

Harry Klein

The Tradition of a Częstochowa Family in Montreal

The *Częstochower landsmann*, Nathan Gelber, arrived in Montreal more than forty years ago. Here, in Montreal, he settled down financially, married and his wife gave him seven children - three sons and four daughters. The family currently consists of forty members - so may they multiply! They comprise of Nathan Gelber and his wife, three sons and three daughters-in-law, four daughters and four sons-in-law and twenty-four grandchildren.

When Nathan Gelber's children had grown up a little, he called them together, set seven packs of cigarettes on the table and gave them a talk on the dangers of smoking. After the talk, he told his children to take a cigarette from each pack, smoke it and convince themselves that it was not his intention to deprive them of the pleasures of smoking, but on the contrary, to shield them from the bad consequences of smoking.

Each of the children smoked a cigarette and, as none of them had ever smoked before, it had a negative effect on them. Each of them began choking from the smoke, sneezing and even vomiting. All the children threw away their cigarettes and each vowed, by shaking their father's hand, promised to never smoke in their lives.

Once the children had matured and potential matches were being considered, every future son or daughter-in-law was required to take this oath.

The result of this vow is that it has become a tradition in Nathan Gelber's family that none of them smoke – not the parents, the sons, daughters, daughters-in-law, sons-in-law or the grandchildren. On the contrary, they take every opportunity to convince others not to smoke.

Nathan Gelber is extremely proud of his decision to avoid smoking and he is known as such to all his friends and acquaintances.