

**The Celebration of the 200th Anniversary of Kleinjetscha
1769 – 1969**

**Presentation by Pfarrer Adam Zenz
Kleinjetscha**

October 25, 1969

Translation by Kathy Plourde with the assistance of Matt Potje and Alfred Schmidt

Dear People of Kleinjetscha,

Let today's Kirchweih sounds, our church bells and the music, both festive and solemn, that sound over our community today, be carried through the ages and reach all people of Kleinjetscha in all directions of the wind and proclaim to them a loving greeting from home.

Greetings to our Kirchweih couples.

Greetings and a heartfelt welcome to all our guests and visitors in this 200th celebratory and memorial year since the founding and existence of our community and

Greetings to all the faithful of Kleinjetscha who are able to witness this day with us.

As the priest, I would like for everyone to see each other again over the course of one year on the home soil of the church and the cemetery of Kleinjetscha and to experience the homeland anew so that for everyone the words of the poet hold true:

“Only he who is true in his deepest soul
Loves the homeland as much as you”

Drop by drop, time goes by in the sea of eternity.

As if in a mirror, I see five to six generations back in the past of the community and as if in an echo, I hear the voices of the stately ranks of these generations, who since the time of settlement stayed and left, how they spoke and what they suffered.

It was the year 1769, that is two hundred times that spring has come over the fields and meadows of this community with all its splendor of flowers and birdsong, the joy and awakening of life.

Two hundred times, it has become summer since the first wheat sheaves were brought in and two hundred times that the blessings of the autumn harvest were stored safely in attics and cupboards, in cellars and in sheds. Since then, however, the cold winter has peacefully blanketed the work-weary departed of your family in the cemetery with its white wings.

Let us reflect on this, let us take these words to heart, for:

The first generation found death here
For the second generation remained need
The third generation had bread.

Therefore, this memorial hour here on the grounds of St. Lukas Church, at the most central and holy point of this town, must also give us latecomers reason to give thanks to our ancestors but also to God's foresight that gave them so much joyous will to live and so much joy in work and vitality that they in his goodness and mercy were able to survive the trials of life and their youth were able to pass these blessings on to the next generation.

Therefore it is now our task, "What you inherited from your fathers, you must now also earn for yourself in order to keep it."

What has given their whole life and life's work its own polish, its own festive sparkle and crowning glory was their deep faith.

Deep reverence before the Creator and the Lord of all nature, from whom their conscientious work ethic, from whom their righteousness, but also from whom their joy in family life, cleanliness and thrift came forth, this earned them the esteem and attention of others. Dependence on united cooperation developed:

1. a solidarity in faith
2. the united voice of the community towards the outside world but also the whole-hearted unity in prayer, song and offerings of a community bound together by fate.

In the year 1771, at Michaelmas on September 29, that is the second year of the settlement, Kleinjetscha had:

93 men 76 farmers and 17 professionals
90 women
97 sons children and youth
87 daughters

60 years later – 377 soulsⁱ

1831 – The community was enlarged by 33 houses

1842 – 1,276 souls of three denominations (1256 Catholic, 15 Orthodox, 5 Jews)

1869 – 1,811 souls of four denominations (1806 Catholic, 5 Orthodox)

The first priest here was Peter Graf who had been a priest already for 18 years in Germany. Presumably, he came here with his family and worked here in God's grace for 32 years.

His first burial on March 9, 1772 was a one year old child, Anna Roos.

The first baptism on August 16, 1772 on St. Rochus [Day] was Johann Jäger.

The first wedding on November 24, 1772 was Paul Schlechi with Anna-Maria Binder

Pastor Peter Graf was a powerful man who knew how to pair strength with love. He had means – he had one field and bought a farmhouse where the rectory stands now.

Since the community was still poor and still without a school or church, he built (with his own means) a schoolhouse with teacher’s living quarters and with a larger room as a house of prayer. To this the community provided 500 bricks, the labour and 30 Kreuzer in cash. He offered monetary help to many and if they were poor and unable to pay, he gave it to them as a gift. He was thus the first large benefactor of the community. He died in Wiesenhaid.

The second priest Hieronymus Büchs (1804-1824) died in Perjamosch.

1811 – On September 17 there was a major fire. 37 houses were fell victim to the fire - among them the house of prayer, school and rectory.

1813 – 44 years after the settlement of the community, the current Baroque style church was built by Patronatsherr von Agram Archbishop of Zagreb, Max Verkovic. The paintings were done by two masters from Budapest who were academics and artists.

The third priest, who was also chaplain in Gertianosch – Lucas Franich (1824-1841) was from Slovenia where he also died.

1833 – The cemetery chapel was built.

The fourth priest, Johan Vino (1842-1866) died in Vienna

All knew what their calling was and were real fathers and benefactors of their community so that we can honor them with the words of the poet:

Praise the brave black monks
Praise the brave robe-bearers,
All beautiful human beings
Pious guardians, faithful caretakers!ⁱⁱ

With this, I close the first hundred years.

Second Century:

Just as mites will weaken a tree but not destroy it, so ideas often appear in the course of history that make the ordinary man curious and inquisitive, whether these ideas are constructive or destructive. The ordinary man can often not tell the difference and look them over. He often lets himself be won over by these ideas and thus they become important. So then can spiritually poor people easily be led astray by ideas to regrettable misdeeds against religion and church and to go against their religion and peopleⁱⁱⁱ.

In the second century, there was bread. Economically, the farmers were well off. They had the time and opportunity to educate themselves.

In 1866, there was a reading club with 25 newspapers in Kleinjetscha. The standard of living began to rise.

In 1883, the so-called Kulturkampf (cultural struggle) took place during the Bismarck regime.

In the Church, the Alt-Katholiken (Old Catholic) movement under Ignatz von Dollinger began to develop.

Father Johannes Heintz (1866-1878), a man of broad vision, wrote a book of over 1300 pages that is unfortunately no longer published. Similarly, the teachers at that time, Karl and Lucas Millig, Georg Janzer, Kaspar Schütt did their utmost to preserve spirituality, culture, heritage, faith and folklore. Great achievements in Kleinjetscha.

1865 – The second great fire in Kleinjetscha - 80 houses with the tall church steeple. Also the bells fell down and melted.

1823 – A hailstorm struck all the fields so that the people had no harvest in this year.

40 years later – drought

1863 – from March until the beginning of October, no dew, no rain. All seeds, grass, bushes and trees withered.

1870-1880 – the flood years, travel itself was almost impossible with the water. In low places, the water rose one to two meters. 70 years later – 1943, again a flood year.

1831 – came the first cholera epidemic. 76 people were taken in 6-7 weeks time. A total of 100 people fell victim to the cholera.

The swampy area after the flood years 1870-1880 was conducive to the spread of malaria. Almost every house had one to two people afflicted with malaria.

It wasn't until the year 1883 that there was an economic upswing.

Then came the war:

I 1914-1918 – 35 men died

II 1939-1945 – 14 men died and 19 were missing

15 families fled, more than 60 people did not return home. These figures hit the community hard. A whole book could be written about it. For today, with this I will close the second century since the settlement

And since new times can be built on the ruins of the old, a clear eye can look back and look ahead.

Let us now look back thankfully to our ancestors, their heads held high for 200 years and collectively thank all the benefactors of the community of Kleinjetscha and pray to the Almighty:

Bless the community of Kleinjetscha and give its faithful the grace and strength to be able to carry the legacy of our ancestors into the future.

Amen.

As said by Father Adam Zenz on October 25, 1969

Edidt Erika Monica Zapfl

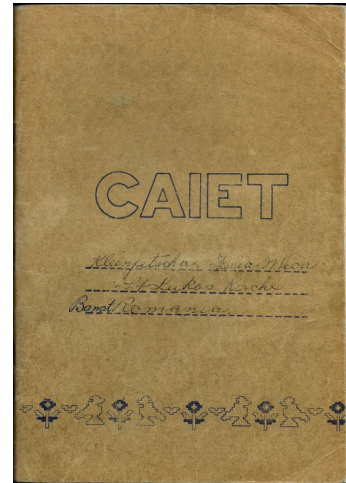
Notes:

The above was written in a school notebook that was given to my grandparents, Barbara & Mathias Hui when they visited Kleinjetscha in June, 1973. Underneath it, my grandmother wrote the names *Edidt Erika Monika Zapfl* (I don't who they are but assume they are relatives or friends of the family). They may have written this down from Father's Zenz's talk or from a printed copy. My grandmother then used the notebook to write other things about Kleinjetscha, their journey to Canada and their life here.

I translated it from German with the assistance of my father, Matt Potje and his neighbor, Alfred Schmidt but this is not a professional translation and no doubt has some errors.

Kathy Plourde

August 27, 2010



ⁱ 377 is the total of the list of inhabitants for 1771

ⁱⁱ Poem by Friedrich Wilhelm Weber

ⁱⁱⁱ This section was difficult, am not sure about the translation