

CHAPTER VI -For Greater Things

In Chapter VI of "For Greater Things: The Story of Saint Stanislaus Kostka," the narrative shifts to Vienna, where the young Polish nobles, Paul and Stanislaus, encounter significant changes. Following the death of Emperor Ferdinand I, their Jesuit-run boarding school is closed due to the new Emperor Maximilian II reclaiming the building. Faced with the need to find new lodging while continuing their education as day scholars, they, under the guidance of their tutor Bilinski, settle in the spacious residence of Senator Kimberker, a Lutheran, located in the fashionable Platz Kiemark.

The mansion, despite its grandeur and the generous accommodation offered by Kimberker, brings unfamiliar challenges for Stanislaus. Notably, his spiritual and lifestyle differences soon clash with the more worldly pleasures favored by Paul and Bilinski. The house under Kimberker becomes a lively hub for gatherings, often marked by drinking and gambling, environments from which Stanislaus withdraws. This withdrawal is not from disdain but from a mismatch of values; while he remains polite and uncomplaining, his solitude grows.

Yet, Stanislaus's isolation becomes a fertile ground for deep spiritual growth. Unlike his brother and Bilinski, whose focus on entertainment grows in the absence of parental oversight, Stanislaus turns inward. His loneliness, rather than becoming a source of despair, leads him to seek companionship in the divine. He converts the mansion's empty spaces into places of prayer, where he communicates with God and the saints with the openness and sincerity of a return after a long absence.

Through these personal trials and the transformation of physical solitude into spiritual companionship, Stanislaus's character shines. His resilience, cheerfulness, and devoutness amidst the hedonistic lifestyle around him underscore his sanctity. The chapter highlights the stark differences in coping mechanisms among the youths far from home: while Paul and Bilinski immerse in temporal joys, Stanislaus finds solace and strength in his unwavering faith, turning the mansion into a sanctuary of quiet devotion and reflection.