In 1968 I was inspired by the priest P. Jan Mikula, a priest who came to our parish. He studied in Rome, was very educated and was imprisoned for his faith. That got me and I said to myself, so I'll be a priest too.

AND HOW DID IT CONTINUE?

At the age of eighteen, I signed up for the seminary. I completed the first three years, but I was aware of the seriousness of the commitments. That's why I interrupted my studies and worked at a hospital as a paramedic. After a year, I wanted to complete my studies remotely, which was not possible at the time. The chapter vicar had nothing against it, but he told me that I had to get permission from the ministry. I went there and the clerk asked me why I wanted to finish "such a school". I told her that if I didn't finish my studies, three years spent in the seminary would not count towards my retirement. She was surprised that I was the first young person to think about retirement and I got that permit within a week.

SO YOU COMPLETED YOUR STUDIES AND WERE ORDAINED AS DEACON?

No. I graduated, got married and worked for a total of 16 years in civilian jobs. At that time, the state did not even allow the ordination of deacons. When the Velvet Revolution came, I reported to Bishop Koukl and asked him to be ordained a deacon. He told me that he had to wait a while for the conditions for deacon service to be clarified. I was ordained in the summer of 1990.

DO YOU HAVE ANY MEMORY OF THE ORDINATION CEREMONY?

[Laughter] ... a nice one... It's different than being a priest, I already had a wife, three children. I was ordained in our church; it was a nice party with parishioners and friends.

THEN YOU BEGAN TO SERVE IN THE PARISH?



My wife and children lived here. When I started, about thirty believers went to church here. I knew I was going to teach religion. I offered applications for religious education at our parish to the local school, and 100 children applied.

SO MANY CHILDREN FROM OUTSIDE THE CHURCH? IS IT EVEN POSSIBLE?

Really. For the first lesson, however, about eighty arrived, the next lesson twenty less .... But sixty remained. After two years, they asked for baptism themselves. We baptized 45 children. Many of the children no longer continued practicing their faith. Their non-practicing parents already had the impression that they had achieved what was needed, and I didn't see the children so often. Those who remained gradually transferred to high schools and began to bring their classmates to our rectory. This created a group that is a strong parish core, many of whom already have children here today.

HOW IS BAPTISM TODAY AND HOW LONG IS PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM?

We always baptize adults at Easter, children also at other times. There are four meetings in preparation for the baptism of children. As the youth grew up, some found partners in the community, so we were very happy with their weddings.

(We went to the Chapel of the Resurrection and Václav began to explain and show us everything.)

COULD YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS BEAUTIFUL CHAPEL AND WHY YOU CHOSE TO BUILD IT EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE A LARGE OLD CHURCH NEARBY?

The rectory, which belongs to us today, was used by the town under the previous political regime. It was even to be demolished so that there could be a square and a clear crossroads. Fortunately, this did not happen, and we got the rectory back, but in a state of disrepair. We completed its renovation in 1996. There were cowsheds in the yard and the barn was also in a state of disrepair. We learned that the German organization Renovabis not only helps with the repairs of old churches, but that it also contributes to new buildings. In the parish, we agreed to build a pastoral centre with a hall, two apartments and the Chapel of the Resurrection. We received the promised 4 million crowns from Renovabis. During his visit to Prague in 1997, Pope John Paul II blessed the foundation stone. In 1998 we demolished the barns and in 1999 we built the shell construction. The Czech-German Fund for the Future helped us complete the hall. We were able to continue, the hall was completed and blessed in 2000. Further assistance was provided by the American Bishops' Conference, and the rest of the money came from renting out the buildings returned to us. We wanted to finish the chapel in 2001, because our old Church of the Holy Trinity was completed in 1701. And we succeeded and the Chapel of the Resurrection was consecrated. In 2005, we completed the planned apartments, which serve the needy. In 2009, we renovated and paved the yard. For a long time, Sister Evelyn Bernard of Germany from the Secular Institute of St. Boniface of Detmold worked in the parish. She worked well with children and young people and also helped to obtain financial assistance from Germany. She had a significant share in the realization of the entire



construction. Thanks are due to all who prayed, worked, and contributed financially to the construction of this building.

COULD YOU TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT THE BEAUTIFUL ALTAR PAINTING AND THE STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS?

The altarpiece was created by the academic painter Mr. Petr Veselý from Brno. For a long time, I was looking for someone to portray the Resurrection in a truly spiritual way, not just as “a springtime overflowing with colours”. Mr. Veselý was very interested in the work and brought many designs from which this image crystallized. We wanted it to look like a fresco, so it doesn't have a frame. You will not find the Stations of the Cross in our chapel. But there is the Way of the Resurrected One. The triptych depicts the individual encounters with Jesus after his Resurrection. Here, for example, is Jesus' meeting with Peter. Petr denied Him and was certainly very ashamed and afraid. But Jesus meets him face to face. The path of the risen Christ continues on six tall rectangular stained-glass windows. When the sun shines through them, they flood the white chapel with multiple colours.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE ALTAR, THE SEATS AND THE CROSS?

The altar and seats, the tabernacle, the baptismal font and the pulpit were created by Mrs. Iva Ouhřabková from Liberec. They are all made of fireclay, which is engraved with vertical lines. The procession cross was cast from bronze by sculptor Pavel Hřebíček, who is also the author of the candlestick under the paschal candle and the little bells.

THE ENVIRONMENT IS VERY BEAUTIFUL, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE OLD CHURCH? WHEN DO YOU MEET THERE?

We are in the church from spring to autumn. Some prefer the chapel, some the church - that's how everyone gets their turn.

(We went to the nearby old church and noticed the demolished cemetery walls.)

WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

A bomb landed here at the end of the war, fortunately it did not hit the church. The cemetery around the church is disused. Inside the church there are distinctive and well-preserved stained-glass windows from 1901. And despite the fact that the majority of the population was of German ethnicity, we find two statues of typically Czech saints - St. Wenceslas and St. John of Nepomuk. In the tower there is a very interesting mechanical mechanism for the tower clock, which was inoperable for many years. A skilled local engineer Ing. Servinsky decided to take care of it. He put it into operation and now he comes to the tower every day to wind up the clock. I admire his perseverance.

ARE THERE ANY GRAVES OF LOCAL PRIESTS?



Here, as you can see, there is a tram line around the church that connects Liberec with Jablonec. The only, quite damaged tombstones are in the church wall. I think there are some graves of priests by the wall of the presbytery. Surprisingly, during the previous regime, the stone cross with Christ survived, but in the end, someone broke it anyway, leaving only a torso of Christ's body. One day I would like to make a cross for it from rough wood.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE PARISH?

Many of our plans also failed. For example, if everyone we baptized still went to church, the chapel would not be big enough for us. So I keep asking the Lord not to let me spoil too much anymore.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH?

Given the situation in the Roman Catholic Church in our country and diocese, I think that the laity will have to take responsibility not only for property, but also for pastoral activities in their communities and parishes. They must be given space to do so. People around us long for authenticity and simplicity. We, as a church, will have to work on ourselves to be able to offer them these values. And so, I have to start with myself. We have to ask the Holy Spirit to show us the way.

THANK YOU FOR AN INTERESTING TALK AND FOR A REFRESHING MOMENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND FOR THE TIME YOU GAVE TO US.







Father Antonín and his youngsters in front of the former barns - here stands the charity part of the new building - and in front of the rectory building







After the Velvet Revolution, the restoration of the rectory begins with the laying of new roofing



Near the pile of rubble Vaclav talks about the future chapel with Deacon Wimm Tobe of the Dutch Bretheren





Vratislavice parish with Father Radim and deacon Vaclav in the completed chapel.









The small chapel with the closed and open triptych











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