

# Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria

Visitor Experience, #6 in Series

*Praise and Thanks to God – We Are Blessed! – Great News!*

**Phase I has been completed – Now Phase II  
CONSTRUCTION HAS BEGUN!**



**First Day of Construction: April 11, 2016**

**Phase I** (\$2.4 million) has been completed, i.e., start-up costs (2 ½ land acres), Architect's Plans, Exhibit Research of our Story and Design, and Professional Services. Total cost: \$2.4 million. All paid up.

Now we have moved into **Phase II** (April 11): the construction of the building exterior and grounds, costing \$4 million. Completion date is February 2017. General Contractor, Michael Boyle. Come and visit our construction site.

**Phase III** will be the building interior, the heart of our heritage center, with all the high-tech exhibits telling our beautiful story beginning with Christ's words to go out and make disciples of all the nations. The arrival of our ancestors in 1854, the founding of new settlements after Panna Maria, lots of hard work and flourishing family life centered – energized by the Faith. Divine Providence has truly blessed us in every generation with new leaders and organizations, priests and Sisters both from our own families and recently arrived priests and Sisters from Poland. Cost \$5.6 million. We have been blessed. Thank you, Lord! Now, it's our turn as good stewards! Let's memorialize our ancestors. We have to preserve our inherited values, share them with new generations of our families, and, with pride and thanksgiving share them with the whole world.

**Phase IV** will be an endowment fund to perpetuate our heritage center and to provide operational costs (\$2 million). May God Bless Our Memorial Tribute to our Polish ancestors!



Clearing and preparation of the construction site and marking of the pier locations, Week 2



Drilling the piers for the foundation, Week 3



Removing the excavated soil, Week 4



Continuation of drilling of the piers and the construction of the form for the foundation, Week 5

## Week 6 Progress!



Thanks to **Lorraine and Howard Ponish** of Uvalde, TX, for their \$100,000 generous gift in memory of Joe and Lucy Manka. Their memorial gift will be placed in the Lobby of our center as a Heritage Circle member along with the other 19 Heritage Circle members. We also thank all of our Heritage Circle members and all the other donors as well. May God reward your generosity!

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**Naming Opportunities of the Rooms and Exhibits** are available: 14 have been taken, and 63 remain open. They range from \$1M down to \$25,000.

Another opportunity is available! Our first month's payment for construction is \$175,055.48. Your sponsorship would make you a Heritage Circle member (your name in the Lobby) and you could also name an exhibit or exhibits!

Contact me, Bishop Yanta, or a board of director member, or fund-raising committee member for more information.

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### **Did you identify the other 4 of the Moczygemba priests?**

In the last Visitor Experience, #5, published in December, there was a large colored picture of the 5 Moczygemba priests. We identified only the front center one – Father Leopold Moczygemba, founder of Panna Maria, oldest permanent Polish settlement in the USA. From left to right: yes, another Father Leopold Moczygemba, a nephew of his now famous uncle; Msgr. Henry Moczygemba; Father Leopold, patriarch of all the Polish in the USA; Msgr. Tom; and Father Leon.

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### **Reverend Leopold Moczygemba 1858-1892**

- Son of Anton Moczygemba and Philippina Wenz
- Born on May 4, 1858, in San Antonio, Texas
- Ordained in 1884 and celebrated his First Solemn Mass in Lemont, Illinois, at Saints Cyril and Methodius Church on June 29, 1884
- Nephew of the pastor, Father Leopold Moczygemba, who had thirty years earlier founded Panna Maria
- Died on April 14, 1892 on Holy Thursday at the age of 34 at Immaculate Conception Parish in Elmhurst, Illinois; buried in Lemont, Illinois

**Reverend Monsignor Henry I. Moczygemba 1914 – 1995**

- Son of Frank Moczygemba and Julia Sekula
- Born on April 4, 1914, in Cestohowa, Texas
- Ordained on May 28, 1949, at San Fernando Cathedral
- Died on March 2, 1995; buried in Cestohowa, Texas

**Reverend Leopold Moczygemba 1824-1891**

- Born October 28, 1824 in Wielka Pluznica, Poland in Opole region of Poland
- Parents were Leopold Moczygemba and Eve Krawiec
- Ordained priest in Order of Friars Minor Conventual on July 25, 1847
- Founder of Panna Maria, America’s Oldest Polish settlement
- Died February 23, 1891. Buried originally in Mt. Elliott Cemetery, Detroit, MI
- Reinterment in Panna Maria, October 13, 1974 in church yard

**Right Reverend Monsignor Thomas Moczygemba 1863-1950**

- Son of Joseph Moczygemba and Caroline Szyguda
- Born on December 11, 1863, in Panna Maria, Texas
- Nephew of Father Leopold Moczygemba
- Ordained on January 5, 1890, in Victoria, Texas
- +Died on June 28, 1950; buried in San Fernando Archdiocesan Cemetery, San Antonio, Texas

**Reverend Leon (Leo) Vitalis Stanislaus Moczygemba 1894 – 1959**

- Son of Jacob Moczygemba and Joanna Keller
- Born on April 8, 1894, in Panna Maria, Texas
- Ordained on June 9, 1919
- Died on November 17, 1959; buried in Panna Maria, Texas

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**JOB OPPORTUNITY** – We, PMHC, are seeking a Director of Development with 3 to 5 years of fund-raising experience to complete construction and to provide for operational cost and maintenance. Please call our office 210-263-7270 or write to Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria, P.O. Box 28125, San Antonio, Texas 78228 or contact me, Retired Bishop John W. Yanta.

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## Our Polish Parishes in Historical Order

|                 |           |              |              |
|-----------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|
| Dec. 24, 1854   | 1855      | 1855         | 1866         |
| Panna Maria *** | Bandera * | St. Hedwig * | Yorktown *** |



|               |                |                |              |          |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|----------|
| 1873          | 1898           | 1902           | 1910         | 1925     |
| Cestohowa *** | Kosciuszko *** | Falls City *** | White Deer * | McCook * |

These nine parish windows (6 ft. tall) will be a vital part of the exhibit with a narrative of each historic parish. Beginning with the next newsletter we will feature one of our Polish parishes beginning in chronological order with St. Stanislaus, Bandera, the second oldest in 1855, then St. Hedwig also 1855, etc. We are beginning with Bandera since the Panna Maria story has been much publicized and is known as the first permanent Polish community and parish in the USA.

**\*\*\*(Naming opportunity taken) \*(Naming opportunity available)**

**OTHER ORIGINAL POLISH PARISHES** – Inez, Las Gallinas, Meyersville, and St. Michael Parish will be featured in future newsletters.

**NAME CHANGE** – You probably noticed already our name change. This issue has been discussed, dialogued, and prayed over at length since our inception almost five years ago. Many of you were consulted. The Panna Maria Heritage Center is now “doing business as “(dba) the Polish Heritage Center at Panna Maria.

Our Board of Directors was unanimous in its vote. Mentioned time and time again was that the new name is more *inclusive*. Legally, everything remains the same – 501c,3, etc. We have the approval of the Texas Secretary of State.

Congratulations and thanks to the **Panna Maria Historical Society** for a very informative May newsletter. Our Polish Heritage Center will cooperate and complement the excellent work of PMHS and will work with you now and in the future. May God Bless all of you! Sto Lat!

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### **Prayer – The Greatest Power on Earth**

Please pray for our Polish Heritage Center in your Masses, rosaries, and devotions. Also pray to God through the intercession of our Polish saints – Our Lady of Czestochowa, Sts. Cyril and Methodius, St. Stanislaus, St. Hedwig, St. Hyacinth, and St. John Paul II. Beautiful images of these saints will be in the rotunda.

“Let your work be seen by your servants and your glory by their children; and may the gracious care of the Lord, our God be ours; Prosper the work of our hands for us!”

“Let the favor of the Lord be upon us: give success to the work of our hands, give success to the work of our hands.” (Psalm 90)

**May God Bless You and Yours!**

**Retired Bishop John W. Yanta**