

# Religious Services or the Care of Souls in Reports on Clerics at the Moravian and Silesian Estates Belonging to the Prince of Liechtenstein from the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century

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Received 31 August 2023 | Accepted 6 November 2023 | Published online 18 December 2023

**Abstract.** The reform of the Catholic clergy initiated by the Council of Trent emphasized the importance of the practical exercise of the care of souls (*cura animarum*). The ideal priest should, following the example of Christ—the Good Shepherd, take responsible care of his ‘sheep’—the parishioners. The paper focuses on how the parish clergy performed pastoral care, based on the analysis of reports written on clerics working in the 1760s in ten Moravian and Silesian estates of the Prince of Liechtenstein. These reports prepared by the Prince’s officials mostly contain an evaluation of the performance of the pastoral care by the given cleric. They thus provide an interesting insight into the religious services offered by the lower clergy from the perspective of the owner of the estate, who was also the patron of the local parishes. They show that the Prince of Liechtenstein as the patron, together with his officials, supervised how the clerics provided for the spiritual needs of his subjects and furthermore through the exercise of the right of patronage he helped to provide his subjects with proper pastoral care.

**Keywords:** care of souls, lower clergy, the right of patronage, estates of the Prince of Liechtenstein, Moravia, Silesia, eighteenth century

The first century of the early modern period brought new impulses that influenced the perception of the religious services offered by the clergy. In the Catholic Church, the Council of Trent emphasized the importance of the practical exercise of the care of souls (*cura animarum*) by the clergy when it stated:

“[...] it is by divine precept enjoined on all, to whom the cure of souls is committed, to know their own sheep; to offer sacrifice for them; and, by the preaching of the divine word, by the administration of the sacraments, and by the example of all good works, to feed them; to have a fatherly care

of the poor and of other distressed persons, and to apply themselves to all other pastoral duties [...].”<sup>1</sup>

The ideal image of a priest’s activity as a spiritual administrator was developed in more detail in the ecclesiastical norms issued in the individual dioceses. In the diocese of Olomouc, such an instruction for the parish clergy was issued in 1666 by Bishop Charles of Liechtenstein-Kastelkorn.<sup>2</sup> According to this instruction, the main task of the parish priest was the zealously exercised care of souls, which represented a ‘heavy and formidable burden’ (*grave ac formidabile onus*), since it was connected with the responsibility for the salvation of the souls entrusted to him. The parish priest was the exclusive mediator of contact with God for the inhabitants of the parish. Therefore, he was to permanently reside in his parish and watch over the parishioners entrusted to him and conscientiously provide them with spiritual services. He was to administer the sacraments to his parishioners willingly and as needed in any situation, so that no one would be deprived of eternal salvation due to his negligence. Other duties of the priest included the frequent and proper celebration of Mass and the proclamation of the Word of God through regular preaching and catechesis. Overall, the instruction defines a desirable model of responsible spiritual care for the parishioners, whom the priest was to accompany with his religious services both in everyday life and on the way to eternal salvation, following the example of Christ—the Good Shepherd who cares for his sheep.<sup>3</sup>

The question of how priests actually exercised pastoral care for their parishioners was of interest not only to church authorities, but also to holders of the patronage

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1 “[...] praecepto divino mandatum sit omnibus, quibus animarum cura commissa est, oves suas agnoscere, pro his sacrificium offerre, verbique divini praedicatione, sacramentorum administratione, ac bonorum omnium operum exemplo pascere, pauperum aliarumque miserabilium personarum curam paternam gerere, et in cetera munia pastoralia incumbere [...]” *Canones et decreta sacrosancti oecumenici concilii Tridentini*, 123–24 (sessio XXIII, decretum de reformatione, cap. I). The English translation is taken from: *The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent*, 175. On the ideal of the priest according to the Council of Trent, see e.g.: Jedin, “Das Leitbild des Priesters,” 102–24; Holzem, *Christentum in Deutschland I*, 339–42. From other literature on the early modern development of the clergy, see e.g.: Bergin, “Between Estate and Profession,” 66–85; Schorn-Schütte, “Die Geistlichen vor der Revolution,” 216–44; Schorn-Schütte, “Evangelische Geistlichkeit und katholischer Seelsorgeklerus,” 39–81; Schorn-Schütte, “Priest, Preacher, Pastor,” 1–39; Dürr, “Images of the Priesthood,” 87–107; Pfister, “Pastors and Priests,” 41–65; Julia, “Der Priester,” 282–320; Janse and Pitkin, eds., *The Formation of Clerical and Confessional Identities*.

2 *Monitorium sive instructio brevis*.

3 On the concept of the Good Shepherd, see: Dürr, “...die Macht und Gewalt der Priestern,” 80–86, 91; Dürr, “Images of the Priesthood,” 92–99, 106.

rights of parishes.<sup>4</sup> It is the evaluation of the work done by clerics by their patrons that can provide a new perspective on this topic.<sup>5</sup> This is evidenced, for example, in documents written from the extensive estates of the Princes of Liechtenstein. Members of this noble family, while exercising the right of patronage, also monitored the activities of the clerics on their estates.<sup>6</sup> This monitoring is documented in a comprehensive list of clerics from the Liechtenstein estates, which was compiled in the 1760s.<sup>7</sup>

This list is based on the reports of various people—the officials of individual Liechtenstein estates. Their reports were always sent in a given year to the central administration of the princely domain, and here they were transcribed into the manuscript analyzed. This gave the entire set of reports a unified external form, but retained a certain diversity of content. This diversity reflected the individual approach of their original authors—local princely officials. Nevertheless, the reports are similar in their main features.<sup>8</sup> Most of them contain a brief general assessment of the performance of pastoral care, some of them also provide information on specific clerical duties.<sup>9</sup> Another common feature of the reports is that their writers praised

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4 From the perspective of church authorities (through the written documents they produced), summarized the activities of clerics within parishes Zuber, *Osudy moravské církve I*, 205–48.

5 For more information on the exercise of patronage rights in the Czech Lands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see: Schlenz, *Das Kirchenpatronat in Böhmen*; Stuchlá, *Prachatický vikariát*, 103–123; Stuchlá, “Curés et seigneurie,” 97–115; Pumpr, *Beneficia, záduší a patronát*.

6 On this topic based on normative sources from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Winkelbauer, ed., *Gundaker von Liechtenstein*, 60–88; Hipfinger, ed., *Das Beispiel der Obrigkeit*, 256, 351, 416–17, 428.

7 MZA, G 10, book no. 1140. The manuscript contains reports written in 1764–1768 on the clerics working at twenty-four estates belonging to the Prince of Liechtenstein. Some reports from this manuscript have been analyzed with regard to the issue of clerics' careers, their professional structure, and professional competences. See: Pumpr, “Původ, profesní struktura a kariéry patronátního kléru,” 283–314; Pumpr, “Úloha patrona v procesu profesionalizace nižšího kléru,” 461–98.

8 Due to the considerable size of the entire manuscript, only reports from some of the estates have been analyzed for the purposes of this paper. Specifically, reports from ten Liechtenstein estates have been selected for this investigation: Úsov (Mährisch Aussee), Bučovice (Butschowitz), Ruda nad Moravou (Eisenberg), Lednice (Eisgrub), Kolštejn (Goldenstein) (today Branná), Zábřeh (Hohenstadt), Krnov (Jägerndorf), Uherský Ostroh (Ungarisch Ostra) (in the source: Ostrau), Šternberk (Sternberg) (and its part Karlovec [Karlsberg]), and Moravská Třebová (Mährisch Trübau). All these estates were located in Moravia and Silesia, all belonging to the Olomouc diocese. For more information on the part of the Liechtenstein domain that was located in the Bohemian Crown Lands, see: Merki and Löffler, *Das Haus Liechtenstein in den böhmischen Ländern*.

9 Characteristics of the performance of pastoral care are available in the vast majority of the reports on clerics. For the ten estates under investigation a total of 313 reports on 177 clerics have been preserved in the manuscript analyzed, of which the characteristics of the performance of clerical duties by a priest are available in 243 records on 145 clerics.

the work activities of the vast majority of clerics. Most often they stated that the cleric is ‘zealous’ (*eifrig*), ‘diligent’ (*embsig, fleissig*), or ‘tireless’ (*unermiedet, unverdrossen*) in the performance of his clerical duties.<sup>10</sup> These attributes show that the spiritual administrator was valued mainly for his efficiency and zeal for work.<sup>11</sup> If the patron’s officials praised the clerics for performing their duties properly and ‘accurately’,<sup>12</sup> they appreciated it even more when a cleric worked above and beyond the call of duty.<sup>13</sup> Overall, it is clear that the patron and his officials, as well as the Church, based their evaluations of the clerics on the ideal of an efficient spiritual administrator.

Liechtenstein officials also shared the Church’s demand that clerics administer the sacraments to parishioners according to their needs. That is why they praised clerics who were willing or helpful (*willig*) in providing spiritual services. The willing provision of spiritual services was naturally appreciated by the parishioners themselves.<sup>14</sup> Liechtenstein officials sometimes explicitly stated whether parishioners were satisfied with their clerics. These testimonies suggest that the popularity of the cleric may have been reflected in the greater interest of parishioners in the spiritual services he provided. For example, the parish priest in Brankovice, František Jiříček, was said to be so popular with his parishioners that more people came to him for confession in one year than to the previous parish priest in four years. Also, if parishioners

10 E.g., the report on the local chaplain in Strání Ondřej Nevijel (1764): “[...] ein besonders auferbaulicher frommer Geistlicher, der in der Seel-Sorge sich alle nur erdencklich Mühe giebt [...]” MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 215.

11 The adjectives good (*gut*), exemplary (*exemplarisch*), praiseworthy (*rühmlich, löblich, lobenswertig / lobwürdig*), or the formulation “*führet sich wohl auf*” repeatedly appear in other general characteristics that positively evaluate the activities of a given cleric.

12 “Verrichtet seine Officia accurat, daß er auch hirowegen allerdings zu beloben” (local cooperator in Mladoňov [Bladensdorf] František Dvořák, 1765); “in seinen geistlichen Obliegenheithen giebet sich selbter alle mögliche Mühe solche der Schuldigkeit nach zu vertreten” (parish priest in Podlesí [Krumperk, Grumberg] Johann Hertzog, 1764). MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 32, 70.

13 For example, the chateau chaplain Ignác Pauer often preached in Nové Zámky (Neu Schloss), where he was not explicitly obliged to do so (1764). Similarly, Josef Lang, the later parish priest in Úsov (Aussee), was praised in his previous position in Plumlov (where he was chateau chaplain) as a cleric who was “tireless in pastoral care beyond his duties, zealous, vigilant and diligent in the performance of all clerical functions” (1764) and who zealously and tirelessly provided spiritual administration in the town of Plumlov and five distant villages, all by himself and without remuneration (1765). MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 25, 231, 241.

14 See the report on the cooperator in Úsov (Aussee), Antonín Pschor (1764): “Hat sich durch seinen schönen und denen Tugenden anhängigen Lebens-Wandl, grossen Eyfer in denen geistlichen Verrichtungen, durch seine durch das ganze Jahr alle Sonn- und Feyertag haltende Predigen und ansonsten Iedermann erzeigende geistliche Dienstfertigkeit bey denen Kirch-Künder dermassen Lieb und Werth gemacht, daß alles in dessen Persohn ein besonderes Zutrauen setzet.” MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 20–21.

needed to provide the dying with the sacraments, they turned more often to parish priest Jiříček than to his local chaplain. The parish priest responded willingly to these requests regardless of harsh weather (rain or snow) and, in addition, treated parishioners with compassion and mercy when collecting the stole fees.<sup>15</sup>

These stole fees (*Stolgebühren*), which were collected at some church ceremonies (baptisms, weddings, funerals, etc.), had traditionally been a source of problems. The cause of the problems was the fact that in collecting them there was a connection between the exercise of spiritual administration and the raising of funds for the parish priest's livelihood.<sup>16</sup> The Church instructed clerics to be moderate and modest in collecting these fees, not to make spiritual services conditional on payment, and to provide the poor with free sacraments and a church burial.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, there were other cases similar to the one concerning the actions of the dean in Bučovice, Jiří Schüller. According to the parishioners' complaints, this priest was ruthless and harsh, refusing to perform the burial regardless of their poverty until they paid the required fee.<sup>18</sup> It should be added that parishioners generally accepted the connection of spiritual services provided by the priest with the provision of his material needs, i.e., a system based on the provision of spiritual services in return for material services. Problems arose when the parishioners felt that the rules of this 'mutual trade' were broken, i.e., that the cleric did not care about their salvation and gave priority to his own economic interests.<sup>19</sup>

15 See the 1764 report on parish priest František Jiříček: "[...] hat das Lob von seinen Pfarr Kindern genommen, daß er mehr in diesem einen Jahr Beicht Kinder gehabt, als dessen Vorfahrer in 4 Jahren, dessen wegen wird er auch zu denen Sterbenden mehr alß dessen Local Caplan beruffen und findet sich es mag regen oder schneiben gantz willig ein, nebst diesem ist auch derselbe mit dessen Pfarrkindern in Abnehmung der gebührenden Stolla mitleydig und barmhertzig [...]" MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 42.

16 See: Pumpr, *Beneficia, záduší a patronát*, 220–31; Stuchlá, *Prachatický vikariát*, 69–76; Zuber, *Osudy moravské církve I*, 199–200; Petke, "Oblationen, Stolgebühren und Pfarreinkünfte," 26–58.

17 *Monitorium sive instructio brevis*, 60–61 (article 33).

18 "[...] sehr unbarmhertzig und hart, besonders gegen denen armen Pfarr Kündern unmitleydig, indeme er gar keine Begräbnus umsonsten, gleichwie seine Vorfahrere gethan, verrichten lasset, sondern zur gänzlichen Tillgung der Begräbnus Schuldigkeit die wenig hinterlassene Kleydungen verkauffet werden müssen, ingleichen auch in der grösten Theuerung denen armen und gepresten Pfarr Kindern einiges Körndl in leydentlichen Preiß nicht zulassen, viel weniger vorleihen wollen, in übrigen ist diese Beschwernuß wieder demselben von seinen unterhabenden Pfarr Kindern hervorgekommen, das selbter durch dieß gantze Jahr, so er bereits allda Dechand ist, weder eine Kinder Lehr, vielweniger eine Predig gemacht [...]" MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 39–40 (1764).

19 See: Beck, "Der Pfarrer und das Dorf," 107–43, 283–87. Beck's observation that there was a direct relationship between the religious acts of the priest, which were supposed to ensure the salvation of the individual and the community, and the material obligations of the parishioners

Liechtenstein officials thus recorded in their reports not only the positive evaluations of the cleric's activities by the parishioners<sup>20</sup> but also (albeit isolated) cases of their dissatisfaction.<sup>21</sup> These records show that Liechtenstein officials took into account the parishioners' references when assessing the cleric's professional activities. Parishioners were thus involved in controlling the activities of the priests to whose supervision and spiritual administration they were to be subject.<sup>22</sup> They were therefore not just passive objects of the priest's pastoral care. They could communicate their potential dissatisfaction with the cleric's pastoral care to the officials of the patron. And it was the patron who, through the right of presentation to the parish benefices, decided on the career of the cleric.<sup>23</sup> Negative references from parishioners could ultimately affect a cleric's career prospects. In extreme situations, parishioners could write a complaint against their parish priest and thus initiate a process that in some cases led to the priest's departure from the parish.<sup>24</sup>

Critical reports also indicate what was perceived as the opposite to the ideal image of a spiritual administrator. For example, the chamber burgrave of Krnov (Jägerndorf) described the parish priest in Równe (Rovné, Roben), Antonín Červenka, as a "very weak" priest and also "a lukewarm spiritual administrator whose pastime is the economy and wine houses", adding that this parish priest left

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to the parish priest, was used in the Czech environment by Pavel Himl when he examined relations between rural subjects and their spiritual administrators on the South Bohemian estate of Český Krumlov (Krumau). See: Himl, *Die 'armben Leüte' und die Macht*, 297–333.

- 20 E.g., "Embsig in seinen Verrichtungen, daß dessen Pfarr Kinder mit ihme wohl zufrieden" (parish priest in Dubicko Jeremias Franck, 1765); "Die Kirchkinder geben demselben in der Seelsorge sehr gutes Lob" (local chaplain in Domašov [Domstadt] Augustin Němec, 1764). MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 138, 329.
- 21 It was not only the aforementioned dean in Bučovice who provoked complaints from his parishioners. The parishioners were also dissatisfied with the parish priest in Široká Niva (Breithenau) Christian Brückner, whom the report from 1765 evaluates as follows: "ein mather und stichlender Prediger, mit welchen die Kirch-Kündern nicht wohl zufrieden seynd". MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 151, 158.
- 22 This situation was not specific to the Liechtenstein estates. A similar practice is documented for the South Bohemian estates of the Prince of Schwarzenberg. According to a report from 1696, officials on the Schwarzenberg estate of Hluboká (Frauenberg) asked the village mayors (*Dorfrichter*) whether parish priests were celebrating Mass properly, holding sermons and catechesis, and whether they were charging excessive stole fees. Podlaha, *Dějiny arcidiecése pražské*, 452.
- 23 It was the decision-making on the career advancement of clerics that gave rise to the list analyzed here. It collected data on the professional qualities and activities of clerics so that the patron could decide based on this information who would be appointed to hold parish benefices.
- 24 See: Pumpr, *Beneficia, záduší a patronát*, 272–78.

the pastoral duties to his cooperator.<sup>25</sup> This characteristic is the opposite of the ideal model of a priest's activity, who was to be as active as possible in the care of souls. The repeatedly used adjective 'weak' points to the absence of professional skills that were necessary for the effective exercise of spiritual administration and that could not be replaced by anything else. This fact is recounted by a critical remark about the parish priest in Široká Niva (Breithenau), Christian Brückner: "Although he wants to perform his clerical functions with great benefit for souls, especially in matters of faith, he is too weak and also does not know how to capture the minds [of the faithful]." Nor did the priest impress his listeners with mocking sermons.<sup>26</sup> This brings us to the question of assessing the specific clerical duties that made up the care of souls.

The spectrum of tasks for the spiritual administrator were characterized by Liechtenstein officials as a trinity of activities: preaching, catechesis, and administering the sacraments. Through the first two activities the cleric was to fulfill one of his basic duties, namely the proclamation of the Word of God. In the context of preaching and catechizing, the zeal, diligence, and tirelessness of clerics are again often praised. The quality of the performance of these activities is rated mostly positively (most often using the general term 'good'). Liechtenstein officials evaluated a minority of preachers with superlatives<sup>27</sup> and only rarely spoke about the average to below-average preaching performance of specific clerics.<sup>28</sup>

Another fact evaluated was the frequency of preaching and catechesis. According to the regulations of the Church, priests were to perform these activities regularly on Sundays and feast days.<sup>29</sup> The commendatory reports of Liechtenstein officials usually

25 "[...] derselbe ein sehr schwaches Subjectum und lauer Seelsorger, sein Zeith Vertreib ist die Würtschafft und Wein Häuser, die geistliche Schuldigkeiten überlasset er seinem Cooperatori alleine zur Sorge." MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 159 (1765).

26 "Will zwar seine geistliche Functiones mit großen Seelen Nutzen, sonderlich in Glaubens Sachen, verrichten, ist aber zu schwach und hat auch keinen Modum die Gemüther einzunehmen" (1764); "ein mather und stichlender Prediger, mit welchen die Kirch-Kündern nicht wohl zufrieden seynd" (1765). MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 151, 158.

27 Such preachers are called "excellent", "berühmt", "renomirt", "stattlich", "vortreflich", "vornehm", or "besonders gut". See e.g.: the report on the cooperator in Bučovice Joseph Blumenwitz (1764): "sowohl in der deutsch- alß auch böhmischen Zunge vortrefflicher Prediger, wessen seinen Predigen das Volckh ohnerhörth gerne beywohnet, wird auch hin und wieder zu predigen invitiret". MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 41.

28 "In predigen kein besonderes Subjectum"; "ein mather und stichlender Prediger, mit welchen die Kirch-Kündern nicht wohl zufrieden seynd"; "der schlechteste Prediger und Seelsorger ob denen fürstl. cammer Güttern." MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 158, 336.

29 *Monitorium sive instructio brevis*, 47–48, 50 (articles 15, 18); Zuber, *Osudy moravské církve I*, 207–16; Stuchlá, "Křesťanská cvičení v některých farnostech prachaticko-netolického vikariátu," 251–66; Stuchlá, *Prachatický vikariát*, 185–94.

only state in general terms that the cleric does these activities ‘frequently’.<sup>30</sup> In the case of the parish priest in Brankovice, František Jiříček, the local official also praised his helpfulness: the priest often held catecheses in the homes of parishioners so that they could understand the truths of the faith as easily as possible.<sup>31</sup> For some clerics, the report writers commented that they could preach more often.<sup>32</sup> Only rarely is the cleric’s complete inaction in the above areas criticized. The parish priest in Rovné (Roben), Antonín Červenka, according to a Liechtenstein official, had not preached or held catechesis in the eight and a half years he had been in his parish. The reason may have been his limited language skills: although the parish was German, the priest knew the Czech language better.<sup>33</sup> The opposite problem was encountered in the case of Joannes Klötzer, the cooperator in Hluk, who spoke more German than Czech, which was the language of inhabitants in the local parish. The consequence was that people slept more than they listened during his preaching. Therefore, the official recommended that another cleric, who could speak Czech better, be appointed in his place.<sup>34</sup>

However, similar cases in which the language skills of a cleric limited his work in the care of souls were exceptional. The Prince of Liechtenstein and his officials, as well as church authorities, realized that knowledge of the parishioners’ language

30 In the case of the cooperator in Úsov (Aussee), Antonín Pschor, did the official specifically point out that he preaches all year round every Sunday and feast day. MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 20 (1764).

31 “Catechisiret auch öfters in denen Häußern, um daß das Volckh es desto leichter begreifen möge.” MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 42 (1764).

32 See: the report on the dean in Krnov (Jägerndorf) Joseph Saliger (1765): “berühmter Prediger und wäre zu wünschen, daß sich derselbe auch ausser der Fasten Zeit hören lassete”. The report on the parish priest in Hluk František Antonín Podstatský of Prusinovice (1764): “in seiner geistlichen Function fleissig, doch predigt er einmahl und scheint hierwegen die öftere Unpäßlichkeit zum Vorwand zu haben”. The report on the parish priest in Kunovice Jan Merten (1764): “in der Seel-Sorg eyfrig, doch wurde guth geschehen, wann er zum Trost seiner Kirchen Kündern dann und wann auch selbsten predigen möchte”. (In this case there was a correction, as the report of 1765 indicates: “ein guter Seel Sorger, der nun mehro an Predigs statt alle Sonn und Feyertäge fleißig catechisiret”.) MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 155, 208, 210, 218–19.

33 MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 153–54 (1764). The report about the dean in Bučovice from 1764 has a similar sound (“in übrigen ist diese Beschwernuß wieder demselben von seinen unterhabenden Pfarr Kindern hervorgekommen, das selbter durch dieß gantze Jahr, so er bereits allda Dechand ist, weder eine Kinder Lehr, vielweniger eine Predig gemacht”). In this case, however, the reason was not ignorance of the language of the parishioners (the priest knew both Czech and German). Moreover, according to the report of the following year, the priest corrected his inaction (“derselbe nun sich öfters in dieser verwichener Jahrs Zeith mit deßßen gutt gemachten Predigen hat hören laßßen”). MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 39–40, 44.

34 MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 210 (1764). However, already a year later, the official reminded that the cooperator was trying to improve his Czech: “giebet sich Mühe die böhmische Sprach beßßer zu erlernen”. MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 220 (1765).

was a prerequisite for effective pastoral care. Therefore, when deciding who would be granted a parish benefice, the patron with his officials made sure that the cleric knew the language of the parishioners.<sup>35</sup> As a result, the language skills of the clerics on the Liechtenstein estates almost always corresponded to the language of the parish inhabitants.<sup>36</sup> Exceptional cases of language incompatibility between a cleric and his parish were solved e.g., through the joint exercise of spiritual administration by several clerics whose language skills complemented each other. In other cases, the clerics concerned were relocated to areas more in line with their mother tongue, and some individuals sought to improve their language skills.<sup>37</sup>

Relatively rarely did Liechtenstein officials record the question of how clerics administer the sacraments. Again, they appreciated the diligence and zeal, i.e., the work commitment of the cleric. Of the particular sacraments, they noticed only two: the Eucharist (i.e., the celebration of Mass) and the Extreme Unction (most often referred to as the “provision of the sick”—“Versorgung/Versehung deren Krancken”).

The celebration of Mass was perceived by the patron’s officials as the most elementary and simplest activity, which even the least capable cleric should master.<sup>38</sup> Thus, in the aforementioned report criticizing the inactivity of parish priest

35 In 1765, the chamber burgrave of Krnov (Jägerndorf) pointed out to the Prince that the local cooperator in Lichnov (Lichten), Franz Opitz, should be rewarded for his merits with ‘some German benefice’ (Opitz spoke only German). MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 157. The fact that the Prince of Liechtenstein and his officials paid adequate attention to the language issue in the context of ecclesiastical administration is also evidenced by other information recorded in the source analyzed. Reports on individual clerics contained therein record their language skills, and the manuscript also records the language situation in the parishes under the Prince’s right of patronage. See: MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 1–7.

36 See: Pumpr, “Úloha patrona v procesu profesionalizace nižšího kléru,” 486 (for seven North Moravian and Silesian estates of the Prince of Liechtenstein). An analogous situation prevailed in the entire Olomouc diocese. Pumpr, *Nižší kléru na Moravě v 18. století*, 102–5, 174–76. On the language question in the context of ecclesiastical administration, see further: Zuber, *Osudy moravské církve II*, 113–18; Stuchlá, *Prachatický vikariát*, 39–43; Ryantová, “Jazyková otázka v církevní správě,” 135–54; Martínková, “Profesní migrace duchovenstva,” 90–94.

37 More on this with references to specific cases, Pumpr, “Úloha patrona v procesu profesionalizace nižšího kléru,” 488.

38 If a cleric was unable to celebrate Mass, it was evidence of his poor health and consequent inability to perform his clerical duties. See the report on the parish priest in Moravský Beroun (Bärn) Franz Traum (1767): “[...] hat dermahlen einen Administratorem, ist dergestalten schon miserabl, das er weder die heil. Meßß zuleßen imstand seye und ist stetts bethliegerig.” MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 336. The parish priest in Nivnice, Ferdinand Egide, was also unable to fulfill his clerical duties to the extent that even celebrating Mass was a problem for him. In this case, the cause was the parish priest’s poor health, apparently caused by excessive alcohol consumption. See: the 1764 report: “[...] hat er vielleicht durch das angewohnte unmässige Trüncken sich dermassen hingerichtet, daß er schon durch etwelche Jahre nicht das mindeste mehr zu verrichten imstande ist. Von dem

Červenka, the writer stated that this priest had shown ‘poor diligence and usefulness’ in the spiritual administration that was his responsibility and would have been better suited for the role of a cleric who would only celebrate Mass (i.e., not for the function of a parish priest).<sup>39</sup> From the patron’s point of view, it was not enough that the parish priest was able to regularly celebrate Mass for his parishioners; he had to have the practical professional competencies that were necessary to exercise quality pastoral care for his patron’s subjects. He was to direct their religious life by means of preaching and catechesis, and to provide them, as necessary, with all the spiritual services which were to ensure their earthly success and ultimately their post-mortem salvation. By these services, the priest accompanied the parishioners in their everyday concerns as well as in critical life situations. These critical situations are recalled in the positive appreciation of those clerics who have shown a compassionate and merciful attitude towards their parishioners, especially those in need, i.e., the poor and the sick.<sup>40</sup> It was grave illness or the end of earthly life that represented the most extreme situation in which the priest was to be available to each of his parishioners in order to help the sick or dying person to step into eternity through the sacraments. Therefore, the clerics who were appreciated were those who willingly responded when called to the sick and, in accordance with the orders of the Church, tried to ensure that their parishioners did not die without the sacraments.<sup>41</sup>

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übermässigen Trincken lasset zwar gedachter Pfarrer in etwas ab, doch hat es das Ansehen nicht als ob er hierdurch restituiret, gefolgsam von dem miserablen Zustand des Zittern an denen Händen, weswegen er weder zu communiciren fähig ist, befreyet zu werden sich Hoffnung machen könnte, immassen es mit ihme von Tag zu Tag immer ärger wird, daß er genung mit harter Mühe das Heyl. Meeß-Opfer zu verrichten sich vermögend befünde und gleich wie dann hiraus natürlicher Weiß erfolgen muß, daß dem allda Zahl Reichen Kirchen-Kindern das schuldigste genügen schwehrlich oder gar nicht geleistet werden.” MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 212.

39 “[...] hat selbter auf unverdiente Recommendation des verstorbenen Herrn v. Glomner vor 8 ½ Jahren das daige [!] Roobner pur deutsche und mit dem Lutheranern vermischte Beneficium erhalten, alwo er bies anhero noch keine Christliche Lehr gehalten, viel weniger selbsten geprediget hat, mithin einen schlechten Fleiß und Nutzen in seiner obliegenden Seelsorg erwiesen, taugete besser für einen Meeß-Pater.” MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 153–54.

40 See the report on the second chaplain in Krnov (Jägerndorf) Christoph Niessner (1765): “[...] ein guter Prediger und sehr eyfriger Seelsorger, besucht öfters die Krancken, tröstet die Betriebten und hieffft nach Möglichkeit denen Nothleydenden und bestrebet sich nach Cräften die Laster auszurotten, das Gute zu unterstützen und folgsam die Ehre Gottes zu vermehren [...]” MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, p. 155.

41 E.g.: “eyffrig- und embsiger Versorger dern Krancken” (cooperator in Bučovice Joseph Blumenwitz, 1764); “in Beruffung zu die Krancken willig und unverdroßßen” (cooperator in Zábřeh (Hohenstadt) Josef Křížan, 1764); “in Versehung dern Krancken mühesam und unverdroßßen” (cooperator in Postřelmov, Ignác Christ, 1764); “ohnermiedet in Besuch und Tröstung dern Krancken” (second chaplain in Krnov (Jägerndorf) Christoph Niessner, 1764). MZA, G 10, book no. 1140, pp. 41, 129, 130, 146.

Again, the ideal of the active spiritual administrator who conscientiously cares for the salvation of the souls entrusted to him, an ideal defined by the post-Trent Church, appears here. The reports analyzed show that this ideal was shared by the Prince of Liechtenstein and his officials, as well as by the parishioners themselves – the princely subjects. The Prince, as the holder of the right of patronage over the parishes on his estates, exerted effective pressure on clerics to exercise the care of souls in accordance with this ideal: through his officials, he gathered data on the life and work of clerics and then used this information when deciding who would be granted a vacant parish benefice. The cleric seeking career advancement (i.e., seeking to obtain a benefice) was thus dependent on how the patron (his officials) evaluated his previous professional activity. In this way, the Prince of Liechtenstein, through the exercise of the right of patronage, together with his officials helped to provide his subjects with proper pastoral care and, in addition, contributed to the implementation of the post-Trent reform of the clergy, i.e., to the gradual transformation of the clerical estate into the clerical profession.<sup>42</sup>

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MZA. Moravský zemský archiv v Brně [Moravian Provincial Archives in Brno].

G 10 Sbíрка rukopisů Moravského zemského archivu [Collection of manuscripts at the Moravian Provincial Archives].

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42 See: Pumpr, “Úloha patrona v procesu profesionalizace nižšího kléru,” 461–98; Pumpr, *Nižší klérus na Moravě v 18. století*. As far as the concept of the ‘professionalization of the clergy’ is concerned, it should be emphasized that in the period under investigation the formation of a modern clerical profession was not yet a completed process, rather it was ‘an early modern »path toward a profession«’ (Luise Schorn-Schütte). On this concept (and its critical reflection), see: Schorn-Schütte, “Die Geistlichen vor der Revolution,” 216–44; Schorn-Schütte, “Evangelische Geistlichkeit und katholischer Seelsorgeklerus,” 66, 80; Schorn-Schütte, “Priest, Preacher, Pastor,” 36; Bergin, “Between Estate and Profession,” 66–85; Pfister, “Pastors and Priests,” 41–65; Comerford, “The Care of Souls is a Very Grave Burden for [the Pastor],” 349–68; De Boer, “Professionalization and Clerical Identity,” 369–77.

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