

# Panna Maria, Karnes County, Texas, USA



Father Leopold Moczygemba

## Did you know that ...

- Panna Maria (Virgin Mary in Polish) is the oldest permanent Polish settlement in the United States
- It was established in 1854 by Father Leopold Moczygemba, from Upper Silesia in Poland, who came to the United States to serve as a Catholic priest to the German community in Texas
- In September, the first immigrant families began their journey from Poland to Texas for a better life
- On December 24, 1854, the first Mass was celebrated under the oak tree which is still a living reminder of the first Polish settlers
- Settlers built first houses from mud and grass
- Farming was the source of income and food for most of the families in Panna Maria
- The first Polish church was built and consecrated on September 29, 1856
- Polish immigrants started the first Polish school in the United States- St. Joseph's School



The Oak Tree-Place of the First Mass

# Panna Maria Today



Immaculate Conception Catholic Church

- Panna Maria consists of only a few buildings
- As of 2000, the population is 41 people
- The original church was destroyed by fire, and the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church which is still used today was built
- The oldest Polish school in the US is now a museum
- The Convent Bed & Breakfast provides quiet and country place for visitors to stay in Panna Maria



- Panna Maria's visitor center has many historical photographs, souvenirs, handmade crafts, and offers local food
- Today's Snoga's Store and Post Office was the first brick building built in Panna Maria

