

# The Church of Blessed Mary Restituta



Mary Restituta was born Helena Kafková in Brno, Husovice, in 1894. When she was two years old, the whole family moved to Vienna, where her father got a job. Helena first worked as a tobacconist, then as a nurse. She entered the order of the Sisters of Christian Charity. She was very skilled and became an instrument nurse in the operating room. She was principled and uncompromising, wanting only the best for her patients (*Resoluta* - nickname). She refused to remove the crosses from the rooms and came into conflict with the Nazis. She was denounced by a doctor for a leaflet ridiculing the Nazi regime. She was arrested in October 1942, sentenced, and executed in March 1943. In prison, she led several fellow prisoners to faith. She took care of everyone, forgave everyone, and went to her execution with joy.

The parishioners of Lesná have wanted a church since 1968, but the regime would not allow it. In 1989, about 150 parishioners gathered for Sunday Mass in a social hall on Halas Square. In October 2004, the Spiritual Center (dedicated to Mary Restituta and Father Martin Středa) was opened, where daily services are held. On Sunday, January 3, 2005, the Brno-Lesná parish was established, which was removed from the parishes of Husovice and Královo Pole. The then parish priest, Pavel Hověz, collected money for the church with the believers of the parish. After several years, the design of Marek Štěpán (also known for his work at Sazovice, Ostrava – Zábřeh, Šumná) was selected from 36 church designs. In 2014, the necessary permits were obtained, construction began in 2017, and the church was blessed by Bishop Pavel Konzbul on September 12, 2020. This church was built solely from donations from believers and donors (approx. 6500). Without subsidies and state contributions.

The church space is divided into several important parts. The main part is the nave, which has 220 seats for the faithful. The presbytery, located east of the nave, is the most important space in the church. Here the priest and his assistants celebrate Mass, and there is also the tabernacle, the most revered place in the church, where the Blessed Host is kept – the transformed Jesus Christ. The dominant feature of the presbytery is the cross, a symbol of Christ's suffering and salvation. The futuristic design of the interior creates the impression of an inner universe, permeating both the sacred and the secular. The universe is as if "torn" by the descent of the Messiah to Earth. In the apse there is a copy of the Gothic Madonna with Child from Klentnice by René Vlasák. The Madonna and Child carries the symbol of salvation. A window in the ceiling lets light into the interior, which symbolizes the light of the Gospel. Although we do not see the source of light, we perceive its beauty and power, which speaks to us. The encounter with God, the source of light, awaits us only in eternity.

The 32-meter tower of the Church of Blessed Mary Restituta in Brno is dedicated to the memory of priest Martin Středa. In the 17th century, he played a role in preventing Brno from being captured by Swedish troops. The inscription "Fos + Zoe", meaning "light and life" in Greek, can be found on the tower.

The tower bell has a set of 16 bells that play melodies every day at 5:50 p.m., on Fridays at 3:00 p.m., and on Sundays at 9:50 a.m. before the main Mass. The bells play 50 spiritual and 5 secular compositions, including the New World Symphony and the Ode to Joy. The ringing is electromagnetically controlled, and the melodies are selected according to the liturgical period. The tower has a balcony that is used by photographers, the bell ringer playing the midnight bugle, and in the summer months also the summer pulpit. A walkway leading to the tower is accessible only to technicians. The tower is equipped with an active French lightning rod and offers a beautiful view of Brno.

The facade of the Church of Blessed Mary Restituta in Brno was designed and made at his own expense by Petr Kvíčala and his students. The facade is decorated with symbols of nature, spiritual and human activity that believers bring to the church to be blessed by God. The urban concept of the facade emphasizes the protruding tower, which has the task of attracting people to the church. There is parking for local residents under the church. Kvíčala's facade is a unique work of art that reflects both the spiritual and secular dimensions of the Church of the Assumption of Our Lady in Brno. It is a symbol of faith and hope and at the same time serves as an invitation for all to enter and find peace and quiet there.

The parish at the Church of Blessed Mary Restituta in Brno has approximately 600 faithfuls. Services are held in the church every day. On Sundays, older believers gather at 8:00 am, while the main Mass at 10:00 am is popular with young people with families. The parish cafe is open after Sunday Mass. The parish has two choirs: an occasional choir and a schola that sings every Sunday at 10:00 am. The church is cleaned by four groups of volunteers and decorated by a group of women. In addition to services, the parish hosts a variety of other activities. Prayer groups for mothers and young people meet regularly, there are board game nights, meetings for mothers with children, and activities for men. Various events are held in the parish hall and the hall can also be rented.