



# The Prague Christian Fellowship POST

Monthly Newsletter of the Sbor Křesťanské společnosti PCF

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## Orval Hobart Mowrer (1907–1993)

A few years ago, by sheer coincidence, I “discovered” the novels of Lloyd C. Douglas. Since the early 1930’s, I had, of course, been accustomed to seeing their titles—sometimes two or three at a time—on the various bestseller lists. But, as a professional psychologist, I had dismissed them as the sentimental rubbish which the critics were all too willing to assure you they were. However, sometime in 1954, one of our then teen-age daughters remarked to me one day that she was reading a book which she thought I too would find interesting. It was, she said, by a man named Douglas and was entitled *Magnificent Obsession*; and in the passage which had particularly inspired her comment, someone was saying that he had just realized that, whatever else the Bible might or might not be, it is a superb handbook on human relations. Having grown up in—and long since left—a church which took a completely other-worldly view of religion, I was indeed intrigued by this notion and soon started reading the book myself.

This was at a time when, for both scientific and personal reasons, I was thoroughly disillusioned with psychoanalysis and was desperately looking for something to take its place. Here, it seemed, was a possible lead. As an indication of the impact *Magnificent Obsession* had on me, I may say that from it I went on, during the next year or so, to read all of Douglas’ other novels (some ten of them), his autobiography, a collection of sermons, four small “theological” books (published while he was still a Congregational minister), and *The Shape of Sunday*, by his daughters, Virginia and Betty. As a psychologist and as a person, I am

much impressed by the interpersonal philosophy of Lloyd Douglas as it is developed in his various writings. But here I want to call attention to a particularly penetrating insight—the very heart of his approach—which I have recently been helped to understand in a new and deeper way.

### I.

There are millions of persons now living who will recall the scene, about midway through *Magnificent Obsession*, in which young Dr. Wayne Hudson, “on the edge of failure and in deep depression” following the death of his wife, goes to a monument works to pick out a marker for her grave and there encounters the eccentric but strangely talented sculptor, Clive Randolph. Sensing the doctor’s state of mind, Randolph engages him in conversation and gradually, as their friendship develops, imparts to him a “secret” which can, he says, transform one’s life.

At no place in the novel is the theory fully and explicitly stated; but when pieced together, it runs something like this. Most of us live depleted existences: weak, zestless, apprehensive, pessimistic, “neurotic.” And the reason is that when we perform a good deed, we advertise it, display it—and thus collect and enjoy the credit then and there. But when we do something cheap and mean, we carefully hide and deny it (if we can), with the result that the “credit” for acts of this kind remains with us and “accumulates.” A person who follows such a life style is chronically bankrupt in the moral and spiritual sense. If, at any given moment, his life were “required of him,” he would be found wanting, could not pay out, settle up; for his “net worth” is less than nothing, negative. Small wonder, then, that a per-

son of this kind has no confidence or zest and lacks creativity. He is too busy pretending, too “insecure,” too afraid of being “found out.”

So what is the alternative, the remedy for a person who has already fallen into, or wishes to avoid, such a miserable and meaningless existence? It is, quite simply, to reverse this whole strategy: admit and thus divest oneself of one’s weaknesses, errors, follies, and hide one’s charities, good deeds, virtues. This, Randolph tells Dr. Hudson, is the secret of “that mysterious power I mentioned. By following these instructions to the letter, you can have anything you want, do anything you wish to do, be whatever you would like to be. I have tried it. It works. It worked for me. It will work for you!”<sup>1</sup> And where, Dr. Hudson asks, did Randolph come by such an idea?

“One day, I went to the church my little girl attended, and heard a preacher read what is on this page [torn from the New Testament, which the sculptor always carried in his billfold]. It evidently meant nothing to him, for he read it in a dull monotonous chant. And the congregation sat glassy-eyed, the words apparently making no impression. As for me, I was profoundly stirred. . . . There it was—in black and white—the exact pro-

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## What's Inside?

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## David Loula, KS Zdar nad Sazavou

## Czech Wells Series – Well of Holiness

*“The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy”* (Isaiah 8:13).

*“As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy’”* (1 Peter 1:14-16).

*“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified; for God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life”* (1 Thessalonian 4:3,7).

Who pioneered the digging of the Well of Holiness in the Czech kingdom? Presumably it was Milíč of Kroměříž. He turned to Christ in the year 1363 and fully devoted himself to Him. His contemporaries gave evidence of his being a man

of holiness, humility as well as one on whom the power of God rested. His opponents inculpated him on two occasions before the Pope himself, as a result of which he had to appear before him on trial. But God loved Milíč and therefore stood by him. Milíč was exonerated and complimented with great honours, to which he was indifferent. His chief prosecutor, Klunkot, did an “about face” completely on meeting Milíč and, being overpowered by the love of God shining out of Milíč, repented and apologised. The Albanian Cardinal, brother of Pope Urban, said, *“Although my brother pope Urban shines with miracles, I think however, that this Milíč should be canonised before my brother.”* In his penance Milíč resigned from all the functions and posts he

had as a capitulary. He renounced all his property and engaged modestly in spreading the Gospel; tending to the poor, ill and lonely; worshipping, studying and in writing his sermons. The legacy of Milíč of Kroměříž was taken up by Tomáš Štítný of Štítné, Matěj of Janov and Master John Huss. They continued to sanctify their audience through their writing and sermons. What transformed the audience and what does holiness mean? The Hebrew word *‘kadosh’* and Greek words *‘hosios’* and *‘haganos’* mean separation and isolation as well as brightness, illumination and purity which cause fear and respect. Holiness therefore means something superior, noble and perfect. These are attributes of God, and

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# Family Profile

## Rickey Fanning

Hopefully my story here will open the door to meet some of you in PCF and encourage those reading this member profile.

I was born in Houston, Texas but my mother was very unstable and left when I was only one year old. Fortunately, my father was there for me; however, he was murdered when I was 11 years old. At that time I had to move to a boy's home and lived in state institutions until I was 18 years old. By then I was already involved with drugs and alcohol and battled depression. After my release I moved to Kansas City and became homeless (lived in car).

People at my work helped me get an apartment and I met a neighbor who was a Christian. However, at that time in my life I hated everything about God. Even with my frustration and anger, this woman who was my neighbor, showed me unconditional love. It affected me so much that I prayed to receive Jesus. We soon married!

However, my wife got cancer and I fell into deep depression (I stayed inside my home for three months). On the anniversary of my father's death I lost control and tried to kill my wife's brother (he was hurting my puppy). After being arrested and about to head to jail, I promised God I would live for him if he got me out of the big mess I was in. God's provision was almost immediate. Rather than taking me to jail the police took me to a mental institution. They left and shortly afterwards the hospital released me. For some reason the charges were dropped and God had somehow fixed my big mess.

After this time period in my life, my wife was raped and became pregnant. She resented me for not being there when she needed help. She left the relationship and I have never seen her again. This left me depressed again and I slipped back into drugs as a way to suicide. I started hanging out with people who "cooked" drugs. My best friend got arrested for drugs (and was sentenced to seven years in prison). Soon I found a new drug dealer to hangout with. Then he got arrested (and was sentenced eight years). Finally I turned back to God and asked him to get me out of my mess. I decided to move to a new environment and get a fresh start.

So I ended up in Dallas living with my brother. We had had no relationship for 16 years and did not get along when we had been together. I soon discovered he was dealing drugs. Living with him, I soon ended up back in drugs. He was doing more drugs than selling so it was not long before we got kicked out of the apartment. We both became homeless in Dallas.



I had heard about a ministry called *Blood N Fire* through my brother's roommate and I started to go to their services. Some of the leaders began talking to my brother and me about both going through their discipleship program. They gave us two weeks to decide and then we found housing (with other drug dealers). The choice was before me. I was doing drugs and then, convicted by the Holy Spirit, would go into a corner and weep. In the end I decided to join the one-year program. My brother ended up backing out and then got arrested and went to jail (for three months).

I lived in *Blood N Fire's* discipleship house and prayed for my brother. Later he told me that God spoke and told him that if he did not go into the program he would die. James (my brother) came to the program and moved into the house. God touched both of our lives. We finally were reconciled and restored our relationship. Then I was able to meet my other brother (we had not seen each other in 16 years). Again, God did a miracle and we were reconciled and our relationship was restored. Not to mention I was freed from my drug abuse ☺. The Lord turned my life around!

The spiritual leaders in my life felt that I should go to Atlanta for a nine month program called *School of Martyrs*. The *Blood N Fire* leader, John Wallace, had moved to Atlanta to start the school. Part of the program included an internship in a ministry. I had a heart for Prague already and then met Mark and Sherry Robbins. We all felt it was a good fit and the school suggested I move to Prague for my internship (the last three months of my school). Now the leaders have agreed that I can stay on here until at least December. Then we will talk about a longer commitment (possibly another two years).

God has done such miraculous works in my life. I can only look forward to what he has in store for me while I am here at PCF in Prague.



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cess for achieving power to do, be, and have what you want! I experimented."<sup>2</sup>

We are never told exactly where this passage is to be found in the New Testament; but it is not hard to guess that the allusion is to the first few verses of Matthew 6:

*Take heed that ye do not your alms before men. . . . Do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.*

Randolph had wanted the "capacity to do just one creditable work of statuary!" A few years before he had been an ordinary stonecutter. Now he was a gifted sculptor whose work was later to be exhibited "at the Metropolitan." So Dr. Hudson also "experimented," taking care that his philanthropies were never known during his lifetime. He transcended his depression and became a great brain surgeon. And Bobby Merrick, another character in the book, by following the same principles was able to make an important humanitarian invention. Ah, you will say, but these events happened only "in a book." Can they be duplicated in real life? Neither in his autobiography, *Time to Remember*, nor in Doctor Hudson's *Secret Journal* (the sequel to *Magnificent Obsession*, written 10 years later), nor in the volume which his daughters published about him, is there any definite evidence that Lloyd Douglas himself practiced Clive Randolph's secret formula for "power." But is it not suggestive that until he was fifty years old, Douglas was a good but not outstanding minister and then, suddenly, became and remained to the end of his life the most widely read novelist in the English language? "Daddy always said he wanted to write a novel someday," his daughters tell us. If all the facts were known, I believe that Lloyd C. Douglas' own life would dramatically testify to the potency of the principle which he called an "obsession."

### II.

Here, however, I am more concerned about "power" in the therapeutic sense than in its implications for creativity, important as that, too, may be. For at least a decade now, it has been known in scientific circles that psychoanalysis is a fiasco; and former practitioners of that dubious art are today experimenting broadly with different concepts and methods. They are particularly disenchanted with the alleged advantage of interminable talk; and many of them are open to the possibility that E. Stanley Jones was right when he remarked, some years ago, that it is easier to act yourself into a new way of thinking than to think yourself into a new way of acting. The result is that today something vaguely describable as action "therapy" is in the making; and in my own work along these lines, I find myself, more and more, guiding neurotic individuals into a twofold

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strategy which involves (a) confession of past misdeeds and (b) concealment of present and future "good works." Instead of advising disturbed persons to continue to pay fees to a professional counselor, I urge them to take advantage of the opportunities which are always freely available for becoming honest and open with respect to past mistakes and then to take the equivalent of a fee (in time or money) and devote it to "charity by stealth."

Because we psychologists and psychiatrists have ourselves been so "obsessed" by an entirely different philosophy, it has been hard for us to assimilate the full implications and practical possibilities of this other approach; but recently I have been using it with increasing confidence and success. I could cite a sizeable list, now, of instances in which this approach has worked, quickly and dramatically, in the lives of disturbed persons. However, I shall instead describe only one person whose experiences are typical and yet unusually illuminating. A bright young man with a history of adolescent delinquency and debauchery, he had, when I first saw him, already been attracted to and joined a religious group and had undergone a conversion of sorts; but he continued to be ruminative, moody, unpredictable in his interpersonal responses, and never quite certain when he might revert to his old mode of life. At the suggestion of a mutual friend, he came to see me; and we moved quickly and with surprisingly little resistance toward the decision to make a clean breast of his past to two trusted members of this group, and from this step the new policy of openness was extended to "significant others."

The relief experienced by this young man and the personal change noted in him by his friends were very striking; and we were soon able to start thinking about the more positive aspects of the program. At this juncture I began introducing him to Clive Randolph's "secret." The lad was much interested, and presently I saw his face contort into a sort of scowl, his eyes light up, and with some difficulty he succeeded in re-stating the idea in a way which, to me at least, was both clarifying and novel. I am sorry I do not have a record of his exact words; but they went something like this:

*What you seem to be saying is that when we tell or brag about some accomplishment or favor we've done someone, we exchange the "credit" for immediate satisfaction, that is, we "spend" it. And in the same way, when we confess an evil, something we feel guilty about, we likewise get rid of it, dissipate it . . . like those things I did and thought I wasn't ashamed of but was. Now that I have admitted them, they aren't really a part of me anymore—they just don't seem very important. By admitting these things, I have "spent" my guilt. And now the same principle seems to work also the other way 'round. Just as the wrong kind of "credit," if accumulated, will eventually destroy you, so will good "credit," if not used up, give you strength and inner confidence. The net effect is that you are, in any case,*

*what you keep back, save: strong and self-accepting if what you hide and keep back is good, and weak and self-hating if what you keep and hide is bad.*

In thinking over this rephrasing of the theory, I recalled that some years ago there was a lively controversy in scientific circles—between, it so happens, a Yale professor and one at Harvard—concerning the problem of defining "personality." The man at Yale insisted that we are, basically, what other persons perceive us to be, and the reactions we produce in them. In short, he said, one's personality is one's "social stimulus value. When asked to describe an individual's personality, we describe the impression he makes on others, the way he influences others."

This view, according to the Harvard psychologist, was all wrong. "Definitions of personality in terms of the outer appearance of a man," he said, "are completely unsatisfactory. Psychologically considered, personality is what a man really is, what an individual is regardless of the manner in which other people perceive his qualities or evaluate them."

Suffice it to say that, twenty years ago, the Yale professor had the better of the argument. His contention that a person is the effect or impressions he produces on others seemed eminently scientific and congruent with the stimulus-response psychology of that time; whereas the view of the Harvard professor that we are what we really, inwardly are seemed mystical and tautological. But now we can give more substance to this position. Now we can see that one's personality is, in truth, more importantly defined and structured by what is unknown, inward, secret about him than by what is known. When a person shows unusual strength, we often say, "I don't see how he (or she) does it!" And, by the same token, when a person breaks down, we are often even more mystified; for again we have not been aware of hidden weaknesses, just as we have not known the source of the other person's great strength.

During the time that I was seeing the young man just mentioned, a lawyer about 30 years of age from a distant city telephoned unexpectedly, announced that he was in town and would like an appointment. When I saw him, he said that during the past eight years he had been in treatment with three different psychoanalysts but had not achieved relief from his severely obsessional symptoms. Somewhere he had learned of my interest in a different approach, and soon it emerged that in all his past "treatment" no attempt had ever been made to get him to clean up a number of misrepresentations he had systematically practiced with his parents and other persons. And when, after a good start had been made along these lines, I introduced him to Clive Randolph's formula, he recalled an aunt who, not long ago, had died of cancer. "And yet," he said, "she was so courageous and strong about it all that everyone remarked how wonderful she was. Then, after she was dead, I don't know how many people came and told us about how she had helped them in some way but would never let

them mention it." Who was this woman, really? Was she the person the public knew, or was she the person she knew? Perhaps it is less important what our "stimulus value" is to others than what it is to ourselves. Had this woman sometime read *Magnificent Obsession*—or merely the Sixth Chapter of the Book of Matthew? Yes, I think it is perhaps not too far from the truth to say that, ultimately, we are our secrets.

*From O. Hobart Mowrer, The New Group Therapy. Copyright © 1964. Reprinted by permission of Trinity Forum. 1. Magnificent Obsession, Lloyd C. Douglas, p. 134. 2. Ibid, p. 135*

## Sixth Annual Úvaly English Day Camp

August 14th-18th

Czech or English-speaking  
volunteers are needed!

*English Camps are THE BEST way to reach youth!*

**Contact Kelsie Mullen  
if you are interested.**

777 150 802 or mullen@uvaly.net



## Upcoming Birthdays

*The following PCF members past and present will be having birthdays in the next few weeks.*

Babak Falsafi	June 5
Stephen Sexton	June 5
Laurie Luby	June 7
Lukáš Port	June 7
Gary Niederheitmann	June 10
Eugene Martin	June 10
Sára Gawliková	June 10
Sandy Duryea	June 11
Olivar Šedivý	June 11
Peter Lovett	June 12
Nathan Parry	June 14
Anne Marie Bailey	June 15
Jacquie Gutsulyak	June 15
Eva Hazuková	June 16
Sergei Razlivkin	June 16
Charlie Reinhardt	June 18
Bethany Robbins	June 18
Sarah Blenkarn	June 18
Rebeka Koukliková	June 18
Rickey Fanning	June 19
Joseph Mehaffy	June 19
Michaela Haig	June 28
Andy Faust	June 29
Jana Dubová Nunes	June 30



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Christians should reflect and manifest His light. Jesus sanctified us with His blood and His word – separating his people from the world of sin and sealing them to Himself. His noble and perfect character shall now miraculously shine through the church into the darkness of the world.

The striking magnificence of God's glory should inspire surprise and fear in the infidels so that they submit to God and honour him. **"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven"** (Mt. 5:16). This really happened in the Czech kingdom. The values, relationships, dedication, gratitude and diligence of the followers of Milíč, Matěj of Janov and Huss and their way of thinking, speaking and behaving astonished others. They were not passive do-gooders. God transformed their hearts, so doing good was great happiness and pleasure for them. One may say that they were truly delighted to distribute their wealth to the poor, and to cut down on sleeping so that they could visit the poor and ill and strengthen them with the Gospel. Gathering for prayer, worship and contemplating the Gospel meant true heaven for them. Many were greatly honoured to suffer for Jesus the humiliation and torment of their opponents. Such a church attracted everyone's attention. It caused wonder and respect, inspired many followers of Christ, as well as provoked opposition from the enemies of truth.

After John Huss was burned at the stake, his followers successfully repelled the crusaders, but the light of God started to fade away from the church. Within the next fifteen years the church was no longer detached and cut off from the world but detached from Christ and attached to the world. Groups of the true followers of Christ however remained. They formed the Union of Brethren in the town of Kunvald, in the year 1457. The Union was mindful of holiness after its foundation and avoided sin. Therefore God allowed it to grow rapidly, despite being harshly persecuted. As long as it was mindful of its purity, it flourished, although its enemies wanted to destroy it. It crystallized as a result of the adversity and was kept vigilant and pure. When obstacles ceased for a while, the Union cooled off towards God. The Lord sent new hardship through which the Union was regenerated. The bishops and elders were aware of it and considered hardship of the utmost necessity as they had become stiff and dead-alive. After the Schmalkaldic League War (1548), when the Union was outlawed, elder Brethren wrote a *'Redemption or Redress'*. It was a binding ordinance for all members of the Union urging them to become holy and detached from the world and sin. The introduction says: *"To redeem us God allows for temptation, to purify us, test us and expel the world from us."* Thus, as the historian Amadeo Molnár stated *"during its historical existence between the mid 15th century until the mid 17th century the Union remained more or less true to its specific way of worship, undiscouraged by violent persecution from the Catholic rulers and the malice of the Utraquist church, nor tempted by the promise of peace which might have been gained through diplomatic compromise."* For the historian

František Palacký as well as for President T.G. Masaryk the Union of Brethren was the purest and most beautiful blossom of the Czech reformation and even of the world's reformation. They spoke to the Czech nation bravely and urged it to return to Brethrens' values. What was so important? It was because of the Well of Holiness from which its members drank.

Even the world's famous reformists respected and admired this purity of life. Take for example the words of Martin Luther: *"Since the Apostles there have been no people whose church is closer to the teaching and life of the Apostles than that of the Czech Brethren. Although these Brethren don't surpass us in the purity of teaching, they still surpass us by far in their dutiful discipline present in the church which brings happy order to the church happily. As far as discipline is concerned they deserve the greater praise, which we must acknowledge for the glory of God and for the truth, as our German people are still not prepared to bear the obligation of discipline."*

The same principles gave rise to the foundation of the reorganised Union of Brethren called the Moravian church or *'Moravians'* in Herrnhut in 1724. It was founded by those who had fled Moravia as they could no longer bear the oppression of conscience and faith in their homeland. Most of them were non-canonised saints. Many died as martyrs for Christ, often serving as missionaries. They indeed drank from the Well of God's Holiness and the effects were visible. Only those converted and detached from sin could stand the test of Herrnhut. God was so strongly present there that sinners either repented or ran away. The Brethren cautioned one another, and the cautioned was always ready and happy to repent his sins and to ask the others' for forgiveness and prayer. They regarded themselves as equals and treated one another as brothers – children of the same fathers.

What went wrong? What contaminated this pure well? Where shall we look for it and how can it be purified? An old Czech proverb says: *"Where the Lord builds His temple, the Devil builds his chapel."* Where the spring of holiness welled, the devil let well a similar one. The springs stand one next to the other. It is essential for the church to choose the right one to drink from. Godly sources bring life and holiness, Satanic sources are deadly. The sin is a poison that spoils the souls of individuals as well as causing the death of churches. The devil strives to tempt many to draw from his waters He tries hard to make his waters look like God's waters. His greatest success is when he succeeds in mixing them. The church keeps coming for the water to the same place but the water is no longer as refreshing as it used to be. Later it becomes bitter and at this point it is usually too late. At first the difference is hardly noticeable. We keep doing the same, only the passion somehow seems to fade, then we realise that we don't like doing something anymore and the only thing that keeps us going is the routine, or the desire to keep one's reputation. Finally we realise (though more often not) that we worship God with words but our hearts have drifted away from Him. We gain greater pleasure from the things we buy, or make, or from talking to our friends and watching TV than from prayer and the Gospel. This is an

infallible sign that we have been drawing from a false spring. Of course, even the false source brings pleasure which is immediate. Its source is superficial, whereas God's source is hidden. The true wisdom lies in the deep waters. Take for example two people donating money for the poor or the victims of a tsunami. One does so in public, the other secretly. One is admired by people, the other remains unknown. The first one drinks from the well of the world, the other from the Well of Holiness. The difference, albeit not apparent at the first sight, is crucial.

What the church seeks for indicates the source of contamination. Every church seeks for something and similarly every individual. If they cease to seek, they have lost the purpose of life and being. Jesus said: **"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well"**. (Mt 6:33). The secularised church seeks the recognition of the world, its concerns are of a worldly nature: fame, wealth, beauty, power and respect and it is prone to go astray in order to reach them. On the other side the church of holiness seeks the heavenly kingdom and heavenly righteousness. Its main concern is the rule of God. Then the Lord adds to it the rest – admiration of the world. But the church which seeks recognition loses God's favour as well as recognition. If it ceases to worship the truth, it loses its saltiness, the Lord allows it to be thrown out and trampled by men – disdained (Mt 5:13).

Is there a way to preserve the purity of the well? Yes - to wash one's robe everyday in the blood of the Lamb as: **"Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed"** (Rev 16:15).

*Editor's note: This is the 3rd of 7 articles from a paper by David Loula. Continued next month.*

<b>PCF Finances</b>	
April 2006	
<b>+56,153</b>	<b>Total Income</b>
1,174	Internet & Communications
7,960	Office Rent & Electricity
8,500	Church Rent
10,097	Supplies & Equipment
250	Copying & Publishing
0	Salaries/Employer Tax
0	Evangelism & Teaching
2,500	Church Giving
288	Fees & Advertising
225	Miscellaneous
<b>-30,994</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>
<b>25,136</b>	<b>Net Income</b>
<b>44,636</b>	<b>Current Liabilities</b> <b>(Includes unpaid tithes)</b>

*All amounts shown are in Czech Crowns.*

PCF Bank Info:  
Sbor Křesťanské společnosti PCF,  
ČSOB a.s., Kamenická 26, Prague 7  
Account No. 181730394/0300  
Variable symbol: 10261

*Should you have a testimony to share please email us. The deadline is June 20, 2006.*