

9. ANOTACE

Premonstratensian Monastery in Nová Říše in the First Half of 20th Century

The Monastery of Premonstratensians in Nová Říše was founded by Markvard of Hrádek with his wife, Vojslava, for Premonstratensian nuns in 1211. During the Hussite wars, the monastery was repeatedly ransacked and finally in 1430, completely destroyed. In subsequent years, the nuns continued to grow older and pass-away, and in 1596, the last nun, prioress Anna Černická, was taken to the Premonstratensian Convent in Chotěšov.

After a necessary conversion, the male community of Premonstratensians from Zábřdovice near Brno came to the monastery on 26th May 1641. Their successful activities were disturbed by big fire in Nová Říše that damaged the monastery and the church. After being restored, it was promoted to the independent abbey in 1733. The other big fire engulfed the church roof and the monastery including the library and the new prelat's buildings, which had not yet been finished. Its economic growth started in the second half of the 19th century after a long and complicated renovation.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the monastery began to flourish spiritually and economically under the abbot Josef Karásek (1893 – 1908), and it achieved its peak under his successor Norbert Drápalík (1909 – 1912). Under the abbot Ferdinand Hotový (1913 – 1928) the monastery struggled with the difficulties of World War I and its consequences.

The order was reformed between 1927 – 1933, and it brought a fundamental change in the monastery's way of life. In the course of reformation in 1929 when the abbatial election was declared null and void for Josef Kunka, the Congregation appointed Pavel Souček the abbot (1929 – 1943). He managed to put the reformation requirements into effect with much determination.

During World War II, these events were interrupted on 29th May 1942. On this date, 12 of Nová Říše's premonstratensians were arrested on the denouncement of a former novice, Gerlach Kříž, and nine of them were deported to the concentration camp in Osvětim (Auschwitz) where five of them including the abbot Souček lost their lives.

The members of the Order, who survived the war and came back from the concentration camps, elected Augustin Machalka the abbot (1945 – 1993). Scarcely had they managed to start their new life in the monastery when the communist government arrested all brethren and nuns and closed all covents and monasteries.

The friars were jailed or sent to serve in the so called "auxiliary technical battalion." The monastery was converted into a storage facility for the army hospital in Brno.

The History of the First Half of 20th Century
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The Reformation of Order