

ANNOTATION

Metoděj Jan Nepomuk Zavoral, Abbot from Strahov

Metoděj Jan Nepomuk Zavoral is a eminent personality of Czech sacred history of the end of 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. He was born in Neveklov in 1862, in 1872-1880 he studied at secondary school in Benešov and Prague, after graduation in 1880 he joined the Norbertines (Premonstratensians) and became a novice in the monastery in Prague-Strahov. A year later he took the first vows, starting to study theology, ordained in 1885. He became a priest first in Sepekov (1885–1888), then in Jihlava (1888–1905). In 1905 he was adjourned back to Strahov. In the same year, after death of abbot Zikmund Starý, Zavoral is elected an abbot, being of the age of 43 at that time.

His main objective was to manage the regular community and operation of the monastery. At the first, rather peaceful stage (1906-1914) he was able to become deeply acquainted with his office. Owing to this, he successfully conducted the community a monastery through the difficult period of the 1st World War (1914-1918) as well as the period of establishment of the new Czechoslovak State after 1918. He was facing a number of problems related with the difficult position of the Catholic Church in the new republic, including of the period of “priest dissidence”.

Public activities were a significant part of his life. In the time of the 1st republic, he was a highly reputable politician for a couple of years, was engaged in charitable area, he was known as a brilliant predicant and organizer of world Eucharistic congresses and other spiritual activities. It is necessary to mention also his literary work, or his involvement in Czech-Romanian relations. His activities were acknowledged with a number of awards and honours.

The end of his life was influenced by historical events, leading to abolishment of the 1st republic. In last years of his life, Zavoral went on retirement, while the monastery was headed by abbot-coadjutor Bohuslav Jarolímek. Zavoral died on 26 June 1942 in at the aged of 80 years and was laid to rest in the cemetery of the Premonstratensian order in Prague suburb Nebušice.

Key expressions:

1. Abbot Zavoral
2. Premonstratensians
3. Czech sacred history
4. 1st half of the 20th century
5. biography