The image shows the interior of a Gothic Revival style cathedral. The nave is supported by white columns with gold bands. The floor is paved with a cross pattern. In the foreground, there are wooden pews and a large brass candelabrum with many white candles. The altar area is at the far end, featuring a large painting, a red throne, and a white altar. The walls are light-colored, and the ceiling is high with pointed arches.

St Peter and St Paul's Cathedral in Tallinn

The History of Catholicism in Tallinn

If you ask a passer-by in Tallinn where the Roman Catholic cathedral of St Peter and St Paul is, the chances are that you may not get an answer. Many people who live in Tallinn do not know that there is a Catholic church in Tallinn and likewise many Estonians do not know that there are Catholics in Estonia. Catholicism seems to belong to the distant past, to the romantic Middle Ages: after all, Lutheranism has been the dominant religion in Estonia for centuries!

However, Catholicism has a centuries-long history in Estonia and it is alive and well today. Catholicism was prevalent in North Estonia, from 1227 to 1561, and in South Estonia even longer, from 1227 to 1626, until that territory also fell under Swedish rule. All surviving medieval chapels and churches in Estonia were once Catholic places of worship.

The recorded history of Catholicism in Tallinn goes back to the year 1219, when the Danish King Valdemar II arrived in Tallinn with a large army and established a stronghold for subjugating North Estonia. He was accompanied by Andreas Sunesen, the Archbishop of Lund, the Estonian bishop Theoderich and other two bishops, together with a number of priests, who were to Christianise the people to be subdued. Immediately, the construction of a church began at Toompea, which preceded the present Dome Church.

In 1229 monks belonging to the Dominican Order arrived in Tallinn from Denmark who founded their monastery at Toompea. Soon after the brothers were forced to leave, but they were able to return to Toompea in 1246, and they resumed their activities in 1260's in the place where today the Cathedral of St Peter and St Paul is located.

In 1249, the Cistercian Order founded the convent of St Michael in the centre of the town and, in 1407, the convent of the Order of



View of Vene Street at the Roman Catholic Church. Photo from the early 20th century

the Most Holy Saviour of St. Bridget was established, close to the border of the town. Impressive churches, distinctive of a prosperous merchant town, were built in Tallinn: St Nicholas' Church and St Olaf's Church, as well as the church and chapel of the Holy Spirit hospital, the Holy Spirit Church.

Tallinn became the centre of the Diocese of Tallinn, which included North Estonia and belonged to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the archbishop of Lund. The residence of the bishop and the main church – the Dome Church – were at Toompea.

The reformation movement, which Martin Luther had begun, reached Tallinn in 1523. The town council adopted the new ideas and soon thereafter the celebration of the Catholic Mass was prohibited in the centre of the town. The Dominicans were forced to leave the town, the Cistercian convent was reformed in 1543, and the Bridgettine convent was plundered by Russian troops in 1575.

At Toompea, where the nobility was in power, Catholic Masses were celebrated until as late as 1561, when finally the nobility and the town council swore allegiance to the Protestant King of Sweden Erik XIV. During the Swedish reign, Catholicism was prohibited in Estonia.

Tallinn capitulated to Russian troops in 1710 and the whole territory of Estonia became part of the Russian empire. Multi-national Russia was more tolerant in religious matters and in 1786 celebrating the Catholic mass was resumed. A Catholic parish was established in 1799, which was granted the use of the refectory of the former Dominican monastery. Until 1860, the parish was under the pastoral care of Dominicans. The old building was rebuilt into a three nave basilica in 1845 and it was dedicated to St Peter and St Paul, the apostles. Parish members were of Polish, Lithuanian and German origin and the church was called “the Polish church”. Missionary activity among local people was prohibited.

*Episcopal ordination of Eduard Profitlich
at St Peter and St Paul's Cathedral on 27 December 1936*

The independence of Estonia in 1918 brought about significant changes for the local Catholic Church. The Holy See established the Apostolic Administration of Estonia on 1 November 1924 and the transformation of the “Polish church” into an “Estonian church” began. During the years from 1924 to 1940 Jesuit priests worked in Tallinn. Much attention was given to the religious education of young people, publications of Catholic literature in Estonian began to appear and the economic situation of the Church improved. The episcopal ordination of Eduard Profitlich, of German origin, on 27 December 1936, had nationwide repercussions – Estonia had a Catholic bishop once again, after the reformation.

“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” Difficult times began for the Catholic Church in Estonia with the Soviet occupation in 1940. Most of the priests left and only those who knowingly chose a martyr's fate stayed. Bishop Eduard Profitlich who was citizen of the Republic of Estonia remained in Tallinn with his flock, while thousands of his compatriots left for Germany. He was arrested on 27 June 1941 by the Soviet occupation forces and he died in prison in Kirov on 22 February 1942. Henri Werling, the successor of the bishop, spent ten years in a prison camp in Russia.



*On the left:
Invitation to the
consecration of
the new church
on 26 December
1845*

*On the right:
Song sheet of
the consecration
service of the
church,
26 December
1845*



*From the left:
Mikelis
Krumpāns,
Elisabeth
Ambrozunas and
Tunne Kelam
in a homely
atmosphere,
the early 1980s*

Great honour is due to the men and women who, despite the pressure of the atheist regime, were able to sustain the Church until the time of liberation. Mikelis Krumpāns, the parish priest for decades, and the parish members Elisabeth Ambrozunas and Alina Selicki deserve special mention here.

At the end of the 1980's, a time of radical change began in the Catholic

Church. As signs of relaxation were seen in society and the young Estonian priest Rein Ōunapuu assumed office in 1987, the Church awoke to new life. The number of Estonian Catholics soared to several hundred, the Estonian Catholic magazine *Kiriku Elu* began to be published again and contacts developed with Catholics of other countries. The 1990's saw the return of the religious orders who left Tallinn centuries ago, the Dominicans and the Bridgettines, as well as the arrival of the sisters of the Order of the Missionaries of Charity and members of various Catholic organisations. Priests who came from other countries learned Estonian and set to work with devotion.

The historic visit of Pope John Paul II to Estonia in September 1993 attracted much attention from the whole of society.

Today, the Catholic Church in Estonia is amazingly multi-national: Estonians, Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, Russians, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Czechs, Hungarians, Americans, Germans, French, Italians, Spanish and people of numerous other nationalities meet at Mass. The Catholic Church in Estonia is enjoying increasing popularity.

In their search for the meaning of their fragile existence in the changing world, people are returning to Christian values.

St Peter and St Paul's Cathedral in Tallinn

In 1799, in succession of the parishes which had been closed down in 1561, a Roman Catholic parish was re-established in Tallinn and it was permitted to use the former refectory of St Catherine's monastery of the Dominican Order, which had been closed down in 1525. By 1832, the number of parishioners amounted to 1,500, however, the refectory could scarcely contain 300 people and, besides, the former refectory of the monastery was in poor technical condition. On the basis of the plans and the budget drawn up by order of the Civil Governor of Estonia, Duke Paul Friedrich Benckendorff, the reconstruction of the old refectory into a new church began in 1841 which was designed by a well-known architect of St Petersburg, Carlo Rossi. The vaults of the refectory and the south wall were demolished and a practically new building was constructed. The cost amounted to 15,865 roubles. The new Cathedral of St Peter and St Paul was consecrated on 26 December 1845.

The church is, as we can see today, a neo-Gothic basilica with a wider central nave and narrower aisles which have been preserved up to this day. It has a square east wall, without an apse, and vaults are supported by octahedral pillars arranged in four pairs. There is a small sacristy on the eastern side and its walls stand on the foundation of the kitchen of the former monastery.

When the two-storey house on the southern side of the monastery complex was demolished in 1920, the western wall of the new Catholic church, which came to light, was designed as a festive facade by architects Erich Jacoby and Franz de Vries. The facade was finished in 1924 and it bears the following text:

View of the church from the west, before 1920 when the two-storey building belonging to the Dominican monastery complex was demolished



HIC VERE EST DOMUS DEI ET PORTA COELI
/Here truly is the house of God and the gate of heaven/
 and the dates of construction
 AEDIFIC. MDCCCXLIV
/built in 1844 /
 RENOV. MCMXXIV
/renovated in 1924/.

*View of the
 church from
 the west after
 the demolition
 of the two-
 storey building
 belonging to
 the Dominican
 monastery
 complex*

Thus, the northern wing of the former Monastery of St Catherine of the Dominicans was rebuilt as a church with a neo-Gothic interior and a neo-Classical exterior. A new entrance was also added, instead of the former entrance at the northern side, hidden in an obscure yard.



The facade of St Peter and St Paul's Church in 1930s

The interior of the church has undergone several simplifications over the course of time. A major reconstruction was carried out in 1938, according to the design of architect Nikolai Thamm Jr. The wooden neo-Gothic décor was removed from the eastern wall of the choir and from the chancel; a new altar of Carrara marble (now in the Marian Chapel) and a new tabernacle were installed. On the gilded copper door of the tabernacle there are words in Latin “ECCE PANIS ANGELORUM” (Behold the bread of angels) and images of bread, fish and a ship. A series of paintings, the Way of the Cross, which is the work of the Swiss artist Schiestl, was arranged on the wall.

In connection with the liturgical reform the altar rail surrounding the sanctuary was removed in 1992 and a new temporary altar was installed, to enable the priest to celebrate Mass facing the people. The interior of the church was also renovated in 2002-2003, when the floor was replaced and the walls were painted in lighter colours. The present altar of grey dolomite and the ambo were made in Estonia by the “Gildemann” Company in Märjamaa, and consecrated by Archbishop Peter Zurbriggen, on 24 December 2003. A relic with the remains of St Diodorus was placed in the later.

Among works of artistic value in the church, the altar painting of the “Assumption” may be mentioned, which is a copy of a work of the 17th century Italian painter Guido Reni, and was donated to the church by Ludwig I, the king of Bavaria. In the southern aisle, the “Ascension” by the local painter Carl Sigismund Walther (1783-1866) is featured. At the sides of the altar we can see two statues, “Peter the Apostle” and “Paul the Apostle”, by Robert Johann Salemann (1813-1874), who was born in Tallinn and worked in St Petersburg. In addition, there are three polychromatic sculptures of artificial stone: “St Anthony of Padova” in the southern aisle, “The Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus” in the central nave and “St Joseph” in the northern aisle.

Interior view of St Peter and St Paul's Church in 1922





On the left, up:
Marian chapel
in 1980s



On the right, up:
The tabernacle

The organ was made by August Terkmann in 1913. There are altogether four bells in the two towers of the church. In the northern tower, there are two bells from the 19th century and a new bell made in 2000 in Germany by the Gescher Bell Foundry. Another new big bell from the Gescher Bell Foundry was installed in the southern tower also in 2000.

"The Way of
the Cross",
by the Swiss
artist Schiestl

In the north-western corner of the church there is the Marian chapel, in the place of the former entrance. The altar, which is now in the chapel, served as the main altar of the church until 1992. The painting over the altar is a copy of the image of Our Lady of Częstochowa.



The altar of St Peter and St Paul's Church in 2004



A brief chronology of the parish of St Peter and St Paul in Tallinn

Prologue

Autumn 1523: Martin Luther wrote the letter "To Dear Elected Friends of God in Riga, Tallinn, Tartu and Livonia", which is deemed to be the beginning of reformation in Tallinn.

14 September 1524: A wave of iconoclasm began in Tallinn. People of lower classes destroyed altars, icons and statues in St Catherine's Church, Holy Spirit Church and St Olaf's Church.

12 January 1525: The town council adopted the decision regarding the expulsion of the Dominicans from Tallinn.

1543: Until that year, Catholic Masses continued to be celebrated in St Michael's convent church. Then the town council complained to the Master of the Order that idolatry continued at the convent with "singing and jingling (singende und klingende)" and that something was to be done about it, proposing to close down the convent church.

1549: Catholic services were held secretly in St Michael's convent.

1561: The Estonian nobility, together with the inhabitants of the centre of the town, swore allegiance to the Protestant King of Sweden. This marked the end of the celebration of Catholic Masses at the Cathedral of the Virgin Mary in Toompea, which the people of the town centre had been forbidden to attend under the threat of punishment.

1575: The premises of St Bridget's convent were plundered by Russian troops and the nuns were taken prisoner. This ended the activities at the convent in Pirita, which was actually outside the town borders at the time.

18 January 1786: The first reported public Catholic Mass after the Reformation is celebrated in Tallinn. In the same year, 284 Catholics were registered in Tallinn.

Duke Konstantin Lubienski, the priest of St Peter and St Paul's parish from 1860 to 1863

The Parish of St Peter and St Paul from 1799 to 2005

1799: Duke Jacob de Castro Lacerda, the Spanish Commandant of Tallinn, requested a church for his Catholic soldiers. The refectory of the former Dominican monastery was placed at the disposal of the newly founded parish.

1832: With the Poles who were in the service of the Russian government and the German and Polish merchants who settled in Tallinn, the number of parishioners increased to 1,500. The refectory, which could contain no more than 300 people and was in poor technical condition, no longer met the needs of the parish. The process of the construction of a new building on the same site was started. The first reconstruction plan was designed by an architect from St Petersburg, Carlo Rossi.

1841: The construction of the church began according to the plans and the budget drawn up by order of the Civil Governor Duke Paul Friedrich Benckendorff. The vaults and the south wall of the refectory were demolished and practically a new building was constructed. The cost was 15,865 roubles.



Nicolaus Limanowicz, the priest of St Peter and St Paul's Church from 1860 to 1909. Photo of 1894



Antonino Arata, Archbishop of Sardes, Apostolic Nuncio in Estonia. The Nuncio has the so-called cappa magna, the episcopal silk cape on his shoulders

Procession in Vene Street. 1930s



1845: The new three nave neo-Gothic basilica was consecrated.

1914: Circa 6,000 Catholics lived in Estonia before the First World War, mostly Poles and Lithuanians who had come to Estonia as workers, officials or soldiers.

22 September 1918: The Diocese of Riga was re-established and Duke Eduard O'Rourke was appointed bishop. The parishes of Estonia were under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Riga.

1920: The two-storey building at the north-western corner of the Dominican monastery complex was demolished. Thus the western wall of the church was revealed which was designed as a festive western façade by architects Erich Jacoby and Franz de Vries.

1922: According to the census, there were 2,536

Catholics in Estonia, about half of them lived in Tallinn.

Autumn 1921: Pope Benedict XV sent the Apostolic Visitor Antonino Zecchini, who was based in the diocese of Riga, to Estonia.

25 October 1922: Pope Pius XI appointed Dr. Antonino Zecchini as Apostolic Delegate for the three Baltic States.

1924: Archbishop Antonino Zecchini appointed Joseph Kartt SJ as parish priest of Tallinn.

1 November 1924: The Holy See established the Apostolic Administration of Estonia and appointed Archbishop Antonino Zecchini

as the first Apostolic Administrator.

26 September 1926: Leon Abraitis (1901-1930), a citizen of Estonia, was ordained a priest in Tallinn.

24 January 1927: The statutes of the Catholic parishes and the pastoral councils were approved by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. According to the statutes, the bishop or the representative of the Pope had the right to invite foreign priests to Estonia, with the permission of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

4 December 1930: Eduard Proffittlich SJ assumed the office of the parish priest at the Church of St Peter and St Paul Tallinn remained under the pastoral care of the Jesuits.

18 October 1933: Antonino Arata was appointed chargé d'affaires for the Holy See in the Republic of Estonia.

1934: according to the census, there were 2,300 Catholics in Estonia. The majority of them were not Estonians.

12 July 1935: Antonino Arata was appointed as Apostolic Nuncio to Estonia and Latvia.

27 December 1936: Eduard Proffittlich was consecrated a bishop in the Church of St Peter and Paul by the Apostolic Nuncio Antonino Arata, assisted by Auxiliary Bishop Jāzeps Rancāns from Riga and by bishop Willem Cobben, the Apostolic Vicar of Finland.

26 August 1940: The Apostolic Nuncio Antonino Arata was expelled



Young generation of the parish in 1931



R. D. ALEXANDER DORDETT

Ordinatus
die 10 maii anno 1942; apud
Ecol. SS. Apostolorum Petri et
Pauli, Tallinn.

—
In memoriam
Missae primitialis,
Deo oblatae
die 17 maii.

—
Deo gratias.

from Estonia at the beginning of the Soviet occupation. He left the Baltic States with the flags of Latvia and Estonia in his suitcase, promising to preserve them in the Vatican until both states would regain their independence.

27 June 1941: Archbishop Eduard Proffittlich was arrested by the People's Commissariat for Interior Affairs and he was accused of espionage for Germany and having had contacts with the German Embassy during repatriation. His successor as Apostolic Administrator ad interim was Henri Werling.

22 February 1942: Archbishop Eduard Proffittlich died in prison in Kirov. The court had convicted him of prohibited assistance during the emigration of the personnel of the Catholic Church, of counterrevolutionary activities and of propaganda in the church, and sentenced him to death by firing squad.

6-11 May 1942: Antonijs Springovics, the Archbishop of Riga, sent his Auxiliary Bishop Jāzeps Rancāns for a visit to Estonia. On 10 May, Bishop Rancāns conferred priestly ordination on Alexander Dordett, who later became a professor of canon law at the University of Vienna.

Katholischer Wehrmacht-Gottesdienst

jeden Sonntag um 9.30 Uhr und 17.00 Uhr

in der Kirche – Venestr. 16

Notice of the divine service for the military, 1943

15 August 1945: The Apostolic Administrator ad interim Henri Werling was deported. Antonijs Springovics took jurisdictional responsibility for Estonia and sent priests from his diocese to Tallinn.

1952: Mikelis Krumpāns (1916-1987) arrived in Tallinn to assume the office of parish priest.

During the Soviet occupation, no permission for establishment or right of assembly was granted to Catholic organisations, and the publication of Catholic literature was prohibited. Furthermore, it was forbidden to prepare children for the first communion and to actively involve them in religious services, whether in the choir or as altar servers. A great part of the assets of the church was confiscated. The Catholic Church became once again the national church of Poles and Lithuanians; there were about a dozen Estonian Catholics.

When the oppression relaxed, the number of churchgoers increased again. Catholicism gradually gained popularity among the members of the Lutheran Church.

1975-1990: Several hundred of Estonians were baptised in Tallinn. A remarkable number of intellectuals converted to Catholicism, giving new vigour to the activities of the parish. On his death on 13 July 1987, Mikelis Krumpāns had been the parish priest in Tallinn for nearly 35 years. October 1977: Vello Salo, a priest residing in Canada, visited Estonia and celebrated mass behind closed doors.

6 October 1985: Rein Ōnapuu completed his studies of theology and was ordained a priest in Riga. From 1987 to 1993, he was the only Catholic priest working in Estonia. Contacts with Paul Verschuren, the Bishop of Helsinki, and with Catholics in Finland played an important role in the development of parish life.

On the left:
Alexander Dordett who was ordained as priest by bishop Jāzeps Rancāns at St Peter and St Paul's Church on 10 May 1942

On the right:
Alexander Dordett's ordination card, 10 May 1942

Priest Mikelis Krumpāns with parishioners on 15 August 1981





On the left:
Solemn mass with
Paul Verschuren,
the Bishop of
Helsinki, at
St Peter and
St Paul's Church,
photo of 1982

Priestly
ordination of
Rein Ounpuu by
Cardinal Juljans
Vaivods in Riga
on 6 October
1985

October 1989: The publication of the magazine Kiriku Elu, for Estonian Catholics, was resumed. It became popular even outside the circle of the Catholic Church.

1989: Guy Barbier, who works as a priest in Helsinki, visited Tallinn for the first time. He continues to serve the Catholic Church also in Estonia with much devotion, up to the present day.

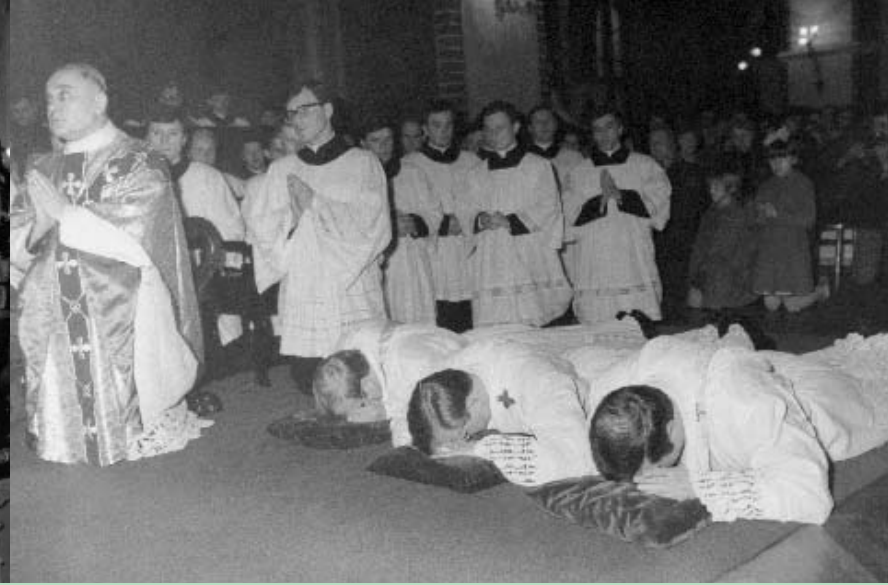
1991: Archbishop Francesco Colasuonno visited Tallinn as the representative of the Pope, to assess the situation of the Catholic Church in Estonia.

30 November 1991: Pope John Paul II appointed Justo Mullor Garcia as Apostolic Nuncio to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

1992: The Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei commenced activities in Tallinn.

15 April 1992: Pope John Paul II appointed Justo Mullor Garcia as Apostolic Administrator of Estonia.

28 August 1992: The sisters of the Order of the Missionaries of Charity arrived in Tallinn.



1993: M. Tekla Famiglietti, Superior of the Order of The Most Holy Saviour of St. Bridget OSSS, visited Tallinn for the first time.

10 September 1993: Pope John Paul II visited Tallinn.

16 April 1994: The sisters of the Order of The Most Holy Saviour of St Bridget arrived in Tallinn, after an absence of 419 years.

January 1996: Zbigniew Piłat MIC was appointed as parish priest of Tallinn.

1996: The Attaché of the Apostolic Nunciature, Philippe Jourdan, arrived in Tallinn.

November 1996: The Order of Preachers (Dominican Order) resumed activities in Tallinn.

February 1997: The Superior General of the Marian Clerics of the Immaculate Conception, Adam Boniecki MIC came from Rome and visited Tallinn.

9 July 1997: Pope John Paul II appointed Archbishop Erwin Josef Ender as Apostolic Nuncio to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.



On the right:
The first mass of priest
Rein Õunapuu at
St Peter and St Paul's
parish in 1987

Guy Barbier,
a priest who has served
the parish of Tallinn for
years

Celebration of the 10th
anniversary of Pope
John Paul II's visit, 2003

9 August 1997: Pope John Paul II appointed Archbishop Erwin Josef Ender as Apostolic Administrator of Estonia.

1998: Ludwik Krzysztof Grabarczyk OP was appointed as parish priest of Tallinn.

1999-2001: The Vicar General of the Apostolic Administration, Philippe Jourdan, acted in the capacity of parish priest of Tallinn.

2000-2001: The vicar of the parish priest of Tallinn was Ceslavs Miksto

2000: According to the census, 5,757 adult Catholics were living in Estonia, about one-third of whom were Estonians. About 2,500 Catholics were living in Tallinn.

15 February 2000: The Superior of the Order of the Missionaries of Charity, Sister Nirmala MC, visited Tallinn.

31 March 2000: Two new bells, made in Germany, were installed in the towers of the Church of St Peter and St Paul.

16 September 2000: Timothy Radcliffe OP, the General Superior of the Order of Preachers, visited Tallinn.





Solemn papal mass at the Town Hall Square on 10 September 1993



The meeting of Pope John Paul II and President Lennart Meri at Kadriorg on 10 September 1993

15-17 May 2001: The annual meeting of the Catholic Bishops of the Baltic States took place in Tallinn. It was attended by 18 bishops, including two cardinals.

30 June 2001: Alfonso Di Giovanni was appointed as parish priest of Tallinn.

2001-2003: The vicar of the parish priest of Tallinn was Jim Starasinich

15 September 2001: The new convent of the Order of the Most Holy Saviour of St. Bridget in Pirita was consecrated. Priest Vello Salo took the office of convent chaplain.

25 October 2001: Pope John Paul II appointed Archbishop Peter Stephan Zurbriggen as Apostolic Nuncio to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

15 November 2001: Pope John Paul II appointed Archbishop Peter Stephan Zurbriggen as Apostolic Administrator of Estonia.

3 August 2003: Gustavo Alfaro was appointed as parochial vicar in Tallinn.

12 and 16 October 2003: The festive celebration of the 25th anniversary of the pontificate of Pope John Paul II and of the 10th anniversary of his visit to Estonia took place.

24 December 2003: Archbishop Peter Stephan Zurbriggen consecrated the new altar of the Church of St Peter and St Paul.

26-28 April 2004: For the second time, the meeting of the Catholic Bishops of the Baltic States took place in Estonia. It was attended by 16 bishops, including two cardinals.

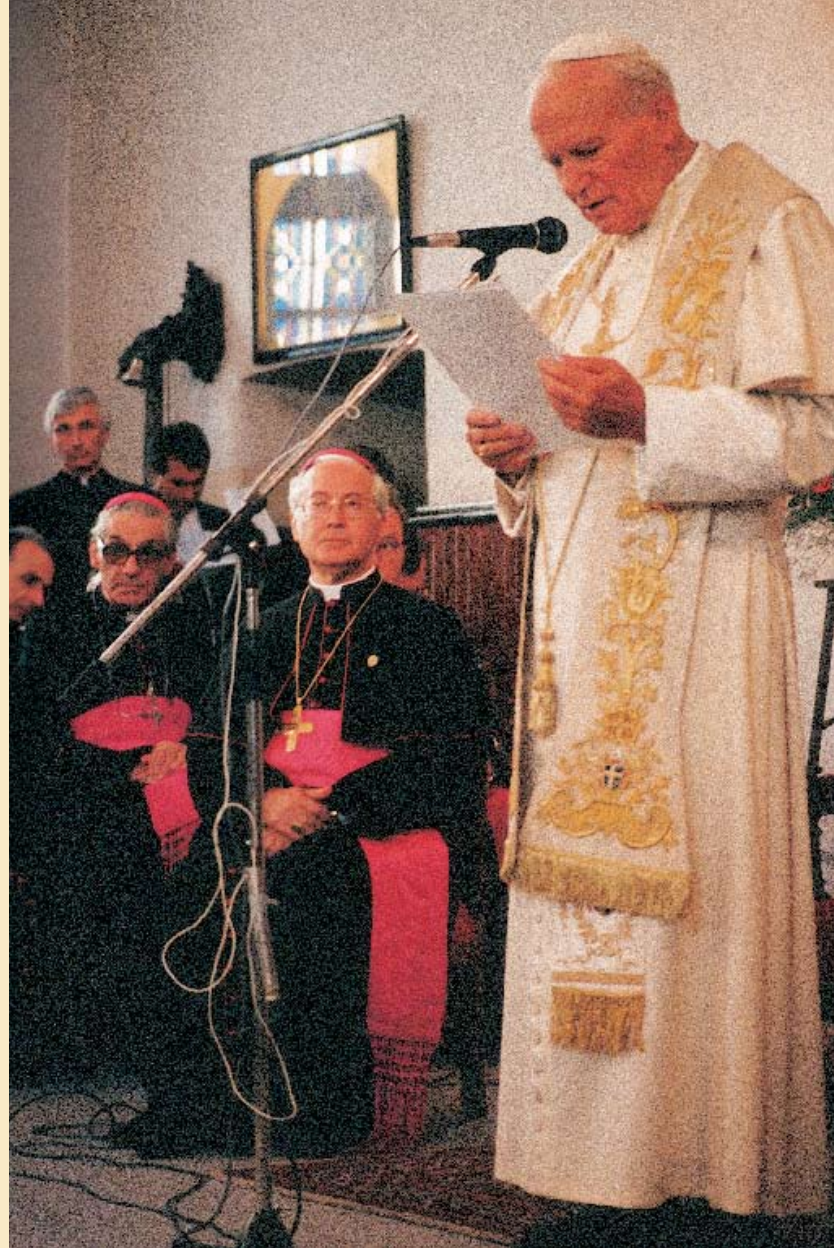
1 November 2004: The 80th anniversary of the establishment of the Apostolic Administration in Estonia took place.

23 March 2005: Pope John Paul II appointed Msgr Philippe Jourdan the Titular Bishop of Pertusa and Apostolic Administrator of Estonia.

2 April 2005: Pope John Paul II died.

19 April 2005: Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger was elected the new pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, taking the papal name Benedict XVI.

10 September 2005: Episcopal ordination of Msgr Philippe Jourdan at St Olaf's Church in Tallinn. The principal ordaining bishop was Archbishop Peter Stephan Zurbriggen together with assisting bishops.





Timothy Radcliffe OP, General of the Order of Preachers, among the parishioners of Tallinn in September 2000



Archbishop Erwin Josef Ender among parishioners



Sister Nirmala MC (second from the right), Superior of the Order of the Missionaries of Charity founded by Mother Teresa, among the sisters of the order in February 2000



(from the left) Ilmar Johannes Franciscus Kesa and Augustyn Loska OFM and Mgr Philippe Jourdan and Mihhail Lotman talking in the courtyard of the Dominican monastery

IN MEMORIAM

Eduard Profittlich (1890–1942)

Eduard Profittlich was born in Birresdorf, Germany, in 1890. Having studied philosophy and theology in Holland, he went to Poland in 1922, where he graduated from the University of Krakow with a doctoral degree in theology. He then worked as a parish priest in Poland and Germany.

Following the assignment given to him by the German province of the Society of Jesus, he came to Estonia in 1930. A year later, Pope Pius XI appointed Eduard Profittlich as Apostolic Administrator of Estonia, virtually the head of the Catholic Church in Estonia. Eduard Profittlich's intention was that the Catholic Church which was known among people as the "Polish church" would also be the "Estonian church". This aim could not be achieved in just ten years but the new pastor was surprisingly successful in that short period. He quickly learned Estonian and soon began to preach in Estonian. In 1933 he took Estonian citizenship.

In 1936, Eduard Profittlich was ordained a bishop.

His contemporaries remember him as a good shepherd who never failed in giving advice and support, and he was a living example for others. Profittlich did not follow Hitler's call to return to Germany in 1939, sticking to the principle „where the flock is, there is the shepherd”.

The Soviet occupation involved the repression of many clerics. On the orders of Boris Kumm, the People's Commissar of the Security Service, a search was conducted at Eduard Profittlich's premises on the night of 27 June 1941, and the archbishop was arrested. During the search, the



Decree of the Papal Russian Commission of 11 May 1931, appointing Eduard Profittlich as the new Apostolic Administrator of Estonia due to the resignation of Antonino Zecchini, Titular Archbishop of Myra



directory of the members of the Catholic parish of Tallinn, manuscripts of sermons, correspondence with the Pope and other letters were confiscated.

The fate of Archbishop Profittlich remained unknown until 1991 when access was given to the files of the People's Commissariat for Interior Affairs. Profittlich had been sentenced to death by firing squad, after having been found guilty of "defaming the Soviet regime from the pulpit, concealing the emigration of Catholics, praising the German army and making counterrevolutionary propaganda."

Eduard Profittlich died in the hospital of the prison of Kirov on 22 February 1942, before the execution of the court's decision.

From the last letter of Archbishop Eduard Profittlich written home on 8 February 1941:

"Although, humanly speaking, the future does not hold anything enjoyable for me, I have made the decision to stay here. After all, it is only fitting that the shepherd stay with his flock and share joy and suffering with them. And I must say that, even though the decision cost me several weeks of preparation, I did not make it with fear and

anxiety but rather with great joy. And when it became clear at last that I was to stay, my joy was so great that I prayed Te Deum out of joy and gratitude. On the whole, I experienced such an effect of God's grace in my soul that I have hardly ever felt so happy in my life as on Thursday evening, after having made the decision. ... I would have liked to tell everybody how good God is to us when we give ourselves totally to him, how happy we can be if we are willing to give away everything, freedom and life, for Christ ...".

In 2004, the process of beatification of the Apostolic Administrator of Estonia Eduard Profittlich was begun.

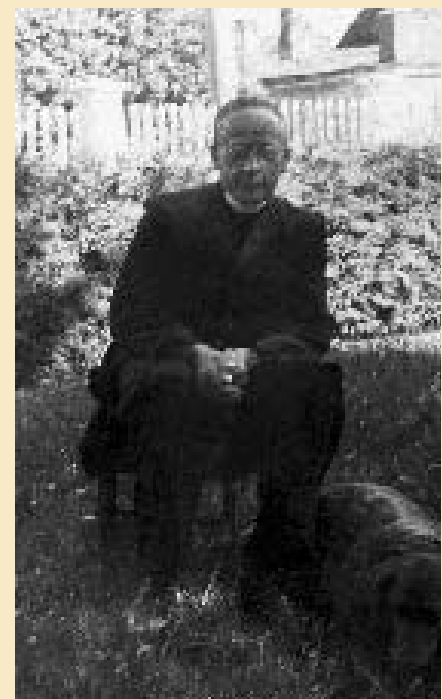
Henri Werling (1879–1961)

Born in Luxemburg on 14 December 1879, he entered the noviciate of the German province of the Society of Jesus in 1900. He studied in Germany, Holland and Poland and was ordained a priest in Krakow on 25 August 1912. On 2 February 1917, Henri Werling made his final profession.

The apostolic delegate in Estonia, Archbishop Antonino Zecchini, appointed the member of the Society of Jesus, Henri Werling, parish priest in Tartu in 1923. Henri Werling was the first member of the Society to come to Estonia during the second period of the Jesuits' activities (the first period was from 1583 to 1625). Until 1931, Henri Werling worked mostly in Tartu but he also took care of the parish of Tallinn.

Archbishop Eduard Profittlich among clerics in the late 1930s

Henri Werling,
Apostolic
Administrator
ad interim



He learned Estonian and took Estonian citizenship in 1937.

Henri Werling made a praiseworthy contribution to the publishing of Catholic literature in Estonian, which has not lost its relevance even today. He published the collection of prayers „Shining Stars” in 1928, and he translated the four gospels into Estonian, two of which, the gospels of Matthew and Mark, also appeared in print. He helped in founding the Catholic kindergarten in Tartu, organised the renovation of the church in Tartu in 1930, and assisted in the establishment of a boarding school in Tallinn. Henri Werling was the spiritual director of his brother Jesuits and a confessor. He also did missionary work, taught catechism and was the censor of literature.

In 1931 he moved to Tallinn in order to assist the Apostolic Administrator Eduard Profittlich. At the beginning of the Soviet occupation in 1940, the majority of the Catholic priests left Estonia. The Jesuits Eduard Profittlich, Henri Werling and Charles Bourgeois were the only ones who stayed.

After the arrest of Archbishop Eduard Profittlich on 27 June 1941, Henri Werling became the substitute of the Apostolic Administrator. During the years of German occupation, from 1941 to 1944, he worked as a priest in Tallinn and Pärnu. Less than a year after the beginning of the second Soviet occupation, on 15 August 1945, Henri Werling was arrested and sent to a prison camp in Perm Oblast in the Urals. Some of his letters from the year 1946 remain, which he sent to the religious sisters in Tartu, asking for materials for celebrating Holy Mass in prison.

Henri Werling was released from the prison camp in 1954 and he returned to Estonia. Since his health had been ruined by the very difficult work, Henri Werling settled in Esna-Kodasema and came to Tallinn every two months, to help the parish priest Miķelis Krumpāns as a confessor. Although his health was deteriorating, he continued his visits to Tallinn and worked on the translation of the Acts of the

Apostles into Estonian. When his relatives suggested to him to leave Estonia, for his homeland, Luxemburg, he refused, since he wished to die in the country to which he had devoted so much of his life's work.

Henri Werling departed this life on 22 February 1961 and he was buried in the Liiva cemetery on 26 February 1961.

Priests who have served the parish in Tallinn 1799 – 2001*

<i>Gerardus Peper OP</i>	1799–1801
<i>Romualdus Schultz OP</i>	1800–1806
<i>Casimirus Olczewski OP</i>	1801–1803
<i>Andreas Proniewicz OP</i>	1804–1808
<i>Ceslaus Schultz OP</i>	1805–1810
<i>Ludwik Placki OP</i>	1806–1819
<i>Thomas Mackiewicz OP</i>	1808–1816
<i>Matthias Olseyko OP</i>	1817–1833
<i>Alanus Kann OP</i>	1821
<i>Hermenegildus Katyll OP</i>	1824–1835
<i>Bonifatius Alexandrowicz OP</i>	1825–1827
<i>Hieronymus Świącicki OP</i>	1827–1829
<i>Franciscus Węckiewicz OP</i>	1829–1838
<i>Vincentius Prossolowicz OP</i>	1835
<i>Rakowski OP(?)</i>	1837
<i>Pfilippus Jodakowski OP</i>	1838–1844
<i>Thaddaeus Sikorski OP</i>	1838–1840
<i>Jacobus Jodkowski OP</i>	1842–1860
<i>Augustinus Ewers OP(?)</i>	1845–1860
<i>Konstantin Lubienski</i>	1860–1863
<i>Nicolaus Limanowicz</i>	1860–1909
<i>Friedrich Giscard</i>	1909–1911

Franciscus Trasun	1911–1912
P. Krysiak	1913–1917
M. Krupowicz	1916–1917
Josef Meškowski	1917
Antonius Mackiewicz	1917
Martin Wenzlaw	1917–1924
A. Sobolewski(?).....	1918
Felix Wiercinski SJ	1924–1925
Joseph Kartte SJ	1926–1930



*Augustinus Prokop
OP, priest who
helped the parish
of Tallinn from
1996–1998*

Henri Werling SJ	1931–1945
Eduard Profitlich SJ.....	1930–1936
Vincas Dejnys.....	1935–1939
Bruno Borucki SJ	1937–1941
Henri Werling SJ	1941–1945
Kazimirs Sosnovskis	1946–1947
Jāzeps Grišāns	1950–1952
Mikēlis Krumpāns	1952–1987
Rein Ōunapuu	1987–1995
Zbigniew Piłat MIC.....	1995–1998
Ludwik Grabarczyk OP.....	1998–1999
Philippe Jourdan	1999–2001
Alfonso Di Giovanni	2001–

** The list of priests is only preliminary and needs further specification.
Compiled by Vello Salo.*



Roman Catholic priests active in Estonia with Archbishop Erwin Josef Ender in Holy Week on 31 March 1999. From the right: Augustyn Loska OFM, Xavier Riera, Vello Salo, Miguel Angel Arata, Rein Õunapuu, peapiiskop Erwin Josef Ender, Philippe Jourdan, Guy Barbier, Alfonso Di Giovanni, Ludwik Grabarczyk OP, Hugon Andrzej Prohon OFM

On the right, statues in the church: on the left, up: the Virgin Mary with Child Jesus; from the right, down: St Anthony of Padua, St Joseph, patron saints of the church St Paul and St Peter



Bishop Philippe Jourdan celebrating the eucharist



Pope Benedict XVI



Archbishop Peter Stephan Zurbriggen

*Msgr Philippe Jourdan the Titular Bishop
of Pertusa and Apostolic Administrator of
Estonia*



*Alfonso Di
Giovanni, parish
priest of Tallinn*



*Holy Mass in St Peter and
St Paul's Cathedral*



On the right: Tower bell made in Germany by the Gescher Bell Foundry in 2000

*Back cover:
On the left: Installation of the tower bell on 31 March 2000*

On the right: View of the church from the courtyard of the Dominican monastery

Issuer: The Apostolic Administration of Estonia

Text: Toomas Abiline, Indrek Oper

Correction: Helve Trumann

Design: Mari Kadanik

Translation: Helve Trumann

Photos: The archive of St Peter and St Paul's parish, Indrek Oper's private collection, Allan Alajaan, Jaan Künnap, Toomas Abiline, Valerija Pöllupuu

Special thanks:
The Tallinn City Museum



