

Regular Nursing

The 10th century represents the beginnings of religious nursing. They were not based on the philosophy of illness, but on service to God. Members of nursing orders wanted to help those in need and thus show their love for God. . In 817, **Pope Gregory the Great ordered the monasteries to take care of the poor**, disabled and sick - this led to the development of orders and congregations with a nursing focus.

Members of orders took a vow of voluntary poverty (and other vows). They did not keep property and money, they voluntarily gave everything to the order. Rich nobles often became members of orders (eg the order of St. Lazarus). **Nursing orders founded the first hospitals** from the very beginning of their activity . These were established mainly at monasteries. Hospitals were small, so only a few beds could be placed here. Therefore, they cannot be compared with hospitals as we know them from today.

Types of Orders

Nursing orders can be divided as follows:

1. **Ecclesiastical** – religious sisters live in a monastery, they accept religious life
2. **Chivalry** – were created in times of wars; the members are knights and their philosophy is to go into battle: "we kill the enemy but treat the wounded"
3. **Secular** – members subscribe to a philosophy based on helping one's fellow man; they live a civilian life

Orders that participated in the treatment of the sick

1. Order of St. Lazar - "Military and Hospital Order of the Knights of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem"
2. Johannites – Knights of St. John of Jerusalem
3. Crusaders with a red star
4. Clares
5. Order of Merciful Friars
6. Elizabethans – Order of St. Elizabeth of Thuringia
7. Boromejky - Order of St. Karel Borromeo
8. Congregation of the Gray Sisters III. Order of St. Francis
9. Deaconesses
10. Voršilky
11. Vincentians – Sisters of Mercy of St. Vincent of Paula

Military and Hospital Order of the Knights of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem

Order of St. Lazar of Jerusalem is one of the **oldest** charitable associations with a relatively long tradition. There are several dates of origin of the order.

On July 15, 1099, the order was conquered by Crusader soldiers from Jerusalem. They found a whole range of medical facilities here. It is proven that the hospital of St. Lazarus in front of the inner walls of the city, the hospital at the church and monastery of Maria de Latina, founded by the Italian merchant and banker Irinus Gozzoni from Amalfi, and the women's hospital of St. Mary Magdalene. The hospital and church of the Virgin Mary of Latinská was rebuilt in 1048 and entrusted to the monks of St. Benedict. From this hospital arose the seat of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. The order was officially established in 1113 by Pope Pascal II. (another source states the year 1115). The head of the hospital was Father Gérard, who is considered the founder of the order.

St. Hospital Lazarus of Jerusalem served the lepers without distinction. There were also many leprous warriors among the knights.

The increase in the number of members of the order and the obligation to defend the often unsecured infirmaries from enemy raids led to a certain militarization of the order, which eventually became a **martial and knightly** order . The knights did not focus only on the protection of the leprosaria, but fought in various wars and battles together with the Templars and other orders (often even against each other, without the knights knowing).

The order came to the Czech lands in the 12th century, probably during the reign of Vladislav II. (1140–1172). The first center of the order was in Prague, and the first hospital with a chapel was built outside the city walls of **Na Zderaz** at the end of the 12th century. Kings Wenceslas II and John of Luxembourg gave the hospital many privileges, which were also confirmed by Charles IV. Disaster for the hospital of St. Lazar, but also for the entire order, was marked by the period of **the Hussite wars** . Wars interrupted the activity of the order. The second center where the order operated was **Kutná Hora**. In 1324, a hospital with the church of St. Lazarus. It existed until 1833 and was then destroyed by the Hussites. The order also operated in other places of the state. At the beginning of the 18th century, Count František Antonín Spork worked on a plan to build a church and hospital dedicated to St. Lazarus, but this plan was never implemented.

There are documented reports of leprosariums in our territory, which are connected with the activities of other church orders.

Johannites - knightly order and hospital order of St. John of Jerusalem

The Knights of St. John of Jerusalem are among the oldest orders. The Johannite order developed from an older brotherhood of Italian merchants from Amalfi, who founded around 1040 in Jerusalem near the church of St. John the Baptist hospital for the treatment of pilgrims going to the Holy Sepulcher. At the time of the conquest of Jerusalem, this nursing home provided care to wounded soldiers, civilians and residents of Jerusalem.

The founder of the order is Blessed Brother **Pierre Gérard de Martique**. The order was approved by a papal bull in 1113, in which the confraternity of the hospital is approved as an order. The Order was taken under his protection by the Pope, which was a significant privilege. During the time of the crusades, other hospitals were founded and managed by the order. The order received various donations from patrons, including land, and thus was sufficiently financially secure.

Order objectives

- *Hospital care* - service to the poor, was considered an honorable service to Christ
- *Defense of the faith* - knightly and military functions - protection and accompaniment of pilgrims in defensive battles with Muslims

The high quality of care was widely known. There are documents of travelers of the time who encountered the order's facilities and were dazzled by the cleanliness of the hospital environment and the cleanliness of the linen, which was not usual at the time. The order employed Christian, Muslim and Jewish doctors. Their cooperation was beneficial. Doctors shared their experience and proven treatment methods with each other.

The food served on silver trays and plates was of a high standard.

The order's arrival in **Malta** dates back to 1530, when this territory was donated to the order by Emperor Charles V. To the hospitals that were on the island before the arrival of the order, others were added - hospitals for women , sailors , for the isolation of infectious diseases , and a school of anatomy was also established . Hospitals were treated in a group system. The records show that the groups of patients for one nurse were of different sizes. Somewhere it was 6-8 patients, in another hospital 25-28 patients. Part of the care was also the provision of spiritual care.

The order came to Bohemia around 1158. In some areas, Johannite hospitals were the only facilities that provided care to the needy, including spiritual support. In addition to Prague, where he settled shortly after his arrival, the order was also active in Manětín, Kadan, Ploskovice, Kladsk and Strakonice.

Red Star Crusaders

The Order of the Red Star Crusaders evolved from a lay **hospital fraternity** founded by **St. Agnes** of Bohemia , patroness of Czech nursing, at the same time as the order of the Poor Clares in the first half of the 13th century. In 1233, Agnes founded a hospital brotherhood based on the ideals of the poverty of St. Francis of Assisi, which was recognized by the Pope as an independent nursing religious order. Pope Gregory IX, by bull from 1237, took the brotherhood under the protection of the Holy See. He confirmed his estates, exempted the order from paying papal tithes and allowed the transfer of members of the order only to stricter orders.

Anežka Přemyslovna donated part of her property and estates to the Order. Since the establishment of the order, the main mission of the Crusaders has been the care of the poor and sick.

By a document from 1252, Prague bishop Mikuláš added a **distinguishing sign** to the order - he added a red star to the red cross on a black cloak that had been used until now . Since then, the order has been called the Red Star Crusaders.

Later they were promoted to **the order of chivalry** , as more and more nobles joined it, renouncing all their property for the benefit of the poor. Many of them, as non-priest brothers, devoted themselves to charitable work.

The service to the poor was described by the cruiser Ji Pospíchal, who was restoring the hospital destroyed by the Thirty Years' War in the 17th century: ".....hospitality is performed both on poor households and outside the order house. All receive half a pound of meat and vegetables daily for their ordinary diet... Even the poor are not denied if they need clothing. There used to be only one large hall, in which there were many chambers, now the house is divided into halls, so that four people can live together. Besides the poor, there are a certain number of pupils to sing to the choir, part of the alms..."

In 1832, the order founded a **children's nursery** in Karlín in Prague , the first of its kind in Bohemia.

Order of the Brothers of Mercy

The Hospitaller Order of the Brothers of Mercy originates from **Spain** . The founder was **Jan z Boha** , real name Jan Ciudad. He was born on March 8, 1495 in Portugal to poor parents. He has lived in Spain since he was a child, because as an eight-year-old boy he disappeared from his parents' house for reasons that have not yet been explained. He was discovered 300 kilometers from home. He stayed in Spain until he was 37 years old. He worked here as a goatherd, soldier and bookseller. His life was full of adventure and exhaustion.

At the age of 40, John of God is already quite tired of his bitter and bitter journey in life, and therefore he turns to God more and more. After returning to Granada, Spain, he heard the sermon of St. John of Avila, which shakes him deeply. Unfortunately, his loved ones cannot explain such a radical change in his behavior and take him to the Royal Hospital. In this environment filled with callousness and misery, John of God will feel the urge to religious life.

With his personality, which had a charismatic effect on those around him, Jan z Boh was able to win over those around him for his ideas. That is why in 1538(9) he starts building a shelter for the homeless in Granada and pays attention to their needs.

Jan was supported by many benefactors, so he could afford his own house and build an asylum in it for the sick and needy.

He divided the sick according to their illness and needs. He noticed the mentally ill and their experiences. He strictly observed hygienic conditions.

John of God is considered a **pioneer of modern nursing care** , because he understood care in a comprehensive way - he cared for the whole person.

The main mission of the order is to **reduce human suffering** by building health and social facilities in which people are provided with comprehensive care. The education of the order's brothers, who were often also doctors or trained nurses, was also aimed at caring for the sick.

The motto of the Order of the Brothers of Mercy was: **"Per corpus ad animam" = Body to soul**. It describes the order's focus on healthcare, charitable activities and missions.

In 1605, the order came to the Czech lands. He brings the order of princes from Liechtenstein to his estate in Valtice in southern Moravia. In 1620, the order came to Prague to the church of Simon and Judy, then settled in Nové Město nad Metují, Prostějov and Brno (here is the head office of the order). The founder of the convent in Brno is Count Leopold of Dietrichštejn, the owner of several Moravian estates, some of which were located very close to Brno. Count Leopold wished to introduce the brothers to the provincial capital, and therefore bought the so-called **Winkler-Berg House** in today's Vídeňská Street, formerly Wenceslas Street, and founded the foundation on 15 November 1747.

On May 3, 1749, the foundation stone of the new convent was laid, as significant structural modifications had to be made.

In the second half of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, the Brno convent with the hospital experienced a significant period of its prosperity. The upper floor of the hospital was completed, where 11 rooms for the sick were created. The turn of both centuries was marked by the Napoleonic Wars, and after the Battle of Slavkov in 1805, the order's hospital was filled with wounded Frenchmen. The war had a negative impact on the hospital in terms of economy as well, which loosened the discipline of the order's brothers.

Order of St. Elizabeth

The patroness of the order is St. Alžběta Duryňská , cousin of Anežka Přemyslovna. At the end of the 13th century, among the members of the tertiary order of St. Francis awakens a desire for a more perfect Christian life. The founder of the Elizabethan order is **Apolonie Radermacherová** (1571-1626) from Aachen. Its goal was to elevate the care of the sick through the service of religious sisters. Together with several girls, she reformed the hospital, next to which stood the church of St. Elizabeth. In 1627 in Cologne, this new community was legally incorporated into the Franciscan order and confirmed as an order in 1631.

In 1719, at the invitation of Countess Karolina Schönkirchová, the first two Elizabethan religious sisters - SM Angelina and SM Johana (she later founded monasteries in Wroclaw and Kadan) came from Austria to Prague. With the support of Prague Archbishop Ferdinand Count Kühnburg and with the permission of Emperor Charles VI. a house with a chapel and a garden at Na Slupi in Prague was bought from the Servites. **A hospital** was established here, where only women were treated. Financial problems were apparent right from the start of the hospital's operation. Female patients were not allowed to be treated for a fee, as religious rules forbade it. Countess Markéta Valdštejnová helped to solve the situation, who decided to dedicate her fortune to the Elizabethan women. The new hospital was one of the most modern in the country. Unlike other hospitals of the time, women were treated by doctors. Around 1840, the hospital had a capacity of 70 beds and 44 nuns cared for the sick. In 1914-1918, the hospital served as an infirmary for soldiers.

Maids, factory workers or wives of workers from Prague factories came to the Alžbětinek hospital. All diseases were treated here - from pneumonia to fractures to rheumatism. Abortions were no exception.

Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy of St. Karel Borromeo

The initiative to found the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy of St. Karel Borromeo was given by the young lawyer Josef Chauvenel in the French city of Nancy. There were many poor and impoverished people here after the Thirty Years' War. He saw up close the horror and misery of people infected with the plague, and died of the disease himself at the age of 31.

His father Emanuel fulfilled the wishes of his dying son by founding the "**House of Mercy**" (18 June 1652). The first five sisters got down to hard work. On 21 May 1663, they receive approval from the bishop of Toula. According to the activities of the sisters, people soon began to call them "mercy" sisters. The name of St. They added Charles Borromeo after the statues of this saint that decorated the facade and courtyard of the house where the sisters lived.

The impetus for bringing the Congregation to Prague was given by the Prague University professor Alois Petr Klár. His intention was to care for the blind. He wanted to entrust his work to the Sisters of Mercy of St. Karel Borromeo. After various difficult negotiations, the motherhouse in Nancy agreed to admit Czech girls to its novitiate, who were to become founding members of the Congregation in Bohemia.

In 1837, the first **four Czech sisters** came from Nancy to Prague, accompanied by two French sisters . They establish a small community in the institution for the blind in Klárov. A French sister, Mother Terezia Helvigová, later became the first Superior General in Bohemia. They bought two small houses under the Strahov garden, which laid the foundation for the mother house with the church of St. Karl and the hospital.

The activities of the sisters grew. In 1945, they were already active in 120 places, mostly in hospitals, schools and various social institutions.

In 1939, the Congregation carried out its plan - it established its own **nursing school** at the Pod Petřínem hospital. It was opened in September 1939 and the headmistress SM Klovská stood at the head of the school. The school was located on the 2nd floor of the monastery together with the boarding school. During the 10 years of the school's existence, 134 female students graduated here, of which 88 were religious and 46 were civilian. In 1949, the school was abolished. During World War II, a number of sisters were involved in helping the resistance. Some were also connected with the guerrilla movement.

Links

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- History of Nursing/Antiquity
- History of Nursing/Middle Ages
 - Historical personalities in nursing from the Middle Ages
 - Care of the sick during medieval epidemics
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