



EASTERN CATHOLIC LIFE

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POPE OFFERS TO HELP, MEET FAMILIES FOLLOWING MASSACRE IN NICE

Vatican City. By Junno Arocho Esteves. Article and photos from Catholic News Service

Pope Francis offered his help to the people of Nice in a surprise phone call following a deadly attack during Bastille Day celebrations, said the head of an association of Italians living in France.

Paolo Celi, president of the France-Italy Friendship society, told Vatican Radio that he was shocked upon answering his phone and hearing, "Paolo, I am Pope Francis."

"There was a moment of silence from my part. Then he asked me to impart to the entire city of Nice, to all the families of the victims, his message of solidarity and comfort saying, 'What can I do,'" Celi said in an interview published July 18.

Celi also said the pope expressed his desire to meet with the families of the victims of the July 14 massacre.

"We also spoke for quite some time over the phone about a meeting in Rome in the near future without setting a date," he said.

The pope also spoke on the phone with Christian Estrosi, former mayor of Nice and president of the Regional Council of Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur, Celi said. The call, he said, gave Estrosi "the necessary strength in this situation."

Celi, who had left the promenade shortly before the attack happened,

also said he was "greatly comforted" by the pope's gesture.

"With his words, with his comfort, the Holy Father can alleviate this awful memory to restore the vigor and desire for hope of all these people," Celi said.

The July 14 attack took place when 31-year-old Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel drove a truck through the crowds celebrating Bastille Day along Nice's seaside promenade, leaving 84 dead and over 100 wounded.



A woman prays after the violence

In his remarks following the recitation of the Angelus prayer July 17, the pope led pilgrims in a moment of silent prayer for the victims of the massacre "in which so many innocent lives, even many children, were mowed down."

"May God, the good father, receive all the victims in his peace support the wounded and comfort the families; may he dispel every plan of terror and death so that no man dares to spill his brother's blood ever again," he said.



People gathering on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice for a Memorial

THE HOLY AND GREAT COUNCIL: POPE SENDING OBSERVERS TO ORTHODOX MEETING

Vatican City. By Cindy Wooden. Article and photos from Catholic News Service



Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Francis

Pope Francis will send high-level observers to the pan-Orthodox council meeting in Crete as a sign of respect, support and encouragement of the Orthodox Church.

The Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church was scheduled to open June 19, which is Pentecost on the Julian calendar, and run through June 26.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople invited Pope Francis to send observers to the meeting

on the Greek island of Crete, and the pope chose Cardinal Kurt Koch and Bishop Brian Farrell, respectively the president and secretary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Sending the Vatican's top ecumenical officers demonstrates that "it is the Holy Father's judgment that this is supremely important for the Orthodox, for our relationship with the Orthodox Church and, beyond that, it's supremely important for the Christian witness in a world that is ever more confused about the role of religion," Bishop Farrell told Catholic News Service June 8.

Council members -- 24 bishops from each of the 14 autocephalous Orthodox churches -- are scheduled to approve six documents, including statements on: the mission of the Orthodox Church in the contemporary world; the pastoral care of Orthodox

living outside their church's traditional homeland; how the autonomy of new Orthodox churches is determined; rules regarding marriage; the importance of fasting; and relations with other Christians.

Leaders of the Orthodox churches have been discussing hopes for such a meeting for almost 100 years. Planning meetings began in the 1960s, but even as the start date drew near, there were some fears that not all 14 self-governing Orthodox churches would send delegations.

The Orthodox Church of Bulgaria demanded June 1 that the meeting be postponed until a discussion could be held on its list of concerns, which included criticism of the how little the texts under consideration could be amended. The Bulgarians also objected to the invitation of observers from non-Orthodox churches and said they would not participate if the

meeting went ahead as scheduled.

After the Antiochian Orthodox Church also asked for a delay and signaled a willingness to stay away from the meeting, a Russian Orthodox leader asked June 3 that a pre-council meeting be held by June 10 to work out some of the remaining concerns.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate, however, issued a statement June 6 saying the process already agreed upon by the heads of the 14 churches would not change and calling upon all 14 churches "to rise to the occasion and participate, on the pre-determined dates, in the sessions of the Holy and Great Council."

The Catholic Church is hopeful that the council will take place, Bishop Farrell said.

"Every process that highlights and strengthens unity among Christ's

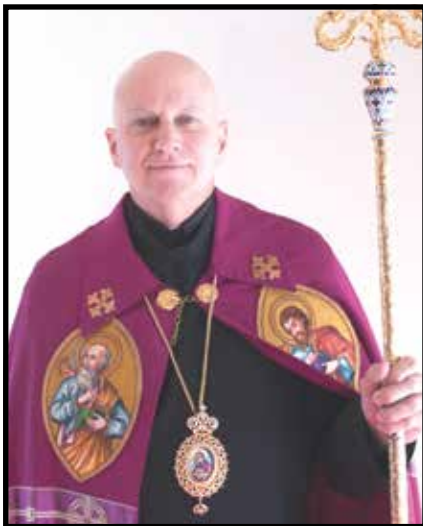
Continued on page 9

Clergy appointments—p3

Uzhorod Seminary Choir Tour Dates—p7

Schedules for summer pilgrimages—pp8—9, 12—13

Metropolitan William and Bishop Kurt to lead pilgrimage to Rome—p8



I LIFT UP MY EYES...

Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt



THIRD AND FINAL PART OF INTERVIEW WITH BISHOP GERALD DINO

Bishop Kurt: Where did you go after teaching at the seminary?

Bishop Gerald: Holy Ghost in Jessup, PA. It was supposed to be temporary, just two years, but lasted 17 years. I had a parochial school. The salary of teachers was very, very low. I started raising it gradually and the people rebelled. People paid \$75 a semester. When I got to \$150 a semester, people began pulling out their children. I didn't want to close it, but we couldn't survive. I head the Latin school across the street was merging with the school in Archibald, PA. One of my parishioners, Red Mancak (his father was mayor) put a bug in my ear. I went to the superintendent of schools (Diocese of Scranton), and he thought it was a great idea. The first principal was a wonderful educator who was a close friend of Bishop Nicholas Samra, so he knew about the Eastern Churches. Because we had the largest school (building), they made it the center. It became the first bi-ritual parochial school in the nation. There were three pastors: me, Father Joe Kopacz, and a third one who died young. It was the largest parochial school in northeast PA at one time. Both of the first two principals did a great job, and still keep in touch with me. (Father Kopacz is now Bishop Joseph Kopacz of the Diocese of Jackson, MS.)

It was in Jessup that I started doing a holy hour, that is one hour a day in front of the Blessed Sacrament in the church. I learned it from Bishop Fulton Sheen; he attributed his success to that.

Bishop Kurt: Where did you go after Jessup?

Bishop Gerald: Bishop Pataki became the Bishop of Passaic in 1996, and he put out a circular asking for suggestions for various offices in the eparchy. I received 54% of the suggestions for protosyncellus. (Thanks to Father Basil Kraynyak, who unbeknownst to me was my "campaign commissioner." He was calling everyone.) So then I moved to Linden, NJ, to be closer to the Chancery. Msgr. George Billy was retiring anyway. The next eleven years I was in Linden and worked in the chancery office two days a week.

In Linden, I renovated the interior of the church with the help of Christina Dochwat. It was supposed to be one of her last art projects.

Bishop Kurt: What did you learn in those two parishes?

Bishop Gerald: In Jessup, I learned being in a parish for a long time is not necessarily a bad thing: you see how people change and grow in their faith, you see them go from church. You see them going to church as children, then questioning and falling away, till they come back again and become good and faithful parishioners.

In Linden, I learned just being kind to the people, and being understanding of their faults, and they come around and appreciate you as a priest. If they see you as a good fair priest and a holy man, they will respect you.

Bishop Kurt: What did you learn from Bishop Pataki?

Bishop Gerald: I learned a lot about how to be a

leader, and also what not to do. When there was a problem, he always let you know; you always knew where you stood with him. If he didn't like something, he would tell you; if he liked something, he would tell you. I learned the need for visiting the parishes on a regular basis. I learned the importance of being the person who deals with a problem—don't have someone else be a hatchet man. He never had a hatchet man. I was not his hatchet man.

Bishop Kurt: As bishop, did you have some spiritual or missionary program in mind?

Bishop Gerald: Mainly preaching, be good preachers, learn how to preach well. How many people go shopping for parishes? They, a lot of young people, have a shopping list, and one thing on the list is good preaching. Is the priest good to his people, is he accommodating? For example a young man just showed up at the cathedral because he couldn't go to confession at his parish.

Bishop Kurt: What would you recommend to improve preaching?

Bishop Gerald: With priests, I would tell them to include a lot of personal experiences. I would tell them to go take courses in homiletics at nearby schools. Listen to examples of good preachers, for example, Fulton Sheen. What did he do to become a great preacher? The priests need continuing education. I try to do that with Clergy Days. We talk about how to evangelize, how to run a parish. We had a speaker from the Episcopal Diocese of Phoenix. He talked about the importance of physical appearance—people passing by will see that the people care about the church and that attracts people to your church. I had CAFE (University student group) talk to us to tell the priests what the young people are interested in and what attracts them. It's also important to encourage camaraderie among the clergy.

Bishop Kurt: Do you have some interesting stories from your parish work?

Bishop Gerald: When I was in Jessup, I had an encounter with an angel. I had visited the hospital in Peckville, PA. On my way home, there was a little incline at a four way intersection. I stopped at the red light on the incline. Suddenly, a voice came from the back of my car, "step on the brake". I didn't believe what I was hearing, so I went ahead. Then the voice yelled, "slam on the brakes". So I did, and then a car went through the intersection at about 60 mph. Had I not stopped, the car would have slammed into me on the driver's side. I would have been killed. All my windows were rolled up, so the voice didn't come from outside the car. I looked around. There was no one in sight in any direction, and no other cars. I was thinking on the way home, the voice sounded like it came from the back seat of my car. I thought it must be my guardian angel. The voice saved my life. I didn't say anything for several years in Jessup, so then, on the feast of Saint Michael, I preached about it. Then a lot of parishioners went to investigate that intersection, and they saw you can't see the oncoming traffic.

Here is another story from Jessup. There was a housekeeper who was dying. The former pastor went to anoint her (I think it was Father Paul Tigy-

Bishop Gerald is a son of our own Eparchy of Passaic, and this month we continue with his interview. At the end of part two, Father Gerald had completed his time in Europe with many adventures around the continent, and after returning to Dunellen for a year, he was sent to teach at our seminary in Pittsburgh for six years.

Bishop Gerald: I went back to Dunellen for another year. Then Father Judson Procyk (the future archbishop) was the rector of the seminary, and he brought me to the seminary to teach. Archbishop Kocisko wanted someone else for the position, but Father Procyk didn't want him so he asked for me, that's how I went to the seminary. By the time I went there, Father Procyk had left, and Father Pataki (the future Bishop Pataki) was the rector. So I taught for 6 years at the seminary. I taught dogma and patrology.

Bishop Kurt: What is the proper approach for dogma in our Church?

Bishop Gerald: Well I taught the Eastern theology, not the Western theology. I taught the Eastern Fathers, not scholasticism—the Eastern Fathers and their approach to theology. I tried to show that they complement each other and are not opposed.

Bishop Kurt: What would you say is something important in Eastern theology?

Bishop Gerald: Theosis. We are made in the image and likeness of God. It is this image that we must make fully present in our lives, constantly perfecting that image in us—as opposed to the western approach where God's grace is poured into us and you must cooperate with that grace.

Bishop Kurt: Who is your favorite Church Father?

Bishop Gerald: I guess, John Chrysostom.

Bishop Kurt: Is there an Eastern theology of sacraments?

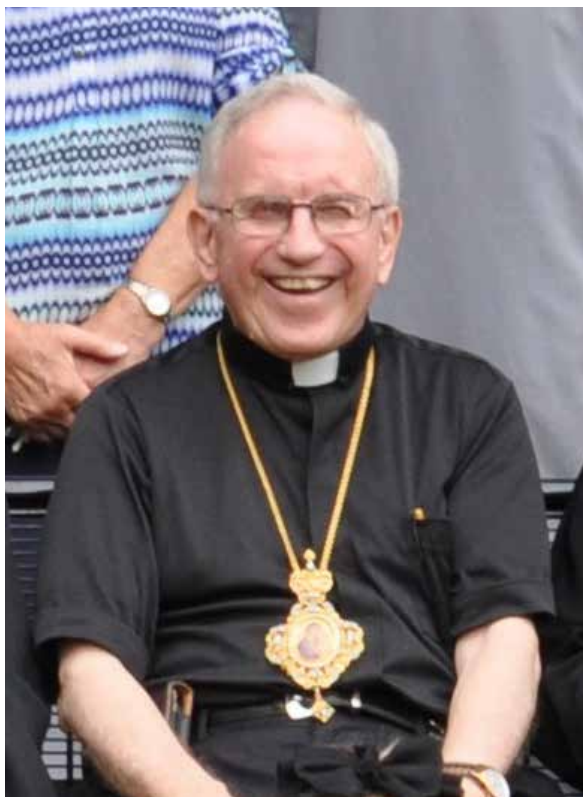
Bishop Gerald: I just brought out what that Fathers of the Church taught about each sacrament.

Bishop Kurt: Is there an Eastern theology of the Church?

Bishop Gerald: Oh yeah. The Church is *communio*; each Church has the fullness of the Church within itself, it's not just part of the big Church. It is fully Church in itself, and it is in communion with other Churches. The West sees only the big Church as fully Church and the smaller Churches share in that.

Bishop Kurt: Is the role of the lay people different in the East?

Bishop Gerald: Well everyone is part of the Body of Christ. I would quote Saint Paul, each part of the body cannot say since I'm not the eye; I don't care about you, etc. Everyone is expected to evangelize, not just the priest or consecrated religious—that is, spread the word of God.



Bishop Gerald Dino

er). The family was praying by the body. After the priest left, she died, and the family saw the soul leave the body. It went up from the body. It looked like smoke.

Here's a funny story from my time in Jessup. I knew a lady who worked at the hospital. She was always with a man in church; I assumed it was her husband. Then I got word that her husband died, and the body was covered with a sheet. Then at the Panachida, I said, that doesn't look anything like her husband—the make up guy did a terrible job. Then I saw the other guy coming up for communion at the funeral. He turned out to be her brother. Her husband never came to church.

Here's another story that shows that it is important for a priest to visit the sick, to give Communion. There was a lady, I won't say which parish, unbeknownst to me, she was the town prostitute when

she was young. She called me to visit her mother who was away from church because she was sick. I gave her all the last sacraments at her death, and gave her a funeral. Then the daughter started coming to church once month, then twice a month, then every Sunday, then she had her house blessed and told me she says the rosary every day with her husband.

Bishop Kurt: Who is your favorite evangelist?

Bishop Gerald: Matthew, because he is the easiest to preach on, the most adaptable to modern American situations. He was a tax collector, so he was steeped in the ordinary life of a Jew in his day and age. So he spoke to them in writing his Gospel. He wanted to make it clear to their everyday experience.

Bishop Kurt: What is your favorite book in the Old Testament?

Bishop Gerald: The Book of Psalms. My favorite Psalm is the first one. That's the one I preached when I became a bishop. I also preach on that at ordinations. That psalm talks about the tree that is planted near running water prospers because it near the source of its life.

Bishop Kurt: Who is your favorite prophet?

Bishop Gerald: I like Jeremiah, because he said, "I'm too young to do this work, get someone else." And the Lord said, "No. I want you. And don't worry, I'll help you. Just put your trust in me, and I'll do the rest." It shows that it's not up to us, it's not us, but it's God working through us. Mother Teresa used to say, "I am God's pencil through which he writes a love letter to the people."

Another favorite scripture passage of mine is the Beatitudes. They are beautiful, especially to preach on.

Bishop Kurt: Do you have any advice for teenagers?

Bishop Gerald: Be obedient to your parents. You may not think so, but they do ultimately have your welfare at heart.

Bishop Kurt: For young people?

Bishop Gerald: For unmarried young people, I would say, take everything you hear from your college professors with a grain of salt. Learn to think for yourself. Remember all the good people who grew up with you, in your past. Don't rush into marriage. Make sure you're in love with the person, not just sexual attraction, but love is present there. Sex and love aren't the same thing. Those are the difficult years in a person's life—how many lose their faith at that point in life, or lose their morals.

Bishop Kurt: Advice for young married people?

Bishop Gerald: Learn to be loyal to your spouse, and be good to your parents.

Bishop Kurt: And finally, do you have advice for a new bishop?

Bishop Gerald: Be a prayerful man. Respect your priests. Look at them not as your subjects, but as your arms, feet, ears, eyes, and respect them as you respect the parts of your own body. They represent you. The bishop is the true pastor. And remember, whatever is accomplished is not your doing. It is God's doing, using you as His instrument.

On July 5, Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Bishop Gerald Dino from the pastoral care of our Eparchy of Phoenix. He remained administrator until the enthronement of Bishop John Pasak on July 20.

Thank you Bishop Gerald, for your inspiring words, and for your decades of work for our Church, and for your love!

+Kurt Brunette



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

Msgr. Nicholas Puhak is relieved of the pastoral care of Saint Mary Church in Freeland, PA effective August 24, 2016.

Father Peter Donish is relieved as Administrator of Saint Mary Church, Freeland, PA effective August 24, 2016.

Father Scott Boghossian is relieved of his responsibilities as Pastor of Saint Basil the Great Church, Miami, FL and Administrator of Saints Cyril and Methodius Church, Fort Pierce, FL. Father Scott is appointed Pastor of Saint Mary Church, Freeland, PA, each effective August 24, 2016.

Father Steven Galuschik is appointed Administrator of Saint Basil the Great in Miami, FL and Administrator of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Fort Peirce, Florida, each effective August 24, 2016. These assignments are in addition to his present responsibilities.

Father Mykhaylo Kravchuk is appointed Parochial Vicar of Saint Basil the Great, Miami, FL and Parochial Vicar of Saints Cyril and Methodius Church, Fort Pierce, FL, each effective August 24, 2016.

HOLY AND GREAT COUNCIL

Continued from Page 1

followers is in line with the Gospel and every process that does not bring about unity is a negation of the prayer of Jesus at the Last Supper" that his disciples be one, the bishop said. "It is hugely important for Christianity and, therefore, for the Catholic Church that the pan-Orthodox council be an effective sign of the unity of Orthodoxy."

Bishop Farrell said the Orthodox decision to open the meeting on Pentecost is not simply symbolic, but is a spiritual affirmation that the meeting and its deliberations must be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Among all the churches and Christian communities the Catholic Church has formal relations with, the Orthodox are unique. The Catholic Church recognizes the Orthodox as a "sister church," which has maintained apostolic succession of its bishops, a valid priesthood and sacraments. However, different Orthodox churches and, especially different sectors within those churches, do not always recognize the Catholic Church as a "sister church" with valid sacraments; the draft Orthodox document on relations with other Christian churches does not directly address the issue, but insists ecumenical dialogue is "imperative."

"In the Catholic view," Bishop Farrell said, "Orthodoxy is the Eastern part of the church and, as Pope John Paul often repeated, we long for the day that the church can breathe with both lungs" -- East and West. The council could be "a big step in the right direction," he said.

"We would like our presence to be a sign of our great support for the unity of the Orthodox Church," he said, "and for their efforts to respond to the many challenges of living in today's society and their intention to do that as a body rather than as separated into independent churches."



PEOPLE YOU KNOW AROUND THE EPARCHY

IN MYRTLE BEACH

Father Vasyl Polyak, who is serving in the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, recently, visited the Blessed Basil Hopko Mission at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Some of the community gathered for a luncheon fellowship after the Sunday Divine Liturgy. Father Conan Timoney, Pastor of the Patronage of the Mother of God Parish in Baltimore, MD, is the administrator of the Mission.



Father Vasyl Polyak and Mission Parishioners

IN MARRIOTTSTVILLE

The Eastern Catholic Eparchial Directors of Religious Education met at Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center, Marriottsville, MD., for its spring meeting, Monday, May 23 through Thursday, May 26, 2016.



Pictured are (seated l. to r.): Sister Jean Marie Cihota, OSBM (Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix), Sister Marion Dobos, OSB (Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Archeparchy of Pittsburgh), Sister Ann Laszok, OSBM (Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of St. Josaphat in Parma, Ohio), (standing l. to r.): Father Hezekias Carnazzo (Melkite Greek Catholic Eparchy of Newton, MA), Very Rev. Archpriest John M. Fields, treasurer (Ukrainian Catholic Metropolitan Archeparchy of Philadelphia), Rt. Rev. Mitred Archpriest John S. Kachuba, vice-chairman (Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma, Ohio), Very Reverend Gregory J. Noga, ECED Chairman (Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic, NJ), Father Paul L. Volda (Romanian Catholic Eparchy in Canton, Ohio), Rev. Deacon Daniel G. Dozier (Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic, NJ), Father Andrew J. Summerson (Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma, Ohio).



Bishop Kurt, Father Myron, and altar servers celebrating the Divine Liturgy

IN LEVITTOWN

Father Myron Badnerosky's 60th Year of Ordination

Over 135 parishioners and friends gathered at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church Auditorium in Levittown, PA, to celebrate the 60th year of Father Myron Badnerosky's ordination to the priesthood. Father Myron was ordained on Pentecost Sunday in 1956 and came to OLPH in 1959 as the pastor. Father Myron only wanted a simple affair with cake and cookies, but the parishioners decided to surprise him with a sit-down luncheon. Friends and former parishioners came from Maine, Virginia, Maryland, New York and New Jersey and a special guest, Mickey Mouse, was provided by the Slezak family. Many stories were shared about what Father Myron meant to the parish, which he has faithfully served for 57 years. His cousins, Nadine Herceg and son, Trevor, and Tanya Martyanik, came from Holy Spirit Byzantine Catholic Church in Binghamton, NY, to join in the festivities. The following Sunday, May 29th, Bishop Kurt joined Father Myron to concelebrate the Divine Liturgy and the parishioners had a chance to share hospitality and visit with Bishop Kurt.



Father Myron Badnerosky with special guest, Mickey Mouse

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SHARING THE FAITH WITH OTHERS

Annual Church Tour stops at Saint Nicholas Church, Swoyersville, PA

An annual church tour that brings together people of all religious faiths included Saint Nicholas of Myra Church, Swoyersville, PA, on the afternoon of June 26th, 2016.



Joseph Chisarick talks about parish history

Father Gary Mensinger, pastor of Saint Nicholas, fascinated the visitors with interesting facts and insights about our Byzantine Catholic faith, presented in combination with his quick wit. It was a chance for those who never set foot in a Byzantine Catholic Church to have questions answered and curiosity satisfied in a friendly manner.

Joseph Chisarick, a life-long parishioner described the history of the neighborhood parish, citing the ways parishioners rallied through some difficult challenges. The original church was destroyed by a fire in 1914. In 1961, the front of the rectory had mine subsidence, and the current property had damage from major flooding from Hurricane Agnes in 1972. None of these prevented the parishioner base from growing over the years, uplifted by their spirit of hospitality to all and unwavering focus on God and family.

Jan Lokuta, who organized the tour, has led similar tours in the Pittston area of Wyoming

Valley since 2005. The goal has been to feature area churches spotlighting them as a treasured resource. A parish church is a living, breathing community of people foremost, but can also be a repository of fascinating history, art, and expression. Church buildings are a reflection of those who built them and those who continue to worship in them.

This tour started at the historic Forty Fort Meeting House, founded in 1807. It included stops at Forty Fort Presbyterian Church; the Stella Presbyterian Church, Forty Fort; Saint Elizabeth Seton Roman Catholic Church, Swoyersville, Saint Nicholas Church, and finally at Forty Fort United Methodist Church.

Saint Nicholas Parish celebrated 100 years in 2004. Father Gary Mensinger serves as administrator and also as pastor of Saint Michael, Pittston.

20TH ANNUAL FLEA MARKET, ZITI DINNER, AND ETHNIC FOOD WEEKEND

Saturday, August 6: 9am to 4pm

Sunday, August 7: 10am to 3pm

Saint Michael Byzantine Catholic Church,
205 North Main St., Pittston, PA

The Ziti Dinner will be on Sunday from 10am to 3pm. The tickets will be sold at the door. Adults - \$10, Children under 12 - \$6.00 and take-outs will be available. Bake sale will be on Saturday August 6th. All Ethnic Foods are homemade! "Best Piggies in the Area" (also known as Halupki), Pirohi (Potato and Sauerkraut), Haluski (cabbage & noodles), Potato Pancakes, Sausage & Peppers, Wimpies and many other yummy foods and refreshments.

"Best Piggies in the Area"

VISITING MYRTLE BEACH THIS SUMMER?

Blessed Basil Hopko

Byzantine Catholic Mission welcomes you!

THE DIVINE LITURGY

WILL BE CELEBRATED ON THE FOLLOWING
SUNDAYS AT 10 A.M.:

**JULY 31
AUGUST 7, 14, 21**

For more information call Jack and Cathy
Securda at 910-575-2265 or Don and Jean Wirth at 843-249-9502 or
Father Conan Timoney 410-302-6996.

The Blessed Basil Hopko Mission is located
at 3059 Highway 90, Conway, Myrtle Beach, SC
It is located between Routes 22 and 501 on Highway 90.

FATHER OF DEACON THOMAS SHUBECK REPOSES IN THE LORD

+Paul Shubeck, father of Deacon Thomas Shubeck, fell asleep in the Lord on Friday evening, June 3, 2016. The Office of Christian Burial and Divine Liturgy was celebrated by

the Right Reverend James Hayer, pastor, at Saint Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church, Rahway, NJ, on Tuesday, June 7, with Interment at Saint Gertrude's Cemetery, Colonia, NJ.

Blessed repose to God's servant Paul, and may his memory be eternal!

CARE FOR CREATION

Ecumenical Orientale Lumen Conference Held in Washington, DC

Article by Rev. Msgr. George E. Dobes, Image courtesy of St. Isaac of Syria Skete

“Iurgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all” (*Laudato Si'*, 14).

With that earnest plea of Pope Francis as motivation, the 20th Annual Orientale Lumen Conference

convened on June 21st for four days at the Washington Retreat House on the theme: “Creation: Our Shared Inheritance.” The Conference brought together Orthodox and Catholic laity and clergy for discussion of the ecumenical dimensions of the Papal Encyclical *Laudato Si'* and the environmental statements and symposia of the Ecumenical Patriarch.

“The theme of the Conference is one close to the Holy Father’s heart, for he is convinced that the common commitment of Catholics and Orthodox to respect God’s creation and promote an integral ecology is a privileged path of growth in dialogue and cooperation.” So wrote Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Papal Secretary of State, conveying His Holiness’ cordial blessings on the Conference.



Icon of the “Creation of the Stars” was used as the Conference Theme

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

from the Office of the Metropolitan

Join Metropolitan William Skurla and Bishop Kurt Burnette on
**A PILGRIMAGE FOR THE
 HOLY YEAR OF MERCY**

October 19 thru 30, 2016

12 days, 10 nights

ROME ✠ BARI ✠ ASSISI ✠ VENICE

For complete itinerary, pricing, or further information
 contact Diane Rabiej

Executive Assistant to the Bishop, Eparchy of Passaic

Phone 973-890-7777 • E-mail drabiej@eparchyofpassaic.com



**Specially organized for the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh USA
 by the Vatican Office of Pilgrimages**

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, via a video message, sent his congratulations and his fervent paternal prayers to the conference attendees and organizers, commenting that we need to be united in our concern for the Earth. Video messages conveying gratitude and greetings from other hierarchs of both the Orthodox and Catholic Churches were viewed by the participants.

Presenters at the conference included: Father John H. Erickson, former dean of Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Father John T. Ford, CSC, professor at The Catholic University of America, Dr. Elizabeth Theokritoff, an Orthodox lay theo-

logian, and Mr. Paolo Puccini, CSP, a Paulist seminarian. Video presentations came from Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia and Archimandrite Robert Taft, SJ, both unable to attend in person. Father Ronald G. Roberson, CSP, of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops was the moderator.

Mr. Jack Figel, founder and organizer of the Orientale Lumen Conference and Foundation, was recognized at the conclusion of the conference for his twenty (20) years of devotion and dedication to ecumenical education and dialogue.



Seminary Choir to Visit American Churches

The Orientale Lumen Foundation announces that a third Seminary Concert Tour is scheduled to take place on September 11 through October 2, at Byzantine Catholic parishes and other sites throughout the Northeastern United States. The choir will include 16 seminarians from the Blessed Theodore Romzha Seminary in Uzhorod, Transcarpathia, Ukraine and will sing a two-hour concert of sacred music, both plain chant and choral arrangements, in the Church Slavonic language.

This third tour will provide an opportunity for parishioners of these American churches to meet future priests who will mostly become married, and for the seminarians from Europe to experience American culture and church life. Some 20 priests from Europe now serve in Byzantine Catholic parishes across the US. The concerts will be free and open to the public. Free-will donations made at the concerts, after travel expenses are paid, will be sent to the seminary to help with seminarian education and formation.

Several special events will take place during the tour: the choir will sing at the 43rd Annual Slavic American Festival at Epiphany Church in Annandale on September 11th, an ecumenical concert will take place at Saint Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral in Washington, DC, on September 30th, and a pilgrimage Divine Liturgy will be celebrated in Church Slavonic for the Feast of the Protection of the Theotokos (October 1st) in the Ruthenian

Chapel of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC.

The Orientale Lumen Foundation, based in Fairfax, VA, is a “grass-roots” ecumenical movement of laity and clergy who promote Eastern Christianity and dialogue between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches through annual conferences, pilgrimages and media recordings. For further information about the tour, call 703-691-8862 or visit: www.seminaryconcerttour.com or www.olfoundation.net.

Concerts and Divine Liturgies will take place at the following locations:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|------------------|
| Sunday, Sept. 11 | Epiphany Church (Festival) | Annandale, VA |
| Tuesday, Sept. 13 | Saint Mary Church | Johnstown, PA |
| Wednesday, Sept. 14 . . | Saint John Church | Uniontown, PA |
| Thursday, Sept. 15 . . . | Saint Mary Church | Bradenville, PA |
| Friday, Sept. 16 | St John Chrysostom Church | Pittsburgh, PA |
| Saturday, Sept. 17 | St Elias Church | Munhall, PA |
| Sunday, Sept. 18 | Holy Ghost Church (AM Liturgy) | McKees Rocks, PA |
| Sunday, Sept. 18 | St George Church (PM Concert) | Aliquippa, PA |
| Monday, Sept. 19 | Saint John Cathedral | Parma, OH |
| Tuesday, Sept. 20 | Saint Mary Church | Youngstown, OH |
| Wednesday, Sept. 21 . . | Saint Mary Church | Weirton, WV |
| Thursday, Sept. 22 . . . | Saint Ann Church | Harrisburg, PA |
| Friday, Sept. 23 | Saint John Church | Hazleton, PA |
| Saturday, Sept. 24 | Saint Thomas Church | Rahway, NJ |
| Sunday, Sept. 25 | Saint Mary Church | Hillsborough, NJ |
| Wednesday, Sept. 28 . . | Saint Michael Church | Mont Clare, PA |
| Thursday, Sept. 29 . . . | Saint Gregory Church | Beltsville, MD |
| Friday, Sept. 30 | Saint Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral | Washington, DC |
| Saturday, Oct. 1 | Basilica (AM Liturgy) | Washington, DC |
| Saturday, Oct. 1 | Epiphany Church (PM Concert) | Annandale, VA |
| Sunday, Oct. 2 | Epiphany Church (AM Liturgy) | Annandale, VA |

“Light of the East-2” Pilgrimage
(Optional OL EuroEast IV Conference Plenary Sessions)
October 17-28, 2016
Rome and Constantinople
(Optional Weekend to Cappadocia)
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Sponsored by the Orientale Lumen Foundation and Viking Travel

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“Light of the East” Pilgrimage Private Audience with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in 2014

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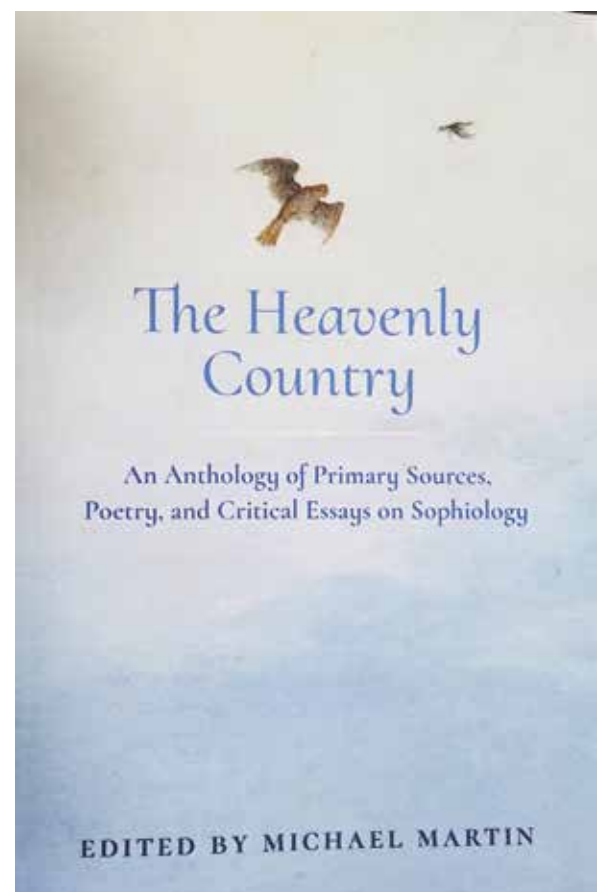
PARMA PARISHIONER AND PASSAIC PRIEST COLLABORATE ON AN ACADEMIC PRODUCTION

A hefty new anthology (434 pp.) exploring various aspects of sophiology (the study of wisdom) from both western and eastern Christian traditions has recently been published by Angelico Press/Sophia Perennis. The editor and compiler of this academic work, entitled *The Heavenly Country: An Anthology of Primary Sources, Poetry, and Critical Essays on Sophiology* is Michael Martin, Ph.D., an Assistant Professor of Philosophy and English at Marygrove College, Detroit, MI, who is also a parishioner of Saint Stephen Byzantine Catholic Church, Allen Park, MI, pastored by Father Cyril Attak, a parish of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma (OH). The volume consists of three parts. The first (166 pp.) as the subtitle of the book indicates, is a compilation of primary texts in sophiological writing, beginning with the Bible and Old Testament sapiential books in particular, then proceeding on to the writings of western esoteric (Protestant) and romantic voices, then on to those of Russian Orthodox and Catholic philosophers and theologians. Part II (94 pp.), at the heart of the volume, attention, without comment, is given over to various western and eastern poems of decidedly sophiological inspiration, including the famous "Prayer to the Virgin of Saint Bernard" of Dante

Alighieri (1265–1321) from his *Divine Comedy, Paradiso*, Canto XXXIII, translated for this volume by Dr. Martin himself. Not surprisingly, the notable poems of the Russians Vladimir Solovyov (1853–1900) and Alexander Blok (1880–1921) find their way into this collection. The very title of this anthology, *The Heavenly Country*, is taken from the name of a prose poem by the American poet Robert Kelly (b. 1935).

For its part, Part III (196 pp.) is not a florilegium, but is a collection of "critical essays" on the topic of sophiology by nine noted scholars who have written on the subject, be it western or eastern, Catholic or Orthodox. Russian Orthodox thinking on the matter is the subject of a number of the essays in the volume, but the one specifically entitled "Russian Sophiology" is the contribution of Father Robert F. Slesinski, Ph.D., a priest of the Eparchy of Passaic. For his part, Dr. Martin, a poet himself, concludes the volume with his own offering, "The Poetic of Sophia."

An intellectually charged volume inspiring challenges to the human imagination, it is not for the academically faint of heart, but for those aspiring to understand something of Sophia, the



Wisdom of God. This important new academic contribution may be purchased (\$22.95) from Angelico Press, 4709 Briar Knoll Dr., Kettering, OH 45429 or www.angelicopress.com or www.amazon.com

Pilgrimage for Peace Sunday August 7, 2016

celebrating the 800th anniversary of the Portiuncula Pardon during this Holy Year of Mercy



Portiuncula Chapel, now contained in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels, outside of Assisi.

The Portiuncula is a "little portion" of land with a small chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Angels. Here the early friars met each year, and Francis embraced Sister Death.

St Francis of Assisi asked that those who come to the Portiuncula would receive an indulgence – a pardon of their sin (as usual, with Confession, Holy Communion, and prayers for the Pope). This year we celebrate the 800th anniversary of this pardon, in our day extended to all Franciscan churches.

August 7 Schedule

10am Matins

11am-1pm Food Service

noon Holy Anointing

1pm Divine Liturgy

2:30-5pm Food Service

3:30-4:30pm Children's Program

4-4:30pm Spiritual Talk

by Fr Edward Tlucek, OFM, vicar provincial of Assumption BVM Province, which includes Holy Dormition Friary. Fr Ed has assisted at Byzantine parishes for several years, and he is a native of Wilkes-Barre.

5pm Vespers

Confession/Penance will be available

visit us online: <https://byzfranciscan.org/>

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held at

Holy Dormition Friary

712 State Hwy 93

Sybertsville, PA 18251

for more information:

570-788-1212 ext 400

holydormition@gmail.com



SISTERS OF SAINT BASIL TO CELEBRATE 82ND ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE

The 82nd Annual Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help will be held at Mount St. Macrina, September 3 & 4, 2016. This year’s theme is “Theotokos: An Inexhaustible Fountain of Mercy,” in honor of Pope Francis’ declaration of an extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy,” stated Sister Ruth.

In March, Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla dedicated the door to the Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help as a Holy Door of Mercy. Thus, Pilgrims will have the added blessing of passing through the Holy Door when they enter the Shrine to pray.

The very well-attended Anointing of the Sick services will be scheduled for both Saturday and Sunday afternoons rather than two on Sunday. In addition to the Enrichment Sessions usually offered, a Festal Icon Walk is planned for Saturday afternoon. This service will be comprised of various prayers taken from the Feast represented by the respective icon.

As in previous years, the Sisters will welcome all those Pilgrims who come from all over the country. Limited accommodations on the Mount and camping on the racetrack will be available as in the past. Light fare will be available at the Lunch Stand starting on Friday evening. For those arriving early, Compline will be held at the Shrine Altar on Friday evening. Divine Liturgy will be celebrated on Monday morning, September 5, for those who stay over.

Other plans for the weekend include many opportunities for participation in the Divine Liturgy of the Byzantine Catholic Church. Also scheduled are Matins, Vespers, sacrament of reconciliation, activities for teens and children, and other services in honor of the Mother of God.

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



SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

Friday, September 2

7:00 p.m. – Office of Small Compline at Shrine Altar

Saturday, September 3

7:00 a.m. – 12 noon - MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions) House of Prayer Patio

OPENING OF PILGRIMAGE

8:00 a.m. – MATINS at Shrine Altar

9:45 a.m. – Procession with icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help from House of Prayer to Shrine Altar

10:00 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY

Welcome: Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM

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

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. – MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions) House of Prayer Patio

1:00 p.m. – PARAKLIS at Shrine Altar

2:00 p.m. 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 p.m. – TEEN PILGRIMAGE at Prayer Garden

4:00 p.m. – VESPERS with DIVINE LITURGY at Shrine Altar

6:00 p.m. – ENRICHMENT SESSION at Mausoleum

7:15 p.m. – Procession from House of Prayer to Mount Macrina Cemetery

7:30 p.m. – PARASTAS at Mount Macrina Cemetery

CANDLELIGHT PROCESSION (Mount Macrina Cemetery to Shrine Altar)

AKATHIST to OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP

Following Akathist: TEEN SOCIAL at Prayer Garden

YOUNG ADULT SOCIAL at Trinity Center

Sunday, September 4

7:00 a.m. – MATINS at Shrine Altar

7:00 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY in House of Prayer Chapel

7:30 a.m. - 12 noon – MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions at House of Prayer Patio)

8:30 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY - Slavonic at Shrine Altar

10:30 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY at Shrine Altar

12:30 - 5:00 p.m. – MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confessions at the House of Prayer Patio)

1:00 p.m. – CHILDREN’S PROCESSION with Special Blessing for Youth & Young Adults - from House of Prayer to Mother of God Shrine

1:30 - 2:30 p.m. – MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION (Confession for the infirm, sick and physically challenged at Manor Gazebo)

2:00 p.m. – 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 p.m. – Procession from House of Prayer to Mother of God Shrine

4:00 p.m. – DIVINE LITURGY at Mother of God Shrine

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

7:15 p.m. – Procession from House of Prayer to Mother of God Shrine

7:30 p.m. – 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

Monday, September 5

9:30 a.m. – DIVINE LITURGY at Shrine Altar



FAITH AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

By Father Carmen Scuderi, OFM, Ed.D., P.C.C.

CHASTITY, VIRTUE, AND DISCIPLINE IN APPROACHING THE ISSUE OF HOMOSEXUALITY

The necessity for Training in Virtue

The USCCB, in November of 2006, in putting together the text on ministering to persons of a homosexual inclination, devoted a section of their guidelines to discussing the need for virtue and training in virtue as a part of living in this world. This was not exclusive to homosexuals. Indeed, the document states the necessity of every person to be trained in the virtuous lifestyle.

The authors of the document see the process of acquiring a virtue therapeutic in that the gaining of the virtuous behavior changes the direction of the person from brokenness to healing and wholeness. The acquisition of virtue, whatever virtue it may be, is a habit-forming discipline that is fired with the aid of the Holy Spirit the aid of a spiritual director and our graced determination to acquire the virtue.

In the realm of chastity, the document makes clear, "In our society, chastity is a particular virtue that requires special effort. All people, whether married or single, are called to chaste living" (2006, MPHI, USCCB, p 8). According to the understanding of the authors of the document, it is chastity that orders the disordered desires of lust, re-structuring the person's desires of mind spirit and body to harmonize with the will of God. The document also makes clear the consequences of the violation of chastity and the pain that is caused through infidelity: self-centered dehumanization and human suffering that often fol-

low unchaste promiscuous behavior.

Conversely, chastity affirms humanity as an image of God the consequence of violating that image is suffering. The authors are not naive admitting that, "The acquisition of virtues requires a sustained effort and repeated actions" (2006, MPHI, P8). A behavior is modified through repetition which makes the behavior permanent. They quote the philosophers' of old understanding that the more one repeats an action that is good the more the base passions become conformed to the good action being practiced; the vice versa also holding to true. So, the more good actions are repeated, the more the person grows into the virtue the easier it becomes to call the virtue forth and practice it. "Avoid the bad and practice the good" becomes the staple by which virtue is learned and made permanent in the person, while the baser responses are extinguished and eventually discarded.

The authors of the document explicitly state that the experience of "disordered passions should not be a cause of despair . . . They (passions) do not simply have to be repressed in order for one to act morally. Repeated good actions will modify the passions that one experiences. In fact, passions that have been properly disposed aid one in acting well" (2006, MPHI, p 9). The authors of the document admit to the reality that because of the brokenness of human nature it may not be possible to have the passions so completely under control and trained so that in every

case they will spontaneously act in a proper manner. There is free admission to the fact that some restraint and rather rigorous insistence on the part of the individual in reining back the impulses by the rational will, will be the case. Persistence in practice and the effort in choosing wisely will "at least reduce the resistance of our passions to acting well" (2006, MPHI, p 9).

The Spiritual Aspect of Choosing Chastity and Virtue in Lifestyle

The process of disciplining our desires and passions to follow God's Will is not a struggle performed in a so-called spiritual vacuum; God's own Spirit, the Spirit of Holiness and Truth continually works within the center of our being. The Law of Christ, the Life of the Spirit empowers us with abilities that are supernatural and bit by bit continue to re-fashion us into the Image of God we are meant to become, provided we are open and amenable to the Spirit's working within us. The document states, "The New Law of Grace, the Holy Spirit in our hearts, overcomes the power of sin and enables us to do what we should. We are no longer mastered by sin" (2006, MPHI, p 9-10). The redemptive act of Christ accomplishes a healing of the wounds of our broken nature restoring us in a way we could not accomplish on our own. In the next installment, the place and necessity of friendship and the context of community in the role of chaste living and from that the growth in holiness will be examined and discussed. [ECL](#)



SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

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

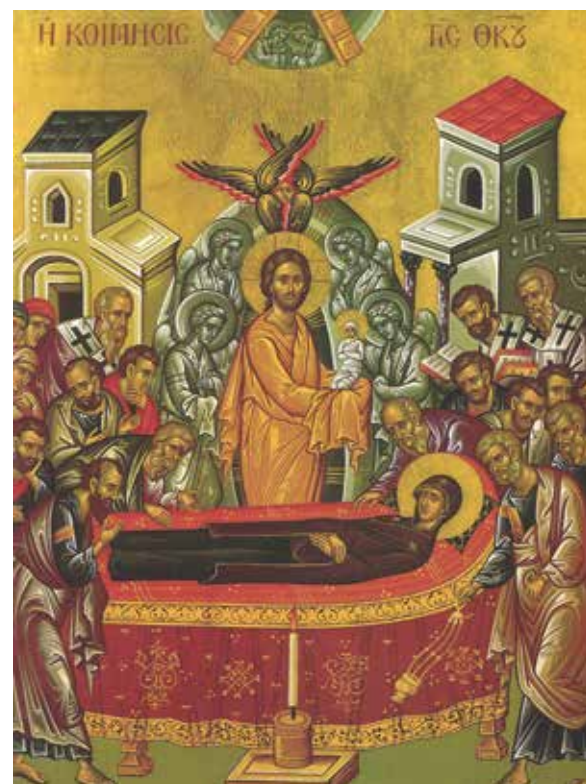
MARY: ARK OF THE LIVING GOD

For movie buffs, the mere mention of the Ark of the Covenant probably conjures up images of Indiana Jones. The real story about the Ark is hardly less exciting than the Hollywood version. Built according to the exact specifications God gave Moses on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9), this gold-covered wooden box was the focal point of the Lord's presence with His chosen people through the Exodus. Once in the Promised Land, the Ark was housed at the shrine in Shiloh (Joshua 18), from which it was captured by the Philistines and recovered by King David (1 Samuel 4-5) and entrusted first to the town of Beth Shemesh and then to Kiryat Jearim (1 Samuel 6). And there it remained until it was led triumphantly into the newly-built capital, Jerusalem, by King David, who "danced and made music before the Ark," as the Paschal Canon of Saint John Damascene says (ode 4; cf. 2 Samuel 6:5).

The Liturgy for the Dormition repeatedly iden-

tifies the Ark of the Covenant with Mary. Holy as it was, the Ark only contained relics of the Exodus: the tablets of the Law, a jar of manna and the rod of Aaron (Hebrews 9:1-7, the Epistle read at most Marian feasts, although not the Dormition), symbols of God's presence. Mary the Theotokos actually contained God Himself in her womb for nine months.

The Irmos sung at the Liturgy of the Dormition refers to a particularly striking passage in the Ark's history to stress Mary's unique holiness. "Let no uninitiated hand, touch the living ark of God" recalls the Ark's journey through the hills (2 Samuel 6:3-4) to Jerusalem on an ox cart. When the oxen stumbled at one point, a man named Uzzah grabbed the Ark to steady it and was struck dead (2 Samuel 6:6-8; God had issued a clear warning in Numbers 4:15). This prompted King David to react with fear and ask: "How can the ark of the Lord come to me?" (2 Samuel 6:9). There is a striking similarity here with one



Icon of the Dormition of the Theotokos

of the first events in the life of Mary reported by the Gospels. Just after the Annunciation, "pregnant with God" (as the Akathist Hymn puts it),

Mary set off for the “hill country” to visit Elizabeth, who greeted her by saying, “Who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” (Luke 1:39-43). The identification of Mary with the Ark is written into the Gospel itself.

The Ark of the Covenant also appears side by side with Mary in Saint John’s vision of heaven. Midway through Revelation, Saint John first sees “the temple of God was opened in heaven and the ark of his covenant was seen in his temple” (11:19). The very next thing Saint John sees is:

“a woman, clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was with child and cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. . . She bore a male child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron” (Revelation 12:1-5). That woman is Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, and her physical presence in a heavenly vision points to what the feast of her Dormition celebrates.

What became of the original Ark? It was installed in the Temple by King Solomon (1 Kings

8:6-9) and re-installed there a century and a half later after the reforms undertaken by King Josiah (2 Chronicles 35:2-3). Was it carried off along with all the other valuables in the Temple by the Babylonians (2 Kings 24-25; 2 Chronicles 36:18) before they burned down the Temple in 587BC? Or was it hidden by the prophet Jeremiah (2 Maccabees 2:4-8) and preserved to this day in Ethiopia? Ultimately, it does not matter. The Ark has served its purpose and Mary has fulfilled what the Ark could only symbolize. **ECL**



LIFE, LOVE, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

By Ann M. Koshute, MTS

I’M NOT “EFFICIENT” - I’M A PERSON

On a recent lunch date, a friend and I were greeted by a smiling woman behind the counter, encouraging us to place our order using the self-serve kiosk. “You’ll get a free cookie!” she chirped. Later my friend remarked how odd it was hearing the woman cheerfully talk herself out of a job. The transition to self-service is becoming commonplace, as concern for profits trumps the need for persons. Money is the motivator, and efficiency the fuel.

Efficiency and usefulness was also at the heart of a decision made this time fifteen years ago. On August 9, 2001, then-President George W. Bush announced the release of federal funding for research on cells from human embryos. Such research had been taking place privately already, but researchers long desired access to the Government’s large coffers. The issue was (and is) divisive, and no one was sure which way the President would go. His final decision – to allow tax-payer funded research only on cell lines taken from embryos created before the announcement – remains contentious. (Let’s pause to understand what we’re dealing with: embryonic stem cells come from human embryos, created in labs to aid people – heterosexual and same-sex couples, and single women – in conceiving. Sperm and eggs are “collected” from men and women, fertilized in a lab, and either implanted or frozen for later use. As of 2015, an estimated one million frozen embryos exist in the United States.) Opponents say the research destroys the tiniest of human lives, treating them as “material,” rather than as persons. Advocates claim human embryos provide the kinds of cells (known as “stem cells” – those scientists manipulate into becoming whatever specialized cell is desired) that will cure disease and restore function to persons with disabilities. They say embryonic stem cell research is the “miracle cure” and a triumph of efficiency.

A full explanation of how these cells operate and what the research entails is too complex to flesh out here. What interests me is how our notions of efficiency and utility so impact us that we sometimes don’t realize how they change our view of the human person. Don’t get me wrong: being efficient is generally a good thing, in our work and in organizing our lives. And we “use things” all of the time, finding some objects, words and ideas “useful” or not. But we should never use the terms “useful” or “efficient” with regard to a person. When we reduce a human person, however subtly, to the level of an object we cannot see him or her as God’s icon.

Media hype and celebrity advocacy aided researchers in convincing many that embryonic stem cells are the miracle we’ve been awaiting. To oppose the research is to lack compassion for those who suffer, sentencing them to lives that are essentially “useless.” Any moral trepidation felt by those opposing the research is countered with an appeal to efficiency: since embryos exist in abundance, and most will never be implanted in a womb, it’s better to “put them to good use” rather than discard them or keep them in the deep-freeze indefinitely. Yet even with all of the research that’s been conducted on embryos, the miracle has yet to be realized. In a surprising twist, adult and cord blood cells have yielded successful treatments. In fact, it appears that adult cells offer the greatest promise for cures, even if you never hear about it.

No one with any sense of compassion – no right-believing Christian! – can look on the suffering of the seriously ill or physically disabled and toss them aside. We pray for miracles, and we are called on by God to utilize the wisdom and scientific ability He’s given us to alleviate suffering and improve our health and welfare. But at what cost? Is one life more worthy than

another? How do we decide? These are difficult, sometimes heart-wrenching decisions, but we can’t rely on ourselves to find the answer. Human embryos, the tiniest of persons, are easily dismissed. After all, we can’t see them (save on the ultrasound screen). They don’t speak or even think yet, and they can’t defend themselves. It’s tempting, even for good Christians, to lament their state of suspended animation, yet believe that they can be sacrificed out of compassion – and, yes, efficiency.

The technology allowing me to order a sandwich from a computer isn’t at all the same as a procedure by which my eggs are harvested, fertilized and implanted inside me; or kept frozen at great expense, or subjected to experimentation. My point is not to draw an equivalency among them, or to trivialize infertility, embryo research, or the suffering of persons with illness or disability. Rather, I want us to step back and consider the decisions we make every day, the way we look at and treat ourselves and each other. I’ll be the first to admit that I too often calculate my actions and my relationships in terms of efficiency and utility. I treat others as a means to getting what I want, or see them in objectifying terms that reduce them to a problem, hindrance or annoyance. Yet there is a danger in even the subtle, almost innocuous ways we objectify ourselves and others. If we’re not careful we can become less mindful of the good of all human persons, and especially of the most vulnerable. Using the language of “efficiency” makes us susceptible to calculating everything – and everyone – based on this metric, rather than simply loving them. I’m not “efficient” or “useful.” And neither are you. We are icons of God: each wonderfully imperfect, the “tiniest of persons” in His sight, yet infinitely loved by Him. **ECL**

NEW PUBLICATION FROM THE PONTIFICAL ORIENTAL INSTITUTE



Rome. A new scholarly work, the Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Christian East, a hefty 2000 plus pages volume, has just come off the press this past summer under the editorship of Edward G. Farrugia, S.J., a longtime professor of theology at the Pontifical Oriental Institute. It is a revised and very much expanded volume of the first edition published in Italian in 2000. Since then expanded translations of the dictionary have been done in Romanian, Spanish, and Czech. The major translators of the Italian original into English hail from the Eparchy of Passaic, namely, Fr. Robert F. Slesinski, Ph.D., and Fr. John S. Custer, S.T.D., the rector of St. Michael the Archangel Cathedral in Passaic, New Jersey. In addition to his work as a translator, Fr. Slesinski contributed nine entries

to this encyclopedia-dictionary: “Florenskij, Pavel Aleksandrovič” (with Gerardo Ciofari, O.P.), “Frank, Semyon Ljudvigovič,” “Karsavin, Lev Platonovič,” “Losev, Aleksej Fëdorovič,” “Lossky, Nicholas Onufrievich,” “Minsk, Theological Faculty of Sts. Cyril and Methodius,” “Radiščev, Alexander Nikolaevič,” “Russian Religious Philosophy,” and “Skovoroda, Hryhori.”

Over 150 scholars worldwide participated in this project. American Catholic contributors include Ronald Roberson, CSP, Robert Taft, S.J., and William Toma. American Orthodox contributors include John Behr, Will Cohen, John Erikson, Thomas Fitzgerald, Michael Meerson, Sophia Senyk, and Constantin Simon. Representatives from the Armenian Church include Krikorian Chahinian, Michael Findikyan, and Nina Garsoian.

This finely published encyclopedia-dictionary costs 100 euros or approximately \$130 US. The volume may be purchased from Edizioni Orientalia Christiana, Pontifical Oriental Institute, Piazza S. Maria Maggiore, 7, 00185 Rome, Italy.

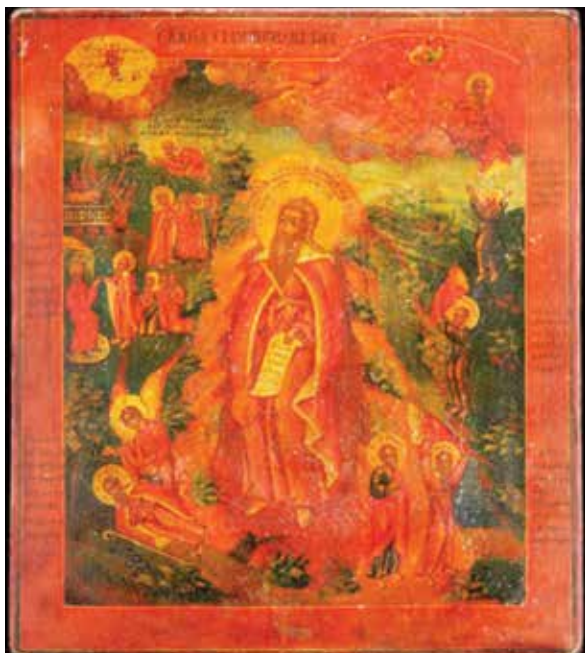


UNDERSTANDING ICONS

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.

ADMONISH THE SINNER

Installment 11 of 12



Spiritual work of mercy

To many, the word admonish seems to elicit confusion and frustration. Frequently, ardent believers misunderstand this work of mercy and, instead of gentle warnings, they arduously quash the upsurges of what they perceive as heresy. Others are afraid to upset the apple cart: they refrain from saying anything, remaining mute and actually, by their silence, applaud, commend and even nurture sinful behavior.

Admonish, from the original *admonire* means to express warning or disapproval in especially in a gentle, earnest, or solicitous manner; to chide, to reprove. Our Blessed Lord admonishes the sinful woman in John 8:11, in a kind and gently manner: "Neither do I condemn you, go, and do not sin again."

Perhaps some of the most vivid descriptions of admonishment occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, particularly those of the Holy Prophet Elijah found in the Book of Kings.

The Prophet Elijah begins his priestly ministry, described in 1 Kings 17: 1-3, by appearing before the evil King Ahab with an admonishment: "As the Lord, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain there, except by my word." After speaking this word, the Lord leads the Prophet into the wilderness, where he is fed bread and meat in the morning and evening by ravens for a period of three years.

Elijah's prediction of God's punishment of drought against Ahab and the Jewish people is actually an inducement to repentance, He makes them thirst for righteousness and mercy! This procedure recalls the popular proverb, You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink, but you certainly can make it thirsty!

Water, dew and rain are all scriptural symbols of the mercy/grace of God descending from heaven. One of the most prominent instances of its use occurs when Archangel Gabriel proclaims to the Holy Mother of God at the Annunciation (Evangelization) Luke 1:35 "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you..." This description evokes the many Hebrew Messianic prophecies which

is found in Psalm 72:6 : "He shall descend like gentle rain upon the newly mown meadow," used as the psalm verse on the feast day.

This work of mercy is prominently portrayed in the icons which illustrate the life of the Holy Prophet Elijah. In the middle area of the icon, or sometimes around the edge of the icon a single scene shows the admonition of the Holy Prophet Elijah to the evil King Ahab. The Holy Prophet has a halo and gestures his warning by extending his right arm toward the seated king.

Recall that Prophet Elijah appears and is thought to be invoked in two key moments in the Life of Our Lord. First, Elijah appears with Moses on either side of Our Lord at the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor. Both Hebrew prophets were known for delivering admonitions to God's people. At the Transfiguration, they attest to the fact that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah.

Secondly, at the moment before Our Lord's death on the cross he cries out: "Eli, Eli, ..." Several of the bystanders thought he was invoking Prophet Elijah with these words. Actually, Our Blessed Lord expresses the exasperation of unrepentant sinners by stating: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me."

Elijah is known to be the prophet who appears immediately before the Messiah arrives. Some believers even thought Saint John the Baptist was the age old prophet incarnate. There is no surprise in this since the Forerunner also admonished Herod: "It is not lawful for you to be living with your brother's wife."

Elijah is always depicted with long flowing white hair, ageless, or as old as the hills, or as the ancient Adam in icons of the Descent into Hades. It is not mere coincidence that iconographers began to illustrate God the Father in a similar way. By showing the Father as the Ancient of Days they were imputing the quality of long suffering, and eternal mercy by depicting Him with long flowing white hair, a visualization of eternal mercies flowing from heaven.

Many times in fam-

ily life also, it is the Father who has the thankless job of laying down the law in the family. Frequently Moms admonish their children: "Just wait until your father gets home from work." His task is to admonish or warn his children of their sinful behavior in the anticipation that they will return to their senses. Curiously, this is the exact same coif of Saint John the Baptist, long flowing hair, which evokes the solicitude of the Father, the Priest, the Prophet for the return of their sinful people.

Do not be afraid to admonish/warn your children of their obligations of regular church attendance and practice of the sacrament of reconciliation. Invoke the heavenly intercession of the Holy Prophets Elijah and John the Baptist to give you the words to express the admonishments in a gentle way for the return of sinners to our heavenly Father. **ECL**



HOLY DORMITION PILGRIMAGE EVENTS

**2:00 - The Joy of Love:
Be the Sign of Mercy
Wherever Family Life Exists**

**Most Rev. Peter Libasci
Bishop of the Diocese
of Manchester, NH**



Peter Anthony Libasci was born November 9, 1951, to the late William and Florence Libasci in Queens, NY. He attended St. Margaret School, Middle Village, NY, followed by Cathedral Preparatory Seminary, Elmhurst, NY.

Fr. Libasci was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Rockville Centre on April 1, 1978 by Bishop John R. McGann. On April 3, 2007, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI appointed Msgr. Libasci auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre. He has served as the tenth Bishop of Manchester, NH since Sept. 19, 2011.

Bishop Libasci is bi-ritual and celebrates the Divine Liturgy in the Byzantine Ruthenian Catholic Church.

Sr. Kathleen Hutsko is a member of the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. During her 35 years as an SSMI, she has been in education and administration. Her presentation will focus on a cluster of parables, unique to St. Luke's Gospel, which highlight the merciful love of God.



**2:45 - The Gospel of
Mercy: St. Luke**
Sister Kathleen Hutsko, SSMI

**Saturday Conferences Presented in English
in St. Mary's Villa**

The Door of St. Mary's Chapel has been designated an Eparchial Holy Door of Mercy. You are encouraged to walk through the Door, visit the Chapel and obtain the special blessings of this Jubilee Year of Mercy.

**Special Video and Exhibits for the Year of Mercy
will be on display in the Gallery**

CHILDREN and TEEN/YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS

**Children's Program
for youth up to age 12**

**Teen / Young Adult Program
for Ages: 13 and up**

**SATURDAY - 7:15 p.m.
Includes participation in
candlelight procession**



**SATURDAY - 7:15 p.m.
Includes participation in
candlelight procession**

SUNDAY - 1:00 p.m.

SUNDAY - 1:30 p.m.

****No Youth Camp-out this year****

Questions? More information?

Sr. Kathleen at (845) 753-2840 ssminy@aol.com

Pilgrimage weekend August 13 - 14, 2016 Sloatsburg, NY

CATECHETICAL REFLECTIONS

Father Robert F. Slesinski, Ph.D.



MAN BEFORE GOD

The Marvel of the Mind: The Cognizing Subject. Installment 14

The “inward man,” we have seen, is the one who enjoys a self-presence of his very self. We cannot stand outside of ourselves in such fashion that our senses can capture our very existence, as if looking in a mirror we could see our souls, even less quantify them. Our souls—our minds let us say—are not accessible to sense perception. Our physical bodies are, indeed, perceptible to our physical senses, but not as lived bodies. We intuitively know a soul is at work animating a lived body, clearly distinguishing it from a corpse, an animateless body. But a soul or mind as such is not subject to bodily perception. Only intellectual engagement in self-reflection can bring the datum of the human person’s self-presence to him or herself.

The datum of self-presence is not one to be downplayed or be outright dismissed as a vain pursuit. To the contrary, it is only by having a prise de conscience (a grasping, in other words) of our selfhood that we can fully appreciate the significance of free will for the human person. In the process of cognizing myself as a subject, I also focus on myself as an object. In the self, the subject as subject and subject as object coincide. At this juncture the mind and the will are at one. It is the conscious mind that takes decisive courses of action, activating the will at the same time. Cognitive awareness and volitional doing should, it would seem, be in sync in the free decisions that determine any given human being. The will should not be capricious or quixotic. That would make it only a slavish will subject to whim.

No, to be fully free, the will should be informed by cognitive awareness of my truest self, which is best manifested in my will as it is only through my will that I am fully in charge of myself. In sum, the will is the rational faculty in the human person through which he or she determines and shapes his or her life.

Conscious reflection on the choices and direction of my will is a mark of the “inward man.” It is precisely this man that Saint Augustine speaks of in his famous declaration “restless is our heart until it comes to rest in thee” (Confessions, I, I, 1). This is the voice of a searching will, one engrossed with truth and ultimate meaning in life. For Augustine, of course, ultimate meaning only comes once ultimate truth is obtained, something which obtains only once our self-presence is fully informed, nay, formed, by the presence of God in our lives.

In the dialogue between Augustine and his interlocutor Evodius, as found in On Free Choice of the Will, we find Augustine making his case. He writes (II, XV, 153):

If there is something more excellent than truth, this is God. If there is not, then truth itself is God. Whether or not truth is God, you cannot deny that God exists, and this is the question with which we agreed to deal.

Convinced of the soundness of Augustine’s position, Evodius finds himself confirmed in truth and puts himself squarely on the path to truth. His sincere response to Augustine contains motivational words for us. We read (II, XV, 156):

I can scarcely find words for the unbelievable joy that fills me... And my inner voice shouts for truth itself to hear, that I cling to this: not only does good exist, but indeed the highest good—and this is the source of happiness.

Do we admit that good exists in this world, and do we understand it in the context of truth? Are we capable of reasoning toward an Ultimate Source of this truth and goodness, which cannot but be Ultimate Truth and the Ultimate Good? OMG!, could there really be a true Lord and Master of life after all? [ECL](#)



62nd ANNUAL HOLY DORMITION (ASSUMPTION) PILGRIMAGE

AUGUST 13 – 14, 2016

SISTERS SERVANTS OF MARY IMMACULATE
ST. MARY’S VILLA / SLOATSBURG, NY

Theme: Jesus – the Face of Mercy;
Mary – the Mother of Mercy

The Door of St. Mary’s Chapel has been designated an Eparchial Holy Door of Mercy. We encourage all pilgrims to walk through the Door, visit the Chapel and obtain the special blessings of this Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Saturday, August 13

12:00 p.m. Food Available at Pavilion

1:00 p.m. Akathist to the Mother of God — Very Rev. John S. Custer SSL, STD, Rector
Choir: Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel in Passaic, NJ

2:00 p.m. Presentations (listed below)

5:00 p.m. Divine Liturgy — Most. Rev. Peter A. Libasci — Bishop of Manchester Diocese (grotto — English)
Choir: St. Mary’s Byzantine Catholic Church, Hillsborough, NJ
Blessing of Water (front of Villa)

7:15 p.m. Teen/ Young Adult Gathering and Discussion (Pavilion)

7:15 p.m. Activity for children — Youth will also participate in the candlelight procession

8:00 p.m. Moleben to the Mother of God with candlelight procession (grotto — English)
Most Rev. Kurt Burnette — Bishop of Passaic Eparchy - main celebrant / homilist
Panakhya — St. Mary’s Villa chapel

****No Teen Camp Out ****

Sunday, August 14

8:30 a.m. Materi Molitvy / Mothers in Prayer — Rosary / Singing (St. Mary’s Villa Chapel)

10:30 a.m. Pontifical Divine Liturgy with procession to the grotto
followed by blessing of flowers

Most Rev. Stefan Soroka, Metropolitan Archbishop of Philadelphia

Most Rev. Paul Chomnycky, OSBM, Bishop of the Eparchy of Stamford

Most Rev. Bohdan Danylo — Bishop of the Eparchy of Parma

Most Rev. John Bura — Auxiliary Bishop of the Archeparchy of Philadelphia— Homilist

Most Rev. Basil Losten, Bishop Emeritus of the Eparchy of Stamford

Choir: St. Josaphat Church — New Britain, CT

12:00 p.m. Youth Liturgy - Rev. Paul Makar — St. Michael’s Ukrainian Church —Cherry Hill, NJ
main celebrant / homilist (chapel — English)

1:00 p.m. Activity & Blessing for children/youth (Terrace)

1:30 p.m. Teen/ Young Adult Gathering and Discussion (Terrace)

1:30 p.m. Blessing of the Sick (St. Mary’s Villa Chapel & grotto steps)

Blessing of Religious Articles (in front of St. Joseph’s Home)

2:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross — Basilian Father

3:00 p.m. Moleben to the Mother of God (Grotto - Ukrainian)
Most Rev. Bohdan Danylo — main celebrant / homilist

Blessing of cars and buses — Rev. Ivan Tyhovych

**Special Video and Exhibits for the Year of Mercy
on display in the Gallery**

CONFESSION AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE WEEKEND

Presentations in English:

2:00 The Joy of Love: Be the sign of mercy wherever family life exists
— Most Rev. Bishop Peter Libasci (Bishop Libasci is bi-ritual.)

2:45 The Gospel of Mercy: St. Luke
— Sr. Kathleen Hutsko, SSMI

Rt. Rev. Mitred Msgr. John Terlecky, Pilgrimage Spiritual Moderator





Last month, we reviewed some of the history and geography of the ancient Greek city of Corinth to whom Saint Paul wrote two letters, having visited and labored there for approximately two years. As a tentmaker by trade, he earned his keep by making tents without drawing monetary support from the Christian community just in its infancy. Although he enjoyed quite a measure of success, he also suffered much from the hostility of the Jews who brought him up on charges of religious sedition before the Roman governor Gallio (Acts 18:12-17) who essentially disregarded the matter and returned it for resolution to the Jewish authorities.

The first epistle consists of 15 chapters while the second just has 13. 1 Corinthians deals with many specific problems, some moral, others dogmatic and points to authentic Christian love as a more excellent way to live in all of Chapter 13. Its key themes are the power of the Cross of Christ and His resurrection. He clarifies in its first four chapters any misunderstanding of his position as a minister of the Gospel. He responds to reports of serious divisions and factions within the community. He calls them to task over immoral behavior, such as incest, participation in idol worship and discrimination between the more affluent and less fortunate among them, particularly when they gather for the celebration of the Eucharist.

SEASONAL REFLECTIONS

Monsignor John. T. Sekellick, JCL



SAINT PAUL'S TWO LETTERS TO THE CORINTHIANS

He reprimands believers for going outside the Church, that is to civil and pagan authorities, to settle their disputes. He explains the proper Christian principles of sexual ethics and marriage in honest realism (Chapter 7). Although he does not mince words, he appeals to their better sense by persuading them to accept his approach to proper Christian behavior. He instructs the community on appropriate comportment at worship and recounts the institution of the Lord's Supper. Paul teaches that the community is the Body of Christ, mutually interdependent on one another, each exercising their different talents and gifts to the benefit of all.

In the first epistle, Saint Paul provides us with the earliest written evidence of the resurrection of Christ which is both the model and the guarantee of the resurrected body that Christians will share at Christ's second coming. He has the Corinthians understand that the resurrected body will not be merely the physical body revived as a mere resuscitation of a corpse but a transformed and glorious immortal body. In closing, he assures them of his love for all of them in Christ Jesus.

His second letter around the year 57 to the Corinthians is understandably a follow up to his somewhat severe letter written a few years earlier, that is about the year 55. It is intensely personal as he wants any critics and adversaries to understand his position as a true Apostle. A careful reading of this second letter reveals a rather emotional Paul. He defends his ministry at length in chapters three and four. He does so by attesting to his persecutions for the Christian faith. He essentially shows how Christ's death and suffering are central for His followers. The theme of sharing in the sufferings of Christ forms an important section of chapter 4, verses 7-18. He states that ministers of Christ may expect to suffer because

they serve from a God Who suffers and saves from a Cross.

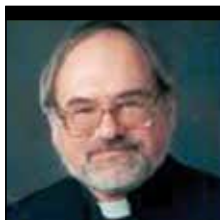
In Chapters 8 and 9 of this letter Saint Paul also addresses money matters almost as a kind of secondary consideration. In Acts and other epistles, a number of passages mention Paul collecting funds from the Gentile Churches for needy Christians in Jerusalem. Romans 15, for example, outlines the significance of the gift of money. These two chapters provide a good understanding of the proper motive for charitable Christian giving.

In Chapter 12, verse 7, Saint Paul mentions his mysterious "thorn in the flesh," whatever it may have been, which he welcomes as a blessing. Scholars have attempted to speculate what that "thorn" may have been ranging from persecution to physical illness, but for Saint Paul whatever its nature, this and other forms of suffering demonstrate for him a major priority in his life: in the greatest weakness as in the very death of Christ, God's power, nonetheless, overcomes all things for good.

Saint Paul's second letter to the Corinthians concludes with his blessing which is still used in our Divine Liturgy introducing the Anaphora: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you." (13:13)

A reading of these two epistles, including the sections not heard at the Sunday Divine Liturgies, provides special insight into the dynamics of the early, fledgling Church, its strengths and weaknesses and especially the guidance and leadership of Saint Paul. His instruction is truly just as valid for us today as it was for his first hearers.

ECL



THE BYZANTINE LITURGY

By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

THE HISTORY OF ECUMENISM

If we believe in one God, then ecumenism, if we define it as unity in faith in Christ, has to be a part of our divine relationship. Yet even in the story of Adam and Eve as a theological description of human origins, from the beginning there was division in the human race. There was envy and resentment even among the first children. Before the coming of Christ, God chose the Hebrew race and kept them pure from the prevalent polytheism, but even within the nation of God, there were a series of divisions, civil wars and subjugation from outsiders. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, often revealed the divisions among his people, as seen by his relations with the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Samaritans. Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, "You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation

is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. (John 4:22-23)" Jesus prayed for his followers: "Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are. (John 17:11)" He taught that there was only to be one sheepfold, "I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I will lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd. (John 10:14-16)"

From the beginning, there were divisions in the Christian community. Saint Paul had to ad-

monish the Corinthians for their lack of charity toward each other. At Miletus, Saint Paul warns the people, "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come among you, and they will not spare the flock. And from your own group, men will come forward perverting the truth to draw the disciples away after them. (Acts 29-30)" In these cases, we see that there is to be a pure adherence to the truth against those who would distort it.

In the greater history of the Church, those who profess belief in Christ have brought divisions among themselves in every age. In the fifth century, most of the Churches who were to find themselves outside the territory of the Roman (later Byzantine) Emperor, the Church of the East in the Persian Empire, and then later the

Oriental Orthodox Churches, who eventually fell under the power of the Moslems, broke communion with the Churches of Rome and Constantinople. In the eleventh century, approximately, the Church of Rome (Catholic) and the Church of Constantinople (Orthodox) broke communion with each other. Then later, in the sixteen century, in the age of Reform, many churches of the West rejected the communion of the Pope of Rome, and divided into a number of dissenting Churches. None of these divisions have been healed, and, in fact, the accusations of each of them against the other have sometimes been very acrimonious.

In the twentieth century, a change began to take place. Christians began to be more and more aware of our Lord’s commandment for unity. There were undoubtedly many factors in this. As communications grew more and more instant, people began to enter into dialogue more easily. The world itself became more and more secular, and hostile to religion, and Christians felt the need to unite against a common enemy. This is not something new, certainly in the beginnings of Christianity, the world was pagan and viewed Christians as traitors to the official religion. There has been a hatred of the faith at all times,

but there have also been people of good will who have had, in every age and place, an ecumenical attitude, seeking unity in Christ. The modern ecumenical movement is usually dated to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. In 1920, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Germanos, wrote an encyclical calling for more open relationships among Christian Churches, and a kind of “League of Churches,” modeled in the “League of Nations.” The World Council of Churches was established in 1948. The Catholic Church became committed to ecumenism at the Second Vatican Council. In the Constitution on the Church, the council reaffirmed the truth of the Catholic Church, but added: “although many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure. These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling toward catholic unity. (8)” Since the Council, the Catholic Church has sustained a number of bi-lateral dialogues with other Christian Churches, especially with the Orthodox Church. This does not mean the compromise of faith, as Pope Saint John Paul II counsels, “The unity willed by God can be attained only by the adherence of all to the content of revealed faith in its entirety. In matters of faith, compromise is in contradiction with God who is Truth. In the

Body of Christ, “the way, and the truth, and the life” (Jn 14:6), who could consider legitimate a reconciliation brought about at the expense of the truth?” However, the hurling of anathemas is no longer the best way of dealing with divisions, now dialogue is preferred. The vast majority of Catholic, Orthodox and Reformation Churches believe that, though there is certainly a core of traditionalists in each that bitterly reject ecumenism. I think, however, that the movement toward unity is a work of the Holy Spirit impelling Christians toward the need for dialogue and union, for the sake of the gospel. This year, at the Great and Holy Council, the Orthodox Church decisively confirmed its commitment to ecumenism: “The Orthodox Church, which prays unceasingly “for the union of all,” has always cultivated dialogue with those estranged from her, those both far and near. In particular, she has played a leading role in the contemporary search for ways and means to restore the unity of those who believe in Christ, and she has participated in the Ecumenical Movement from its outset, and has contributed to its formation and further development. (Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World, 4)” Catholics will certainly endorse this affirmation of dialogue towards communion. [ECL](#)



SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Father G. Scott Boghossian

PRAYER AND THE MORAL LIFE

Without special help from God, it is impossible to live a holy life and remain in the state of grace. Our human nature has been damaged by the Fall of our first parents and by our own sins. Because of this, every serious follower of Christ must contend against powerful spiritual enemies. We experience the dominion of the passions, concupiscence, or what the Bible calls the flesh. “The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do” (Gal. 5:17). In addition, we must contend with the devil and the evil spirits: “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pt. 5:8). The “world,” or the “present evil age” (Gal. 1:4), fills our minds with worldly values that lead us astray. “Do you not know that

friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (Js. 4:4).

It is no wonder that when

the Apostles asked our Lord, “who then shall be saved?” He replied, “What is impossible with man is possible with God” (Lk. 18:27). Without God’s help, we are lost, but God promises to give us His help in response to our prayers. When we pray, we get special help from God, and He empowers us to keep his commandments. Saint Augustine tells us that “God does not command the impossible, but by commanding He suggests that you do what you can, and to pray for what is beyond your strength; and He helps you that you may be able.” In other words, no commandment of God is too difficult for us to obey, if we only seek God’s help through prayer.

Every committed Catholic will experience temptation. To be tempted is no sin. Many of the great saints experienced terrible temptations. Saint Therese of Lisieux, whom Pope Saint Pius X called the greatest saint of modern times, was painfully tempted with unbelief, despair, and perhaps even thoughts of suicide during her final illness. Yet she triumphed over these temptations through prayer. The Desert Fathers were tempted to blasphemy and impurity and almost every other imaginable sin, and they triumphed over these temptations through prayer. During the last years of his life, Saint Alphonsus de Liguori, bishop and renowned moral theologian, was tempted to severe scrupulosity and thoughts of sexual impurity, yet always invoking the help of Jesus and Mary, he never fell.

The saints tell us that God allows us to be tempted so that we may prove our loyalty to Him. Yes, God allows us to be tempted, but He never allows us to be tempted beyond our strength. With God’s help, we are able to surmount any and every temptation of the world, the flesh, or the devil. “God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Cor. 10:13). One of the ways of escape that God provides, and probably the most important, consists of urgent prayer.

As soon as we are aware of being tempted, we must cry out to God for help. A short “Lord, have mercy!” as we bless ourselves with the sign of the Cross will make all the difference in the world. If the temptation does not abate, we must keep up the fight, flee the occasion of sin, busy ourselves with some constructive task, and continue to call on God for help. We must pray “Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner” or “My Jesus, mercy!” or any sincere and heartfelt prayer in our own words. God promises to hear and answer any prayer offered according to His will. To free us from temptation, and empower to live a pure and good life is most certainly His will. We can be confident that if we ask for God’s help, He will empower us to overcome every temptation, live a holy life, and remain in the state of grace. [ECL](#)



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. • Eparchial Victim Advocate • 516.457.5684



SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

Father Lewis Rabayda

WE MUST CHOOSE TO ACCEPT THE HEALING OFFERED TO US

It is usually our own actions, our own decisions to give in to temptation, that prevents us from being whole through the healing of the sacraments. We tend to prevent ourselves from experiencing the Joy of Christ because we prevent ourselves from being forgiven from our sins. We cannot nullify Jesus’ Sacrifice or His Resurrection, we cannot nullify the saving act of the Eucharist, and we cannot deny the purification accomplished in our One Baptism. But by our sin and our unwillingness to confess these sins in true repentance, we have taken judgement into our own hands, and denied Christ his gift of healing and salvation. When we retain our sins and leave them unconfessed, we have told Christ that our sins are not forgivable, that our sins are too shameful to be uttered aloud, or even worse, that we believe we have not sinned. By not confessing, we deny Christ the opportunity to enter into our lives in new and profound ways. And by this refusal, we deny ourselves the graces given in these healing Holy Mysteries of Communion, Repentance, and Anointing of the Sick.

Christ has given us many opportunities to come towards Him to ask for forgiveness and healing through His Church. Christ wants to heal us, but He also wants us to want to be healed. We exhibit a beautiful virtue of humility when we recognize our

given us. It must be our decision, to turn away from our sin, and turn towards God asking for His forgiveness with a contrite heart.

Throughout the Gospels, healing is achieved by making the effort to

Mysteries of the Church with faith, then there is no separation between us and God, and in that gracious state, we experience immense joy.

Healing is within our reach. Wholeness of soul and body is possible, if we invite Jesus to effect it in our lives. We can be free from pain, especially the pain of sin, if we humble ourselves to Christ’s Church. We are indeed blessed by God to be given this great gift. And we are invited to not restrain God’s hand of forgiveness because of fear and our unwillingness to confess to God through His Church. But, with great faith in God’s healing and in our turning towards Him in these great gifts of Reconciliation, Anointing, and the Eucharist, healing is within our reach, and will experience his grace in our lives. [ECL](#)

“Throughout the Gospels, healing is achieved by making the effort to go towards Jesus”

own faults and rely on God to fill the void we experience and to heal our wounds. Jesus comes toward us and seeks us out, but He does not pass by and just hand out healing to everyone, rather, forgiveness and real healing is for those who make the effort to leave behind their brokenness and turn towards God. This action on our part, this turning away from our sin and brokenness, cannot be forced on us. We cannot be forced to accept forgiveness, and likewise, we cannot be forced to accept healing. This would be contrary to the gift of Free Will that God has

go towards Jesus, to travel to where He is, to where He is teaching, to ask Him for healing. And often times these sick and invalids came to Jesus with bodily afflictions, but Jesus first says to them, “Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven” (Matt. 9:2). Jesus first heals the Soul, He heals that separation between man and God caused by sin, and when the separation is no more, than the grace of God abounds. When we are in a state of grace, free from mortal sin, seriously battling venial sin, and regularly participating in the Holy

Do you know someone involved in an adoption in New Jersey in the past? They’ve changed the laws about privacy and information can now be obtained.

Redaction request, contact preference, and social/cultural/medical history forms can be submitted via mail or electronically. They are available online at AdoptionRecords.nj.gov. The New Jersey Catholic Conference has instituted a helpline that anyone can call to get more information about the changes to the law: 609-989-4809. More information is also available on the group’s website: www.njcathconf.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR AUGUST

Eparchial and Parish Events

Slava Isusu Christu! Slava vo v’iki!

Eastern Catholic Life

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- 6 Holy Transfiguration of Our Lord
Solemn Holy Day
- 7 Pilgrimage for Peace
*Holy Dormition Byzantine Franciscan Friary * Sybertsville, PA*
1 p.m. Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Bishop Kurt
- 13-14 62nd Annual Dormition Pilgrimage
Sloatsburg, NY
- 15 Holy Dormition of the Virgin Theotokos
Holy Day of Obligation Chancery closed*
- 21 Susquehanna Syncellate Wedding Jubilarians’ Celebration
Saints Peter and Paul Church Minersville, PA*
3 p.m. Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with Bishop Kurt and clergy of the syncellate
- 29 Beheading of the Holy Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord, John
Simple Holy Day Traditional day of fasting*