PROJECT MUSE®

Slovak Immigrants Come to Terms with Religious Diversity in North America

M. Mark Stolarik

The Catholic Historical Review, Volume 96, Number 1, January 2010,
pp. 56-84 (Article)

Published by The Catholic University of America Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/cat.0.0632>

➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/369490>

SLOVAK IMMIGRANTS COME TO TERMS WITH RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN NORTH AMERICA

BY

M. MARK STOLARIK*

Religious diversity in North America was often a painful experience for Slovak immigrants. Finding no churches to serve them in their own language, they established their own as Slovak Protestants had done. Roman Catholics were confronted by a largely Irish-dominated Church that rejected lay trusteeism and thus fueled many disagreements between the lay founders of the parishes and their clergy. The second, U.S.-educated generation largely gave up the struggle. In contrast, Slovak Greek Catholics, who had insufficient numbers to establish their own churches in the United States, were largely subsumed into Rusyn-dominated parishes, although many reverted to Orthodoxy because of the unwillingness of U.S. bishops to recognize the Union of Užhorod. In Canada, where Rusyns were few, Slovak Greek Catholics established their own parishes and bishopric. Today the struggle has turned into one for survival, as U.S. and Canadian bishops seek to close or consolidate parishes with declining attendance.

Keywords: lay initiative; lay trusteeism; national parishes; Union of Užhorod

Among the immigrants who came to the United States and Canada in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries were 500,000 Slovaks seeking work in the industrial heartland of North America.¹

*Dr. Stolarik is a professor in the Department of History and holder of the Chair in Slovak History and Culture at the University of Ottawa. An earlier version of this essay was presented at "Religious Space of East-Central Europe—Open to the East and the West," which was sponsored by the Conference of the Commission Internationale d'Histoire et d'Etude du Christianisme at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland, on September 8, 2007. The author is grateful to William Galush and Philip Gleason, as well as to the two anonymous reviewers for *The Catholic Historical Review*, for reading and critiquing this essay.

¹This is an estimate based upon the fact that Slovakia (then called Northern Hungary) lost 650,000 people to emigration between 1871 and 1914. The Slovaks also had a return

These Slovaks were divided into four Christian denominations that would have to adapt to North American conditions. This essay will deal with how various Slovak Christians adjusted to new-world conditions.

Those Slovak immigrants who moved to North America between the 1870s and 1914 settled largely in the industrial Northeast and Midwest, and in the Rocky Mountains of the Canadian West. Two-thirds of them hailed from the eastern Slovak counties of Spiš, Šariš, Zemplín, and Abov in northeastern Hungary. They found work in the coal mines, steel mills, oil refineries, and slaughterhouses of North America. The vast majority of these immigrants were single or recently married young men who hoped to make their fortune (the goal was usually \$1000), return home, buy some land, and become prosperous peasants.²

Shortly after they arrived in the United States, however, these Slovak immigrants discovered that their employers and the local, state, and federal governments provided virtually no social services. Thus, if someone fell ill, was injured on the job, or died, no one compensated the victim or his family. Therefore, the first institution that immigrant workers established was the fraternal-benefit society, a self-help organization. It was usually begun informally—a group of male immigrants met in a neighborhood saloon, contributed a small amount of their wages, drafted by-laws, and elected officers. Once the society was established, any member who fell ill, was injured, or was killed received a certain amount of money to compensate him or his family. Some of these fraternal-benefit societies were based on the guilds that had existed in Hungary before 1873. Others were modeled on religious fraternals that had existed in the old country for centuries. Others still may have been inspired by American examples. By 1890, Slovak immigrants had established fifty fraternal-benefit societies in their neighborhoods of residence.³

rate of approximately 30 percent. The federal census counted 619,866 first- and second-generation Slovaks in the United States in 1920. Cf. Ján Svetoň, "Slovenské vyst'ahovalectvo v období uhorského kapitalizmu" (Slovak Emigration in the Era of Hungarian Capitalism), *Ekonomický časopis* (Bratislava), 4, no. 2 (1956), 171, 179; Juliana Puskás, *From Hungary to the United States (1880-1914)* (Budapest, 1982), p. 27; and *Population: General Report and Analytical Tables, Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920* (Washington, DC, 1922), 2:973.

²These facts are documented in M. Mark Stolarik, *Immigration and Urbanization: The Slovak Experience, 1870-1918* (New York, 1989), pp. 23, 35-36.

³For a discussion of Slovak fraternals in America, see M. Mark Stolarik, "A Place for Everyone: Slovak Fraternal-Benefit Societies," in *Self-Help in America: Patterns of Minority Business Enterprise*, ed. Scott Cummings (Port Washington, NY, 1980), pp.

Once they had taken care of their material needs, the immigrants turned to their spiritual yearnings. As a result of the seventeenth-century Reformation in Europe, Slovak immigrants reflected the religious divisions of Northern Hungary. Thus, while more than 70 percent of the immigrants were Roman Catholic, about 12 percent were Lutherans, and the rest were either Greek Catholics or Calvinists.⁴ Each group had established its own local and national fraternal-benefit societies, and those fraternal societies that were founded specifically on the basis of religion led the way in establishing the second pillar of Slovak communities in America—the parish churches.

When the first Slovak immigrants came to North America in the 1870s and 1880s, they found no parishes that could serve their spiritual needs in their own language. Therefore, they initially sought out already established parishes where they could understand the priest or find a welcome. These would include Czech, Polish, and German parishes, which already existed because these ethnic groups had preceded the Slovak migration by several decades.⁵ Thus, in Cleveland,

130–41. For a longer description and a list of these fraternal societies, see Štefan Veselý, "Prvé slovenské spolky v Spojených štátoch amerických" (The Earliest Slovak Societies in the United States of America), *Slováci v zahraničí 4–5* (Martin, Slovakia, 1978), 9–57. Anne Hartfield also showed that fraternal-benefit societies preceded parishes in "Profile of a Pluralistic Parish: Saint Peter's Roman Catholic Church, New York City, 1785–1815," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 12, no. 3 (1993), 30–59, here 47.

⁴Since the United States does not collect statistics based upon religion, the author has had to rely upon old-world statistics for these numbers. Hungarian statistics from before 1914 are unreliable because the government set out to assimilate all non-Magyar nationalities and therefore tended to undercount them. Therefore, the author relied upon the first Czechoslovak census of 1920 for statistics on nationality and religion. Since inter-war Czechoslovakia contained more than 600,000 Magyars (60 percent of whom were Roman Catholics and 40 percent Calvinists), almost 140,000 Germans (most of whom were Lutherans), and 86,000 Rusyns (most of whom were Greek Catholics), it is impossible to ascertain precise figures for the religions of the Slovaks. See Anton Štefánek, *Zaklady sociografie Slovenska; Slovenská vlastiveda III* (The Fundamentals of Sociology in Slovakia) (Bratislava, 1944), p. 180. For the deformation of pre-World War I Hungarian statistics, see Július Mésároš, "Some Deformations in the Interpretation of Censuses in Recent Magyar-Slovak Controversies," in *Slovaks & Magyars (Slovak Magyar Relations in Central Europe)*, ed. Pavol Stefček (Bratislava, 1995), pp. 63–84.

⁵For the story of Czech, Polish, and German parishes, see Anton Peter Houšť, *Krátké dějiny a seznam Česko-katolických osad ve Spoj. Státech Amerických* (A Short History and Listing of Czech-Catholic Parishes in the United States of America) (St. Louis, 1890); Joseph Cada, *Czech-American Catholics, 1850–1920* (Lisle, IL, 1964); William Galush, *For More Than Bread: Community and Identity in American Polonia, 1880–1940* (Boulder, 2006); Joseph John Parot, *Polish Catholics in Chicago, 1850–1920*; and Colman Barry, *The Catholic Church and German-Americans* (Milwaukee, 1953).

Roman Catholic Slovaks initially worshiped in the Czech parish of Our Lady of Lourdes where, coincidentally Reverend Štefan Furdek, a Slovak from Orava county, had become pastor in 1883.⁶ In Minneapolis, on the other hand, Slovaks first congregated at the Polish parish of the Holy Cross, where Reverend Jakob Pacholski saw to their spiritual needs.⁷ Slovaks in South Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, meanwhile, initially tried to worship at the nearby territorial (Irish) parish of the Holy Infancy but were rejected by the icy stares of the locals and the occasional stones thrown at them after Mass. Therefore, the Slovaks switched to the more distant St. Bernard's parish (later renamed Holy Ghost), which catered to Austrian Germans, and where Reverend William Heinen welcomed them.⁸ Similarly, Slovak Lutherans sought out German Lutheran parishes for their first services. Slovak Calvinists and Greek Catholics, due to their smaller numbers, initially congregated with Slovak Lutherans or Roman Catholics.

Even though the immigrants had found already existing parishes of their own faith, this did not satisfy them. They wanted, as much as possible, services in their own language. Thus, in Streator, Illinois, which was a center of the bituminous coal-mining industry, Slovak Lutheran immigrants initially worshiped in the home of Ján Kožlej, who had

⁶"Rev. Štefan Furdek," *Národný Kalendár*, 1903 (Pittsburgh), 198–202. Before the Czech parish was established, Furdek, who arrived in Cleveland in 1882, celebrated Masses for the Slovaks at the Franciscan parish of St. Joseph.

⁷George Dargay, *Historical Sketch of the Church of St. Cyril of Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1891–1941* (Minneapolis, 1941), pp. 2–3.

⁸Ján J. Bartoš, "Prehľad dejín osady ssv. Cyrilla (sic) a Methoda v Bethlehem, Pa." (A Survey History of Ss. Cyril and Methodius Parish in Bethlehem, PA) in *Dejiny Bettebemskej Slovák v Spojených Štátoch v Severnej Ameriky* (A History of the Slovaks in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in the United States of America), ed. Milan P. Pauliny (Bethlehem, 1921), p. 81; and author interview with Elizabeth Lipovsky, Bethlehem, July 27, 1976. For the full story of the Slovak Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, and Lutheran parishes in Bethlehem, see M. Mark Stolarik, *Growing Up on the South Side: Three Generations of Slovaks in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 1885–1976* (Lewisburg, PA, 1985). Almost from the founding of the first Catholic parishes in the United States in the late-eighteenth century, they have been divided into "territorial" and "national." This tradition had developed in Europe centuries earlier and continued in the United States with one major difference—the Irish came in such huge numbers in the mid-nineteenth century that they overwhelmed the Church and turned its territorial parishes into defacto Irish parishes. See Eileen McMahon, *What Parish Are You from? A Chicago Irish Community and Race Relations* (Lexington, 1995), p. 18. She pointed out that the sixty-three "territorial" parishes in Chicago were, in fact, Irish. This was also true in other American cities. For a discussion of national parishes, see Joseph E. Ciesluk, *National Parishes in the United States* (Washington, DC, 1944).

arrived in 1873 from Kuková in Šariš county. For the next ten years Kožlej presided over Slovak funerals by reading from the bible, and he also led the Sunday prayers of a growing congregation of laymen in his home. Finally, in 1884 Reverend Cyril Droppa arrived from Štrba, Liptov county, in response to a “vokator” (call) from Kožlej to serve this congregation.⁹ This kind of lay initiative was common among Lutherans in the old country, and it continued to be practiced in the United States. Slovak Calvinists also practiced lay initiative in establishing parishes and issuing calls for pastors to come and serve them.¹⁰ The main difference between Slovak Lutherans and Calvinists was in the availability of pastors—Lutheran pastors were more numerous and available whereas Slovak Calvinist pastors were few and far between. Thus, Slovak Calvinists had to rely heavily on pastors who were Magyar or “Magyarone” (pro-assimilation into Hungarian language and culture) and could speak Slovak.¹¹

The issue of pastors and their linguistic abilities reflected a wider problem that faced many immigrants and their churches in North America—that of ethnic and linguistic affiliation. For instance, St. Peter’s, the first Roman Catholic church in New York City, which was founded in 1785, started out as an all-encompassing territorial parish. However, the overwhelming number of Irish in this congregation, who celebrated portions of the Mass in English, alienated its French and German members, who wanted the vernacular portions in their own languages and who ultimately broke away and established their own parishes.¹² Similarly, Slovak Roman Catholics in Cleveland, who in 1888

⁹Letter of Droppa to *Národné noviny* (Martin, Slovakia), July 31, 1884, p. 3; Ignác Gessay, “Streatorski Slováci a ich pokrok” (Streator Slovaks and Their Progress), *Národný Kalendár*, 1911, 117–21.

¹⁰For another example of Lutherans issuing “Vokators,” see the ms. “Zapisna Kniha pre cirkev Sv. Jána Krstiteľa v So. Bethlehem, Pa., 1911–1976” (Minute Book of the Parish of St. John the Baptist in South Bethlehem, PA, 1911–1976), in the care of Reverend John Daniel, pastor of Concordia Lutheran parish in Bethlehem. I am grateful to my dissertation adviser, the late Timothy L. Smith, for stressing the role of lay initiative in the founding of religious congregations in the United States during his graduate seminar at the University of Minnesota in 1967–68. See Smith, “Lay Initiative in the Religious Life of American Immigrants, 1880–1950,” in *Anonymous Americans: Explorations in Nineteenth-Century Social History*, ed. Tamara Hareven (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1971), pp. 214–49.

¹¹This becomes clear when one reads the histories of the individual parishes established by Slovak Calvinists in America. Cf. “Krátko dejiny cirkví” (A Short History of Our Parishes), in *Kalendár pre slovenských Kalvínov na rok 1927* (Pittsburgh, 1927), pp. 97–147.

¹²Hartfield, “Profile of a Pluralistic Parish,” pp. 30–59.

had initially joined with Magyars from the same region of northeastern Hungary in creating St. Ladislaus parish, tired of their struggle with Magyar parishioners over who would have their own Mass at the coveted Sunday timeslot of 10 a.m. and decided to expel the Magyars in 1890, and to pay them \$1000 in compensation. The Magyars then established their own St. Elizabeth parish a few blocks away. Slovak Lutherans and Calvinists in other localities did likewise.¹³

Establishing their own parishes in the New World was a new experience for Slovak Roman Catholics, although they did have old-world models to draw upon. In Hungary, most parishes had been established centuries earlier by wealthy nobles, whether secular or clerical; by city governments; and, in some cases, even by village authorities. Whoever established the parish became its patron, under the ancient right of "ius patronatus." This patron secured the land, built and maintained the church, and paid the priest's salary. In return, the patron had the right to participate in the appointment or recall of the pastor.¹⁴ In the county of Spiš, for example, which contained seventy-eight parishes in the early-twentieth century, forty-eight of the parishes had lay patrons, nineteen had religious patrons (largely the bishop), and only eleven were without a patron. Of the lay patrons, twenty-one were rich noble families, nineteen were Hungarian government ministries, and eight

¹³Ján Pankuch, *Dejiny Clevelandských a Lakewoodských Slovákov* (A History of Cleveland and Lakewood Slovaks) (Cleveland, 1930), pp. 12–16. For the story of Slovak Lutherans and Calvinists, see "Krátke dejiny cirkví" (A Short History of Our Parishes), 97–147, and George Dolak, *A History of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America, 1902–1927* (St. Louis, 1955). This splintering of parishes in North America reflected another interesting phenomenon—the fluidity of ethnic identities. While a theoretical discussion of ethnicity is beyond the scope of this essay, Slovaks in America, as did other ethnic groups, gradually moved from a regional to a national identity. See June Granatir Alexander, "Diversity within Unity: Regionalism and Social Relationships among Slovaks in Pre-World War I Pittsburgh," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, 70 (October, 1987), 317–38. For theoretical discussions of ethnicity as "primordial," see Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973) and Harold R. Isaacs, *Idols of the Tribe: Group Identity and Political Change* (New York, 1975). For ethnicity as "symbolic" or "invented" by intellectuals, see Herbert J. Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America," in *On the Making of Americans*, ed. Herbert J. Gans et al. (Philadelphia, 1979), pp. 193–220 and *The Invention of Ethnicity*, ed. Werner Sollors (New York, 1989), pp. x–xv. For a response by leading historians of immigration to America that stresses that ethnicity is a process of "negotiation" between groups and societies, see Kathleen Neils Conzen et al., "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the USA," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 12 (Fall, 1992), 3–41.

¹⁴Štefan Luby, *Dejiny súkromného práva na Slovensku* (A History of Civil Law in Slovakia) (Bratislava, 1946), pp. 363–64.

were city or village governments.¹⁵ Thus, Slovak immigrants, even though they overwhelmingly came from the peasantry, must have known about these patrons, and their rights and duties.¹⁶

Therefore, when Slovak Roman Catholics in North America decided to establish their own parishes, they acted as if they were lay patrons. In most cases the leaders of the local fraternal-benefit societies, once they had enough members, took up a collection, bought some land in the neighborhood where they had settled (usually near their employment), excavated the land, erected a church building, and sent for a priest. They also elected a board of trustees to oversee these actions.¹⁷

Although such lay initiative was common in Protestant congregations, American bishops discouraged it. Indeed, as early as 1829, the First Provincial Council of Baltimore condemned lay trusteeship and rejected the German American claim to lay patronage.¹⁸ However, with

¹⁵*Katolícke Slovensko* (Catholic Slovakia) (Trnava, Slovakia, 1933), pp. 73–81.

¹⁶Ivan Chalupický, the foremost historian of Spiš and Eastern Slovakia, wrote the following: “I am certain that our emigrants brought with them [to America] knowledge of the law of patronage. The “*ius patronatus*” had existed [in Slovakia] for hundreds of years and it was not abolished until the era of socialism, sometime in the 1960s” (e-mail in Slovak to the author, June 26, 2007). Indeed, Furdek also reminded his readers that “*ius patronatus*” did not exist in the United States, and, therefore, individual immigrants had to build and support their parishes. See Bl. Tatranský (Štefan Furdek), “Zo zápisov amerického farára” (Notes of an American Priest), *Kalendár Jednota* (Cleveland, 1902), 120–23; and “Slovenské osady v Amerike” (Slovak Parishes in America), *Kalendár Jednota* (1906), 33. Even after the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, Slovak bishops faced problems associated with lay patronage. See Františka Čechová, “K problematike farských patronátov v Nitrianskom biskupstve za episkopátu Karola Kmet’ka” (Problems with Parish Patronage in the Diocese of Nitra during the Episcopate of Karol Kmet’ko), *Historický časopis* (Bratislava), 55, no. 3 (2007), 464–86. Without presenting any evidence, Alexander denied prior knowledge of lay patronage by Slovak immigrants to the United States, in *The Immigrant Church and Community: Pittsburgh’s Slovak Catholics and Lutherans, 1880–1915* (Pittsburgh, 1987), p. xxi.

¹⁷For a good example of how such a board of trustees functioned, see ms. “Protokolna kniha Zapisnika rKat. slovenskeho kostola Sv.Ap. Cyrilla a Methoda v Minneapolis, Minn.” (Minute Book of the Recording Secretary of the Roman Catholic Slovak Church of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Minneapolis, Minnesota), 1898–1910, Microfilm, St. Cyril’s Parish, Slovak Collection, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota.

¹⁸Patrick W. Carey, *People, Priests, and Prelates: Ecclesiastical Democracy and the Tensions of Trusteeship* (Notre Dame, 1987), p. 253. Carey pointed out that the lay founders of some of the earliest Catholic parishes in America, dating back to the late-eighteenth century, particularly those with a German-speaking majority, had insisted upon applying the ancient rights of lay patronage in the governance of their churches. Indeed, Hartfield pointed out that eighteenth-century New York required all churches to elect a board of trustees (“Profile of a Pluralistic Parish,” p. 30).

the arrival of millions of new immigrants from Eastern Europe in the 1870s and the 1880s, the third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1884 allowed the election of lay trustees, but in most cases only if they were nominated by the parish priest or bishop and only if the pastor retained effective control over them.¹⁹ As we shall see, this is not what most Slovak laymen had in mind when accepting the post of church trustee. Thus, depending upon the circumstances, the creation of a new parish in an American Roman Catholic diocese could be a joyous or a very traumatic experience.

In the case of Slovak Catholic parishes, many endured some sort of traumatic experience involving the lay founders, the local bishop, and the new priest.²⁰ In Minneapolis, for instance, the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Society, which was founded by laymen in 1888, decided in 1891 to create a Slovak parish and actually bought the land by the time Father Pacholski reminded them that they needed the permission of the local archbishop to do so. Pacholski then led a delegation consisting of members of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Society to meet with Archbishop John Ireland, and he granted them permission to incorporate a parish. However, he had apparently never heard of the Apostles of the Slavs²¹ and therefore told them that “one saint was enough.” As a result, the church was officially named St. Cyril, although the parish trustees defied the archbishop by using letterhead that read “Ss. Cyril and Methodius,” erecting statues of both saints on either side of the main altar, and referring to their parish in the trustee minute-book as Ss.

¹⁹Alexander, *The Immigrant Church*, pp. 56–57.

²⁰In studying only four Slovak Roman Catholic parishes in Pittsburgh before 1915, Alexander found very little trauma. Therefore, she termed relations between Slovak church trustees and their bishops as “assertive deference” (p. xx). It is likely that, had she studied all thirty Slovak parishes in the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh over a longer period of time, she would have found plenty of trauma. For instance, St. Anne’s (Slovak) parish in Homestead seceded from the Roman Catholic Church in 1909 (see fn. 47), and in 1925, Bishop Hugh Boyle fired the parish committee of Holy Name of Jesus (Slovak) parish in Monessen and excommunicated those who defied their pastor, the Reverend Emil Sloupský. See the correspondence of the Supreme Secretary of the First Catholic Slovak Union with the Secretary of Branch 311 in Monessen, 1912–1927, First Catholic Slovak Union Collection, file 885, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota.

²¹Even though Pope John Paul II elevated Ss. Cyril and Methodius to the rank of copatron saints of Europe (along with St. Benedict) only in 1985 on the 1100th anniversary of the death of St. Methodius, the Slovaks had a centuries-old tradition of veneration of these two brothers. See Imrich Kružliak, *Cyrlometodský kult u Slovákov* (The Cult of Ss. Cyril and Methodius among the Slovaks) (Prešov, Slovakia, 2003).

Cyril and Methodius.²² Similarly, Slovak Catholic laymen led the way in establishing their own churches, whether it was in Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, or Canada. By 1955, when their parishes had peaked, Slovak Roman Catholics has established 240 churches in the United States.²³ In Canada, which had attracted about 5000 Slovak immigrants before 1914 and 40,000 in the interwar period, Roman Catholics established eight parishes between 1907 and 1960.²⁴

The next issue that faced the Roman Catholic laymen was the question of who would recruit and control the priest. In those places where the laymen were in touch with their bishop, they asked him to write one of his counterparts in Hungary to request a priest. This happened in Streator, Illinois, where in 1884 the Roman Catholic Slovaks, who had established St. Stephen's parish, asked Bishop John Lancaster Spalding of the Diocese of Peoria to find a pastor for them. He then contacted Monsignor Žigmund Bubics, the bishop of Košice in eastern Slovakia, and the latter sent Reverend Jozef Kossalko to the parishioners.²⁵

In other parishes, the laymen sent for a priest themselves, and this often led to problems. The most spectacular example of problems arising from this kind of lay initiative occurred in Minneapolis. Here local

²²Dargay, *Historical Sketch*, pp. 2–3; Articles of Incorporation of the Church of St. Cyril of Minneapolis, St. Cyril's Church, Corporation File, February 23, 1891, Archives of the Archdiocese of St. Paul (hereafter AASP). For the defiant letterhead see the petition to have Skluzaček removed, February 1, 1920, file on Skluzaček. See also fn. 17.

²³Philip A. Hrobak, comp. and ed., *Slovak Catholic Parishes and Institutions in the United States and Canada* (Cleveland, 1955), pp. 31–165.

²⁴Elena Jakešová, "Slovak Emigrants in Canada as Reflected in Diplomatic Documents (1920–1938)," *Slovakia*, 35 (1991–92), 7–8, and J. M. Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada* (Toronto, 1967), pp. 225–39.

²⁵Jozef G. Skurka, "Prvá slovenská rim. katolícka osada v Amerike" (The First Slovak Roman Catholic Parish in America), *Kalendár Jednota*, 1911, 90–95. Dolores Liptak speculated (erroneously) that the first Slovak Catholic parish in the United States was St. John Nepomucene in Bridgeport, Connecticut, founded in 1891; see Liptak, "The National Parish: Concept and Consequences for the Diocese of Hartford, 1890–1930," *The Catholic Historical Review*, 71 (1985), 52–64, here 55–56. Since Liptak is not versed in Slovak, she was unaware of Skurka's article, which was based upon original sources and interviews with the founders of these parishes. Furthermore, Hoffman's *Catholic Directory* of 1889 and 1892 provided misleading information, as it listed the Slovak parishes of St. Joseph in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, and St. Stephen's in Streator, Illinois, as "Hungarian." This occurred because both of their founding pastors were Magyarones, and that is how they initially referred to their churches. However, the vast majority of their parishioners were Slovaks from the outset. For the controversy surrounding the 1884 founding of the first Slovak Catholic parishes in America, see Stolarik, *Immigration and Urbanization*, pp. 83–84.

Greek Catholic immigrants (also known as “Uniates”), who were a mixture of Rusyns and Slovaks from eastern Slovakia and who spoke similar dialects, had initially joined their Roman Catholic brethren in the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Society.²⁶ In 1888 they established their own St. Mary’s parish and then wrote to Greek Catholic bishop Ján Vanyi of Prešov to send them a “pop,” as they called their priests. Reverend Alexis Tóth, a former seminary professor and chancellor to the bishop in Prešov, arrived in Minneapolis in December 1889. His parishioners then introduced Tóth to Reverend Jakob Pacholski, who had initially attracted a variety of Slavic ethnic groups to his Polish parish. Pacholski advised Tóth that he should visit Archbishop Ireland in nearby St. Paul as soon as possible because, according to canon law, Tóth could not officially function as a priest without the permission of the local ordinary. There was, as yet, no Greek Catholic bishop in America to whom Tóth could report. On December 19th Tóth paid a visit to Ireland. When the archbishop discovered that Tóth was a widower, however, he refused to allow Tóth to function in his archdiocese, saying that “I have already written to Rome protesting against this kind of priest being sent to me.” Ireland may not have known about the Union of Užhorod (1646), the Eastern Rite, and the right of Greek Catholic clergy to marry. On the other hand, because Ireland was a chief exponent of the “Americanization” of the U.S. Roman Catholic Church, he may have refused to recognize the Union of Užhorod for fear that such a move would slow the Americanization movement.²⁷

Since Tóth was so summarily rejected by one of America’s leading archbishops, he returned dejected to his flock. His parishioners told

²⁶Ms. “Založeni Slovenski Rimsko Katolicki nemoci podporujuci Spolek Svateho Cirila a Methoda Svatic apostoloch” (Established Slovak Roman Catholic Sick Benefit Society of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Holy Apostles), November 12, 1888, Microfilm, St. Cyril’s Parish, Slovak Collection, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota. The Roman Catholic secretary of this society referred to “our brothers, the Greek Catholics” in these minutes.

²⁷*Ibid.*, and Paul Robert Magocsi, *Our People: Carpatho-Rusyns and Their Descendants in North America* (Toronto, 1984), pp. 26–27. For a very good history of the competing claims of Russian, Ukrainian, and emerging Rusyn leaders for the allegiance of Hungarian “Ruthenians” see Keith P. Dyrud, *The Quest for the Rusyn Soul: The Politics of Religion and Culture in Eastern Europe and in America, 1890–World War I* (Philadelphia, 1992). For the “Americanization” movement, see Jay Dolan, *In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension* (New York, 2002), pp. 92–126. Marvin R. O’Connell noted in his *Biography of John Ireland and the American Catholic Church* (St. Paul, 1988) that “if Ireland’s advocacy of the blacks [discussed earlier] displayed him at his best, his belligerence toward the Uniates showed him at his bull-headed worst” (p. 271).

him to ignore Ireland, but Tóth understood the rules of the Church and realized that he could not function without a bishop. He heard about a Russian Orthodox bishop in San Francisco and paid him a visit. After some negotiations, Tóth reported to his flock that Bishop Vladimir Sokolovsky of the Russian Orthodox Diocese of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands was willing to accept him as a priest, but only if Tóth and his congregation reverted to Orthodoxy. They did so on March 15, 1891. This was the first of many schisms that would rock the Greek Catholic church in America and result in thousands of the faithful returning to Orthodoxy.²⁸

In spite of the fact that Greek Catholicism was practiced by many ethnic groups in the Kingdom of Hungary and the Austrian province of Galicia in the nineteenth century, in the United States it would eventually become dominated by the two largest ethnic groups from those regions—the Rusyns and the Ukrainians. This happened because in 1916, the Vatican finally created two ecclesiastical administrations for the Greek Catholics in the United States—the “Hungarian” Greek Catholic administration centered in Pittsburgh (for the Rusyns and others) and the Greek Catholic administration centered in Philadelphia (for the Ukrainians). In 1924 they were both elevated to full eparchies (bishoprics and later into archbishoprics), and the one in Pittsburgh became known as the Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic Church while the one in Philadelphia came to be known as the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Those Slovaks who remained Greek Catholics were subsumed into one or the other (most are in the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh) while those who followed Tóth and other Greek Catholic parishes that broke with Rome ended up in a variety of Orthodox dioceses. As a result, there are no exclusively Slovak Greek Catholic (or Orthodox) parishes in the United States.²⁹

In Canada, on the other hand, the Slovak Greek Catholics have had their own bishop (eparch) since 1964 and their own independent diocese (eparchy) since 1980. This happened because the vast majority of Greek Catholics in Canada are of Ukrainian origin, and, as a result, there are no Ruthenian dioceses in Canada that might have subsumed the

²⁸Magocsi, *Our People*, p. 27; for the schisms, see pp. 33–38. For an article that is critical of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in its relations with Greek Catholics in America, see Christopher Zuger, “História Byzantskej katolíckej cirkvi v USA” (A History of the Byzantine Catholic Church in the USA), *Theologos* (Prešov), 5, no. 2 (2004), 5–19.

²⁹Magocsi, *Our People*, p. 32. See also Timothy L. Smith, “Religion and Ethnicity in America,” *American Historical Review*, 83 (December, 1978), 1155–85, here 1171.

Slovaks. Therefore, when laymen founded the first Slovak Greek Catholic parish of Ss. Peter and Paul in the coal-mining city of Lethbridge, Alberta, in 1921, it belonged to the Ukrainian Eparchy of Edmonton.³⁰ Similarly, Slovak Greek Catholic parishes, which were established in the interwar period in Windsor and Montreal, originally fell under the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian eparch in Toronto. However, in 1951 Reverend Michal Rusnák, a Basilian refugee from communist persecution in Czechoslovakia, arrived in Canada and began to organize Slovak Greek Catholics into their own grouping. Because many of his coreligionists had also fled to Canada after World War II, Rusnák persuaded them to establish parishes in Welland, Hamilton, Toronto, and Oshawa. Recognizing his leadership, Izidore Borecký, eparch of Ukrainian Catholics in Eastern Canada and resident in Toronto, named Rusnák dean of the Slovak Greek Catholic parishes in his eparchy in 1959. In 1964 the pope elevated Rusnák as Borecký's auxiliary for Slovak Greek Catholics in Canada. In 1980 the Vatican created the first Slovak Greek Catholic Eparchy in Canada and elevated Rusnák to head it. Since the communist regime in Czechoslovakia had forcibly dissolved the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Presov in 1950, Rusnák became the only Slovak Greek Catholic eparch in the world until the downfall of communism in 1989.³¹

While Slovak Greek Catholics in Canada achieved official recognition from the Vatican, their story is marred by the rise and demise of the Cathedral of the Transfiguration in Markham, Ontario. Soon after Rusnák arrived in Canada, he met and befriended the Slovak Greek Catholic multimillionaire Stephen B. Roman, who was then known as Canada's "Uranium King."³² The latter helped Rusnák in his various endeavors, and, when Roman became a billionaire in the 1980s, he decided, with Rusnák's blessing, to build a huge Greek Catholic cathedral modeled upon his village church in Velký Ruskov, eastern Slovakia.

³⁰Michal Dorčák, "Slováci v kanadskom vojsku" (Slovaks in the Canadian Army), *Jednota* (Middletown, PA), February 16, 1916, 1; "Prvé slov. gr. katol. primície v Lethbridge, Alta" (The First Slovak Greek Catholic Mass in Lethbridge, Alberta), *Kanadský Slovák* (Winnipeg, Manitoba), June 20, 1953, p. 2. See also Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada*, pp. 250–52.

³¹Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada*, pp. 249–68; and *Our Heritage of Faith: Consecration of the Slovak Cathedral of the Transfiguration by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, September 15, 1984*, comp. and ed. Helen Roman-Barber and Anne C. R. Roman (Toronto, 1985), pp. 32–34.

³²The best account of Roman's initial success can be found in Peter C. Newman's *The Canadian Establishment* (Toronto, 1975), pp. 269–72.

The cathedral was to be built in Unionville, near Roman's home in Markham. Furthermore, Rusnák and Roman even persuaded Pope John Paul II, who was visiting Canada in 1984, to depart from his official program and to bless the still-unfinished Slovak Greek Catholic Cathedral of the Transfiguration.³³ It was generally understood, once the cathedral was completed, that it would belong to the Slovak Greek Catholic Eparchy. However, before the understanding between Roman and Rusnák was formalized, Roman died in 1988. The Slovak Greek Catholic Foundation, which had been established by Roman and Rusnák to raise and expend funds for the cathedral, had already spent \$20 million, but the building was still unfinished. Moreover, Roman's various investments had begun to crumble even before his death. Roman's eldest daughter, Helen Roman-Barber, who succeeded him as chairman of his various enterprises, could not prevent their collapse.³⁴

Meanwhile, after Roman died, Rusnák concluded that, if the cathedral was to be completed, he would need Roman-Barber's support. Therefore, he asked Roman-Barber to replace her father on the six-member board of the Slovak Greek Catholic Foundation. She did so, but they could not agree on the final ownership of the building. Rusnák died in 2003 and was succeeded by the American-born monsignor John Pazak. The latter also failed to reach an agreement with Roman-Barber regarding ownership of the cathedral. Therefore, Pazak officially closed the still unfinished Cathedral of the Transfiguration on June 1, 2006. It is uncertain what will become of this monumental building.³⁵

Meanwhile, Slovak Roman Catholics, whether in the United States or in Canada, continued to face many problems when establishing

³³Magocsi explained these circumstances very well in a letter to the editor of *The Catholic Register* (Toronto) dated October 27, 1984, repr. in *Kanadský Slovák*, November 3, 1984, 4.

³⁴For Roman's death, see the May 1988 issue of the monthly *Mária*, which is dedicated to Roman and published in Toronto by the Slovak Greek Catholic Diocese. For Roman-Barber's succession, see the articles "Tough, Untried Roman-Barber Takes Father's Crown into Battle," *Globe & Mail*, April 9, 1988, B1; "An Example of Murphy's Law," *Ottawa Citizen*, April 15, 1991, B6, and "Last Roman Family Member Resigns from Denison Board," *Globe & Mail*, December 1, 1999, B9.

³⁵Letter of Bishop John Pazak, May 27, 2006, to "Parishioners and Friends of the Cathedral of the Transfiguration," *Kanadský Slovák* (Toronto), June 10, 2006, 5. See also Bob Reguli, "In Cathedraltown, the Cathedral Is Now Empty," *Globe & Mail*, June 17, 2006, 6; and e-mail from attorney John V. Stephens to M. Mark Stolarik, July 26, 2006. The author had many conversations with Rusnák regarding the unfinished cathedral in the 1990s.

their parishes. Among them were the issues of lay trustees, parish finances, the appointment or recall of a priest, loyalty to Hungary, and even the dialect in which the priests were to preach. It took several generations for these issues to be resolved, although some of them continue to crop up even today.

Since laymen established most Slovak parishes in America, they organized themselves into parish trustees and raised the funds to buy the church property, build the church, and pay the priest's salary. Copying the example of other ethnic groups, the trustees initially elected lay collectors ("kolektori") who, until the Great Depression, visited each Slovak household to collect a yearly assessment of parish dues.³⁶ From this fund the laymen paid their priest. However, if the lay trustees clashed with their priest, they stopped paying him and ordered him to leave. This happened to Kossalko, who preached, among other things, loyalty to Hungary. This led to his moving, first from St. Stephen's parish in Streator, Illinois, to Plymouth, Pennsylvania, in 1887 and his later departure to St. John's in Bridgeport, Connecticut.³⁷ In other parishes, laymen might simply publicly rebuke their pastor, as did Štefan Kokoška, president of the trustees at Ss. Cyril and Methodius parish in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, who, during a sermon, rose and yelled at Reverend Andrej Fekety, "A budz cicho! Co ty znáš?" ("Ah, shut up! What do you know, anyway?").³⁸ In rare instances, they would even resort to violence. For instance, when Reverend Matúš Jankola, pastor of St. Joseph's parish in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, decided in 1907 that the church organist should no longer teach in the parochial school, as had been the custom in Slovakia, some of his parishioners bombed his rectory. He eventually left for the new parish of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Bridgeport.³⁹

³⁶Reverend Matúš Jankola described the "American" system of lay collectors and parish finances in "Črty z katolíckej slovenskej farnosti v Pittston, PA" (Sketches from a Slovak Catholic Parish in Pittston, PA), *Tovaryšstvo, III* (Ružomberok, Slovakia, 1900), 301–05. This article appears as "Matthew Jankola, Sketches from a Slovak Catholic Parish in Pittston, Pennsylvania, 1900," trans. M. Mark Stolarik, in *Keeping Faith: European and Asian Catholic Immigrants*, ed. Jeffrey M. Burns, Ellen Skerrett, and Joseph M. White (Maryknoll, NY, 2000), pp. 187–90.

³⁷*Národné noviny*, October 24, 1889, p. 4.

³⁸Stolarik, *Growing Up*, p. 53.

³⁹*Slovák v Amerike* (New York), November 18, 1907, p. 3. In spite of Jankola's difficulties with his parishioners in Hazleton, his reputation among American Slovaks remains intact because in 1909 he established the Slovak teaching order of the Sisters of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, which eventually found a home in Danville, Pennsylvania. Altogether American Slovaks founded six teaching orders of nuns between 1907 and

In other parishes Slovak laymen took the legal route to rid themselves of an unwanted priest. Thus, in 1919, after Reverend František Hrachovský had bankrupted St. Cyril's parish in Minneapolis, the parish committee petitioned Archbishop H. E. Austin Dowling for his transfer, and Dowling agreed.⁴⁰ The same fate befell his successor, Reverend Wenčeslaus Skluzaček, who attempted to impose his own parish committee upon his flock. The trustees complained to the archbishop about Skluzaček's "terrorism" and arrogance, especially since he had referred to the congregation as "stupid and illiterate," and the archbishop removed him in 1921.⁴¹ The same kind of lay initiative occurred at St. Peter's parish in Fort William (now Thunder Bay), Ontario, which was founded in 1907. Although the Slovak parishioners appreciated that their French-Canadian Jesuit pastor, Reverend François Maynard, had learned to speak Slovak, they still preferred to have a native pastor. Indeed, in 1914 some of the parishioners even brought in a Polish priest to serve them, but he disgraced himself through drunkenness. The bishop of Sault Ste. Marie then replaced Maynard with Reverend Ján Novotný, a Slovak.⁴²

Not only did Slovak laymen often participate in the removal of an unwanted priest but also actively recruited priests they regarded as more attuned to their needs. Thus, after the parishioners of St. John Nepomucene parish in Bridgeport failed to persuade the "Magyarone" Kossalko to support their efforts to build a parochial school, they broke away and, in 1907, established the new parish of Ss. Cyril and Methodius and called upon the nationalist Jankola, formerly of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, to serve as their pastor.⁴³ Similarly, no sooner had the parishioners of St. Cyril's in Minneapolis rid themselves of Skluzaček than they contacted Reverend Michal Judt of Holy Trinity

1953. For their histories see František Hrušovský, *Slovenské rehole v Amerike* (Slovak Religious Orders in America) (Cleveland, 1955), pp. 161–435. For an English description of Slovak religious orders in the United States (which is beyond the scope of this essay), see M. Mark Stolarik, "Slovak Catholics," in *The Encyclopedia of American Catholic History*, ed. Michael Glazier and Thomas J. Shelley (Collegeville, MN, 1997), pp. 1325–26.

⁴⁰File on František Hrachovský and the Corporation file, 1919–20, St. Cyril's Church, AASP.

⁴¹File on Wenčeslaus Skluzaček and Corporation file, 1920–21, St. Cyril's Church, AASP.

⁴²*Jednota*, July 8, 1914, 1 and August 19, 1914, 5–6. See also Roy Poviesana, *Hope and Charity: An Illustrated History of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Thunder Bay* (Thunder Bay, 2002), pp. 71–72.

⁴³*Slovák v Amerike*, September 18, 1906, p. 4, September 28, p. 3, October 27, 1907, p. 2.

parish in Racine, Wisconsin. They had heard that he and his congregation had a troubled relationship, and he was anxious to leave. Therefore, they persuaded him to transfer his services to their parish.⁴⁴ As Edward Hoban, the chancellor of the Archdiocese of Chicago, remarked in a letter to Archbishop Dowling regarding such a lay initiative, "the people, on their part, feel that by agitating, they can obtain whatever they want."⁴⁵

Sometimes agitation was not enough, and a few Slovak parishes copied their Polish coreligionists and seceded from the Roman Catholic Church when they could not get their way.⁴⁶ This happened in Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1909, when a group of parishioners seceded from St. Michael's parish and established St. Anne's Independent Slovak Catholic Church because the local bishop rebuffed their request to transfer their pastor. They affiliated with the Polish National Catholic Church until 1915, when they returned to the Roman Catholic Church after they were promised a pastor to their liking.⁴⁷ Similarly, a group of parishioners at St. Wendelin's church on Cleveland's west side, who wished to establish their own parish on the south side, seceded from the Roman Catholic Church in 1917 when Bishop John Farrelly refused their request. They, too, affiliated with the Polish National Catholic Church. However, the dissidents returned to the fold in 1922 only after Farrelly had died and his successor, Bishop Joseph Schrembs, gave them permission to establish Our Lady of Mercy parish.⁴⁸ Finally, in Passaic, New Jersey, a group of parishioners

⁴⁴Parish Committee of St. Cyril's Church to Dowling, February 27, 1921, and May 1, 1920, and Judt to Dowling, March 7, 1921, in Corporation file, 1920-21, St. Cyril's Church, AASP.

⁴⁵Hoban to Dowling, October 21, 1920, in Corporation file, 1920-21, St. Cyril's Church, AASP.

⁴⁶For the story of the Polish National Catholic Church, see William Galush, "The Polish National Catholic Church: A Survey of Its Origins, Development and Mission," *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, 83 (September-December, 1972), 131-49.

⁴⁷*Jednota*, January 3, 1912, p. 4; Jozef Hušek, "Prehl'ad vážnejších udalostí z dejín IKSJ" (A Survey of the More Important Events in the History of the First Catholic Slovak Union), *Kalendár Jednota*, 1916, 53; Jozef A. Kushner, *Slováci Katolíci Pittsburghského Biskupstva* (Slovak Catholics in the Diocese of Pittsburgh) (Passaic, 1946), p. 61. Even though Alexander knew of this schism, she downplayed it in favor of stressing that Pittsburgh's Slovak Catholics showed "assertive deference" rather than rebelliousness toward the local hierarchy. See *The Immigrant Church and Community: Pittsburgh's Slovak Catholics and Lutherans, 1880-1915* (Pittsburgh, 1987), pp. xx, 43.

⁴⁸"Committee of Ten" to Bishop John Farrelly, September, 1912; Augustín Tomášek to Farrelly, October 24, 1912, and May 2, 1914; Chancellor Scullen to George Moss, January

of St. Mary's church in 1922 rejected Bishop John O'Connor's inexplicable transfer of their curate, Reverend Imrich Jeczusko, back to his original diocese of Košice in Slovakia. They much preferred Jeczusko to their pastor, Reverend Imre Haitinger, because the latter was a haughty "Magyarone," whereas Jeczusko was an easygoing Slovak. Since the bishop refused their petition to rescind Jeczusko's transfer, one-third of the parishioners seceded from the Roman Catholic Church and established the independent Holy Name Slovak National Catholic Church. In 1925 it affiliated with the Polish National Catholic Church, and in 1963 it was raised by the latter to the status of a bishopric for Slovak National Catholics, although it consisted of only one parish.⁴⁹

As we have already seen, another major problem that afflicted Slovak Roman Catholics was the issue of "Magyarone" versus nationalist priests. After the 1867 "Ausgleich" between the Habsburgs and the Magyars, which gave Hungary complete home rule in Austria-Hungary, the Magyar-dominated government set out to completely assimilate ("Magyarize") all of its subject nationalities, starting with the Slovaks. While the Slovak nobility had accepted "Magyarization," based upon its class interests, the Slovak bourgeoisie did resist, but was too small and weak to be effective. Only the Slovak clergy, whether Catholic or Lutheran, was numerous enough to try to resist.⁵⁰ While some Slovak priests, particularly from the eastern counties, where Slovak nationalism was weakest, went along with Magyarization, the vast majority, largely from the central and western counties, did not. For this reason the Hungarian government and hierarchy, particularly Bishop Bubics,

23, 1917, and Scullen to Tomášek, September 14, 1917; Farrelly to Tomášek, October 5, 1917, File on St. Wendelin's Parish, 1909–24, Archives of the Diocese of Cleveland (hereafter ADC). See also *Dedication of Our Lady of Mercy Church* (Cleveland, 1949), pp. 13–14.

⁴⁹Raymond J. Kupke, "The Slovak National Catholic Church, Passaic, New Jersey and the Jeczusko Affair," *Slovakia*, 33 (1987–1988), 63–86. Kupke identified another independent Slovak parish in the diocese—Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Perth Amboy, New Jersey—but provided no details (p. 83n4). No one has yet written a history of the independent Slovak Roman Catholic parishes in the United States, nor even identified them all.

⁵⁰The best exposé of "Magyarization" in the English language is still Scotus Viator (pseud. of R. W. Seton-Watson), *Racial Problems in Hungary* (London, 1908; repr. New York, 1972); in Slovak, see Karel Kálal, *Maďarizácia: Obráz slovenského utrpenia* (Magyarization: A Picture of Slovak Suffering), (Prague, 1930; repr. Bratislava, 2006). Reverend Andrej Hlinka of Ružomberok, who led the resistance to Magyarization and spent several years in jail for his efforts, proudly recalled this resistance by the Slovak clergy in "The Influence of Religion and Catholicism on States and Individuals," in *Slovakia Then and Now*, ed. R. W. Seton-Watson (London, 1931), pp. 167–82, here pp. 173–74.

promoted the emigration of “Magyarone” priests to America and tried (but failed) to restrict the emigration of nationalist priests.⁵¹ Therefore, while a small number of Magyarones, such as Kossalko and Haitinger, tried to continue the practice of Magyarization in North America, the vast majority rejected this philosophy and sought to preserve their faith and their language with the motto “Za Boha a národ” (for God and the nation).⁵² The leading exponents of Slovak nationalism among the clergy in America were Furdek and Jankola, who organized the Slovak clergy in America into the “Society of Slovak Roman Catholic Priests Under the Protection of Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in 1896.⁵³

⁵¹Reverend Ján Staš to Reverend František Sasínek, February 27, 1896, Literárny archív Maticy slovenskej (Literary Archive of the Matica slovenská), Martin, Slovakia, 37-065, and Minister of Culture and Education to the Cardinal Primate of Hungary, February 4, 1902, #393, as published in *Národné noviny*, July 1, 1902, p. 2. See also Monika Glettler, *Pittsburg, Wien, Budapest: Program und Praxis der Nationalitätenpolitik bei der Auswanderung der ungarischen Slowaken nach Amerika um 1900* (Vienna, 1980), pp. 122–24. Bela Vassady, Jr., in “Mixed Ethnic Identities among Immigrant Clergy from Multiethnic Hungary: The Slovak-Magyar Case, 1885–1903,” *The Ethnic Enigma: The Salience of Ethnicity for European-Origin Groups*, ed. Peter Kivisto (Philadelphia, 1989), pp. 47–66, claimed that upwardly mobile Slovak priests from the northeastern counties of Hungary had “mixed Slovak-Magyar identities” but in the United States, they eventually became Slovaks, largely to satisfy their flocks, who also increasingly discovered their Slovak identity due to the efforts of nationalist priests and newspaper editors. On Bubics and “Magyarization” in the Diocese of Košice, see Peter Zubko, *Dejiny košickej kapituly (1804–2001)* (A History of the Chapter of Košice, 1804–2001) (Košice, 2003), pp. 194–96.

⁵²Furdek founded the nationwide fraternal-benefit First Catholic Slovak Union of the United States in 1890 and its weekly newspaper *Jednota*, and both adopted the motto “Za Boha a národ.” See Jozef Paučo, *75 rokov Prvej Katolíckej Slovenskej Jednoty* (75 Years of the First Catholic Slovak Union) (Cleveland, 1965), pp. 10–11. Both the society and the newspaper still exist. American Poles also used this slogan, although Victor Greene mistranslated it as “For God and Country.” See Greene, *For God and Country: The Rise of Polish and Lithuanian Ethnic Consciousness in America, 1860–1910* (Madison, 1975).

⁵³Ms. “Society of Slovak Roman Catholic Priests in America under the Protection of Ss. Cyril and Methodius, Minutes (in Slovak), November 10, 1896, Spolok Sv. Vojtecha (Society of St. Adalbert), Trnava, Slovakia, Fasc. 299, C, #14, on microfilm at Slovak Collection, Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota. Barry noted that German American Catholics, a decade earlier, had also formed a “Deutsch-Amerikaner Priester-Verien” (*The Catholic Church and German-Americans*, pp. 98–99). So did the Lithuanians who, in 1909 established the “Lithuanian-American Roman Catholic Priests’ League.” Cf. Arunas Alisauskas, “Lithuanians,” in the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge, MA, 1980), p. 671. According to Timothy L. Smith, in 1976 Hispanic clergy formed a “Hispanic American caucus” in the United States. See Smith, “Religion and Ethnicity,” p. 1173. It seems likely that priests from other ethnic groups also organized themselves into similar groupings in the last two hundred years. No one, to the author’s knowledge, has explored this subject.

Furthermore, in a 1903 meeting of this society in Philadelphia, the delegates voted overwhelmingly to preach to their congregations in literary Slovak and not in the eastern Slovak dialects.⁵⁴ This was a major victory of the nationalists over the Magyarones, who favored the eastern dialects to weaken the growing nationalism of American Slovaks. Indeed, as Bela Vassady has shown Magyarone priests in early-twentieth-century America had lost the battle for the hearts and minds of American Slovaks.⁵⁵ Furthermore, in 1911 the nationalist priests led the way in establishing the Slovak Catholic Federation, which was a mixture of clergy and laymen interested in promoting Slovak Catholicism (and nationalism) in America.⁵⁶ It survives to this day.

After World War I, as Edward R. Kantowicz pointed out, most American bishops followed the lead of Archbishop Mundelein of Chicago in aggressively pursuing the Americanization of Catholic immigrants.⁵⁷ This was in line with the U.S. government's policy of Americanization, which started during World War I and continued well into the 1920s.⁵⁸ As a result, English became the principal language of parochial schools, and it also crept into church services. Mundelein's policies also led to curbing the powers of church trustees. Among the Slovaks this policy was largely enforced by priests trained in American seminaries, who were taught the "evils" of trusteeism and who set out to control the elections of parish trustees to get rid of the independent-minded ones.⁵⁹ It also led to the priests proclaiming themselves to be the presidents of the parish councils, in order to better control the trustees. Since the American-trained priests were young when appointed, they outlived the original church trustees and eventually

⁵⁴"Society of Slovak Roman Catholic Priests. . .," September 3, 1903.

⁵⁵Vassady, "Mixed Ethnic Identities," pp. 58–64.

⁵⁶Joseph V. Adamec, "The Slovak Catholic Federation: A 65-Year Perspective," in *Slovaks in America: A Bicentennial Study*, comp. Joseph C. Krajsa et al. (Middletown, PA, 1978), 223–32, here p. 223. Adamec apparently did not know about its predecessor, the Society of Slovak Roman Catholic Priests. The Slovak Catholic Federation is the last Slovak organization in the United States that publishes an annual almanac—*Good Shepherd/Dobrý pastier*.

⁵⁷Edward R. Kantowicz, "Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century American Catholicism," *Journal of American History*, 68 (June, 1981), 52–68.

⁵⁸Alexander documented the government's Americanization policies and Slovak resistance to them in *Ethnic Pride, American Patriotism: Slovaks and Other New Immigrants in the Interwar Era* (Philadelphia, 2004).

⁵⁹Reverend Patrick J. Dignan stressed the evils of trusteeism in *History of the Legal Incorporation of Catholic Church Property in the United States (1784–1932)* (Washington, DC, 1933).

triumphed over them. A good example was the Reverend George Dargay of St. Cyril's in Minneapolis. Born into a Greek Catholic family, but raised and educated as a Roman Catholic in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Dargay was appointed pastor of St. Cyril's in 1926. Soon thereafter, he dissolved the old parish committee, appointed a new one, and declared himself "the boss." When his congregation protested, he told them to "pay, pray and shut up." As a result, a group of laymen petitioned Archbishop John Murray in 1933 to remove Dargay, but by then, the latter had skillfully exploited the divisions between the Slovak-speaking "old timers" and the U.S.-born generation. The latter was educated in either American parochial or public schools, was more deferential toward the clergy, and favored more acculturation. They did not sign the petition. As a result, Murray rejected the request, and Dargay remained the pastor and dominated his parish committee until his retirement in 1962.⁶⁰

Slovak Lutherans and Calvinists, unlike Roman Catholics, had no problem with the principle of lay initiative. What they did encounter in North America, however, was a multiplicity of Protestant denominations and synods, and a shortage of clergy. The earliest Slovak Lutherans and Calvinists worshiped together until they had enough individual followers to create their own congregations. This happened, for instance, in Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania, where the Lutherans and Calvinists established a joint parish in 1888. However, the more nationalist Lutherans resented certain Calvinist pastors who preached in both Slovak and Magyar, and, therefore, the Lutherans broke off in 1895 and established their own parish. The Calvinists, meanwhile, continued to be served by Magyar or Magyarone pastors until 1917, when the Slovaks expelled the Magyars over the issue of the language used in services. Thereafter they struggled to find a Slovak-speaking pastor and reorganized as the Slovak Presbyterian Congregation in 1924. The other eight Slovak Calvinist parishes, stretching from Pennsylvania to Illinois, experienced similar transformations. Once they were established, they affiliated themselves with the Presbyterian Church in America.⁶¹

Slovak Lutherans, meanwhile, also established parishes through lay initiative, but were divided by synodical affiliation. After the Slovak

⁶⁰See the file on Reverend George Dargay and the Corporation file on St. Cyril's Church, Minneapolis, AASP, 1926-1962.

⁶¹For the history of the Slovak Calvinists in America, especially their parishes, see "Krátké dejiny cirkví" (Short Histories of Our Parishes). Reverend J. V. Kovár wrote the history of the Slovak Calvinist church in Mt. Carmel, PA, pp. 101-04.

Lutherans created their first parish (Holy Trinity) in Streator, Illinois, in 1884, a group of Slovak Lutheran pastors met for the first time at the fifth convention of the secular Slovak Evangelical Union (established in 1893) in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in 1899. In 1902 these same pastors established the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at a meeting in Connellsville, Pennsylvania. A few years later, they affiliated themselves with the German-dominated Missouri Synod, which was headquartered in St. Louis.⁶² However, about half of the pastors, as well as laymen, found the Missouri Synod too conservative. They especially resented the stand of the conservative pastors against the participation of the Slovak Evangelical Union in funerals and other religious observances. Therefore, the more liberal pastors in 1919 organized themselves into the Slovak Zion Synod and affiliated themselves with the Lutheran Church in America.⁶³

One can illustrate the fortunes of Slovak Lutherans in America by focusing on communities in Minneapolis and Bethlehem. In Minneapolis a small group of Lutheran Slovaks, with the assistance of a German pastor from the Missouri Synod, established in 1888 the Holy Emmanuel Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, which became a part of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and affiliated with the Missouri Synod. However, a smaller group was converted to the Baptist faith in 1919 and established the First Slovak Baptist Church in Minneapolis. Moreover, in 1923 another group of Lutherans, who found the Missouri Synod too conservative, broke away from Holy Emmanuel and set up Holy Trinity Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, which joined the Slovak Zion Synod and eventually affiliated with the Lutheran Church in America.⁶⁴

In Bethlehem, on the other hand, Slovak Lutherans appeared in such small numbers that they struggled to establish a parish in 1911.⁶⁵ However, they had to wait for twenty-five years before they attracted a

⁶²Dolak, *A History*, pp. 42–45.

⁶³Ján Body, *History of the Slovak Zion Synod LCA* (Pittsburgh, 1976), pp. 126–34. For an up-to-date discussion of the varieties of American Lutheranism, see Mark Noll, “American Lutherans, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,” and Mary Todd, “The Curious Case of the Missouri Synod,” in *Lutherans Today: American Lutheranism and Identity in the 21st Century*, ed. Richard Cimino (Grand Rapids, 2003), pp. 3–25 and 26–44.

⁶⁴These parishes were first described in M. Mark Stolarik, “The Slovaks,” in *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups*, ed. June Drenning Holmquist (St. Paul, 1981), p. 355.

⁶⁵Stolarik, *Growing Up*, p. 47.

permanent pastor. After the American-born and educated Reverend John Daniel accepted the congregation's "vokator" in 1936, he quickly perceived that, to ensure his success, he had to attract non-Slovak parishioners. Therefore, he started to preach to his congregation in both Slovak and English, and, by 1976, he had attracted so many non-Slovaks that he "Americanized" his parish and renamed it simply Concordia Lutheran.⁶⁶ One wonders how many other Slovak American Lutheran churches did likewise. Altogether Slovak Lutherans established eighty-one parishes in the United States, of which thirty-nine belonged to the Slovak Synod and forty-two to the Zion Synod.⁶⁷

Such divisions also occurred among Slovak Lutherans in Canada. For instance, the Nativity Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in Windsor, Ontario, which was founded in 1927, is a member of the Slovak Zion Synod and is affiliated with the Lutheran Church in America.⁶⁸ On the other hand, Holy Trinity Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fort William (now Thunder Bay), Ontario, founded in 1935, joined whichever synod sent it a pastor. Since the Slovak Synod sent it more pastors, it settled for the latter.⁶⁹ Similarly, the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Montreal, founded in 1929, is a member of the Slovak Synod and is affiliated with the Missouri Synod as is St. Paul's Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in Toronto, which was founded in 1942.⁷⁰

Even though the Roman Catholic Church in the United States and Canada experienced a period of relative peace during the period of

⁶⁶Stolarik, *Growing Up*, pp. 56–58.

⁶⁷To arrive at these numbers, the author counted the congregations listed in the index to Dolak's *A History*, pp. 189–207 and in Ján Body's list, published in *History of*, pp. 199–200.

⁶⁸"Nativity Lutheran Church, Windsor, Ontario," *70th Anniversary Synodical Album, Slovak Zion Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1919–1989* (Chicago, 1990), pp. 222–23.

⁶⁹"History of Slovak Lutherans," in *Slovak 100th Anniversary 1886–1986, Thunder Bay, Ontario*, comp. Jean Suffak (Thunder Bay, 1986), n.pag.

⁷⁰"Krátke dejiny Cirkvi Nanebevstúpenia" (A Short History of the Church of the Ascension), in *Pamätník, 1929–1954, Z príležitosti 25-ho výročia založenia Slovenskej Evanjelicko Luteránskej Cirkvi Nanebevstúpenia, Montreal, Quebec, Canada* (Jubilee, 1929–1954, on the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Founding of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Montreal, Quebec, Canada), (Montreal, 1954), n.pag.; Jozef Borov, "Spomienky na naše začiatky" (Memories of Our Beginnings), in *Štyridsat' rokov slovenskej evanjelickej a.v. cirkvi sv. Pavla, Toronto, 1942–1982* (Forty Years of the Slovak Evangelical Augsburg Confession Church of St. Paul in Toronto, 1942–1982), (Toronto, 1982), pp. 32–33.

consolidation that lasted roughly from the 1930s through the early 1960s, the issue of lay initiative would not die.⁷¹ For instance, starting in the 1970s, as Slovak Roman Catholic parishes witnessed a sharp decline in their membership due to many families moving to the suburbs, American bishops reacted by closing their central city national parishes, urging their parishioners to worship in suburban territorial parishes, or merging several central city parishes. Only one Slovak parish—Ss. Cyril and Methodius of Detroit—managed to move to the suburbs in 1989, with the permission of Archbishop Edmond Szoka.⁷² In Philadelphia, on the other hand, Archbishop John Krol concluded in 1977 that the local Slovak community had grown too small to support two parishes. Without conducting a proper census, he decided to close St. Agnes parish in the Northern Liberties section of the city rather than the parish of St. John Nepomucene in South Philadelphia. St. Agnes, however, was the larger parish, and its parishioners begged him not to close their parish. When Krol did not respond, they picketed his residence, carrying a coffin with the sign “Please Don’t Bury Our Parish!”. They also wrote to Archbishop Jean Jadot, the apostolic delegate in Washington, DC; appealed to their local state representatives; and publicized their plight in one of the city newspapers. As a result, Krol relented and merged the two parishes at the St. Agnes location.⁷³ Despite this kind of lay initiative, however, Slovak Roman Catholics in 2006 could claim only 158 parishes in the United States. This was down from 240 in 1955.⁷⁴

Slovak Roman Catholics in Canada, meanwhile, displayed a similar resolve. We have already seen that they established their first parish in Fort William, Ontario, in 1907 and struggled to find a suitable Slovak priest. In 1929 Reverend Emery (Imre) Vodicska arrived from Slovakia but quickly alienated the parishioners with his Magyarone attitude. Indeed, Vodicska even published some articles in *The Catholic*

⁷¹Jay Dolan, in *The American Catholic Experience*, p. 384, dates the peak period of calm “devotional Catholicism” between 1918 and 1948. This may have been true for the Irish and Germans, but for the Slovaks, and I suspect that for other eastern Europeans as well, it was one decade later.

⁷²“Rev. Elemir J. Mikus Notes Special Life and Ministry Milestones,” *Slovak Catholic Falcon* (Passaic), July 18, 2007, 4.

⁷³*The Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia), April 17, 1977, A-5. I wrote the history of these joint parishes on the occasion of their diamond jubilee: “A History of St. Agnes-St. John Parish, Philadelphia, 1902-1982,” in *Church of St. Agnes-St. John Nepomucene, Diamond Jubilee, 1902-1982* (Philadelphia, 1982), pp. 9-33.

⁷⁴Hrobak, *Slovak Catholic Parishes*, pp. 31-165; *Good Shepherd 2006* (Pittsburgh), pp. 241-52.

Register (Toronto) in which he extolled the virtues of "His Apostolic Majesty" Otto von Habsburg and called for a revision of the Treaty of Trianon in favor of Hungary.⁷⁵ As a result, the parish committee drove him out in 1934. Meanwhile, the trustees contacted Monsignor Karol Kmet'ko, the bishop of Nitra, for a replacement, but he forwarded the request to the Slovak Benedictines in Cleveland. The latter had broken off from the Czech Benedictine order in Lisle, Illinois, and had organized themselves into a priory in 1927 and a full-fledged monastery in 1934. The Slovak Benedictines staffed St. Peter's parish from 1935 to 1950.⁷⁶ In that year, with the blessing of the Slovak Benedictines, a son of the parish, Reverend Joseph Reguly, was appointed pastor by the bishop of Sault Ste. Marie. Reguly remained until his death in 1988. After him came Reverend Abraham Kappanunkel, a missionary from Kerala, India, followed in 1993 by Reverend Bernard Campbell. Since the number of Slovak speakers at St. Peter's had dwindled to a small minority by the 1990s, the parish remained viable by attracting many local Italians, and it has become a de facto territorial parish.⁷⁷

Slovak Roman Catholics in Montreal, meanwhile, also established a parish, but under different circumstances. Like the majority of Slovak Canadians, most Montreal Slovaks came to Canada seeking work in the 1920s.⁷⁸ In 1927 the Roman Catholics organized themselves into the Ss. Cyril and Methodius branch 784 of the First Catholic Slovak Union, and these members sought out the Polish Monsignor Wincenty Helenowski to help them establish a Slovak parish. With his help they organized themselves into a parish committee in January 1928 and then petitioned the archbishop of Montreal for permission to establish a Slovak mission. The archbishop agreed, and Helenowski celebrated Masses for the Slovaks in various churches for the next two years. In 1930 a group of Slovak Minor Franciscan Conventual Fathers, headquartered in Binghamton, New York, offered their services to the Slovak community of Montreal, and the latter accepted.⁷⁹ By 1944, the

⁷⁵*Slovák v Kanade* (Montreal), September 23, 1933, pp. 2-3 and May 5, 1936, p. 3.

⁷⁶George Reguly *et al.*, "St. Peter's History," *90th Anniversary of St. Peter's Church, 1908-1998* (Thunder Bay, 1998); Hrusovsky, *Slovenské rebole*, pp. 23-39.

⁷⁷Reguly, "St. Peter's History," and Roy Poviesana, *Hope and Charity*, p. 74.

⁷⁸For an overview of Slovak immigration to Canada in this period, see Elena Jakešová and M. Mark Stolarik, "Slovaks," in the *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, ed. Paul R. Magocsi (Toronto, 1999), pp. 1168-79.

⁷⁹In 1928 a group of Franciscans from Slovakia established the Commissariat of the Most Holy Savior in Avalon, Pennsylvania, and they later spread to other locations. Hrusovsky, *Slovenské rebole*, p. 136.

mission of Ss. Cyril and Methodius became a full-fledged parish. The Conventual Fathers continued to serve it until 1995, when the order withdrew its priests due to the aging of its members and a corresponding decline in their vocations.⁸⁰

Meanwhile, due to a decline in priestly vocations in the United States, which had provided many of the priests that served Slovak Catholic parishes in Canada, the trustees of several Slovak Canadian parishes turned to the ancient homeland for help.⁸¹ This became possible after the collapse of communism in 1989 and the subsequent increase in priestly vocations in Slovakia. Thus, the trustees ("wardens") of Ss. Cyril and Methodius parish in Montreal asked the archbishop of Košice for a Slovak priest to serve their congregation. Monsignor Alojz Tkáč responded in 1997 with the middle-aged Reverend Gabriel Juruš. However, Juruš spoke French but not English, behaved arrogantly toward his parishioners, and tried to dominate the parish council. As a result, the trustees turned against him and in 1999 asked the archbishop of Montreal to remove him. The archbishop agreed and, working with the archbishop of Košice, replaced Juruš with a younger and more amenable priest from Slovakia.⁸²

⁸⁰Wincenty Helenowski, "Narodenie osady Sv. Cyrila a Methoda" (The Birth of the Parish of Ss. Cyril and Methodius), and Vojtech Mirga, "Nad históriou osady" (About the History of the Parish), in *Pamätná kniha k 50. výročiu založenia slovenskej osady Sv. Cyrila a Metoda v Montreale, 1928-1978* (Jubilee Book on the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of the Slovak Parish of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Montreal, 1928-1978), (Montreal, 1978), pp. 31-33 and 46-62 and J. M. Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada*, pp. 228-29. See also Ms. "Parish Information Bulletin," July, 1999, issued by Gabriel Zemanovich on behalf of the church wardens (trustees). Copy in author's possession thanks to Paul Čarnogurský, formerly of Montreal, who provided his file on the parish of Ss. Cyril and Methodius.

⁸¹For instance, Ss. Cyril and Methodius parish in Toronto, which laymen had established in 1934, received Reverend (later Monsignor) Michael Shuba from the Diocese of Cleveland, and he remained its pastor until 1970. After that refugee Slovak Jesuits, whose order had been dissolved by the communists in Czechoslovakia in 1950, and who had re-established themselves in Cambridge, Ontario, in 1952, saw to the spiritual needs of Slovak Roman Catholics in Toronto, Windsor, and New Westminster, BC until their recall to Slovakia in 1997. See Michael Shuba, *I'm Just Reminiscing* (Cleveland, 1978); *Slovenskí jezuiti v Kanade* (Cambridge, Canada, 1972) and Felix J. Litva, S.J., *Kanadský experiment: Polstoročie činnosti slovenských jezuitov v Kanade* (The Canadian Experiment: Half a Century of the Slovak Jesuits in Canada), (Trnava, Slovakia, 2005).

⁸²"Parish Information Bulletin," July, 1999, and file on Ss. Cyril & Methodius Church. Incidentally, the archbishop of Košice also provided pastors for the Slovak Roman Catholic parishes of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Toronto, Windsor, and New Westminster after the Jesuits withdrew from Canada.

It should be apparent, therefore, that the adjustment of Slovaks to the various forms of Christianity in North America was often a painful process. Not only did the arrivals have to deal with the culture shock of experiencing an essentially Anglo-Saxon society but also they had to rebuild their religious institutions from scratch. Gerald Shaughnessy, one of the earliest observers of this phenomenon, asked rhetorically of the millions of Catholic immigrants who came to the United States in the long nineteenth century, "Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith?" He answered "yes" by pointing out that in 1820 the United States had contained only 200,000 Catholics in a missionary church, whereas by 1920 it had 20 million followers and had long since become the largest single Christian denomination in America.⁸³ Shaughnessy might have asked the more nuanced question, "how has the immigrant kept his or her faith?" because, apart from the Czechs, who are a special case, most immigrants, as recent scholarship has shown, sought to preserve their faith in the New World.⁸⁴ As we have seen with Slovak immigrants, they struggled mightily to establish and maintain their own parishes, no matter what the denomination.

When confronted with Irish-dominated "territorial" parishes, which held services in English, Roman Catholic Slovaks, like other immigrants, opted to establish their own national parishes, served by priests in their own language. Since no such priests initially existed in North America, laymen had to send for them, either through the offices of the local bishops, or through their own correspondence. Since laymen took the initiative in establishing their own parishes, they naturally assumed that they would have the same rights of patronage over their priests and parishes as had lay patrons in Europe. However, since American bishops had condemned lay trusteeism in the first Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1829 and had sought to strictly control it in the Third Plenary Council of 1884, conflicts between laymen and their pastors or their bishops over the control of parish finances, parish

⁸³Gerald Shaughnessy, *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith?* (New York, 1925), pp. 73, 214.

⁸⁴Karl D. Bicha, "Settling Accounts with an Old Adversary: The Decatholicization of Czech Immigrants in America," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, 8 (November, 1971), 45-60 shows how two-thirds of Czech immigrants to the United States abandoned the Roman Catholicism that had been forced upon them by the Catholic Habsburgs after the Battle of White Mountain in 1620. For the religiosity of most European immigrants to the New World, see Smith, "Religion and Ethnicity in America," *passim* and Robert F. Harney, "Religion and Ethnocultural Communities," *Polyphony*, 1 (Summer, 1978), 3. Both deal with a wide variety of Christian and non-Christian religions and ethnic groups.

property, and even the appointment or removal of pastors occurred in many Slovak parishes. Furthermore, even though the American hierarchy, which was dominated by the Irish, sought to suppress lay trusteeism in the 1920s through its "Americanization" program, it never completely succeeded.⁸⁵ Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of Roman and Greek Catholics, principally Poles, Rusyns, and Ukrainians but also a few thousand Slovaks, seceded from the Roman and Greek Catholic churches in the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries due to the ignorance and intransigence of certain Roman Catholic bishops.

Slovak Roman Catholics in Canada, on the other hand, showed just as much lay initiative in establishing their own parishes as did their American cousins. However, because of their small number, they had to rely upon their American cousins to supply them with priests for many years. When this source of supply withered, and after communism had collapsed in Czechoslovakia, some Slovak Canadian parishioners sent for priests from Slovakia, with mixed results.

Meanwhile, the American hierarchy was largely unprepared to deal with the hundreds of thousands of Greek Catholics who emigrated to the United States. Through open hostility toward married Greek Catholic clergy, the American hierarchy caused several schisms from the Greek Catholic Church back to eastern Orthodoxy. Several hundred Slovaks became Orthodox at this time, although thousands remained loyal to Greek Catholicism. Because the Vatican established only two dioceses (later archdioceses) for Greek Catholics in the United States, Slovak Greek Catholics have had to submerge their ethnicity to either the Ruthenian archdiocese in Pittsburgh or to the Ukrainian one in Philadelphia. Most opted for the Ruthenian archdiocese.

In Canada, meanwhile, Slovak Greek Catholics did better. Because the vast majority of Greek Catholics in Canada were of Ukrainian background, with their own hierarchy, no Ruthenian hierarchy arose that might subsume Slovak Greek Catholics into it because of the similarity of their two dialects. Therefore, in Canada a Slovak Greek Catholic diocese would eventually be created to supervise the Greek Catholic parishes that were established through lay initiative.

⁸⁵Dolan points out that, by 1900, two-thirds of all American Roman Catholic bishops were Irish. See *The American Catholic Experience*, p. 180.

As far as Slovak Protestants were concerned, they faced challenges that were both similar to and different from those of their Roman and Greek Catholic neighbors. While Slovak Lutherans and Calvinists had practiced lay trusteeism in the Kingdom of Hungary since the Protestant Reformation and continued to do so in North America, the Lutherans were faced with a choice of several different synodical affiliations. Therefore, the Lutherans split into the Slovak Synod, which affiliated with the conservative and German-dominated Missouri Synod. Here the pastors tolerated no lay interference in church services. More tolerant Slovak Lutheran pastors, who welcomed lay participation in religious services, established the Zion Synod and affiliated with the more liberal Lutheran Church in America. Slovak Calvinists, a tiny minority, had to initially rely upon Magyar or Magyarone pastors to serve them and only slowly separated from them, as Slovak pastors finally became available after the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918. The Calvinists eventually affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America.

Since this essay is only a survey of the four Slovak Christian denominations in North America, much work remains to be done. While Alexander has studied Slovak Roman Catholics and Lutherans in Pittsburgh up to 1915, and I have studied them in the dioceses of St. Paul, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Sault Ste. Marie, and Montreal over a longer period, no one has yet written a comprehensive history of Slovak Roman Catholics in either the United States or in Canada.⁸⁶ Slovak Greek Catholics have fared even worse. I have studied those in Bethlehem and in the Slovak Greek Catholic Diocese of Canada while Robert Zecker has looked at one mixed Rusyn Slovak parish in Philadelphia.⁸⁷ How many Slovak Greek Catholics exist in the United States, in which parishes they can be found, and in what number remain a mystery.

Slovak Protestants in North America have also received scant attention. Apart from institutional histories of the two major Slovak synods in North America, as well as parish jubilee books, there are no social histories of Slovak Lutherans. While I have studied the Lutheran com-

⁸⁶Thomas J. Shelley recently wrote an outstanding history of Slovak Catholics in Yonkers, New York, as well as in neighboring Slovak and other national parishes in *Slovaks on the Hudson: Most Holy Trinity Church, Yonkers, & the Slovak Catholics of the Archdiocese of New York, 1894-2000* (Washington, DC, 2002).

⁸⁷"All of Our Own Kind here": The Creation of a Slovak-American Community in Philadelphia, 1890-1945" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1998).

munities of Minneapolis and Bethlehem, and Alexander has covered those of Pittsburgh up to 1915, there are dozens more that deserve investigation. Apart from my limited studies of the Slovak Calvinists in the United States, there are virtually no others. The number of still-existing Slovak Lutheran and Calvinist parishes is also unknown.

While several scholars in the United States and Canada have partially reconstructed the institutional history of Slovak religious denominations in these countries, they have barely addressed the devotional aspect of the story. I touched upon Roman Catholic devotional practices in my dissertation, in my study of the Slovaks in Bethlehem, and in my history of St. Agnes-St. John Parish in Philadelphia.⁸⁸ However, comprehensive studies of Slovak Roman and Greek Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist devotional practices largely remain "terra incognita."⁸⁹

The most intriguing question that remains to be answered is: In which direction is the assimilation of Slovak Americans and Canadians going? In other words, does religion matter in the choice of marriage partners, education, work choices, and residence? Do Slovak Catholics, after three or four generations in North America, largely intermarry with fellow Catholics or not? If they do, which Catholics (ethnicity)? If they do not, which groups do they prefer, if any? With whom do Slovak Lutherans and Calvinists intermarry over several generations? Which schools and universities do they attend? Do they live in the same suburbs or not? With whom do they socialize? Is their rate of social mobility the same or not? These are just a few of many questions about the Slovak experience in North America that remain to be answered.⁹⁰ Hopefully, future scholars of immigration and religion in America will try to answer them.

⁸⁸Stolarik, *Immigration and Urbanization*, pp. 74, 83, 97-99; Stolarik, *Growing Up on the South Side*, pp. 52-55; and Stolarik, *Church of St. Agnes-St. John Nepomucene*, pp. 26, 29.

⁸⁹For an excellent overview of Catholic devotional practices in the twentieth century, see *Habits of Devotion: Catholic Religious Practice in Twentieth-Century America*, ed. James M. O'Toole (Ithaca, 2004).

⁹⁰Some of these questions were inspired by Harold J. Abramson's fine study on *Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America* (New York, 1973).