

Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria

Visitor Experience, #13 in Series

A Holy and Blessed Christmas!

Boże Narodzenie!



Father Leopold Moczygemba offers Christmas Midnight, Mass of Thanksgiving, “*Pasterka*”, on December 25th, 1854 under the famous oak tree that still stands today in Panna Maria, Texas.

Father Leopold Moczygamba

Patriarch of American Polonia

Father Leopold Moczygamba, son of Leopold Moczygamba and Ewa Krawietz, was born October 18, 1824 at Płużnica Wielka in Upper Silesia near Opole. He died February 23, 1891 in Dearborn, Michigan. What did he do to become the ***Patriarch of American Polonia?***

Young Leopold was ordained a priest in the Order of the Friars Minor Conventual at Pesaro, Italy, July 25, 1847. When the first bishop of Texas, Most Rev. John Odin, went to France and Bavarian Germany looking for priests in 1852 to come and serve the German speaking Catholics already in Texas at New Braunfels, Fredericksburg, Castroville, and D'Hanis, our Father Leopold volunteered.

Two years later, when four of his brothers accepted his invitation to immigrate to Texas, in 1854 – to his surprise, 96 other families came also. That necessitated an urgent, immediate response of establishing a new land development in Karnes County near where the Cibolo Creek empties in the San Antonio River. Thus, Panna Maria was founded on December 24, 1854.

A great Missionary in Texas for five years, Father Leopold Moczygamba spent the rest of his 34 years of priesthood working in 11 other states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. He spoke seven languages in his ministry and crossed the Atlantic Ocean nine times in search of religious personnel and funds.

He rose to the highest position in his religious order in America, was chairman of the first Polish convention in the USA in 1873, co-founded the Polish Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Detroit in 1885 and was a confessor at the First Vatican Council in Rome in 1869.

His body was re-buried October 13, 1974 in the church yard of Panna Maria as a part of the Floresville Deanery celebration of the Centennial of the Diocese of San Antonio, now an archdiocese.

There were four other Moczygemba priests: another Leopold, who was born of the first marriage performed in Panna Maria; Thomas, first native-born priest of Texas; Leo: and Henry who died in March 2, 1995.

Father Leopold Moczygemba, like the compassionate Jesus, like courageous Moses, and the energetic St. Paul in his many travels, was a giant of a man for God, his Church, and his Polish People. He ranks at the very top of great American Catholic pioneers. Father Leopold Moczygemba truly deserves the title:

Patriarch of American Polonia!

The above is based on the bibliographies of Father Joseph Swastek and T. Lindsay Baker, and composed by Bishop Emeritus John W. Yanta of the Diocese of Amarillo.

Image on right is Father Leopold Moczygemba.





Steerage bunks on an immigrant ship

Image from *The Polish Texans* by T. Lindsey Baker

The weary Polish Silesians began their trip from their homes in September 1854; they sailed the Atlantic in a cargo ship for 9 weeks. Landing in Galveston, they couldn't understand English. Luckily they understood a German speaking agent and were able to arrange for the continuation of their trip down to Indianola. From there, they walked for 2 weeks to San Antonio and then 3 days back to Panna Maria to complete their 3 month long trip.

“The Silesians secured transportation by boat from Galveston to the port of Indianola, farther down the Texas coast. From this second harbor they turned inland toward San Antonio, some of them walking and others riding the hired

Mexican oxcarts...After Father Leopold met the immigrant band in San Antonio, he led most of them the remaining sixty miles southeast to the place he had chosen for their main colony. There, above the confluence of the San Antonio River with Cibolo Creek, on an open knoll on which stood a few clumps of live-oak trees, the Silesians found their new home. Some of the settlers, still believing rumored they had heard in Silesia, were disappointed to find waiting for them neither houses nor a church but instead only tall grass, brush, and a few trees. Nevertheless, having finally completed their wearisome three-month journey, the immigrants were thankful for their safe arrival. In this mood Father Leopold, under one of the largest of the oaks at the site, offered a Christmas mass of thanksgiving, which for many of the immigrants also served as a petition to the Almighty for strength to carry on in face of adversity. In this way the founders marked the establishment of the first Polish colony in America. The new settlement in Karnes County soon came to know as Panna Maria, meaning Virgin Mary in Polish.”

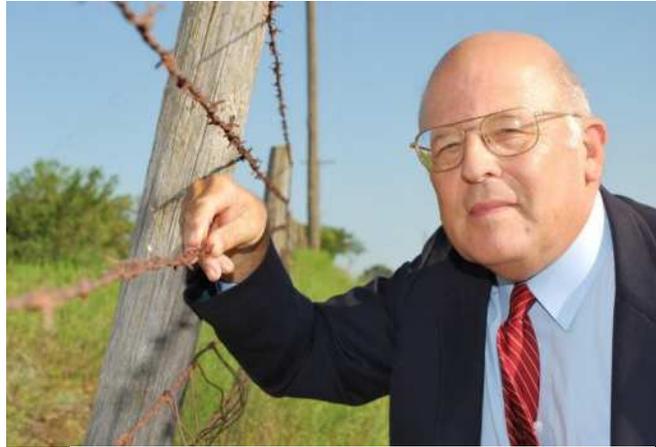
The First Polish Americans by T. Lindsay Baker, pages 23 – 25.

“The settlers [at Panna Maria] had perhaps expected an idyllic (*defined: pleasing or picturesque in natural simplicity*) land and found a rough frontier. From the early days of settlement, the immigrants had complained about conditions to Moczygamba, but their discontent broke into personal hostility against the priest in 1856. The priest, who had become the superior of the Franciscan missions in Texas, was caught between responsibilities to “his” people and to his religious order. For months he wrote to Rome requesting “a Polish father” to care for the Silesians in order for him to fulfill his duties as superior.”

The Polish Texans

T. Lindsay Baker,
The University of Texas
Institute of Texas Cultures,
San Antonio, 1982

“In 1856 a severe drought wrought its ravages on the settlers. There was no rain for fourteen months. Father Moczygamba did everything in his power to alleviate the sufferings in Panna Maria; he consoled, tried to bolster up their courage, save the



T. Lindsay Baker (pictured above) holds the W.K. Gordon Endowed Chair in History at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. He has written over two dozen peer-reviewed academic books on the history of Texas and the American West, including several on the Poles in Texas. In 1975-77 he held a Fulbright Lectureship at the Technical University of Wroclaw, Poland, during which time he undertook research in European sources dealing with the history of Polish immigration to Texas.



Image of Fr. Edward Dworaczyk from *Diamond Jubilee 1874-1949 Archdiocese of San Antonio*, page 31.

despairing from themselves, but he could do nothing to appease hunger. The people wanted bread, and as the measure of agony increased, feeling of bitterness arose against their priest.”

The First Polish Colonies of America in Texas, Rev. Edward Dworaczyk 1936.

The Land of Silesia: What they Left – Forever!



Why? For freedom from oppression and for better opportunities!

Excerpts From
POLISH BUILDERS OF AMERICA SERIES
PRIEST AND PIONEER

Rev. Leopold Moczygemba

By
Rev. Joseph Swastek

“The name **Father Leopold Bonaventure Maria Moczygemba of the Friars Minor Conventual** sounds almost like a small detachment from the cavalcade of saints. It fittingly belongs to a man who strides into American history, like **Moses the Rescuer**, at the head of a throng of several hundred Polish

immigrants, 'who sought shelter from poverty and oppression – **and wanted no more than freedom and a piece of bread.**'”

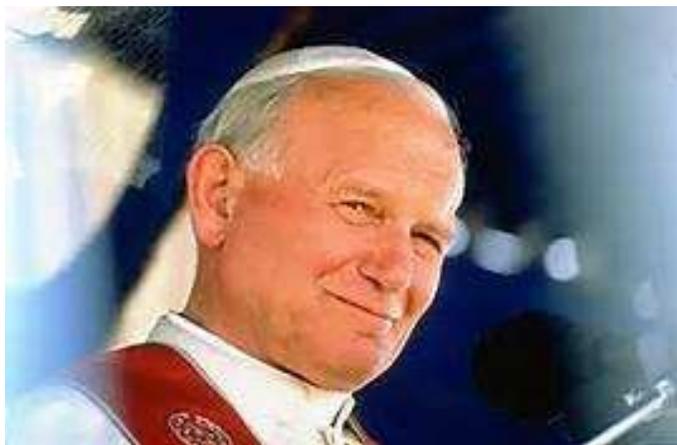
“...**Father Leopold** named Panna Maria after the famous church of the Blessed Virgin in Krakow, Poland. As organizer, builder, teacher and leader, Father Leopold played a decisive role in the establishment of the settlement, earning the title of the **Patriarch of Panna Maria.**”

Rev. Joseph Swastek (pictured right) was professor and Dean of History at St. Mary's College from 1940 until his death in 1977 at the Seminary of Sts. Cyril & Methodius, Orchard Lake, Michigan, located a few miles from Detroit.



“In Poland, Panna Maria, Texas is very famous. Everyone knows of Panna Maria and those first Polish immigrants who responded to the call of their pastor and spiritual leader, Father Leopold Moczygemba.”

“All of our great American Polonia credits its origin to you, Panna Maria, as the first nest built on American soil by Polish immigrants inspiring others to follow in your footsteps.” *Pope John Paul II speaks to the parishioners of Panna*



Maria and to Texas Polonia, Assumption Seminary, September 13, 1987, San Antonio, Texas.

(The Pope's original plan was to visit Panna Maria till his visit of 2 days was reduced to a day and a half.)



FATHER MOCZYGEMBA, A SAINTLY MAN, WHO WAS SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR FOR A SAINT!

Saint Marianne Cope, O.S.F. (*shown left*) is also known as Saint Marianne of Moloka'i. Her feast day is January 23rd, and she is the Patroness of lepers, outcasts, and those with HIV/AIDS. She was beautified in 2005 and declared a saint by Pope Benedict XVI in 2012.

*Excerpts from the historical archives of the
Franciscan Sisters in Syracuse, New York:*

“As we move through our Motherhouse, we are walking on the same ground that felt the footsteps of many saintly women and men who offered their lives in the service of God and God’s people. Among these men and women were our Franciscan brother, **Father Leopold Moczygemba** and our Franciscan sister, **Mother Marianne Cope**. I held **Father Leopold** in great respect. I marveled at his courage, his foresight and his trust in the Spirit to direct his life. When the time came that he had to leave Texas, he went to the Northeast, coming eventually to Syracuse. In doing so, he changed forever our history and was ultimately a key figure in the history of the Sisters of St. Francis. Being an astute man, who was well ahead of his time in his attitude towards women, he counseled the sisters in their business dealings, teaching them about buying and selling property, how to insure the stability of new ministries and how to conduct business. Meanwhile, in St. Joseph’s Parish in Utica, NY a young German immigrant woman, **Barbara Cope**, felt the call to become a Sister of St. Francis. After her father died in 1862 she was able to respond to that call and began her postulancy in August at the Assumption Convent. She was 24 years old. On November 19th of that same year, **Father**

Leopold invested **Barbara Cope**, whom we now know as **Saint Mother Marianne Cope**. **Fr. Leopold** also received her vows Nov. 19, 1863 in that same church which stood on the grounds of the present Assumption Church. **Fr. Leopold** was a builder, and he continued to open missions and when possible, schools in the Diocese. **Father Leopold** was an integral part of the movement of the Spirit that led to our foundation here in Syracuse and to the work of **Mother Marianne** and all our other sisters. His own personal accomplishments are momentous. The sisters of St. Francis certainly owe him a debt of gratitude for the support, confidence and assistance he gave us in our founding years, and for the role he played in our growth and development as religious women. He is a **gentleman** from Poland, a **priest** of God, a **prophet** in his time and a **mentor** and **supporter** of the Sisters of St. Francis. **In this we are blessed...**"

BELATED TRIBUTE

Sermon

Liturgical Reinterment

October 13, 1974

By Msgr. Erwin Juraschek

"To this place today, we have brought our lamps, filled with the oil of hope, to the altar of the past, to touch their wicks to the eternal flames of memory and inspiration. In their growing light, we see the young priest Leopold. In full flower is the Faith which his parents planted early in his soul, even as they tilled the open plains of Poland, under skies as endless as the power of God, yet clouded over by the twin tyrannies of Prussian rule and meagre crops.

...they brought little with them. A few dollars to buy land, a few belongings which would be loaded on a hand cart and pushed from Galveston to San Antonio in a three weeks' march. But they brought great stores of what their ancient land had given them freely, their faith in the ministrations of Christ's church and a Christ Crucified to pray by, taken down from the walls of the only church they had ever known, carried upon waters and to a land they had never known.



Image of Msgr. Erwin Juraschek from the book "For The Cause, The Life of Monsignor Erwin A. Juraschek" by Robert D. Wood, S.M.

On Christmas Eve, they came to the virgin soil of the Rio Cibolo, of the Rio San Antonio. They called it Panna Maria. Beneath a sheltering oak and under the outstretched blessing of the **Moses** who had called them out of the land of oppression and want, they sang the joyous songs of Christmas. That night, Panna Maria gave birth to a new people, that first of their breed, the Polish-Americans. Their **Moses** was not to see their Promised Land in the fullness of its promise. Father Leopold moved on, driven now by a new vision. Only years later would he return, briefly, to see the land, softened at last by

their unrelenting sweat, yielding up its product, its plenty, its prosperity. But driven now, compelled. To San Antonio. To

Galveston. To New York. As the first leader of his order in America. As a simple priest again in Rome, hearing confessions in four languages. Back again in America. In Illinois and Indiana. As president of the Polish Roman Catholic Union. In all these roles, in all these places, his thoughts and labors were shaped buy a single dream, a seminary for young Polish-Americans. It opened its doors in Detroit 32 years after the first Christmas Eve in Panna Maria. Four years and few months later the doors of eternity opened and Father Leopold stepped through. Today, the soil of Panna Maria is opened anew, to receive what remains of that powerful body, driven for 63 years by that determined, priestly soul.

Our minds open to the memory of his vision. Our hearts opened to the inspiration of his courage. Our hands open to the touch of his strength. We welcome him home. We welcome his as a hero, as a giant who shaped history,

who brought great things into being. We cherish what he has given us. We are proud of being one with him in Faith and in blood.

Father Leopold Moczygamba beckons us even now, to yet another Promised Land. It is filled with milk which nourishes our faithfulness to the individual destiny which God has set before each of us. It is filled with the honey which makes the yoke of Christ sweet. Father Leopold has charted our course. Once again, we prepare to leave the land of the old and familiar, clouded over by compromises with the Devil and concessions to the flesh. We take down the cross of the Crucified Christ from walls stained by the inglorious past. We follow once again, to break virgin soil, to bring forth a harvest of justice and virtue, to bring the warmth of Christ to those who suffer in the cruel, north wind.

We dare today to act bravely because he lived bravely. We resolve to endure, to dream relentlessly, because he showed us how. Through his example he has placed greatness within our grasp. We touch our lamps to the undying torch. In their surging light, we remember. The memory moves us once again to take up the cross of Christ, to cross alien seas, to find the Promised Land which is in the soul of each of us.”

St. Michael's Beautiful 150th Celebration!

Sunday, November 20th, a full church celebrated the 150th anniversary of San Antonio's 3rd oldest Catholic Church (presently there are 92 parishes in San Antonio): in 1731 the Cathedral of San Fernando (Hispanic), St. Mary's 1852 (English), and St. Michael's 1866 (Polish). As one of the most beautiful churches in San Antonio at the time, St. Michael's was located in the Polish Quarter which included East Commence Street where the Convention Center Complex now stands. The church, school (elementary and high school), and parish plant were all razed by the Urban Renewal process for our world attraction, Hemisfair '68. Parishioners moved to other parts of the city and never really returned to St. Michael's new church in general but became members of other parishes. A beautiful Mass was celebrated with Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, Bishop

Yanta, Father Lucatero, Father Haby, SM, former pastor. Archbishop prayed from memory the Hail Mary in Polish (he was Bishop of one of the sectors in Chicago which serves several Polish parishes).

Honored guests were two of the Divine Providence Sisters who were teachers at St. Michael's Elementary and High Schools: Sisters Thadine Hyzak and Joyce Jilek. Also Sister Charlotte Kitowski who was baptized by Msgr. Tom Moczygemba. Sister Charlotte Kitowski wrote in an email:

*"Srs. Joyce, Thadine, and I really appreciated the invitation to the celebration yesterday and meeting some of the guests at the reception. We also learned some interesting fact. St. Michael's is the 'third oldest parish in San Antonio' and the Congregation bought the school building for \$8,000 in 1901 with the agreement that 'the grounds were donated by the Parish to the Congregation, on condition that there would always be a Polish teacher among the corps of instructors' (CDP Community Members and Missions, Vol. 4). According to our rosters of teachers, that condition seems to have been met. The Sisters of Divine Providence also rendered more than 400 years of contributed service to the Church at St. Michael's during their 64 years there, and the school had 300 children when Hemisfair and Urban Renewal acquired the property. That seems to be a pretty good record! Thanks again,
Sister Charlotte Kitowski, CDP"*

Polish Heritage Center

Congratulations and thanks to Elizabeth Burda for becoming a member of the Heritage Circle of our Polish Heritage Center. Her name along with the other circle members will be displayed in our lobby. With our goal of 13 million, we are half way to our goal! By adding 80 more Heritage Circle Members, we will reach our goal of 100 Heritage Circle member and be ready for the grand opening! In today's mail I received another \$5,000 check from Dr. Martha Respondek of Yorktown and Corpus Christi. Both Dr. Martha Respondek and Elizabeth Burda are working on their second \$100,000.



34th week of construction

CONSTRUCTION AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2016

Summary: Phase II – Construction of Exterior

Low Bid awarded to Boyle Construction:	\$3,373,000.00
8 th Month completed Construction Cost (April – November):	\$1,310,726.09
4 Months payment by Polish Heritage Center:	\$711,515.79
3 Months payment by Falls City National Bank Loan:	\$365,590.98
Interest Payments paid to Falls City National Bank for loan:	\$2,674.92
Construction cost for first 8 months (including payment #8):	\$1,310,726.09
8th Month payment of due December 27th, 2016:	\$233,619.32
Remaining Construction cost after 8 months paid:	\$2,062, 273.91

Tax Benefits to You of Giving to Charity

There are great tax benefits for those who give. Here are some of the benefits you should know about.

- **A gift to a qualified charitable organization may entitle you to a charitable contribution deduction against your income tax if you itemize deductions.**
If the gifts are deductible, the actual cost of the donation is reduced by your tax savings. For example, if you are in the 33% tax bracket, the actual cost of a \$100 donation is only \$67 (\$100 less the \$33 tax savings). As your income tax bracket increases, the real cost of your charitable gift decreases, making contributions more attractive for those in higher brackets. The actual cost to a person in the lowest bracket, 15%, for a \$100 contribution is \$85. For a person in the highest bracket, 39.6%, the actual cost is only \$60.40. Not only can the wealthy afford to give more, but they receive a larger reward for giving.
- **A contribution to a qualified charity is deductible in the year in which it is paid.**
Putting the check in the mail to the charity constitutes payment. A contribution made on a credit card is deductible in the year it is charged to your credit card, even if payment to the credit card company is made in a later year.
- **Most, but not all, charitable organizations qualify for a charitable contribution deduction.**
You can deduct contributions only if they are made to or for the use of a qualified recipient. No charitable contribution deduction is allowed for gifts to certain other kinds of organizations, even if those organizations are exempt from income tax. Contributions to foreign governments, foreign charities, and certain private foundations similarly are not deductible. Below, you can view a list of organizations for which your donations can be deducted. All organizations rated by Charity Navigator qualify for charitable status, and you can deduct your donations, subject to certain limitations.
- **There are limits to how much you can deduct, but they're very high.**
For most people, the limits on charitable contributions don't apply. Only if you contribute more than 20% of your adjusted gross income to charity is it necessary to be concerned about donation limits. If the contribution is made to a public charity, the deduction is limited to 50% of your contribution base. For example, if you have an adjusted gross income of \$100,000, your deduction limit for that year is \$50,000.

Adapted from Charity Navigator www.charitynavigator.com

Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Heritage Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law, as decreed by the IRS.

Tax ID number: 46-0561240

Please note that this document is subject to tax law changes.

Your Goal	Your Gift	How to Make the Gift	Your Benefits
Make a quick and easy gift	Cash	Write a check, make a donation on the website, ask the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation to put it on your credit card	Income tax deduction
Make a quick and easy gift	Transfer of Stock	Using the stock transfer form, transfer stock directly to Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation	Income tax deduction and avoidance of capital gains tax
Eliminate capital gains tax on the sale of a home or other real estate	Real Estate Gift	Donate the property to Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation or sell it to the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation at a bargain price	Immediate income tax deduction and avoidance of capital gains tax
Give your personal residence or farm, but continue to live there	Retained Life Estate	Transfer the deed of your home to the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation , but retain occupancy	Charitable income tax deduction and lifetime use of home
Make a large gift with little cost to yourself	Life Insurance Gift	Give a policy with the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation as owner and beneficiary	Current income tax deduction; possible future deductions
Avoid the twofold taxation on retirement plan assets	Retirement Plan Gift	Name the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation as beneficiary of the remainder of the retirement assets after your lifetime	Avoidance of heavily taxed gift to heirs, allowing less costly gifts
Create and/or increase income from assets	Charitable Gift Annuity	Create a charitable annuity that pays you a set income annually	Immediate income tax deduction and fixed income for life, remainder of the corpus passes to the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation
Create and/or increase income from assets; Create a hedge against inflation over the long term	Charitable Remainder Trust	Create a trust that pays you a fixed or variable percentage of the trust's assets, valued annually	Immediate income tax deduction, annual income for life that has potential to increase, remainder of the corpus passes to Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation
Reduce gift and estate taxes on assets passing to heirs	Charitable Lead Trust	Create a trust that pays the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation a fixed or variable income for a set term, and the remainder passes to your heirs	Reduced size of taxable estate; keeps asset in family with reduced taxes ramifications

GRAND OPENING - WHEN?

People keep asking me when is the Grand Opening? The answer is simple – when the building is complete outside and inside, and all the high tech exhibit is installed that tell our unique beautiful story of how Father Leopold Moczygemba came to Texas because the Bishop of Texas went to France and Bavaria looking for missionaries for his German speaking Catholics already in New Braunfels, Fredericksburg, and the Alsatians who understood German. He invited his 4 brothers to come farm the 7 ½ acres 2 miles south of New Braunfels he had already purchased for them.

His very persuasive letter to his family was shared with others (which I do not believe was his original intention) and as a result, almost a 100 families came! So, he had to abandon the beautiful plan near New Braunfels and he went to “Plan B.” He and realtor John Twohig surveyed by horseback the vast undeveloped land around the Cibolo Creek and the San Antonio river conjunction. Along the way, the Silesian travelers thought they were going to the developed area of New Braunfels, instead of the completely undeveloped area along the Chihuahua Trail near the present Panna Maria, Cestohowa, Hobson, and Falls City. But, Divine Providence, God’s Will, His Plan, always prevails. And we thank His Divine Providence for the area designated for our ancestors.

When is the Grand Opening? It is like a train going to a destination. There is a locomotive that can pull a lot of passenger cars but there is a big problem. Since we (Polish Heritage Center) have started from scratch, we are a brand new reality – never before has this existed so we need to build a railroad track for our locomotive engine to ride on. The track has to be built first!

So if you are not onboard, please get on our train! Welcome aboard and let’s build that track too! **Our destination is Grand Opening!** Please give as God has blessed you. Everyone can give but the amount will not be the same for everyone. Remember the parable that **Jesus** said about the poor widow and her “mite?” **Her mite was more pleasing!** You are in my prayers.

May the Prince of Peace Bless You and Yours with His Peace!

Bishop John W. Yanta

Merry Christmas!

Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria Foundation
P.O. Box 28125, San Antonio, TX 78228
Tax ID: 46-0561240. A 501(c) (3) organization.
<http://www.polishheritagecenterpannamaria.org/>

Edition: Feast of St. Nicholas
December 6, 2016

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