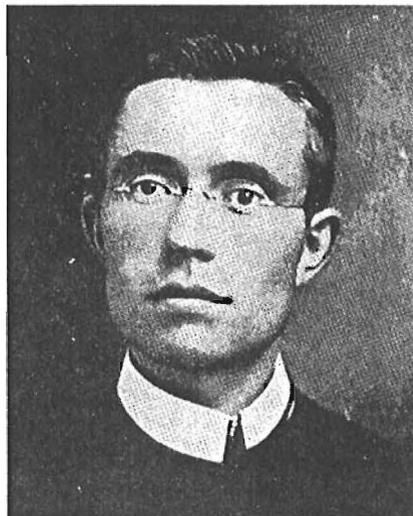


# CENTENNIAL SNAPSHOTS

## 2. Father Hendrik Boels, CSSR

Hendrik was the second of four brothers born to the Flemish-speaking Roman Catholic farmer and blacksmith Augustine Boels and his wife, Ludovica, on 10 October 1882 in Leffinge, Belgium. He entered the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (the Redemptorists) and made his profession of vows on 29 September 1901. After studies in the Redemptorist seminary of Beauplateau, Belgium, he was ordained to the priesthood on 7 July 1907. He was then sent to study the Ukrainian language and the Byzantine rite with the Basilian Fathers in Krechiv, Western Ukraine. In 1908 he received permission to adopt the Byzantine-Ukrainian rite. On 6 January 1909, he arrived in Yorkton, Saskatchewan where he became the pastor of the Ukrainians in the Yorkton and surrounding rural areas. For the Synod of the Catholic hierarchy of Canada, meeting in Quebec City on 13 October 1909, Father Boels wrote a forceful letter on the need to name a bishop for eastern rite Catholics in Canada in order to organize the faithful into parishes and to offset their suspicion of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, then identified with their former Polish landlords. This letter made a great impact on the participants of the Synod, was reprinted in the official Catholic newspaper, *The Catholic Register*, and helped in the appointment of Bishop Nykyta Budka to Canada. In August 1910, Father Hendrik was transferred to Brandon, where he served the Ukrainian settlers in the Manitoba areas of Brandon, Portage-la-Prairie, and Shoal Lake. In Brandon, he was chaplain to the students of the first Redemptorist minor seminary in western Canada, established for both Roman Catholic and Eastern Catholic students. In July 1913, when the monastery was transferred to the English Canadian Redemptorists, the Belgians were transferred to Yorkton, where he again served as pastor for the Ukrainians in the Yorkton and Ituna areas. In addition to his pastoral work, he preached missions in Canada and became the Canadian organizer for the Apostleship of Prayer. During the influenza epidemic of 1918, he visited the Ukrainian settlers, comforted them, and gave them the last holy rites, until he himself became sick and died in the house of Mykola Korchinski, in Hubbard, Saskatchewan, on 24 November 1918. For his funeral, a great mass of of people gathered, in spite of the still-raging epidemic; in this way they gave evidence of their admiration and recognition of this gentle Redemptorist pioneer who gave his life for his Ukrainian people. Well-known for his constant reading and sermons on the "Passion of our Lord" by Saint Alphonsus Liguori and the "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas à Kempis, many people considered him a saint and insisted he be buried in Hubbard, close to the people he served. Father Hendrik Boels still lies buried in the parish cemetery of the Holy Cross, in Hubbard, Saskatchewan. His life and death inspired his younger brother, Achiel Boels, to enter the Congregation and to dedicate his life to the Ukrainians. Father Hendrik Boels was only 36. *Vichna Pamiat!*



Ukrainian Redemptorists 100 years

*The year 2006 marks 100 years since the Redemptorists began formally working with eastern European immigrants in North America and eventually around the world in their own rite. This series of 'Bulletin Inserts' is dedicated to the pioneer Redemptorist Fathers and Brothers of the Yorkton Province. For more information about the Redemptorists, contact: the Redemptorist Vocation Office: 250 Jefferson Ave., Winnipeg, MB, R2V 0M6, Canada or visit our website: [www.yorktonredemptorists.com](http://www.yorktonredemptorists.com)*