



Miklavževanje

By Milena Sorsak

V dolgih zimskih večerih so naši predniki po poganskih šegah in navadah izvajali pohode našemljencev, ki so predstavljali duhove rajnih in razne demone. V 12. stoletju pa je Cerkev to tradicijo skušala prekriti s krščansko vsebino. Dodala jim je dobrotnika sv. Miklavža, našemljenci kot hudobni duhovi, parkeljni in hudiči pa so postali njegovi spremljevalci in izvrševalci kazni nad porednimi otroki.

Prav veliko zgodovinskih podatkov iz življenja sv. Miklavža ni, a o njegovi dobrotljivosti govorijo neštete legende. Bil je sin pobožnih staršev, ki sta bila zelo usmiljena do revežev. Ko sta oba nenadoma umrla, je Nikolaj podedovano premoženje razdelil med uboge, sam pa postal redovnik. Po smrti škofa v Miri, so verniki odločili, da bo njihov naslednji škof tisti duhovnik, ki bo prvi stopil v cerkev in to je bil Nikolaj. Svojim vernikom je hotel biti zgled v vsem zlasti v dobrodelnosti. V času njegovega škofovskega delovanja so bili kristjani v rimski državi še močno preganjani in tudi on je bil zaradi vere nekaj časa v ječi. Umrl je leta 324 v Miri v Mali Aziji, današnji Demre v Turčiji, kjer še danes stoji cerkev sv. Nikolaja, ki je delno preurejena v muzej.

Nikolaj je bil izredno usmiljenega srca in se je ves razdajal v dobrodelnosti. Po njegovi smrti so se mnogi začeli zatekati k njemu v vseh mogočih življenjskih stiskah. Njegovo češčenje se je začelo hitro širiti v Vzhodni Cerkvi in Zahodni Evropi, preko Alp pa šele v 12. stoletju, ko naj bi njegove relikvije prenesli v Bari v Italiji. Danes stoji tam mogočna bazilika posvečena sv. Nikolaju, kamor prihajajo romarji z vsega sveta.

V njegovo čast je bilo v Evropi zgrajenih na stotine cerkva, v Sloveniji jih je preko 200. Sv. Nikolaj je zavetnik Ljubljane, kateremu je posvečena stolnica, prvi zapiski prvotne cerkve segajo v leto 1262.

Sv. Nikolaj (Miklavž) je pa prav posebno priljubljen pri otrocih, saj na predvečer obletnice svoje smrti 6. decembra obdarja otroke širom sveta.

Prvi zapiski o Miklavževem obhodu na Slovenskem segajo v leto 1839. Tradicija je močno zasidrana v slovenski kulturi in je tudi neprijazna vlada v drugi polovici prejšnjega stoletja ni uničila.

Ta kulturna dediščina se nadaljuje tudi v zdomstvu. Sv. Miklavž s svojim spremstvom angelov, pa tudi parkeljnov leto za letom obiskuje otroke v slovenskih dvoranah, jih nagovarja k dobrim delom in seveda obdarja.



Miklavževanje pri Brezmadežni leta 2007



Miklavž prihaja 2010 pri Brezmadežni



Ephemera

Anne Urbančič

Last summer some of my research students working on the personal notebooks of an author who died in 1921 opened one dated 1914, the beginning of World War I. The pages were filled with the loopy writing of an elderly man showing signs of age, anxiety, and the illness which eventually brought him to his death. But there, tucked carefully between two pages was a perfectly preserved stem of parsley. Parsley? Yes, parsley. You can imagine our conversations over the significance of this dried but still green leaf in the notebook.

In archival terms, what we found is categorized as *ephemera*. The word comes to us from the Greek word *ephemeros* meaning “daily”, through a medical phrase of the 1300s which referred to a fever that passed quickly. Today, archivists use the word to describe items of short term use that somehow end up being part of a collection. Check your own books and papers: you might find a pressed flower, transit tickets or transfers, ticket stubs, receipts, money, post-it notes. All these things are classed as ephemera, and many of them pose archival mysteries, sometimes amusement and sometimes consternation. Usually, archivists do not destroy or remove ephemera but allow the items to remain in the archival materials where they were found.



Among the most common items of ephemera in the collections of the Canadian Slovenian Historical Society archives is a holy card with the portrait of Our Lady Help of Christians, ubiquitous in the Slovenian communities in Canada, and especially in Toronto where the first community church honoured the Blessed Virgin who sustains and supports Christians, and where a copy of the painting hangs above the altar. The painting is also known as Our Lady of Brezje because the original hangs in the basilica there. The artist, Leopold Layer (1752-1828), had been condemned to death by the regime of Napoleon, and made a vow to create an image of the Blessed Virgin if she helped free him from being executed. He intended it for the church of St. Vitus (sv. Vid) in his own town. Layer was highly inspired by a similar sixteenth century work of the Blessed Virgin with the Christ child he had seen in Innsbruck. It was the work of Lucas Cranach (Elder) entitled *Mariahilf*. Layer’s prayers had a positive outcome; he did escape death and upon his release, he offered the painting to the church in gratitude. Layer also produced the frescoes of the church walls. Then decades later, prayers to Our Lady to cure grave illnesses were miraculously answered. The word spread quickly and soon pilgrims and believers began to fill the small church, bringing their own petitions. A new neo-Renaissance church, begun in 1889 was opened to the world’s pilgrims in 1900.

The shrine still remains a popular one; among the millions of pilgrims to pause in front of Layer’s painting are also Laura Bush, former First Lady of the USA, and Pope John Paul II, who had declared the church a basilica some years before his visit. Special days of pilgrimage to the church are May 24 (Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians) and August 15 (Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady).

The portrait by Layer is not fully identical to the one you see in the basilica and on holy cards today: the opulent crown was added to the original in 1907 by the Bishop of Ljubljana, with the permission of Pope Pius X, and the frame of gold leaves in relief in 1977.

The painting by Leopold Layer is one that all Slovenians across the world recognize and cherish. No wonder there are so many holy cards of the painting tucked among papers received by our archives.



Advent Wreath

Franca Anderson

Advent is the season of Hope and Joy during the four weeks leading to the joyful celebration of Christmas. In Latin, Advent means “coming”. It is a time for us to open our hearts as we prepare for the birth of the Lord Jesus our Saviour. We prepare in spiritual renewal with reflection, prayer, liturgy and alms giving, e.g. charity and outreach service.

The Advent Wreath is used during Advent in church and at home, here and in Slovenia. The Advent Wreath consists of a circle of evergreens (symbolizing God’s eternity and our salvation)

There are five candles-four on the evergreen wreath and one white one in the middle. Each week one more candle is lit and blessed as we pray and sing for the Lord Jesus, waiting for his birth.

Each candle has its own symbolic meaning. Week One: Purple Candle for Hope; Week Two: Purple Candle for Faith/Love; Week Three: Pink Candle for Joy, and Week Four: Purple Candle for Peace; Christmas Day: White for Jesus, light of the world!

The use of the Advent Wreath at home is a wonderful way to gather the family and prepare our hearts to receive the Lord.

We can buy or make our own Advent Wreaths.

This tradition of lighting the candles on each of the four Sundays during advent which has been in practice in many Germanic countries has only recently been adapted by the Slovenian communities.

Archivist Corner

Emily Chicorli, archivist



The Canadian Slovenian Historical Society (CSHS) collects and preserves records from Canadian-Slovenian families, individuals and organizations. Amongst its archival collection, currently housed in the basement of Dom Lipa, are stories that tell of how European conditions and conflict influenced the immigration of many Slovenians to North America and how their lives were built in Canada.

The CSHS Archive actively documents how families, religion, businesses and culture thrived and evolved. These records are evidence of the many hardships and obstacles overcome by Canadian-Slovenians, and how the community maintained important traditions and cultural identity over the last one hundred and fifty years.

The aim of the CSHS Archives is to preserve these records and stories for present and future generations within the Canadian-Slovenian community. To meet this goal, the CSHS relies on donations of records from families, individuals and organizations.

We are seeking and encouraging donations of records from Canadian-Slovenians from all provinces and territories. The collection is especially in need of records from communities outside the Greater Toronto Area.

The CSHS encourages and welcomes new donations to the archive. For more information, please contact the CSHS Archives to get in touch with the Archivist and Board Members: cshistorical@gmail.com.

We encourage you to also visit the CSHS website, which includes news, photographs and stories from the collection: <http://www.slovenianhistorical.ca/>

Follow us on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/Zgodovina/>

**IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF OUR STORY, PLEASE
SEND US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS TO:**

cshistorical@gmail.com

THANK YOU!

CSHS is a non-profit organization run entirely by volunteers. We depend on donations for the existence of our archives, our premises and our work gathering Canadian Slovenian materials. We appreciate any assistance from our Slovenian community and we hope that you continue to help us in this very important work.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our donors who have supported us throughout this year to continue our work of presenting Slovenian heritage and archives to the Canadian public. Your help has been immeasurable.

The CSHS committee wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a blessed, happy New Year!

Vesel božič in srečno, zdravo novo leto!

EVENTS

CSHS - LUNCH

Please join us and enjoy a hearty, warm lunch on Sunday, January 21, 2018 at Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Church Hall, following all the masses.

Cost \$16 per plate "EAT IN or TAKE OUT"

Choices include: chicken schnitzel, vampe, or golaž

All are welcome! First come first serve - no advance sales

CSHS GENERAL ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, February 17, 2018 at 10 AM, Dom Lipa, (Lower Level) Recreation Room

Refreshment provided. All are welcome!

GOALS FOR 2018

During 2017 we have been actively presenting our Slovenian heritage at various events and displays including those in the Ontario Parliament Building and Ottawa. We have interview several members of the community to preserve their histories and we have continued to accumulate and preserve donated archives in our lodgings at Dom Lipa.

Plans for 2018;

- increased awareness of CSHS among Slovenian Canadians
- continued collection, organization and preservation of archival materials
- continued collection and sorting of Canadian-Slovenian books at our library in Hamilton, St. Gregory Parish
- collaboration with Slovenian language schools
- begin work on the establishment of charitable status



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