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50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC METROPOLITAN CHURCH OF PITTSBURGH

by Cantor George Janocsko, reprinted with permission from the *Byzantine Catholic World*
Photos by Nick Havrilla, Sr.

The following is a transcript of a speech given by George Janocsko, cantor at Saint John the Baptist Cathedral in Munhall, PA, at the June 23 banquet celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh:

Glory to Jesus Christ! Slava Isusu Christu!

In 1895, the British author H.G. Wells wrote a famous novella called *The Time Machine*. Wells' work has been the inspiration for numerous books, movies and television programs in the genre of science fiction and pop culture.

I am sure that many of us have wondered would it would be like to travel back in time to witness some important event, to meet some famous person, or to just revisit some aspect of our own lives. In some sense, the study of history is a form of time travel. By

studying history, we seek to understand our past in order to enable us to shed light on the present and to guide our way in the future.

Today, we gather to remember events in the life of our Byzantine Catholic Church that occurred slightly more than fifty years ago. On Feb. 21, 1969, Pope Paul VI, who was proclaimed a saint just this past October, in recognition of the remarkable growth and the steadfast loyalty of Byzantine-Ruthenian Catholics in the United States, issued a decree officially creating the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church consisting of three eparchies (or dioceses): the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, first known as the Archeparchy of Munhall because this small borough was the location of the Cathedral; and two suffragan Eparchies: the Eparchy of Passaic, NJ, originally created in 1963; and the new Eparchy of Parma, OH,

created from the western territory of the former Munhall Eparchy.

I invite you now to take a few moments to share a ride with me on our own time machine as we briefly look back at the people and events that have shaped our Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church over the last 50 years. Our journey back in time begins of course in 1969 — the year of the creation of our Metropolitan Church. But first, let's provide some context. What was going on in 1969?

In 1969, Richard Nixon was the President of the United States. Our country was deeply embroiled in the Vietnam War and had 542,000 troops stationed in that country. The price of gasoline was 35 cents per gallon and the cost of a first-class postage stamp was six cents. The average price of a new car was \$3,270.

1969 saw the installation of the first automatic teller machine and the flight of the first 747 Jumbo jet.

At the time of Bishop Stephen Kocisko's installation as our first Metropolitan Archbishop on June 11, 1969, our country was still more than a month away from the launching of Apollo 11 and the landing of Neil Armstrong and Buzz

Aldrin on the surface of the moon.

In popular culture, there were only three television networks in 1969 and the most popular shows were *Gunsmoke*, *Bonanza*, and *Laugh-In*. The most popular books were *The Godfather* and *Slaughterhouse 5* and the top movies were *True Grit* and *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*.

Here in the Pittsburgh area in 1969, the steel industry was thriving. The mills located along Pittsburgh's three rivers continued to produce tons of various steel products.

Pittsburgh's landmark building, the US Steel Building, was still under construction in 1969 and would not be finished for another two years.

The local sports scene in Pittsburgh in 1969 was completely topsy turvey from what it is today. In 1969, the Pirates were good and the Steelers and Penguins were bad. In 1969, the Pirates were playing baseball at Forbes Field and were in the midst of a winning season. In 1969, the Steelers had just hired a new coach by the name of Chuck Noll in the hopes of changing

their traditional losing ways. The Penguins were only in the second year of existence, had a losing record and could only dream of making the Stanley Cup playoffs.

On a personal level, in the summer of 1969, I had just completed my junior year at Bishop Boyle High School and, that summer, my friends and I were wondering what it would be like to have traveled to the little music festival held on a farm in Woodstock, NY.

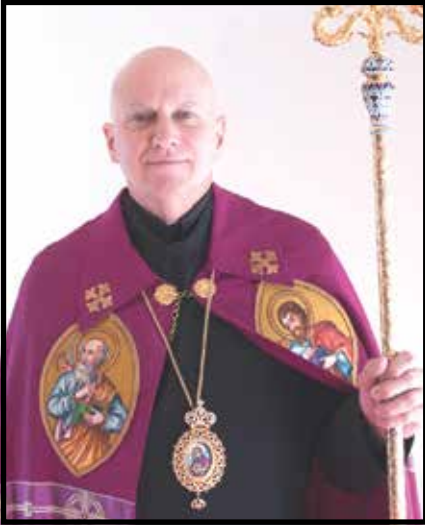
Here at Saint John Cathedral, the rector was the then ever-memorable then-Monsignor John Bilock. The Cathedral was located about a mile-and-a-half away from this present site at 10th and Dickson Streets. Our present rector, Father Andrew Deskevich, well, he hadn't been born yet!

Having provided the context for our journey back in time, we now shift our focus to the unfolding of the history of our Metropolitan Church. Several things of particular note stand out.

...continued on page 6



(left to right) H.E. Cardinal Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Metropolitan Archbishop William, and Father Edward Higgins



I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



A PLACE FOR CHRIST FOREVER

If you ever watched a television show on a Sunday morning between 1980 and 2006, you probably noticed a show called the “Hour of Power” hosted by Robert Schuller. It was the most watched religious show in the world for over twenty-five years. When Robert Schuller became too old to continue preaching, the show declined in popularity, and his family eventually was ousted from all positions. Schuller was a Dutch Reformed pastor from Iowa, third generation 100% Dutch. Just before his fifth birthday, a visiting uncle told him to become an evangelist, and Schuller said it was the most defining moment of his life. How many ministers can say they got the call when they were almost five? After ordination in the Dutch Reformed Church and working in Illinois, he moved to Garden Grove, CA. In 1955, he opened the Garden Grove Community Church in a rented former Baptist church and a drive-in theater four miles away. Each Sunday morning, he held a service at the church at 9:30, and then preached again at the drive-in theater. As his popularity grew, and his congregation, he purchased ten acres in Garden Grove for a new “walk-in drive-in” church. The new church was dedicated in late 1961, and people could sit in the church for a traditional church experience or sit outside in their cars to listen to the sermon as they did at the drive-in theater. Schuller certainly had his finger on the pulse of Southern California culture!

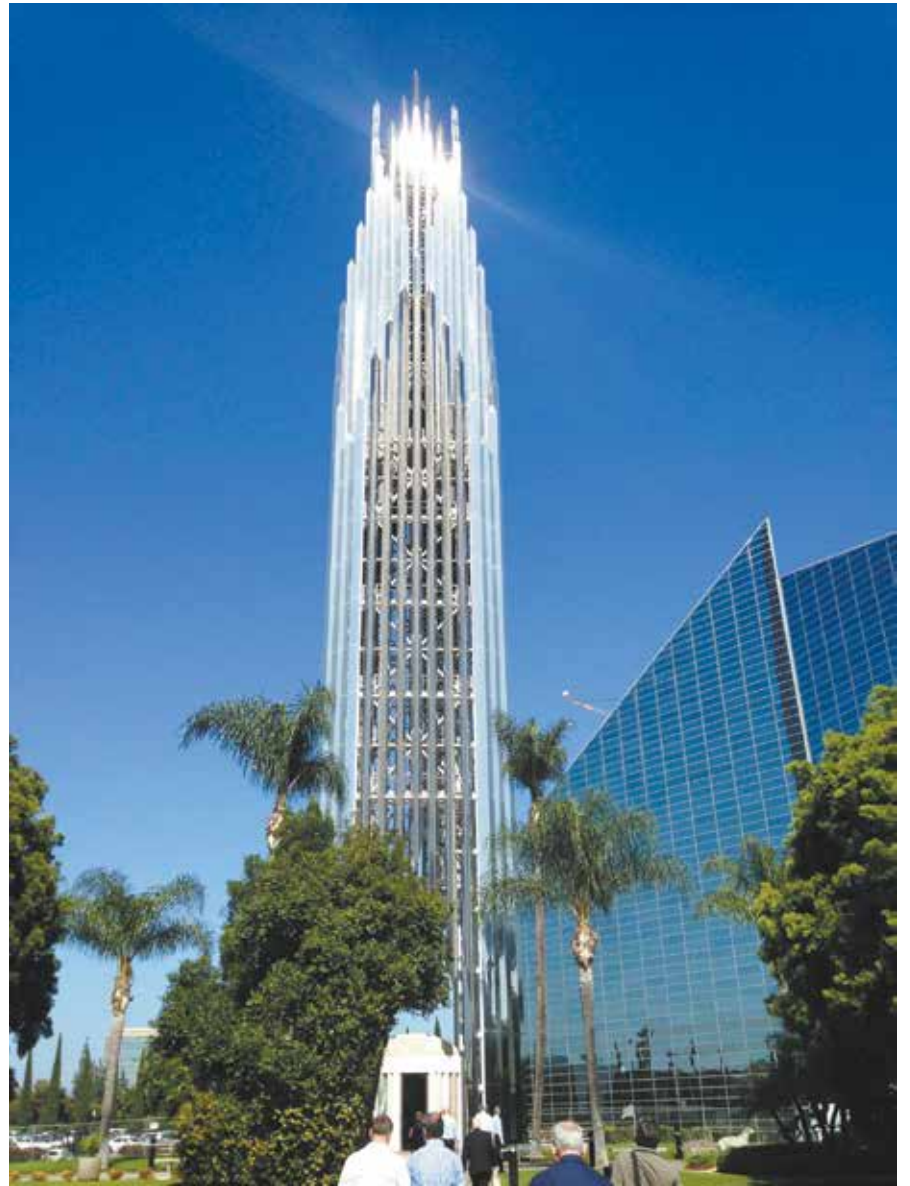
Schuller emphasized the positive parts of the Christian message, as he saw it, while avoiding condemning sinners. He claimed that “Jesus met needs before touting creeds.” (His slogan for his drive-in theater church was, “Come as you are in your family car!” He had a knack for rhyming slogans.) He wrote over 30 hardcover books, at least six of which were best sellers. You can get an idea of his “positive thinking” message just from the titles of his books, “Your Future is Your Friend,” “Move Ahead with Possibility Thinking,” “You Can Be the Person You Want to Be,” etc. I think his positive spin on the Christian message is best reflected in the title of his book about the Beatitudes which he titled, “The Be (Happy) Attitudes.” I remember as a seminarian in the mid 1980’s, whenever I went to a book store I would of course gravitate towards the religious section to supplement my education. It struck me as funny that in Southern California the religion books were always in the same section as the get-rich-in-real-estate books!

As the worldwide popularity of Schuller’s ministry grew, so did his church, and twenty years after the “walk-in drive-in” church, Schuller commissioned an enormous church filled with light. Completed in 1980, the building was made from over 10,000 pieces of glass. They were not bolted in place but fastened with silicone gel so as not to crack in an earthquake. Seating over 2000 people and completed in 1981, it was supposed to be the largest glass building in the world at the time. It houses one of the largest pipe organs in the world, the fifth largest according to some rankings. Expanded from an older Aeolian Skinner from New York City by the Italian company of Frascatti Brothers, it has 273 ranks encompassing over 16,000 pipes. It is in 16 divisions and can be played from either of two five manual organ consoles. Although the church was neither crystal nor a cathedral, it was named the “Crystal Cathedral.” At his first drive-in theater sermons, he stood on the tar-paper roof of the concession stand. He said later, “It was there I fell in love with the sky!”, and was inspired later to build the Crystal Cathedral.

With the retirement of Robert Schuller and the economic collapse of 2008, the Crystal Cathedral ministry fell on hard times and sought protection from creditors in the federal bankruptcy court in 2010. Large tracts of real estate are hard to come by in developed parts of Orange County, CA, one of the most expensive and densely populated places in America. A number of large institutions were eager to acquire the large campus including a university and a medical center.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange was looking for a site for a new cathedral, having long outgrown its original cathedral in Santa Ana. The Diocese of Orange submitted a bid close to \$50 million for the land and all the buildings. The bid by the Catholic diocese was by no means the largest bid; however, Robert Schuller personally intervened with the bankruptcy judge, pleading that the campus continue as a Christian church instead of a secular institution. The bankruptcy judge awarded the complex to the Roman Catholic diocese, although they were required to increase the bid a little. I suspect that he could not award it to a lesser bid under bankruptcy law unless all the creditors were paid. The largest bid was actually from an enormously well-funded medical center.

Robert Schuller was overjoyed that the Crystal Cathedral would continue as a Christian church. He said, “I did not build it for myself, but for Christ. I want it to be Christ forever.” He also said that he always wanted it to eventually belong to the “Mother Church” and that he was very happy that it was now owned by the “Mother Church.” At a presentation for the clergy of the Dio-



Exterior of the Christ Cathedral in Garden Grove, CA

cese of Orange, a few priests teared up when they heard this famous evangelical pastor call the Catholic Church the Mother Church and express his joy that his building was now part of the Catholic Church.

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Orange consecrated the new cathedral on July 17, 2019, and renamed the Crystal Cathedral as “Christ Cathedral.” The motto of the cathedral is “For Christ Forever,” and is based on the encouragement of Robert Schuller, “A place for Christ forever.” I believe the most beautiful part of the long ceremonies took place at the vespers service the night before when the relics were carried in procession to the new Cathedral. It is ancient tradition that a Catholic altar where the Eucharist is celebrated must have the relics of a martyr in the altar. This ancient custom originated when the early Christians celebrated the eucharistic mysteries in the catacombs on the tombs of martyrs. Because there were no tombs of martyrs in Constantinople, our own tradition developed that there are relics of a martyr sealed in the cloth that is kept on the altar under the Gospel book. That cloth is called the antimensation. You may have seen the priest unfold that cloth after the Gospel before he transfers the bread and wine from the side table. Until Vatican II, Roman Catholic military chaplains had to carry an altar stone containing relics when they traveled. To make things easier for them, our bishops consecrated hundreds of antimensia for military chaplains which

they carried into battle regions to have Mass for the troops. Occasionally a chaplain finds an old one in a military chapel somewhere in the world and mails it to our chancery.

The ceremony at the Orange Cathedral was very public and very solemn, raising awareness of the relics. There were quite a few relics, and many were chosen based on association with large ethnic populations of the Church in Orange County. There was a lot of incensing, even by our standards, and each relic was then carried by a deacon in a fine dalmatic accompanied by two people in beautiful ethnic costumes each carrying an oil lamp like the story of the wise and foolish virgins in the Gospel of Saint Matthew. (These were all wise virgins because they all had enough lamp oil.) The procession with the relics exited the vespers chapel and could be seen in the twilight solemnly approaching the great cathedral for the all-night vigil before the great bronze doors.

The auxiliary bishop who preached well at Vespers mentioned the relics and said that a young lady described them as “creepy.” It was a great disappointment to me that the bishop did not go on to explain anything about the ancient and scriptural doctrines of relics, but simply mentioned the ties to local ethnic communities. Indeed, the protestant reformers targeted relics for destruction and called them “superstition.” In England, the shrine of Saint Thomas à Becket was destroyed by Henry VIII. No wonder—Saint

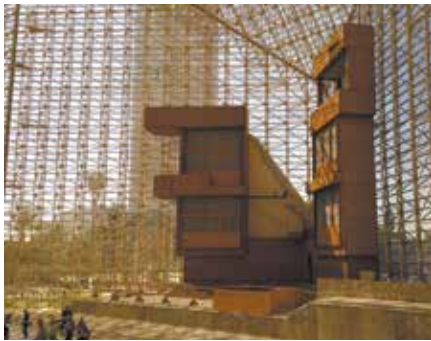
Thomas stood up to an earlier king and paid with his life. The reformers claimed to be cleansing the church of superstitious accretions and followed a policy of *sola scriptura*—“only scriptures.” But is there anything in the Bible to support the veneration of relics? There most certainly is! In the Old Testament, we read that after the death of the great prophet Elisha, his disciples dug a grave and deposited his body. Another funeral procession was interrupted by marauders, so the mourners tossed the corpse into the tomb of Elisha, and as soon as it touched the bones of Elisha the man returned to life. And in the New Testament we read, “God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that touched him were taken to the sick and their illnesses were cured, and evil demons left them.” At the very beginning of the Church, we read in the Martyrdom of Polycarp that after he was martyred, his body was burned, and the early Christians write, “Accordingly, we afterwards took up his bones, as being more precious than the most exquisite jewels, and more purified than gold, and deposited them in a fitting place, whither, being gathered together, as opportunity is allowed us, with joy and rejoicing, the Lord shall grant us to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom, both in memory of those who have already finished their course, and for the exercising and preparation of those yet to walk in their steps.” Saint Polycarp was the bishop of Smyrna and a friend of Saint John the Evangelist.

So, we see the veneration of martyrs is not only found in the Bible and is a continuous tradition of the Church but is also one of the ways that we recognize the sacredness of our physical bodies. Showing respect for the human body even after death is an essential part of our faith, our belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God. In the Old Testament, God commands respect even for the corpses of criminals, so that the Jews did not mistreat the dead bodies of their enemies the way other people did (and still do today). Despite the worship of the flesh in our culture, the popular metaphysics holds that the real person is the spiritual part. But Christian and Jewish metaphysics says that we are a unity of body and soul and that the body is just as sacred as the soul. The modern hatred for chastity is rooted in this failure to recognize the divine image in the body. True love of your own flesh is a virtue based on the divine image in you. So, you see, the veneration of the relics of the saints is a deep theology rooted not only in scriptural events and continuous tradition, but also in our most basic beliefs about who we are and who God is.

The relics placed in the altar at Christ Cathedral, also called the Crystal Cathedral, include a couple of saints who were not martyrs, namely Saint Junipe-

ro Serra the Franciscan evangelizer and civilizer of upper and lower California, and Saint John Paul the Pope of Rome. The relics also include first class relics of the “North American Martyrs.” This title refers to a number of Jesuit missionaries who were killed while preaching the Gospel to the Native American tribes in Canada and the United States in the 1600’s. They were canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1930, and represent all North Americans, although they were all French.

If you travel around the American Catholic Church, you will find a large number of Vietnamese Catholics. As a matter of fact, Vietnam has had a large Catholic population for centuries, despite intense persecution (or because of intense persecution). I noticed during the “Vietnam War” that our news media never mentioned the large Catholic population there. I assume the news media had their own reasons for misrepresenting the nature of the country. The fake news was even more powerful then, before the internet loosened up their monopoly. The actual number of Catholics martyred for their faith in Vietnam during the 18th and 19th centuries is believed to be between 130,000 and 300,000. The cruelty of the martyrdoms was unimaginable. Limbs were cut off one joint at a time—the “death by a thousand cuts.” Christians were branded on the face. A representative sample of 117 martyrs whose names are known were canonized on June 19, 1988, by Saint John Paul and their feast day is November



The main organ with all the pipes removed for restoration

24. The most famous of the Vietnamese martyrs is Saint Andrew Dong Lac. A bone of Saint Andrew is in the altar of the new cathedral, a gift from the Archdiocese of Hanoi.

The history of the Catholic Church in Korea is unusual and fascinating. It was a classed society with a small aristocracy and a large very poor underclass (much like North Korea today). Some of the educated class chose the Catholic faith by studying it with no contact with Catholic missionaries. They sent to Beijing asking for priests and bishops. When a priest from China finally was allowed to enter Korea, he found a community of 4,000 Catholics who had never seen a priest. During the early 1800’s, there was a fierce persecution in Korea producing between 8,000 and 10,000 martyrs. The first Korean to become a priest was Saint Andrew

Kim Taegon. While awaiting martyrdom in prison, his last letter to his flock begins with, “My dear brothers and sisters, know this: Our Lord Jesus Christ, after descending into the world, took countless pains and constituted the holy Church through His own passion and increases it through the passion of its faithful.” He was canonized in May 1984, by Saint John Paul along with 102 Korean martyrs. A relic of Saint Andrew Kim Taegon is in the altar of Christ Cathedral. If you look in old books, you will most often find Korea spelled Corea. There is a popular story in Korea that the Japanese changed the spelling during their occupation so that Korea would have to march after Japan at the Olympics.

Most Americans consider Mexico to be a solidly Catholic country, and indeed it is among the common people. Few Americans are aware that the governments of Mexico have been anti-Catholic since the invasion by the United States in 1846-1848. In fact, it was illegal for a priest to wear clerics outside of a church in Mexico until recently—the law was changed for the visit of Pope John Paul II. Especially in the early twentieth century, large numbers of clergy and religious in Mexico were murdered by the government. Some of this story was recently revealed to the US public in the movie “For Greater Glory” (now available on Netflix and other internet services). One of the Mexican martyrs is Saint Justin Orona Madrigal. Being from a very poor family, he founded a community to serve

the persecution when it was a capital crime to be a priest. His pastoral assignment was to replace another priest who was martyred. He was killed while kneeling in prayer and the soldiers deposited his naked body in the city square. The people placed his body in the church at Cuquío where it is venerated today. There are relics of all three of these great Mexican martyrs in the new Christ Cathedral of the Diocese of Orange, Saint Justino, Saint Rafael, and Saint Atilano.

In his letter to the Colossians, Saint Paul says, “I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of His body, that is, the Church.” Saint Paul was himself martyred in Rome during the reign of Nero. And as Saint Andrew was quoted above, Christ “constituted the holy Church through his own passion and increases it through the passion of its faithful.” Tertullian said in the summer of 197 AD, “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” And in our own Church on the Feast of All Saints we sing, “Your Church has been cloaked with the blood of martyrs.” (In the Roman Empire, a purple cloak was a sign of rank.) Bishop Todd Brown had a great vision when he set in motion the purchase of the Crystal Cathedral. His successor Bishop Kevin Vann has brought to completion the work. Bishop Vann is to be commended for the sublime and informative ceremony carrying the relics of the martyrs to their new home in the altar



Interior of Christ Cathedral during renovation

the poor, especially orphans and poor children. He was shot by federal forces in 1928 while shouting “Viva Cristo Rey!” It’s interesting that communists often target clergy who help the poor, while claiming to help the poor themselves. Saint Rafael Guízar y Valencia was a Mexican bishop known for caring for the sick. He died of his wounds from the revolutionaries in 1938. Saint Atilano Cruz Alvarado was an illiterate cattle herder until his parents sent him for an education. He attended seminary and was ordained at the height of

of Christ Cathedral. If you visit Orange County, CA, don’t just visit Disneyland and Knott’s Berry Farm. Make time to visit the Crystal Cathedral, now Christ Cathedral, a “place for Christ forever.” And make time to meditate on the great mystery of Christ’s passion and the place of martyrs in God’s plan.

+Kurt Bunnett

THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PASSAIC subscribes to the
Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Eparchy, within all its parishes, institutions and programs, is committed to assuring a safe environment in ministry for its children and young people that conforms to Charter requirements. For further information regarding the Eparchial Safe Environment Program please contact:

Father David J. Baratelli, Ed.S., M.Div. • Safe Environment Program Coordinator • 973.890.7777
Dr. Maureen Daddona, Ph.D. • Victim’s Assistance Coordinator • 516.623.6456



PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

IN CARY...

Cary Men's Group Activities

The men's group at Saints Cyril and Methodius Parish, Cary, NC, has had a busy first half of the year. The annual *Saint Nicholas Tree* fundraiser, in which parishioners pledge small amounts of money to assist the needy at Christmas was a huge success. We were able to send \$805.00 to the Saint Nicholas Village of Mercy, an orphanage in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast, Ukraine. The sisters, who were not expecting our gift, report that it arrived in perfect time to help them defray the costs of winter heating. In this way, we truly acted in the spirit of Saint Nicholas!

In March, the men traveled to southern Virginia to farmland owned by the eparchy to clear trees and branches downed by the two hurricanes to hit the property in the previous six months and repair a barn roof, while enjoying the rustic beauty of the area, and building fellowship through manual labor and the praying of the Royal Hours. Father Mark Shuey, Parish Administrator, encouraged us to contemplate the role of the Christian man in our families, our parish and our community.

In May and June, the men organized to replace two of the three wooden doors on our church, as well as some damaged fascia boards. Donated supplies, and the skilled labor of the volunteers made a real improvement in the function and appearance of the building.

And, on Mother's Day, the men cooked a barbecue feast for the entire parish, in honor of all of the women in the parish.



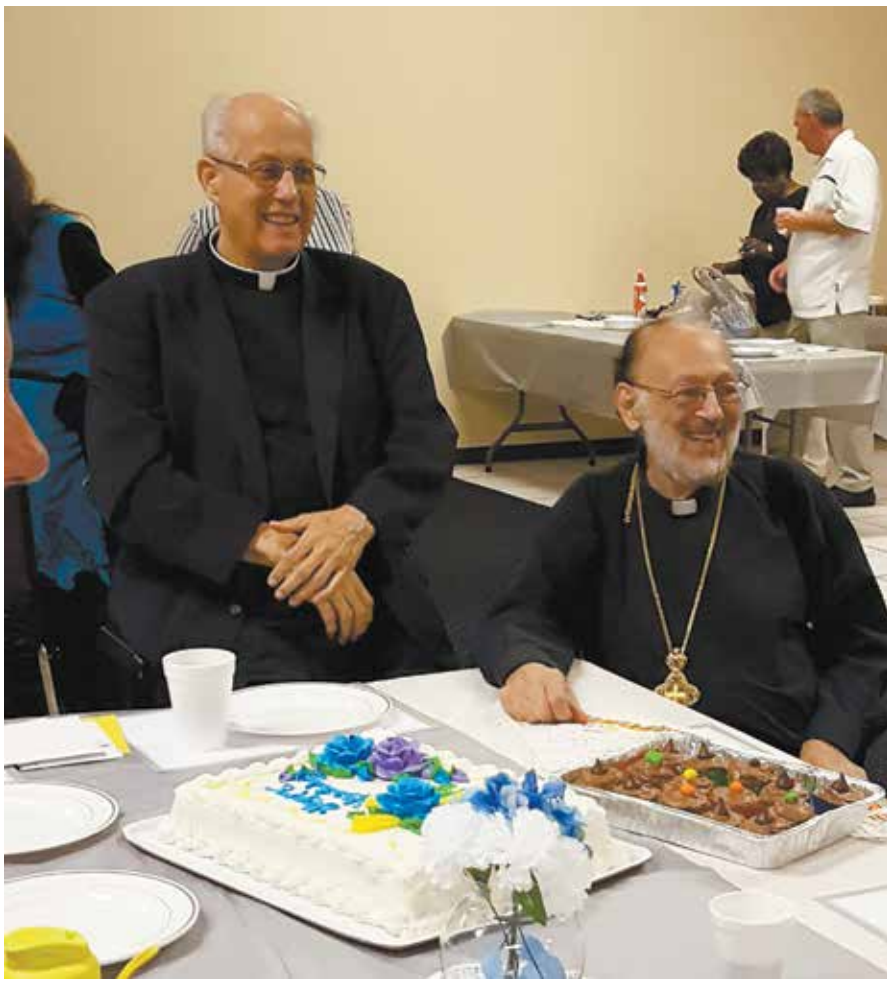
Four members of the Saints Cyril & Methodius men's group clearing fallen trees and limbs on rural property owned by the Eparchy of Passaic in southern Virginia. From left to right: Justin McCarty, Phillip Tooley, Joe Deaton, and Dan Pope

IN MIAMI...

Birthday celebration in Miami:

On June 30, 2019, the members and friends of Saint Basil Catholic Church in Miami, FL, not only celebrated the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, but also the birthdays of two friends who are serving the parish. Father John Fink and Father Ed Kakaty have a lengthy relationship with Saint Basil Parish that was nurtured through a long-time friendship with +Father Peter Lickman, of blessed memory, many years ago. Father Ed Kakaty, a retired priest of the Melkite Greek Catholic Eparchy, began serving the parish community in November 2017. Recently, Father Ed fell and broke his shoulder and is healing in a rehab center. Father John did not hesitate to step up and once again serve the needs of the parish as he has done in the past. In thanksgiving for their many years of service to Saint Basil Parish, the parish commu-

nity celebrated both of their birthdays with a dinner in their honor. Father Michael Kane is the administrator of Saint Basil Parish.



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IN MYRTLE BEACH...

Clergy Vacation and Celebrate Liturgy for Mission Church

Blessed Basil Hopko Byzantine Catholic Mission in Myrtle Beach, SC, was honored to have visits from Father Martin Vavrak, Father Mykhaylo Farynets, Father Ihor Voronstov, Father Mykhaylo Prodanets, and Father Yaroslav Koval as celebrants for Sunday Divine Liturgies. Father Joseph Bertha presented the mission with a relic of its heavenly patron, Blessed Basil Hopko. Father Canon Timoney is the administrator of Blessed Basil Hopko Mission.



Relic of Blessed Basil Hopko obtained by Father Joseph Bertha



Father Martin Vavrak celebrates Liturgy on June 16



Father Mykhaylo Farynets celebrates Liturgy on June 30



Father Mykhaylo Prodanets and Father Ihor Voronstov celebrate Liturgy on July 7



Father Ihor Voronstov celebrates liturgy on July 14



Father Yaroslav Koval celebrates liturgy on July 21



Father Yaroslav Koval blesses cars on July 21



Father Yaroslav Koval blesses cars on July 21

BYZANTINE WOMEN’S DAY OF RECOLLECTION

Women came from the north, south, east and west, the Eparchies of Passaic and Parma, to attend the Byzantine Women’s Day of Recollection which was held on July 13th, 2019. On a beautiful sunny day, seventeen women traveled from PA, VA, NJ, and OH, to go to Holy Dormition Byzantine Franciscan Monastery, Sybertsville, PA, to form a community of their own for the day, to pray, sing, meditate and learn from the wonderful conferences given by Father Jerome Wolbert, OFM. Father Jerome gave us an in depth look at some of the women

of the Bible from the Old and the New Testaments and how we can live as Jesus taught us by following the examples of these women. After a day that began with Divine Liturgy and continued with conferences, good food, fellowship, confessions, rosary, prayer and song the women said their goodbyes with the anticipation of seeing each other at our next Women’s Day of Recollection next year.



Over the expanse of the past 50 years, we have seen a dramatic geographic change in the constitution of our Church. No longer is our Church located primarily in the industrial areas of the Eastern and the Mid-Western United States and no longer are our churches exclusively in urban areas. Instead, our churches can be found throughout the entirety of our nation in areas that had no prior experience with the Byzantine Rite. Thus, we have seen the establishment of our churches in the South, the Southwest and the Northwest — in states like Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Oregon and Washington. In the western United States, the creation of so many Byzantine Catholic churches led our bishops to call for the creation of a fourth eparchy and in December, 1981, Pope Saint John Paul II officially created the Eparchy of Van Nuys, CA, now known as the Eparchy of the Holy Protection of Mary of Phoenix.

Even here in the Pittsburgh Archeparchy, this geographic shift can be seen by the establishment of Byzantine Catholic parishes in such suburban Pittsburgh areas as Monroeville, Gibsonia, North Huntington, and Upper Saint Clair, PA.

In addition to the geographic change, we have seen an ethnic and cultural change within our Church. In his homily at the Liturgy commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of a formal administrative structure known as an exarchate (or mission territory) for Byzantine Catholics in the United States, held at the David Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh on Oct. 3, 1999, the late Metropolitan Archbishop Judson (Procyk) called upon us to enter “the new Christian millennium as an American Byzantine Catholic Church.” Archbishop Judson declared, “We reject the notion of a Byzantine-Ruthenian diaspora in the United States. We are a multi-ethnic church. Christ, His Gospel and His Church cannot be confined or restricted by ethnicity.”

Our journey next takes us to a brief examination of the prominent people and events that have shaped our church over the past fifty years. The speed of our time machine permits us to touch upon them only briefly.

We have had five Metropolitan Archbishops during the past 50 years. Each has made his own unique imprint upon our church.

Under the leadership of our first Metropolitan Archbishop, Stephen (Kocisko), the theology department at the seminary was reopened and new programs were instituted in pastoral and field ministry. A renewed emphasis on Eastern theological traditions and practices consistent with the decrees of the Second Vatican Council was initiated. With the cooperation of his fellow hierarchs, Archbishop Stephen was able to obtain the last available space in the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington and, in 1974, erected a beautiful chapel



H. E. Leonardo Cardinal Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, and Metropolitan Archbishop William

to coincide with the Golden Jubilee celebration of the establishment of the Byzantine Catholic exarchate. This chapel serves as impressive reminder to the many visitors to the Shrine of the presence of Byzantine Catholics in the United States.

The late 1980s and early 1990s also witnessed the collapse of communism in central and eastern Europe. In February 1990, our hierarchs led a large group of American Byzantine Catholic clergy, religious, and faithful back on a historic journey to the Carpatho-Rusyn homelands to reunite with our European brethren who were enjoying freedom of worship after 40 years of suppression and persecution.



Bishop John Pazak Eparch of Phoenix, Metropolitan Archbishop William C. Skurla, Metropolitan Archbishop Fülöp Kocsis Archbishop of Hajdúdorog, and Bishop Kurt Burnette

Bishop Thomas (Dolinay) became the second Metropolitan Archbishop upon Archbishop Stephen's retirement. It was Metropolitan Thomas's desire to give the Archeparchy a more prominent public profile and to better organize its operations. Consistent with that vision, he moved the Chancery and other administrative offices to downtown Pittsburgh, and established a central financial accounting system for the parishes. Unfortunately, Metropolitan Thomas' sudden and unexpected passing prevented him from fully implementing his vision for our Church.

On Feb. 7, 1995, Monsignor Judson Procyk, who served as the rector of this Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist for more than 22 years, was ordained a bishop and was enthroned as the Metropolitan Archbishop in the new Cathedral that he constructed. Metropolitan Judson's tenure lasted slightly more than six years. But that relatively brief time witnessed prominent and important change in the life of Archeparchy as Metropolitan Judson moved our Church to a more faithful adherence to Eastern traditions and practices.

Within the framework of the recently published Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, Metropolitan Judson established new norms for the

with an exchange of the kiss of peace during the 75th Anniversary liturgical celebration held in October, 1999.

Bishop Basil (Schott), the bishop of the Parma Eparchy, became Metropolitan Archbishop in 2002. One of Archbishop Basil's first undertakings was to name personnel and to create and organize the policies and procedures necessary for the archeparchy to be in compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth as mandated that year by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Archbishop Basil also continued the warming of relations with our Orthodox cousins and developed a close relationship with Metropolitan Nicholas of the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of Johnstown. During his tenure, our Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius received accreditation from the Association of Theology Schools (ATS).

Our present Metropolitan, Archbishop William Skurla, became the fifth Metropolitan of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church and the eighth head of the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh on April 18, 2012. His tenure has witnessed the lifting of the 1929 prohibition on married men becoming priests and the welcoming of clergy from Ukraine and Slovakia to serve in our parishes. Metropolitan William's tenure also has seen a marked expansion of programs at our seminary.

Fifty years of hindsight also provides us with the opportunity to look back and reflect upon life within our own individual parishes each with their unique rhythms and flows in harmony with the liturgical calendar of our Church — the liturgies at Christmas, the services during the Great Fast, Holy Week and Pascha — the many social events of our parishes such as the parish festivals, the picnics, and, of course, the wonderful food. We also remember our parishes coming together at the annual Byzantine Catholic Family Days at nearby Kenneywood Park; the annual Saint Nicholas Day Banquets; and that wonderful Labor Day weekend tradition — the pilgrimage at Mount Saint Macrina in Uniontown hosted by the good Sisters of Saint Basil. Finally, we fondly recall the dedicated priests who have faithfully served our parishes over the past fifty years, often times caring for multiple churches.

Our journey back in time in our imaginary time machine ends here at this present moment. Unlike H.G. Wells' time machine, our time machine cannot go forward to give us a glimpse of the future. So where do we go from here?

Gerry Spence is one of this nation's most prominent, flamboyant and skilled trial attorneys. In his closing arguments to the jury at the end of a trial, Attorney Spence often times would tell a story. I believe that his little story speaks to us about the present moment in the history of our Byzantine Catholic Church.

Once there was a wise old man and a smart-aleck young man. The young

administration of the sacraments of initiation, instituted a diaconate program, reestablished the Cantors' Institute to promote better congregational singing, and began an archeparchial choir. Additionally, he directed the preparation and publication of annual financial reports to promote greater openness about the financial situation of the archeparchy. Archbishop Judson also was instrumental in the remarkable warming of relations with the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of Johnstown, most visibly demonstrated

man was driven by a single desire — to expose and embarrass the wise old man as a fool. The smart aleck young man had a plan. He had captured a small and fragile bird in the forest. With the bird cupped in his hands so that the old man could not see it, the young man’s scheme was to approach the old man and ask, “Old man, what do I have in my hand?” To which the wise old man would reply, “You have a bird, my son.” Then the young man would ask, “Old man, is the bird alive or is it dead?” If the old man replied that it was dead, the boy would open his hands and allow the bird to fly off into the forest. But if the old man replied that the bird was alive, the young man would crush the bird inside his cupped hands until it was dead. Then the boy would open his hands and say,

“See, the bird is dead! See, you are not as wise as you think, old man.”

And so, the smart-aleck young man went to the old man, and he said, as planned, “Old man, what do I have in my hands?” The old man, as predicted, replied, “You have a bird, my son.” “Old man,” the young man then said with disdain, “is the bird alive or is it dead?”

Whereupon the old man looked at the young man with his kindly old eyes and replied, “My son. The bird is in your hands. He repeated, “The bird is in your hands.”

It is then that Mr. Spence would face the jury with cupped hands and say, “And so, too, ladies and gentlemen, the fate of my client, the very life of my client, is in your hands.”

My friends, today the bird also is in our hands. The bird that is in our cupped hands is our precious American Byzantine Catholic Church.

We hold in our hands a tremendous legacy of faith exemplified by our distinctive and glorious liturgy, theology, spirituality, and traditions. Will we suffocate that legacy of faith by our indifference and inattention?

Or will we, guided by the good Spirit, remain faithful stewards of this great legacy of faith and rededicate ourselves to the task of strengthening and renewing our Church to meet the challenges of the present age and the ages to come?

With trust in Almighty God and through the intercession of our blessed

and glorious Lady, the Theotokos, I am sure that I express for all here today our collective hope that fifty years from now when the 100th Anniversary of the establishment of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolia is commemorated that we, the members of this generation, will be remembered as faithful and steadfast stewards of our great legacy of faith.

Thank you for your kind attention. God bless our Holy Father, Pope Francis. God bless our God-loving Bishops, clergy and religious. And may God bless us - the faithful of our Byzantine Catholic Church.

New DAMASCUS ARCHBISHOP EAGER TO GIVE HOPE TO TIRED FAITHFUL

By Doreen Abi Raad, Catholic News Service

BEIRUT (CNS) -- After eight years of war, the faithful in Damascus, Syria, are “so tired,” said their new bishop, Syriac Catholic Archbishop John Jihad Battah. Nevertheless, he is returning to his birthplace with enthusiasm.

“I want to help the people, to give them hope to stay in their country,” Archbishop Battah told Catholic News Service ahead of his episcopal ordination in Damascus July 28.

“In all my missions, in Italy, in Lebanon, I was obeying the call of the church. This is the first time I feel great joy and happiness in a new mission, to be going back to Syria,” the 63-year-old archbishop said. He served in Lebanon for the last eight years as bishop for the patriarchal diocese of Beirut and previously in Rome for seven years.

“The most important thing is to take care of the people,” Archbishop Battah said of his new mission. His motto as archbishop is Luke 22:27: “I am among you as the one who serves.”

Damascus did not experience a mass exodus like in war-torn dioceses such

as Aleppo. In the Syriac Catholic Archdiocese of Damascus, there are about 1,000 families, compared to about 1,200 families before the war, the archbishop said.

However, the sanctions against Syria are taking a toll on the Syrian people.

“It’s leading people to leave the country to search for a better future,” he stressed.

“The economic situation is very bad. Everyone is in need now,” he said. The cost of basic necessities has skyrocketed, and medicine is very expensive. “People are dying from lack of medicine.”

“We need prayers for the removal of sanctions. If the sanctions are removed, the people can at least live with dignity,” Archbishop Battah said.

The government in Syria “is a positive government that respects all religions,” Archbishop Battah noted.

He cited the Syriac Catholic youth gathering in Damascus in early July, when Syrian President Bashar Assad visited with the more than 200 young



Syriac Catholic Archbishop John Jihad Battah

people for three hours, answering their questions in an open forum.

Archbishop Battah said his “main mission is to give Christians hope in the future, to stay in their country.”

“My message to the West is to help the Christians in the Middle East to stay in their homelands. Their presence is vital,” the archbishop said, noting that Christians are an “equilibrium, a bridge between all the religions.”

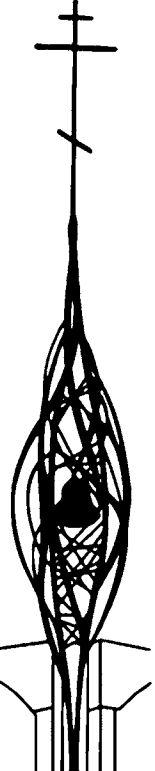
“The Christians are the light of the world. The light should stay in the Middle East,” Archbishop Battah said.

CHURCH SLAVONIC DIVINE LITURGY

With Homily Ponašemu

Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church at 8:30 AM
(Saint Mary’s Ruthenian Greek Catholic Church, Inc.)
246 East 15th Street, New York, New York 10003
Telephone: 212-677-0516
Email: Fredcimbala@gmail.com
Father Edward G. Cimbala, D.Min.—Pastor

Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church, 246 East 15th Street, New York, NY, will offer the Divine Liturgy celebrated in Church Slavonic with the homily preached ponašemu. The celebrant and homilist is Father Gregory Lozinsky, Administrator of Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Jersey City, NJ. This Divine Liturgy is being established as an outreach for people from Eastern Europe with the blessing of Bishop Kurt Burnette, Eparch of Passaic, NJ, at the request of Bishop Milan Šašik, Eparch of Mukachevo, Ukraine. Saint Mary Parish is located on the corner of East 15th Street and Second Avenue and is easily accessible by subway. The 14th Street-Union Square Subway stop is less than a ten-minute walk. Everyone is invited. For more information, please contact Father Gregory Lozinsky at 201-333-2975.



Visiting New York City?

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Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church
Father Edward G. Cimbala, D.Min.—Pastor
246 East 15th Street, Manhattan, New York
212-677-0516

Sunday Divine Liturgy
8:30 AM – Church Slavonic & Homily Ponašemu
10:00 AM
6:00 PM

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warmly invite you to the
85th Annual Pilgrimage
in honor of
Our Lady of Perpetual Help
August 31 & September 1, 2019*

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SISTERS OF SAINT BASIL TO CELEBRATE 85TH ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE

Pilgrimage Time by Sister Elaine Kisinko, OSBM

Summer 2019: What do we need? Fewer rainy days and damaging storms? Less bickering and competition among our civic leaders so they could work together for good and effective government? More people to come to church? Crime and violence to be gone? Peace throughout the world? Healing and health for those who are suffering? Healing the pain of broken relationships? This list could go on and on, and these are but a few of the ills with which we struggle in this time in which we live.

However imperfect we think our lives may be with questions such as these, this is the gift of time that God has given to each of us in which to live every day as best we can. In recognizing this, we pray to Him in thanksgiving, for help, healing, peace, consolation, etc. We pray personally, communally at the Divine Liturgy and at special times, places or occasions. One such special time, place and occasion is, of course the annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help at Mt. St. Macrina in Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

This coming Labor Day weekend will be the 85th time that the hierarchy, clergy, monastics and faithful people will have gathered to give glory to God and to honor His Mother as Our Lady of Perpetual Help. They come to pray, receive the mysteries of healing, and to reunite as Byzantine Catholic Church. I have often referred to the Pilgrimage as a “phenomenon of God’s grace,” simply because it has endured for these many years through times good and bad, with peaks and declines, and despite inevitable constant change. The 85 years certainly stand as a testimony to its significance and worth.

This year the days of Pilgrimage include September 1, the beginning of the Liturgical year. The troparion for the day most significantly prays as follows: O Lord, maker of the universe who alone has power over seasons and time, bless this year with your bounty, preserve our country in safety and keep your people in peace. Save us through the prayers of the Mother of God.

Kindly consider the gracious invitation of our bishops and the Sisters of Saint Basil to attend the Pilgrimage this year. Bring your hopes, petitions, cares and concerns to our Lord and His Mother, and please know that the gift and blessing of your presence and your prayers are most welcome.

The 85th Annual Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help will be held at Mount Saint Macrina, August 31 and September 1, 2019. This year’s theme is *Mary, Cause of Our Joy*.

“As we approach the 85th Pilgrimage, we invite everyone to become a true pilgrim. Come open to discover the God who longs to fill your every true need,” said Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM, Provincial.

Those who plan on attending the Pilgrimage can chose from a variety of accommodations, including camping on the racetrack, Pilgrim houses (first-come, first-served), hotels, motels or bed and breakfasts. Further information is available regarding camping and a complete list of accommodations can be found at www.sistersofstbasil.org

A light menu will be available at the lunch stand beginning on Friday evening.

In addition to the scheduled services, programs and events to be held on Saturday and Sunday, Liturgical prayers will be held at the Shrine Altar on Friday evening and Divine Liturgy will be celebrated on Monday morning, September 2.

PILGRIMAGE SCHEDULE

Friday, August 30

7:00 PM Office of Small Compline at Shrine Altar

Saturday, August 31

7:00 a.m. - 12 noon Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) - House of Prayer Patio

OPENING OF PILGRIMAGE

8:00 AM Matins at Shrine Altar

9:45 AM Procession with icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help from House of Prayer to Shrine Altar

10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY

Welcome: Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM

The Divine Liturgy will be followed by procession to Lourdes Grotto for the Solemn Blessing of Water. The Procession will return to the House of Prayer at the conclusion of the Blessing.

1:00 – 5:00 PM Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) House of Prayer Patio

1:00 PM Moleben at Shrine Altar

2:00 PM Children’s Pilgrimage at Children’s Tent
Orientation for Teens at Prayer Garden
Enrichment Session at Trinity Center
Mystery of Anointing at Shrine Altar
Festal Icon Shrine Walk

3:00 PM Teen Pilgrimage at Prayer Garden

4:00 PM Vespers with Divine Liturgy at Shrine Altar

6:00 PM Enrichment Session at Mausoleum

7:15 PM Procession from House of Prayer to Mount Macrina Cemetery

11:30 PM Compline at Dormition Shrine

Sunday, September 1

7:00 a.m. Matins at Shrine Altar

7:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy - House of Prayer Chapel

7:30 a.m. 12 Noon Mystery of Reconciliation (Confession)

House of Prayer Patio

8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy - Slavonic - Shrine Altar

10:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy - Shrine Altar

12:30 - 5:00 PM Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions)

House of Prayer Patio

1:00 PM Children’s Procession with Special Blessing for Youth & Young Adults - from House of Prayer to Mother of God Shrine

1:30 - 2:30 PM Mystery of Reconciliation (Confession for the infirm, sick and physically challenged) Manor Gazebo

2:00 PM Children’s Pilgrimage at Children’s Tent

Enrichment Session at Trinity Center

Teen Pilgrimage at Prayer Garden

Mystery of Anointing at Shrine Altar

3:45 PM Procession from House of Prayer to - Mother of God Shrine

4:00 PM DIVINE LITURGY - Mother of God Shrine

Homilist: Bishop Gregory Mansour,

Eparchy of Saint Maron, Brooklyn, NY

Words of Gratitude: Sister Ruth Plante, O.S.B.M.

7:15 PM Procession from House of Prayer to - Mother of God Shrine

7:30 PM CANDLELIGHT PROCESSION - (Beginning and ending at the Mother of God Shrine)

CLOSING OF THE PILGRIMAGE

Following the Candlelight Procession:

TEEN SOCIAL Prayer Garden Area

YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL Trinity Center

Compline at Dormition Shrine

Monday, September 2

9:30 AM DIVINE LITURGY at Shrine Altar

The Pilgrimage holds the distinction of being the oldest and the largest Byzantine Catholic Pilgrimage in the country.

The planning for this year’s Pilgrimage started not long after the 84th Annual Pilgrimage. The Sisters and volunteers did the first preparations of the grounds on June 2. The next preparation day is Saturday, August 18. Anyone who is interested in volunteering can contact Sister Joanne Lickvar at 724.438.8644.

Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate

65th Holy Dormition (Assumption) Pilgrimage Schedule

Saturday, August 10

12:00 pm Food Available at *Pavilion*
1:00 pm Akathist to the Mother of God – Rev. Joseph Bertha – *Saint Mary’s Chapel*
Cantor: Patricia Dietz, Saint Thomas Byzantine in Rahway, NJ
1:00 PM Children’s Activity – Sister Eliane, SSMI – Inside Terrace
2:00 PM Presentation – Sister Natalya Stoczany, SSMI (Eng.) – *Gallery*
“Responding with the heart, as did Mary and Josaphata”
3:30 PM Blessing of the Sick – *Grotto steps and Saint Mary’s Chapel*
Blessing of Religious Articles – *front of Saint Joseph’s Home*
5:00 PM Divine Liturgy – Rev. Hryhorii Lozinsky - *Grotto*
Blessing of Holy Water at *Saint Mary’s fountain*
Cantor: Patricia Dietz
7:30 PM Panakhyda – *Blessed Mother’s Circle in front of Saint Mary’s Villa*
8:00 PM Moleben to the Mother of God with candlelight procession - *Grotto*
Most Rev. Kurt Burnette – Bishop of Passaic Eparchy - main celebrant / homilist

Sunday, August 11

***Confessions will be available throughout the day beginning at 8:00 AM**
8:30 – 9:30 AM Materi Molitvy/Mothers in Prayer – Rosary/Singing – *Saint Mary’s Chapel*
10:30 AM **Pontifical Divine Liturgy** with procession to the Grotto –blessing of flowers
Most Rev. Borys Gudziak – Metropolitan Archbishop - *Celebrant and Homilist*
Most Rev. Paul Chomnycky, OSBM, Bishop of the Eparchy of Stamford

Most Rev. Bohdan Danylo – Bishop of the Eparchy of Parma
Most Rev. Benedict Aleksiychuk – Bishop of the Eparchy of Chicago
Most Rev. Andriy Rabi - Auxiliary Bishop of the Archeparchy of Philadelphia
Most Rev. John Bura – Auxiliary Bishop of the Archeparchy of Philadelphia
Most Rev. Basil Losten, Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Stamford
Choir: *Saint Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church – New Haven, CT*
12:00 PM Divine Liturgy for the Youth – Rev. Bohdan Hedz – *Saint Mary’s Chapel*
1:30 PM Blessing of the Sick – *Grotto steps*
Blessing of Religious Articles - *front of Saint Joseph’s Home*
2:00 PM Presentation – Msgr. John Terlecky (Ukr.) – *Gallery*
The Contemplative Nature of the lives of Mary and Josaphata – Gallery
2:30 PM Stations of the Cross – Basilian Father
Activity for Children - Sister Eliane - *Inside Terrace*
3:30 PM Moleben to the Mother of God – *Grotto altar* – Bishop Benedict Aleksiychuk
Blessing of cars and buses
Exhibit: 100th Anniversary of Blessed Josaphata Hordashevska’s Entering Eternal Life
Father Taras Chaparin - Pilgrimage Spiritual Moderator

Join us for our **48th Annual**

SLAVIC AMERICAN FESTIVAL

Sunday, September 8, 2019
12 Noon til’ 6:00 P.M.
Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church
www.slavicamericanfestival.com

Nourishment for the Body
Holupki • Potato Pancakes • Bake Sale • Haluski
• Kolbasi • Pirohi • Nutrolls/Kolachi • Farmers Market
• Beer, Wine, Soda • Ice Cream • Hot Dogs

Nourishment for the Mind
Silent Auction • NFL Football on TV
• Bingo & Instant Bingo • Children’s rides, games & face painting • Rummage Sale
• Fairfax Sheriff Child ID Cards

Nourishment for the Soul
Slavic Religious & Folk Art • Polka Lessons
• Slavic Religious Books, Crosses & Jewelry
• Church Tours: 12:30, 2:30, 3:30, and 4:30 pm
Concert of Sacred Slavic Music at 1:30 pm
Epiphany Slava Men’s Chorus

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Maryland Patronage of the Mother of God 1265 Linden Avenue Baltimore, MD 21227 Phone 410-247-4936 Web www.patronagechurch.org Sunday Divine Liturgy 9:15 am	Patronage at Hagerstown meeting at: St. Ann Catholic Church 1525 Oak Hill Avenue Hagerstown, MD 21742 Saturday Vigil Liturgy 6:45PM 2 per month Call Baltimore for schedule	English Liturgy 10:30 am Epiphany Mission 9301 Warfield Road Gaithersburg, MD Web www.eolmission.org Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00AM	Ascension of our Lord 114 Palace Lane Williamsburg, VA 23185 Phone 757-585-2878 (rectory) Web www.ascensionva.org Sunday Divine Liturgy 11:00 am	Phone 919-239-4877 Web www.sscyrilmethodius.org Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
Patronage at Abingdon meeting at: Stone Chapel at St. Francis de Sales Church 1450 Abingdon Road Abingdon, MD 21009 Sunday Divine Liturgy 5:30PM	St. Gregory of Nyssa 12420 Old Gunpowder Road Spur Beltsville, MD 20705 Phone 301-953-9323 Web www.stgregoryofnyssa.net Sunday Divine Liturgies Church Slavonic 8:00 am Sunday Matins 9:30 am	Virginia Epiphany of our Lord 3410 Woodburn Road Annandale, VA 22003 Phone: 703-573-3986 Web www.eolbcc.org Sunday Divine Liturgies 8:00 am & 10:30 am	Our Lady of Perpetual Help 216 Parliament Drive Virginia Beach, VA 23462 Phone 757-456-0809 Web www.olphvb.org Sunday Divine Liturgy 8:00 am	District of Columbia Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel Basilica of the National Shrine 400 Michigan Avenue, NE Washington, DC 20017 Phone 202-526-8300 Web www.nationalshrine.org No regularly scheduled Sunday Liturgy. To reserve a date and time, priests must call the Liturgy Office and submit a current letter from their eparchy’s Safe Environment Office.
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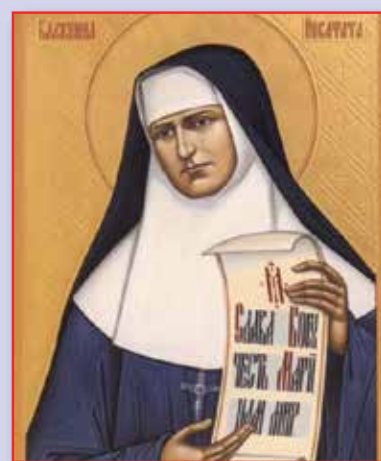


THE 65TH HOLY DORMITION PILGRIMAGE

August 10-11, 2019

RESPONDING WITH THE "HEART"

as did Mary and Josaphata



WITH HIS GRACE
Metropolitan Archbishop
BORYS GUDZYAK

*and bishops of the Ukrainian
and Byzantine (Ruthenian)
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in the United States*



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LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

TENANTS OF THE FAITH

Any fellow teachers will sympathize with the feelings of frustration that come from grading a paper riddled with grammatical and spelling mistakes. Part of the learning process, of course, is correcting such mistakes and helping students learn to write clearly and well. Working with graduate and undergraduate students, my days are spent reading reams of paper, teaching and correcting mistakes in theology. At times I feel like a full-time English professor too, since I mark spelling, grammar and organizational mistakes with regularity. As much as I urge my students to proofread their work (and even have someone else read it), mistakes are made, and I must correct them. It's frustrating when the same types of mistakes are made again and again, and when it's clear that a student is being careless. Sometimes the typos that slip through as a result of not proofreading their work are comical, and I laugh in the midst of my irritation. Lately, though, a couple of student typos struck me as somewhat *Providential*, and they got me thinking a little bit more deeply about my faith and my relationship with God and with my brothers and sisters in Christ. In one paper a graduate student submitted, he wrote about the truth of the "tenants of Faith." It's a simple spelling mistake, perhaps a result of mispronouncing the correct word, *tenets*. A tenet is a belief or doctrine, and we Christians have plenty of them: The Trinity, the Incar-

nation, Mary's perpetual virginity, and so on. My student chose a word that sounds similar – *tenant* – but means something very different. A tenant is someone who rents a space, usually an apartment or house, from an owner. *The tenant makes his home in the space of another.*

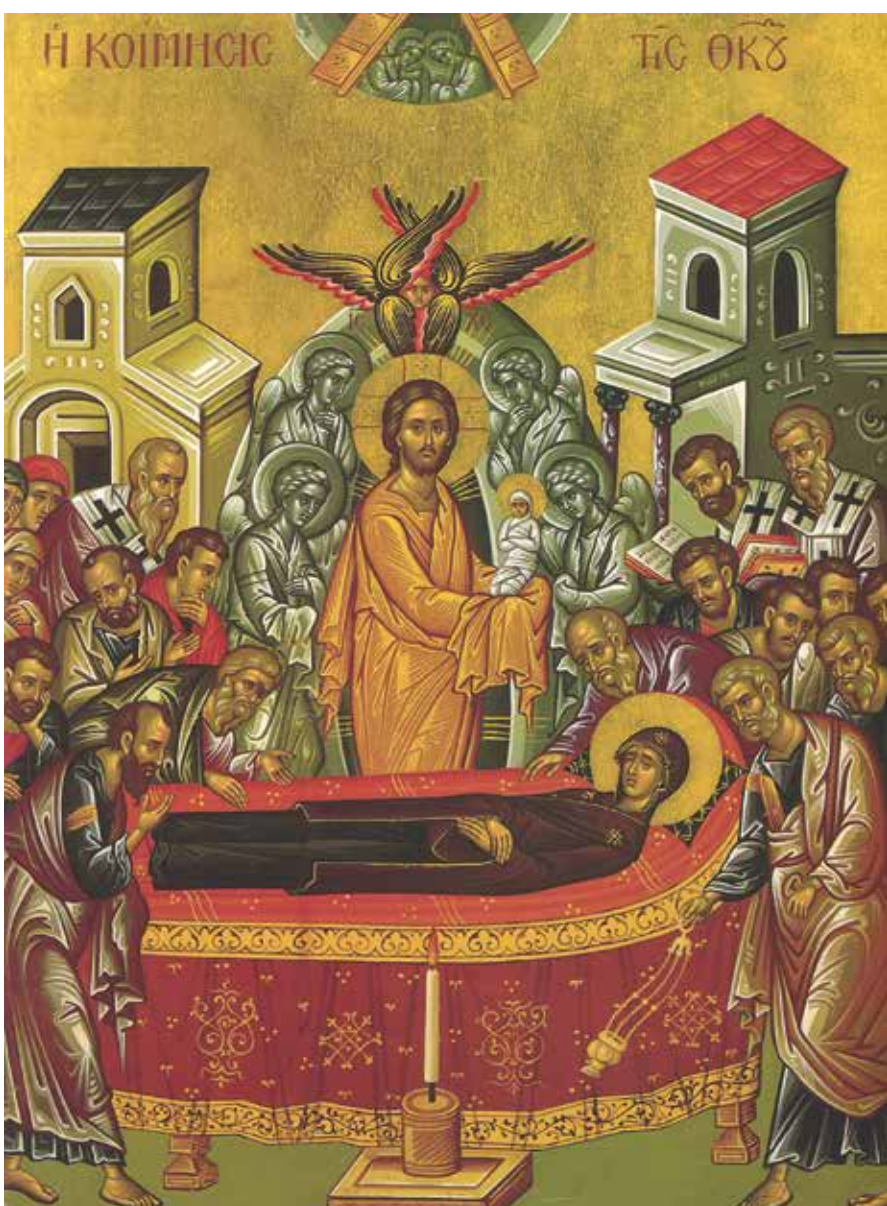
I corrected the paper and moved on. A few weeks later another student made the same mistake. Then another and another. There must have been at least four or five students over the course of a few months who argued the importance of the "tenants of the Faith." At first, I was really frustrated; are they conspiring to make me crazy?! This is perhaps where the Holy Spirit nudged me a bit and I began to consider what it means to *be* a "tenant of the Faith," to live in this space (the Church) created by Another (God). Have I truly made my Faith my home? Is it a place where I seek refuge and solace, a place where I feel secure and loved? Being a "tenant of the Faith" means *I live in this home* where I am clothed (in Baptism), fed (in the Eucharist), and where I find rest (Scripture, Tradition, and the teachings of the Church and the Fathers). Like most tenants, sometimes I can become a little careless and let the dirt build up, or even cause some damage that I can't repair. But this home is owned by Someone who can repair any damage (Confession and penance) and give me what I need to take better care of it

(grace). Perhaps I had something to learn about "tenants of the Faith" after all.

Not to be outdone, another student challenged my patience when she wrote an explanation of the Incarnation of Christ. She wrote that God becoming man, "means people can see with their own eyes and feel with their own hands the *presents* of God." This time, though, I was a little more sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit and considered more deeply my student's unwitting spelling error. We can talk a lot about the *presence* of God in our lives, but do we think about His *presents*? The Incarnation of Christ – God becoming a man, like us in all things but sin – is truly one of the greatest "presents" we could imagine. "God with us" is a gift: extravagant, generous, completely unmerited and undeserved, yet given to us freely. Instead of feeling irritated by my student's typo, I thought about it in light of the other one. To be a true *tenant of Faith* – to live in this space God has made to raise me in as His daughter – I do have to recognize His *presents*. God has gifted me with my life, a loving family, wonderful husband, and many more good things that I rarely stop to appreciate. When we, who are so blessed to be Byzantine Catholic Christians, live in the space He has created for us, truly inhabit it and make it our own, we will learn to recognize and appreciate His gifts, in spite of the difficulties we face living in a *neighborhood*

(a secular world and broken culture) that can be hostile to our efforts to live peacefully and comfortably.

Being an educator isn't always easy, and whether one teaches in a grade school, high school, or college it's easy to be irritated by the lack of effort students sometimes give to subjects we're passionate about and want to open up for them. They say that God moves in mysterious ways, and that He speaks to us when we least expect it. Although I've seen the truth in that a hundred times over in my life, I'm surprised anew each time God reveals Himself or some important truth about myself. I doubt the Holy Spirit *inspired* my students in their typos, but He certainly inspired me. Whether you're a professional educator or an Eastern Christian Formation teacher, be open to what God wants to teach you through them. Regardless of what do in life, God is speaking to you, too. He's asking you to "renew your lease" and do what's necessary to be permanent *tenants* of His home. He has even more *presents* in store for you, if you're willing to receive and properly care for them. God has been *reading our typos* all of our lives. He'll never refuse to offer the corrections we need so that one day the stories of our lives will be written permanently in Truth and we'll be the masterpieces He destines us to become. **ECL**



Icon of the Dormition of the Theotokos, Holyday of Prescept, August 15

Carpatho-Rusyn Society's New Branches



The Carpatho-Rusyn Society has developed branches in Georgia (near Atlanta), Western NC (Asheville), Eastern NC (Charlotte), and mini-branches in the cities of Gainesville, Lakeland, Leesburg, Boca Raton and Nokomis in the state of Florida. Meetings are held two to three times a year to learn, share, and perpetuate the Carpatho-Rusyn culture. For more information visit the website at c-rs.org or contact Bonnie at bb@c-rs.org.

NEW BYZANTINE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FORMING IN GREATER CHARLOTTE, NC, AREA

A Byzantine Catholic community is forming at Saint Philip Neri Church, 292 Munn Rd., Fort Mill, SC. Please join us as we grow our community and celebrate the Byzantine Divine Liturgy. Father Steven Galuschik of All Saints Byzantine Catholic Church in North Fort Myers, FL, along with bi-ritual Deacon Ron Volek are now offering weekly Divine Liturgy in the area. This community will serve the northern part of South Carolina as well as Charlotte, NC. Please share this information with your friends and family – especially those who have moved "down South." We will be celebrating the Byzantine Divine Liturgy on Saturdays at 4:00 PM. If you would like to participate in any way, or have questions please contact Ron Somich at 440.477.6389 or ron.somich@gmail.com. Please check the website for news, upcoming gatherings, and service times at <https://carolinabyzantine.com/>

August: 3, 10, 17, 24, 31



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

Father Jack Custer, S.S.L., S.T.D.

SAVED AS THROUGH FIRE

On the 9th Sunday after Pentecost, we hear a selection from Saint Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians (3:9-17), taken from a much broader discussion about the various preachers, teachers and evangelists who were operating in the earliest Church at Corinth. Saint Peter, the eloquent, flashy Apollos, and even Paul himself each had his own little fan club in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:5-6; 4:6), and these rivalries threatened the unity of the Church.

Saint Paul warns against the human pride and vanity that could poison the work of the various teachers and preachers in Corinth. They might preach for gain or praise; people might be drawn to one or another for reasons having nothing to do with Jesus Christ and His Gospel. Saint Paul looks ahead to “the Day” when Christ will come again in glory and the work of every person will be judged. He imagines the Church as a single building and each preacher as a builder whose contribution may be more or less enduring. Shoddy workmanship—a ministry based on something other than

Jesus Christ Himself—will not withstand the fire of God’s judgment. “The work of each will be made clear. The Day will declare it ... fire will test each the quality of each man’s work” (1 Corinthians 3:13).

Paul continues: “If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet as through fire” (1 Corinthians 3:15). These words are a testimony to God’s mercy which is greater than a ministry motivated by pride or success. Between the lines here is a powerful and painful moment of repentance as someone finally recognizes and admits his less-than-godly motives for what was ostensibly a life dedicated to God. All Christians, but especially bishops, priests, deacons, monastics, cantors, catechists, and others in positions of service to the Church cannot hear these words without being challenged to our core. Here are the terms by which the worship, preaching, and life of every parish will be judged: is it built on Christ or on ourselves? Is it the best we can give or a half-hearted offering?

Saint Paul’s description of divine judgment, trial by fire, suffering loss, and achieving salvation shows that the process of repentance and purification can continue after death. This is why the Church encourages prayer for the dead, a practice that can be traced back at least to the end of the Old Testament (2 Maccabees 12:38-46, one of the books excluded from Protestant editions of the Bible). In Latin theology, the process of purification quickly came to be understood as a place of confinement for the imperfect to be purged by fire for venial sins: purgatory.

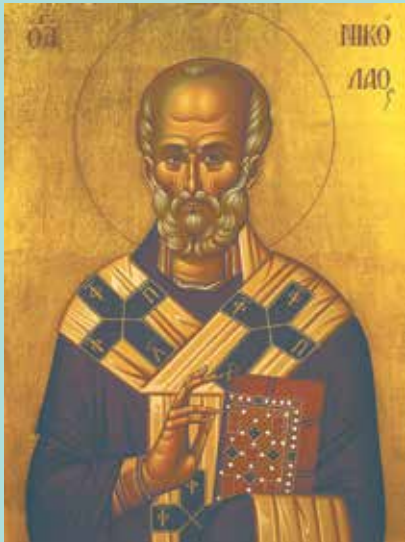
In its teaching on purgatory, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, published under Saint John Paul II (articles 1030-1032) avoids the legal and violent imagery common in medieval and later Catholic authors and simply affirms the possibility of purification and the value of prayer for the dead. Pope Benedict XVI offers a beautiful commentary on 1 Corinthians 3:15 in his encyclical *Spe Salvi* (2007): “we personally have to pass through ‘fire’ so as to become fully open to receiving God and able to

take our place at the table of the eternal marriage-feast” (no. 46). Pope Benedict endorses an opinion, perhaps first expressed by Saint Isaac of Nineveh (7th century), that the fire is God Himself (see Deuteronomy 4:24). “The encounter with Him is the decisive act of judgement. Before His gaze all falsehood melts away. This encounter with Him, as it burns us, transforms and frees us, allowing us to become truly ourselves. All that we build during our lives can prove to be mere straw, pure bluster, and it collapses. Yet in the pain of this encounter, when the impurity and sickness of our lives become evident to us, there lies salvation. His gaze, the touch of His heart heals us through an undeniably painful transformation ‘as through fire’. But it is a blessed pain, in which the holy power of His love sears through us like a flame, enabling us to become totally ourselves and thus totally of God” (no. 47). [ECL](#)

Saint Nicholas Pilgrimage

August 4, 2019
8th Sunday After Pentecost

Carpathian Village / Saint Nicholas Shrine
802 Snow Hill Road, Cresco, PA 18326

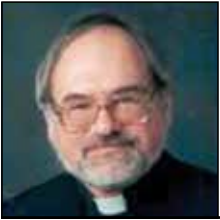


- | | |
|----------|--|
| 12 NOON | Welcome and Blessing of Pilgrims Begins (Picnic Pavilion)
Food Service Begins |
| 12:30 PM | Devotion to Saint Nicholas (Shrine Altar)
With Panachida for Deceased Clergy and Pilgrims |
| 10:00 PM | Confessions Begin (Shrine Gazebo) |
| 1:00 PM | Healing Service with Anointing (Shrine Altar)

Children’s Program (Lower Tent) |
| 2:50 PM | Procession from Lower Tent to Shrine Altar |
| 3:00 PM | Hierarchical Divine Liturgy (Shrine Altar)
Celebrant—Bishop Kurt
Anointing with Oil of Saint Nicholas from Bari, Italy |

Golf cart service available for those with difficulty walking. Restroom facilities for those with physical disabilities also available. Let’s pray that God blesses us with great weather and a beautiful day, through the intercession of the Most Holy Theotokos and Our Holy Father Nicholas, of course!





THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE ANAPHORA OF SAINT BASIL

We are all aware that the usual Anaphora that we pray at the Byzantine Liturgy is ascribed to Saint John Chrysostom, who was Archbishop of Constantinople from the years 398-404. There is, however, also a second Anaphora that is prayed in the Byzantine Church on ten days of the year: the eves of Christmas, of Theophany, and Pascha, on Holy Thursday, and on the five Sundays of the Great Fast, Lent. This second anaphora is attributed to Saint Basil the Great, who was Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia in Asia Minor from 370-379, when he died at the young age of 49. In the earlier years of the Church of Constantinople, the Anaphora of Saint Basil was actually the primary Liturgy. The Anaphora of Saint John Chrysostom probably became dominant in the early eleventh century. At the same time, the Anaphora of Saint Basil remained in the Great Fast, because it was a sacred period that retained more ancient customs of the Church.

The Anaphora of Saint Basil was most likely written mostly by Basil himself. There is no doubt that he was one of the greatest theologians that the Eastern Church has known. His anaphora is a true tapestry of quotations from Sacred Scripture, mostly from the letters of Saint Paul, woven together to present to us a complete story of God's love for us and the history of His plan of salvation.

He based himself on an earlier anaphora, but Saint Basil is the principal author. The corresponding section in the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is centered on one verse from the Gospel of Saint John, "God loved the world so much that He gave His only-begotten Son" (John 3:16). The Anaphora of Saint Basil, on the other hand, has a number of quotations of Scripture passages, which contributes to its length. This is the reason it was said on Sunday, the general meeting day of the community for the Holy Eucharist. Every week, then, the people would hear the story of how God has redeemed us and given us life.

I find it strange that people regard the Liturgy of Saint Basil as penitential because of its length. The reality is that when we are in church, we are already beginning to enter God's kingdom, which is why it begins with the blessing, "Blessed is the Kingdom." It is, therefore, truly a time of great joy, when we begin to be the human beings that God has created us to be. Of course, we have our human limitations, but praying a little bit longer should not be a penance, but a joy. There is a historical fable that has been propagated that the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is a shortening of the Liturgy of Saint Basil, which in its turn was a shortening of the Liturgy of Saint James. The idea behind this is that the Church mercifully al-

lowed us to do less penance. However, this fable is completely false, and the legend was invented by a sixteenth century forger named Constantine Palao-cappa. We should welcome the Liturgy of Saint Basil as a time to learn of God's love and salvation.

There was an original core to the Anaphora of Saint Basil. Saint Basil did not write it entirely himself, but he worked on an earlier, more ancient anaphora that was widespread throughout the Christian East. The other well-known form is the Coptic Anaphora of Saint Basil used by the Church of Egypt. There was a proposal in the Roman Church that the Anaphora of Saint Basil in its Coptic form be used. This was not accepted but the Roman Canon IV is based on the form and style of this anaphora. The Liturgy of Saint James has also developed from the same original form and is sometimes used in the Byzantine Church as a "third anaphora." It may have been used for the Paschal Vigil Liturgy, because the hymn of the Great Entrance for this Liturgy is "Let all mortal flesh keep silent and in fear and trembling stand ...," which is from the Liturgy of Saint James.

Even today, some Byzantine churches do use the Liturgy of Saint James at the Paschal Vigil, and also on the feast of Saint James on October 23 and on the Sunday after Christmas, which is

another feast day of Saint James. The form of this liturgy, however, is quite different from the Byzantine Liturgy. It is, in fact, not at all a Byzantine Liturgy, but the Liturgy of the West Syrian or Palestinian Church, centered in the Patriarchate of Antioch and in the Holy City of Jerusalem. The Byzantine Church of Syria is now called the Melkite Church. After the Council of Chalcedon, they remained faithful to the Orthodox Church that accepted this Council. The Eastern Churches of Syria, Egypt and Armenia rejected this council creating a division that has lasted to the present. When the Melkite Church remained faithful to Constantinople, they replaced their West Syrian Liturgy with the Byzantine Liturgy, but still maintained their ancient tradition on certain days of the year. Byzantine Churches in other countries then imitated the Melkites and celebrated the Liturgy of Saint James on some occasions, not using their own Byzantine form, as in the Liturgies of Saint Basil and Saint John Chrysostom, but adopting it wholly in the Syrian form. It is celebrated differently, though, by the Russian and Greek Churches. Because its form is so different, it is difficult to use in parish churches, and so is not common. [ECL](#)

Jesus Christ makes it clear through the Gospel accounts that He came to give us many good gifts. He first and foremost came to offer Himself as the final carnal sacrifice for sin, so that those who believe in Him will be saved from the fires of hell. He came to give the Israelites, the Jewish people, the final covenant with God in which they would find relationship with Him, and in which Jesus would fulfill the promises of God's previous covenants, by giving the final elements of the law. Jesus Christ then came to open-up salvation and this new covenant with a much larger population—the entire world—than the previously narrow focus on the Israelites. Jesus came to bring a new Kingdom to the world, not a kingdom of physical boundaries, but a kingdom residing in our hearts. Now a question we can ask is, what are some gifts given to those who reside in this Kingdom of the Heart?

As we see through Jesus' ministry, He encountered people by teaching them the truths of God which are conducive to our salvation. He was so clever in His logic that He stunned even the learned Scribes and Pharisees. Because of this clarity of teaching people were drawn to Him to absorb what knowledge of God they could, and to hear about God's saving power. But Jesus did not

only *say* what was appealing to people, He did not only heal their hearts and minds with words, but He *healed* their physical bodies too.

In all instances when Jesus heals there exists a desire to be healed by the infirm. They either search for Jesus to be healed by Him, or, when Jesus comes upon them, they express faith in God's ability to heal. This is the essential element in order for healing to occur, that one have faith in the Holy Trinity's healing power. Jesus makes it clear that this power exists because of the countless healings He performed for those who came to Him in faith. Not only did Jesus heal those who were infirm, but He also gave sight to those who were blind from birth, raised paralytic men whose bodies were useless, He stopped a woman's hemorrhaging, but even more powerful, Jesus Christ reversed the curse of death for several people, as He did by raising Lazarus from the physical decay of death. In all

of these instances, great faith was required from the one who was healed, and after Christ performed the healing, those who are now whole came to an even greater faith in Jesus Christ, and believed in Him.

Saint John the Baptist exclaimed that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2). Jesus Himself mimicked this phrase just before He called His disciples (Matt. 4:17), so the Kingdom of Heaven is now at hand, and it is for those who repent, and who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that He has the power to bring order to the chaotic natural elements. But before Jesus ascended into heaven bodily, He gave the authority He had been given by God the Father to His disciples. Now, the power to forgive, the power to heal, the power to Baptize, the power to even raise the dead has been given to the Apostles. The Apostles in turn have given this same authority to their successors, which has been passed down through the Church to men living today.

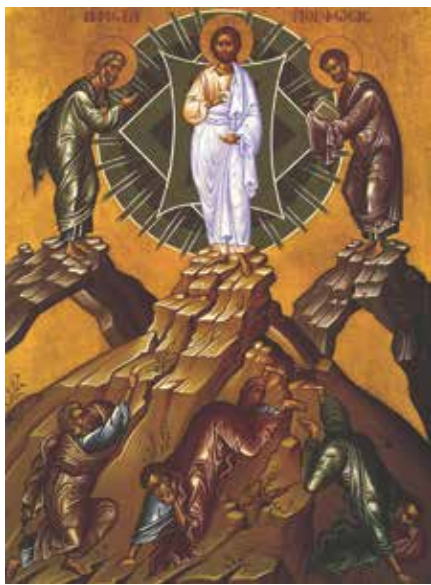
The healing power of Jesus Christ is within our reach. It is present in bishops and priests, it is in our churches waiting to be utilized. But there are several requirements that we must fulfill in order to receive the healing we seek. We, both laity and clergy, need to have full faith in this healing power of Jesus Christ. We, need to truly reflect on our lives, compare it with the teachings of Holy Scripture, diligently go through a good examination of conscience, confess all of our sins, and conform all aspects of our lives to a life of virtue. We, if we want healing of body and soul, need to have this supernatural faith in Jesus Christ, in His Church, and in His Sacraments. It is when we are in this state, that we will receive what we ask for in prayer. And it is this state that will give witness to the Kingdom of Heaven, here on earth. [ECL](#)

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Father Lewis Rabayda



HEALING OF BODY AND SOUL



Icon of the Transfiguration of Our Lord

T.S. Eliot ends his poem, “The Hollow Men,” with: “This is the way the world ends, not with a bang, but a whimper.” At the height of summer, our liturgical year draws to its close, but it does not end with a whimper, but a bang! And, by extension, the redemption of the world by the power of God is seen in two great feasts of our Church, The Transfiguration of Our Lord and The Feast of the Dormition and Assumption of the Theotokos. In the first, we see our Lord “revealing as much of [His] glory to [His] disciples as they could behold” (Troparion for the Transfiguration), revealing His divinity to Peter, James, and John. In the second, we see the fulfillment of Christ’s promise to us, that “...he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has eternal life; he does not come into judgment but has passed from death to life” (John 5:24).

The Transfiguration is a *theophany*—a manifestation of God—that shows us the divinity of Christ. “...His face

shone like the sun, and His garments became white as light” (Matthew 17:2). It is also a theophany in that, as with His baptism by John the Forerunner, “...a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased; listen to Him’” (v. 5). This took place just before His entry into Jerusalem, “That when they would see [Him] crucified, they would understand that [He] suffered willingly” (Kontakion for the Feast). There are many hymns that we sing at Vespers and Matins for the Feast, but I will pass on to you one of these gems:

*Showing the change that mortals will undergo, O Lord,
when they enter Your glory at Your second
and awesome coming,
You were transfigured on Mount Tabor.
Elijah and Moses conversed with You;
and seeing Your glory, the three disciples
Whom You had chosen
were struck with Your splendor, O Lord.
As You covered them with Your brightness,
confirming the mystery of Your incarnation;
also send Your light upon our souls.*
—Sessional Hymn I for Matins of the Transfiguration

In this feast, we are assured that Jesus is fully Man and fully God, and worship Him as such. It brings to life all that we confess in the Nicene Creed, not only

in the Truth of the Unitarian and Trinitarian nature of God, but also the fruits of our union with Him in this world and the one to come.

True, you won’t find any mention in Holy Scripture of the Dormition of the Theotokos and her Assumption into heaven, but it is firmly ingrained in the Holy Tradition of the Church. The feast has been acknowledged since at least the 5th century, with formal celebrations beginning around the 7th century. Writings about her death and assumption can be found as early as the 1st century, so it has always been a part of the Tradition. So important is this feast that it is anticipated in the Eastern Churches with a two-week period of fasting and is a holy day of obligation. In the universal Catholic Church, on November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII proclaimed this as dogma in the Apostolic Constitution *Munificentissimus Deus*, stating: “By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, we pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.”

The hymns for this feast are replete with the teachings of the Church, as

they speak to the fact that God the Word took His flesh from the holy Theotokos, and that, as a result, her flesh was not to suffer from the corruption of death. “You have gained victory over nature by giving birth to God, O pure Virgin; yet, like your Son and Creator, you have followed the laws of nature while being above it. Therefore, through your death, you have risen to eternal life with your Son.” “Just as He preserved your virginity in childbirth, He saved your body from suffering corruption in the tomb” (Odes 1 & 6, Matins of the Dormition). But we should not overlook this fact as well, that as Christ “is the first-born of the dead” (cf. Col. 1:18), and that He raised His Mother after her death, we can also see in *her* the first-fruits of the resurrection of *all the dead* on the last day. Again, we see the fulfillment of God’s promises to us (John 5:24, I Thess. 4:13-18).

The Church gives the world two great proclamations during this season: Christ is True God and True Man, was born in the flesh from the Virgin Mary for our salvation, and that, through His death, resurrection and ascension, we are freed from the power of death, and will be raised on the Last Day, “...and so we shall always be with the Lord” (I Thess. 4:17). **ECL**



SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

OVERCOME TEPIDITY WITH PRAYER

Beware of growing lukewarm in your relationship with God. Jesus says to the church in Laodicea: “Because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth” (Rev. 3:16).

Lukewarm Christians will take little interest in spiritual things, not have a desire for holiness, and deliberately sin in seemingly small and unimportant matters. Tepid believers give up a disciplined time of daily prayer, and rarely, if ever, pick up the Bible or an edifying spiritual book. They complain that the Divine Liturgy is too long and are anxious to leave the church as soon as possible. They think they already know everything about their Faith, when in many cases they are woefully ignorant of the basics. They while away useless hours in front of the television or computer. Tepid souls often think they have no sins to confess and rarely if ever approach the sacrament of confession.

Every serious Catholic is in danger of becoming lukewarm. Today we may be living out our baptismal commit-

ment to Christ with enthusiasm, but if we are not careful, we can quickly sink into spiritual laziness. If you’ve become lukewarm, here are some suggestions to help you reignite your love for God.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Mt. 5:6). Have a strong desire to break out of your tepid condition. Desire to become a saint. Have high spiritual aspirations. Norman Vincent Peale said, “Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you’ll land among the stars.” From now on, your life’s major definite purpose is holiness!

“Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation” (Mt. 26:41). Get back to your regular prayer schedule and do so without delay. One of the desert fathers said, “whoever gives up prayer very surely becomes either a beast or a devil.” Every day that we omit prayer, we go from bad to worse.

“The meditation of my heart shall be understanding” (Ps. 49:3). Consider the eternal truths. Meditate on the pas-

sion and death of Christ, and the four last things: death, judgment, heaven, and hell. If we consider well all that Jesus Christ has done and suffered for us, we will be all the more motivated to give our hearts and lives to Him without reserve. “However much we give is but dirt in comparison to one single drop of blood shed for us by Jesus Christ our Lord,” says Saint Teresa of Avila. When we consider eternity and the reality of Heaven and Hell, we will realize that there is nothing more important in life than serving and obeying God.

“I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity” (Ps. 32:5). Get to Confession. The standard advice in the past was that every Catholic should get to Confession once a week, or once every two weeks. Frequent confession will make a noticeable difference in your life. Some of the saints went to Confession every day!

“Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you” (Jn. 6:53). Daily Divine Liturgy and daily Holy Communion will

also be a great help towards regaining your former fervor and escaping a tepid spiritual condition. “There is no better help toward perfection than frequent communion,” says Saint Teresa of Avila.

“I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you” (Ps. 199:11). For at least a few minutes every day, read something from the Bible, the lives of the saints, or an encouraging spiritual book. Spiritual reading will ignite in your soul a renewed enthusiasm for the things of God.

“Do not be deceived: Bad company ruins good morals” (1 Cor. 15:33). Break up with bad friends. We will inevitably become like the people with whom we spend our time. If our friends are not serious about spiritual things, they will have a detrimental impact on us. Find friends who are serious Catholics and are zealous for God. Is someone dragging you down? If so, stop spending time with them. Are there people in your life who encourage you to put God first? Get around them, and their enthusiasm will be contagious.

If you want to overcome tepidity, draw near to God by desire, meditation, prayer, confession, communion, and spiritual friendships. “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you” (Js. 4:8). **ECL**



SEMINARIAN REFLECTIONS

Reader Timothy Fariss

A LITTLE LIKE PAUL, A LITTLE LIKE CYRIL, AND A WHOLE LOT LIKE MYSELF

In the past seven weeks, I have had the opportunity to make 12 parish visits. That’s a new parish every four days. It is not just new parishes, but new towns and new faces across a 3,500-mile drive. Saint Paul made a few similar treks from the Holy Land to Asia Minor, Greece, and finally Rome. Fortunately for me I had no shipwrecks, nor was I beaten by rods, or pelted by stones. (2Cor11) I did drive headlong into my own fiascos as does any family vacation, but God provides the means to “keep calm and carry on”. As Saint Paul was called to be the Apostle to the Gentiles, and Saints Cyril and Methodius were called to be the Apostle to the Slavs, I too was called to be a temporary “apostle,” not as the historic honorific, but to its definition, “One who is sent.”

A summer assignment usually consists of remaining at a single parish gleaned the wisdom of an experienced pastor and learning what it is like to live as a parish priest. However, this summer, the opportunity presented itself to follow in a missionary spirit to share my experiences, of reversion, of spiritual challenges, of feeling called to the priestly vocation, of feeling called to holiness and sainthood. Yes, I shared a lot of myself but received just as much in return. In every parish I jumped through the roles of being a stranger on the doorstep, to a guest, to family

awaiting the next reunion. I staggered in at odd and sometimes inconvenient hours after a long drive and my plans changed time and time again, but nonetheless I was greeted with smiles when I did arrive. People rushed to make accommodations to care for me and for those blessings I am grateful.

Every parish has presented me with various opportunities to share our faith. Sometimes I was with kids and homeschooleders, sometimes with young adults, and other times with the whole parish. While I may have talked most of the time, I took the opportunity to see the faith of each parishioner and the cumulative faith of the parish. When 12 children showed up on 48 hours’ notice, or when five young adults harmonized a psalm, or when half a parish drove an hour on a weeknight to pray with me, I became a witness to a great faith. In my travels, I planned to give away over 400 books and 250 icon packets and yet I feel like the one leaving each parish having received a wonderful gift. I may have been sent to you this summer, but you, too, are “One who is sent.”

Every Christian partakes in the charism of apostleship. It is part of our calling in our baptism. It may be tempting to say that the pastor is Paul, the pastor is Methodius. Cyril was a layman and tonsured a monk the day



Map of visited parishes

before he died. *Detroit Catholic* published an article studying young adults in RCIA by researcher Tamra Fromm. Her prior studies concluded two common links to why young adults become “nones” or those not involved in a religious organization. The first link was that their Catholic or Christian parents did not pass on the faith, either by not getting their child baptized or not practicing themselves. The second link was having a negative religious encounter.¹

However, when these “nones” were

asked why they were seeking to become Catholic, their response was that they saw someone living out the faith joyfully. In Fromm’s group, 41% said this was a friend or an in-law, while 29% said the faith of their grandmother led to their conversion. Yes, Baba’s rosary moved mountains. Years ago, when I was discerning the priesthood, I remembered the church where I used to pray on Sundays with my own grandmother, which led to my return to the Byzantine Church. Twenty percent also mentioned the fiancé(e) as a witness to their conversion. Only a few mentioned that a priest had a significant impact on their conversion. Think about it, how often do you encounter a priest—and you’re Catholic! How often will a “none” have a significant encounter with a priest? We all share in the responsibility to share the faith, we may not be the one baptizing, but a conversion of the heart begins before asking for the grace of baptism. By living our faith and inviting others into it we reignite the fire that Cyril and Methodius used to offer the grace of faith to the Slavs.” **ECL**

1 Fromm, Tamra. *Detroit Catholic*. “Who does the evangelizing? Friends, in-laws, and priest – often in that order.” June 26, 2019.

When traveling to the South, please visit our churches

All Saints 10291 Bayshore Road North Fort Myers, FL 33917 1-239-599-4023	Epiphany of Our Lord 2030 Old Alabama Road Roswell, GA 30076 1-770-993-0973	Holy Dormition 17 Bucksin Lane Ormond Beach, FL 32174 1-386-677-8704	1-772-595-1021	Orlando, FL 32819 1-407-351-0133
Saint Anne 7120 Massachusetts Ave. New Port Richey, FL 34653 1-727-849-1190	Saint Basil the Great 1475 N.E. 199th Street Miami, FL 33179-5162 1-305-651-0991	Saints Cyril and Methodius 1002 Bahama Avenue Fort Pierce, FL 34982	Our Lady of the Sign 7311 Lyons Road Coconut Creek, FL 33073 1-954-429-0056	Saint Therese 4265 13th Avenue North Saint Petersburg, FL 33713 1-727-323-4022
			Saint Nicholas of Myra 5135 Sand Lake Road	

Altar Server Camp Rescheduled to August 10-13

Eastern Catholic Life

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UPCOMING EPARCHIAL AND PARISH EVENTS

AUGUST, 2019

- 1-4 Young Adult Convocation
Saint Mary Parish, New York City
- 4 Annual Saint Nicholas Pilgrimage
Carpathian Village, Canadensis, PA
- 6 Holy Transfiguration of Our Lord
Solemn Holyday
- 10-13 Altar Server Camp
Rescheduled
- 10-11 Sloatsburg, NY Pilgrimage
Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate
- 15 Holy Dormition of the Theotokos
*Holy Day of Obligation *Chancery closed*
- 29 Beheading of the Holy Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist, John
Simple Holyday
- 31 Uniontown Pilgrimage begins
Mount Saint Macrina, Uniontown, PA

SEPTEMBER, 2019

- 1 Uniontown Pilgrimage concludes
Mount Saint Macrina, Uniontown, PA
- 2 Labor Day
*Civic Holiday*Chancery closed*
- 8 Nativity of the Virgin Theotokos
Solemn Holyday
- 14 Exaltation of the Precious, Holy, and Life-creating Cross of the Lord
Solemn Holyday
- 23-26 Eparchial Priests’ Retreat
Long Branch, NJ