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Bayonne Parish Vocation to be Honored with Beatification

Bishop Kurt to Celebrate Liturgy of Thanksgiving

Sister Miriam Teresa Demjanovich, a parish vocation of Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church in Bayonne, New Jersey, will be declared Blessed at a Liturgy to be held on October 4, 2014 at Sacred Heart Basilica in Newark, New Jersey. The following day, Bishop Kurt Burnette will celebrate a Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving, and seek the special intercession of Blessed Miriam Teresa, at Saint John the Baptist Church in Bayonne on Sunday, October 5, at 3:00 PM. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend this Liturgy. There will also be a reception following in the parish center. If you plan to attend the liturgy and the reception, please contact Saint John the Baptist Church no later than Sunday, September 28 at (201) 339-1840 or by email at ronbat181@gmail.com with the number attending so that proper preparations can be made.

Teresa Demjanovich was born in Bayonne, New Jersey in 1901, the youngest of seven children of Alexander and Johanna (Suchy) Demjanovich, Ruthenian immigrants to the United States from what is now Eastern Slovakia. Teresa received Baptism, Confirmation, and her First Holy Communion at Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church, Bayonne, NJ in the Byzantine-Ruthenian rite of her parents. After attending Bayonne public schools Teresa entered the College of Saint Elizabeth in Convent Station, New Jersey. She was graduated with highest honors in 1923. Two years later, in 1925, she entered the community of Sisters of Charity at Convent Station. After profession of vows as a Sister of Charity, Teresa died in Saint Elizabeth Hospital, Elizabeth, New Jersey in 1927. She was 26 years of age.

She being is considered for Sainthood by the Catholic Church because of her saintly life, her striving for perfection in her religious life, her spiritual writings, the mystical privileges accorded her by God during life and the favors received by others after her death through her intercession with God. The Sisters of Charity petitioned Rome for permission to open her Cause for Beatification and Canonization. The first half of the beatification process is the acceptance of the Positio Super Virtutibus (Her heroic virtues and holiness). This has been approved by the theologians and ordinaries (Bishops and Cardinals). Her name was submitted to the prefect of the Congregation of Saints who then gave her name to Pope Benedict XVI.

On May 10, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI decreed that Sister Miriam Teresa Demjanovich, SC was of heroic virtue and can now be called Venerable.

The second part of the beatification process, the Positio Super Miro (a miraculous cure) can only be considered after the acceptance of the Positio Super Virtutibus.

Our case is that of a young boy who was declared legally blind due to bilateral macular degeneration. Through the intercession of Sister Miriam Teresa, his sight was restored. On December 17, 2013 a panel of Cardinals and Bishops agreed that the cause of the blind child has been accomplished through the intercession of Sister Miriam Teresa. On that same day, Pope Francis declared this an authentic miracle. At least one other documented miracle will be necessary for consideration for her canonization to sainthood.

If you plan to attend the Sunday Liturgy and the reception in Bayonne, please contact Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church no later than Sunday, September 28th at (201) 339-1840 or by email at ronbat181@gmail.com with the number attending so that proper preparations can be made.

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I Lift up My Eyes...

The Pastoral Reflections of Bishop Kurt

Miraculous Rebirth

At the end of June, Father John Zeyack and I had the honor of flying to Europe to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the relegalization of our Church in the former Soviet Union. Although we talk about miraculous icons, the astounding miracle of recent times is the rebirth of the Church. In the Eparchy of Mukachevo, our mother church, they call it the "emergence from the catacombs". This colorful term refers to the practice of the early Christians of holding their meetings in the underground cemeteries near Rome called "catacombs". And indeed there is much similarity. Our Church did continue its life as much as possible in secrecy under the Soviet rule, but the cruel tortures by the Soviet government probably exceeded those of the Romans. It is true that the Roman government killed Christians in spectacularly cruel ways. Ancient secular historians describe these events. In some ways though, the communists were far worse. The Romans, who were not atheists, conducted open trials, and the executions were carried out in public. The Romans had no fear of the truth. The communists, on the other hand, who claim to be following modern science, had secret proceedings, secret arrests, and then tortured their victims for years in distant hidden places. The Nazis, who also claimed to be the modern scientific future of the human race, also arrested people in the middle of the night, held secret trials and executions. It's ironic that both of these groups, claiming to be scientific, used secrecy and lies as their chief weapons for advancement. Modern science, on the other hand, is the organized search for truth based on evidence.

The rebirth of our Church is truly miraculous. Driving around Transcarpathia and seeing all the new churches, and the fervor of the people is like being converted all over again to the Christian faith. In only eleven years, Bishop Milan Sasik has built 154 churches and ordained 164 priests. Bishop Sasik keeps a handwritten diary that he carries with him around the Eparchy, and he had to look in the book to tell me how many priests he had ordained. He numbers each ordination so he doesn't lose track. Like all of our bishops in Ukraine, he has more applications for the seminary than he can accept, and more young men who have completed seminary than he can ordain. A married man can't be ordained until there is a position open, otherwise he can't support his family. As a result, there are a great many seminarians from Ukraine who are getting advanced degrees in Rome or other places while they await ordination. I think the Ukrainian churches must have the largest number of priests in the world

with advanced degrees. In another generation, they may take over all the Catholic universities in the world. As we drove out of a parking lot, with the young children of the parish priest waving at us, Bishop Sasik commented that there must over 1000 priest children in his Eparchy. When our seminary was reopened in Uzhhorod, Bishop Michael Dudick began the practice of paying for the food for the seminary. I am happy to report that the practice became a tradition, continued by Bishop Pataki, Archbishop Skurla, Father Edward Cimbala, and continues to this day. Our own seminarians in Pittsburgh are mighty few, but you can proudly say that you are feeding about one hundred seminarians in our mother Church in Uzhhorod!

On the first day in Ukraine, Bishop Sasik asked me if I would like to see our miraculous icon of the Mother of God in Transcarpathia. The great icon of Mariapocs was the icon of our whole church for centuries when we were only one eparchy, and all of our territory was under the Emperor in Vienna. At the end of World War I, our Church found itself divided up by a series of treaties when the Austrian Empire was divided. Realizing that the icons of Mariapocs, both the original in Vienna and the copy in Mariapocs were irretrievably outside the new borders, Bishop Petro Gebey asked Pope Pius XI, the Holy Father in Rome, for help. The Pope responded to the Bishop by presenting the Eparchy of Mukachevo with an ancient icon from the Vatican treasury, a Greek icon of the Theotokos with the date 1453 written on the bottom. On June 27, 1926 in the presence of 30,000 faithful, Bishop Gebey (also written Hebey in the west) entrusted the entire Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo to the protection of Our Lady of Mukachevo, and deposited the icon with the Basilian Fathers on Mount Chernecha. When our monastery was "liquidated" by the communists, this icon was hidden and passed from one secret hiding place to another one step ahead of the police. The last family to hold the icon presented it to our bishop in 1998, but the Basilian monastery on Mount Chernecha remains with the Orthodox. So Bishop Sasik built a new monastery for our church at Malij Bereznij, and the icon is in that church where I was able to visit it. Our new monastery is a rather simple place compared to the great stone buildings of the ancient monasteries, but we know that God prefers the humble and I think the Theotokos is happy with the new home of her icon and even more happy with her home in the living hearts of the Greek Catholic people.

When Bishop Sasik visited our Eparchy last December he presented us with a handpainted copy of Our Lady of Mukachevo. Things certainly have changed over there. At the banquet on June 28 celebrating the emergence of our church from the catacombs, the Governor and Vice-governor of Transcarpathia were present and are both Greek Catholic, and Bishop Sasik presented the Governor with a handpainted copy, the very icon his government was searching for only a few decades ago. I guess you could say the government finally found the icon, but not the way they expected. The Governor made a moving speech saying that in our churches we need no longer have fear of men, but only righteous fear of God.

Deacon Steven Galuschik to be Ordained to the Priesthood

Wednesday, September 24, 2014 · Rahway, NJ

Bishop Kurt will ordain Deacon Steven M. Galuschik to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ on Wednesday, September 24, 2014. at 7PM.

The ordination will take place at Saint Thomas the Apostle Byzantine Catholic Church in Rahway, NJ, where Deacon Steven is currently assigned and where Father Michael Mondik is Pastor. The ordination will coincide with the annual Eparchial Retreat so that all priests may attend.

An Invitation

Father Michael Mondik and the Parish Family of Saint Thomas the Apostle Church welcome all to attend the Ordination of Deacon Steven to the Priesthood.

If you would like to attend the reception afterwards, please contact the Parish Office of St. Thomas Church at 732-382-5300 by Sunday, September 21st.

+Sister Thomasine Gernat, OSBM

Welcomed Into the Eternal Embrace

UNIONTOWN, PA – A few weeks short of her 90th birthday, on the morning of July 7, Sister Thomasine (Irene) Gernat peacefully entered into the embrace of the Lord Jesus whom she served with such devotion for 67 years. The daughter of the late John and Anna (Gaydos) Gernat, Sister Thomasine was born in Florence, PA. She entered the Sisters of St. Basil from Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Punxsutawney, PA on October 14, 1947. She pronounced her First Vows on August 15, 1949 and made her Perpetual Profession on August 28, 1953 in the presence of the late Bishop Daniel Ivancho.

Sister Thomasine spent the first 20 of her 67 years as a Sister of St. Basil in the teaching ministry. Concurrent with some of these years, she was also called to be the Province Treasurer, a service which she offered with dedication for over ten years. Sister Thomasine was then called to another but similar duty at Mt. Macrina Manor. At the Manor, she initially worked as Bookkeeper in the Accounting Department. However, her talents and industrious spirit did not go unnoticed, and so the position of Assistant Administrator was added to responsibilities. After a sabbatical year following these years of active duty, Sister Thomasine undertook a complete change of ministry and spent the remaining years of her active ministry at the House of Prayer, where her quiet presence and willingness to take on a variety of jobs will not be forgotten by those who knew her. The last three years of her life, Sister Thomasine spent as a resident of the Manor, this time being cared for rather than being in the service of others.

In her personal request form, Sister Thomasine noted that she would want to be remembered for her love for prayer, for her family and for children. Her nieces and nephews and their families could surely testify to the latter. Sister Thomasine also enjoyed working with money, and this was surely borne out in most of her life's work. At the Parastas, Father John Petro offered some reflections on Sister Thomasine's life as he knew her. She, like all of us, was challenged to become the unique person God called into being. Her uniqueness was manifested in a variety of ways. In particular, her eye for detail, for getting things done properly; "crossing the t's and dotting the i's" was a mark of whatever duty engaged her at the moment.

Although somewhat reserved, quiet and unassuming in manner, Sister Thomasine also had a sense of humor and could be quite engaging. In her ministry at the House of Prayer, she preferred to be in the background, helping in the kitchen. In later years, however, she became willing to engage in conversation with those who came for retreat or days of prayer, and she was found to be a compassionate listener.

At the Funeral Divine Liturgy, Metropolitan William, in his homily, noted that as the Gospel proclaimed, Sister Thomasine "has passed from death to life." Having interrupted his trip to Gettysburg for Sister Thomasine's funeral, Archbishop compared her sense of duty and getting things done to James Longstreet, general in the Confederate army during the Civil War. Although he openly disagreed with General Lee's tactics at the Battle of Gettysburg, he did his duty and supervised the disastrous infantry assault known as Pickett's Charge. While we may not be called to such dramatic measures in our lives, we, too, like Sister Thomasine, can "soldier up" and go forward in God's service.

Sister Thomasine was preceded in death by her parents, her brothers Basil and John, and her sisters Mary Gernat and Catherine Wesdock. In addition to her Sisters in community, she is survived by her devoted sisters Margaret Dubensky, Martha Rumbosky and Donna Jean Damson and many beloved nieces and nephews and their families. The Parastas Service was celebrated on Wed., July 9 by Archpriest Eugene P. Yackanich; concelebrants were: Archpriest John G. Petro, Father James Spontak, Father Robert Oravetz, and Monastery Chaplain, Father Michael Huszti. In attendance were Father Ronald Larko and Father James Ragan. The Funeral Divine Liturgy was celebrated on Thursday, July 10 by Metropolitan William. Concelebrants were Archpriest Dennis Bogda, Archpriest John Petro and Father Michael Huszti. In attendance were Father Ronald Larko and Father Stephen Wahal. Interment followed in the Dormition Section of Mount Macrina Cemetery.

May God grant to his handmaiden, Sister Thomasine, eternal memory and peaceful repose.

+Yolanda Scuderi
Mother of Father Carmen Scuderi, OFM

Called to Eternal Repose

HAZLETON, PA – Yolanda (nee Gervasi) Scuderi, 91, mother of Father Carmen Scuderi, OFM, Pastor of Saint John Byzantine Catholic Church in Hazleton, PA, fell asleep in the Lord on July 15, 2014 at Kennedy Hospital in Philadelphia of complications stemming from Alzheimer's Disease.

Yolanda was the daughter of Salvatore Gervasi and Sebastiana Gionsiracusa, both of Sicily. She was a telephone operator for the Bell Telephone System in the mid nineteen-thirties, helping to support a family of thirteen children. She was a devoted wife and mother, a fastidious housekeeper, and a very devoted daughter to the Catholic Church, the Holy Family, and was particularly devoted to Mary, the Mother of God. Her singular passion in life was music. She was gifted vocally, and would sing all the arias to the operas throughout the day, along with traditional Church hymns.

She is preceded in death by her parents, her beloved husband, Salvatore Scuderi, Sr., and her brothers and sisters. She is survived by her three sons, Father Carmen Scuderi, OFM; the Most Reverend Dr. Anthony Scuderi, and the Reverend Salvatore Scuderi, as well as many nephews and nieces.

The Office of Christian Burial with Divine Liturgy was celebrated by her priest-son, Father Carmen, on July 21st at Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church, Hazleton, PA. Bishop Kurt Burnette of the Eparchy of Passaic presided. Concelebrating were Father Frank Twardzik, SDB; Msgr. Nicholas Puhak, Father Gregory Hosler, Father James Carroll, OFM, Father Jerome Wolbert, OFM, and Father Peter Donish. Responses were led by Paul and Michael Komishock and Ann Gergel. Her priest-son, Father Carmen, preached the homily and Bishop Kurt Burnette offered the Prayer of Absolution. Internment was at Buena Vista Cemetery in Brodheadsville, PA next to her husband, +Salvatore.

May her memory be eternal!

A Note of Thanks from Father Carmen, OFM

In behalf of my brothers, Salvatore and Anthony I express heartfelt thanks for the manifold expression of condolences, prayers and presence at the falling asleep and funeral of our mother, +Yolanda Scuderi on the part of the clergy, religious, and faithful of the Eparchy and the Metropolia. Your support was eminently palpable, gratefully received, and was an outstanding example of true Christian Charity and Fraternal support. May God, in His merciful Love, continue to bless and keep all of you in health, strength, happiness and peace for many years to come. Carmen Scuderi, OFM

Understanding Icons

Father Joseph Bertha, Ph.D.

Nativity of the Theotokos

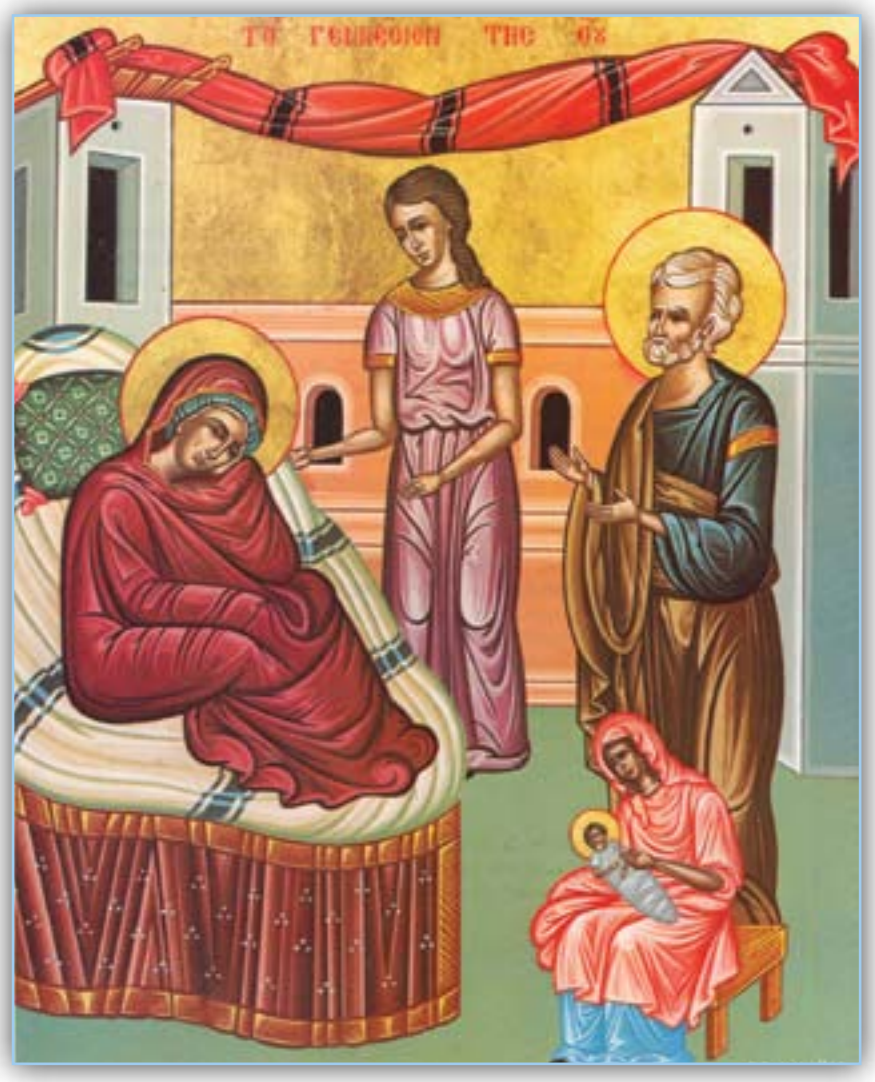
Feast Day September 8th

The icon which is used for the Birth of the Theotokos on September 8th, is basically similar in style to another "birth" icon, that of the Nativity of Jesus Christ. Saint Ann lies on a sofa couchette after having given birth, wearing a deep red colored *maphorion* (veil). This color subtly stresses her virginity referring to the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God (celebrated on December 8, nine months prior to the Virgin's birth).

Saint Joachim is found off to the side. He does not actively participate in the deeds of birth giving, but is present nonetheless. Handmaidens, off to one side, administer the first bath to the newborn Theotokos. Sometimes, in conjunction with the birth, the first seven steps of the Virgin are depicted. Invariably, the young Virgin wears a deep red colored *maphorion*. The stars of Virginity, each typically eight pointed, reiterate her maidenhood, she has one on her forehead, and two on either shoulder.

However, a major divergence occurs in the location of the scene: the Theotokos is born inside of a house, indicated by the drapery stretched between the two towers in the background of the scene, whereas, the Nativity of Our Lord takes place inside a cave. The draped curtain is stretched between two towers and demonstrates the inverse perspective found in many icons.

Inverse perspective, a concept first coined by the art historian Oskar Wulff in 1907, means that the icon focuses inside the viewer of the icon, outside of the actual icon, and inside the soul of the person praying in front of the icon. This is the reason why figures are stretched and architecture is contorted. Both the figures and the architecture in the scene of the icon envelope or embrace the viewer. The concept of inverse perspective is in direct contradistinction to Western religious painting which typically employs linear perspective - where a vanishing point exists in the horizon of the image. I contend that not only does the icon use inverse perspective as one of its characteristics, but that they are multiperspectival. That is, an icon can be viewed from many perspectives simultaneously. These perspectives include: the inverse perspective which focuses on the spiritual, the physical or temporal perspective, prayer perspective, the threshold of eternity perspective.



Both the cave and the house in the birth icons resonate with meaning from the Old Testament prefigurements of the Holy Mother of God. There are some thirteen to fifteen prefigurements of the Holy Virgin in the Old Testament. Two images which are frequently portrayed in the icon of the Virgin's birth are: the Closed Gate, depicted as a closed gate in the background of the icon and found in Ezechiel 44:2 "he said to me: This gate is to remain closed; it is not to be opened for anyone to enter by it; since the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered by it, it shall remain closed," and the Palace which Wisdom has built, the elaborate walls, turrets, towers and columns found in the background of the icon comes from Proverbs 9:1 "Wisdom has built her house, she has set up her seven columns."

Interestingly, these Scriptural prefigurements are depicted in the Birth of the Mother of God icon. Since Saint Ann gives birth to her daughter inside of the House, (there is dispute among the church fathers as to whether her birth took place in Nazareth or Bethlehem), columns are depicted in the background, sometimes even numbering seven. The mystical number of seven represents the seven virtues. The Virgin was born with all of these. Sometimes, her birth scene is paired with her taking her first seven steps as at the Kariye Djami (Chora Church) mosaic from the fourteenth century. This indicates the life of virtue with which the Holy Mother was born! This is due to her Immaculate Conception by Saints Joachim and Ann.

Even at her birth the Virgin represents the fullness of the virtuous life. Virtues are the various Gifts of the Holy Spirit and are attributes of God Himself. They are the characteristics of Jesus Christ, the Divine Son of God in human flesh, the flesh of the Virgin Mary. These divine gifts are present in creation by the gift of God of salvation in Jesus Christ. We express this in the ambon prayer in the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom "for every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights." (James 1:17) On this feast we celebrate and honor the Birth of the Virgin Mother who possesses these gifts which include: Faith, Hope, Charity, Knowledge, Wisdom, Honesty, Humility, Obedience, Patience, Courage, Faithfulness, Self-control, Kindness, Gratitude.

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Come join our Liturgy! Saturday at 6:00 p.m. and Sunday at 9:30 a.m. (coffee and fellowship after Liturgy)

Give Mercy From Above

Join Bishop Kurt and Eparchial clergy for a

Pilgrimage to the Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel

Basilica of the National Shrine
of the Immaculate Conception · Washington, DC

Saturday, September 27, 2014

Commemorating

- 40th Anniversary of the Blessing of the Chapel
- 40th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Byzantine Ruthenian Church to the Protection of Mary
- 90th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Exarchate for Ruthenians in the United States

Moleben Prayer Service to the Theokokos 1:00 pm + Panachida for the Departed Founders of the Chapel-Bishops, Priests, and Laity 2:00 pm + Vigil Divine Liturgy of Sunday 3:00 pm + Opportunity for the Sacrament of Penance

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The year 2014 is the 90th Anniversary of the Establishment of the original Exarchate of Pittsburgh and the 40th Anniversary of the Byzantine Ruthenian Chapel and this Proclamation of Dedication of the Byzantine Ruthenian Metropolitan Church to the Holy Protection of the Mother of God.

The Bishops wished to express a spirit of continuity with the Church of its origins, the Eparchy of Mukachevo, which was dedicated to the Mother of God under the title of her Protection, celebated on October 1st.

In 1773, Bishop Andrew Bachinsky, Eparch of Mukachevo, wrote, "We cannot eliminate the feast of the Pokrov (Protection) for this is the patron feast of our Eparchy and our people are accustomed to celebrate it with great solemnity."

Sunday, September 21, 2014
11 AM – 6 PM

Day of Pilgrimage For Peace

Holy Dormition Byzantine Franciscan Friary
Sybertsville, PA

Pilgrimage Schedule

11AM-3PM	CHAPEL open for private prayer; Gift Shop; Bake Sale; FOOD SERVICE
1PM-3PM	Confessions. Locations in Chapel and Outdoors.
12:30PM	Panachida Service: Memorial Service for the Faithful Departed (*Chapel*)
1PM	Moleben and Healing Service (*Chapel*)
2 PM	Spiritual Presentation - "Yearning for the Lord" *Subdeacon Lewis Rabayda*
2:30PM	Concert of Byzantine Traditional and Spiritual Hymns
3:45PM	Procession to the Main Altar
4PM	Hierarchical Divine Liturgy *Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla*

Special Note: *Parishes requested to bring decorated Procession Crosses. Please bring lawn chairs*

For more information, please email holydormition@gmail.com or call 570-788-1212

Holy Dormition Byzantine Franciscan Friary is located on PA-93. From I-80 exit 256, take PA-93 south. The Friary driveway is just past the second traffic light, on the right. From I-81 exit 145, take PA-93 north. The Friary is on the left at the next traffic light after Gould's Supermarket.

Food Service

11AM-3PM Pilgrimage Dinner (*Indoors in Emmaus Hall*)

12PM-3PM and after the 4PM Divine Liturgy: Slavic and American Foods/Beverages, Bake Sale (Outdoors)

People You Know

Around the Eparchy

Saint John Church · Forest City, PA

Ecumenical Anniversary Celebration

On Sunday, July 27, at Saint Joseph Roman Catholic Church in Forest City, PA Faith of Our Fathers ecumenical service took place commemorating the 150th anniversary of the founding of Forest City.

Participating were Msgr. John Sekellick, Administrator of Saint John Byzantine Catholic Parish in Forest City, and the parish cantor, Mr. Theodore Kowalick. Also participating were Father Patrick A. Albert, Host Pastor, of Ascension Parish in Forest City; Father Joseph Sitko of Saint Mary Church in Waymart; and Seminarian Luke Yavorsky, Master of Ceremonies from Ascension Parish. Approximately one hundred guests were in attendance.

Following the one-hour Service, all were treated to a picnic luncheon in the social hall of Sacred Heart Church.

Saints Peter and Paul Church · Beaver Meadows, PA

Choir Celebrates Anniversary

This year, the Parish Choir of Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Beaver Meadows, PA will mark its 20th Anniversary. The current Choir Director is Cantor Michael Komishock. The Pastor of Saint Peter and Paul Parish is Father James Demko.

Sir Knight Peter Zeleznock (1903-1983) served as Choir Director, Cantor and teacher for 62 years. After his death, the choir disbanded for several years. Then in 1994, Michael Komishock contacted several of the former choir members to see if they were interested in singing a Liturgy in memory of "Professor" Zeleznock. The response from the former members was so good that they decided to stay together to prepare for the 100th Anniversary of the parish in 1995. After this event, the group decided to continue to sing as a choir.

Over the past 20 years, the choir sang the liturgical responses not only in Beaver Meadows, but also at Saint John Church and Saint Mary Church in Hazleton; Saint Michael Church in McAdoo; and Saint Mary Church in Mahanoy City. In addition, the choir also sang in Weatherwood and St. Luke's nursing facilities; the V.A. Hospital and Nursing Home in Wilkes-Barre, as well as Holy Dormition Monastery in Sybertsville; and the Greek Catholic Union Family Day at Knobel's Amusement Park.

Unfortunately, over the past 20 years, at least 20 members of the choir have passed away; and some of the former members are no longer able to sing with the choir. The choir is small now consisting of only 13 members. The choir will sing at this year's Pilgrimage for Peace at Holy Dormition Friary, Sybertsville, on Sunday, September 21st.

The Choir wishes to thank Almighty God, Our Heavenly Father, for having the opportunity to sing praise to Him, and to glorify Him in song. They also wish to thank Father James Demko, Pastor and Spiritual Director, and all the members of the parish, for their support over the last 20 years.

Bishop Kurt Visits LaSalle Academy of Jessup, PA

Nation's Only Bi-Ritual Catholic Parochial School Hosts Graduation

By Joyce Covaleski

Student Council President and Graduate Cullen Myers.

The Eastern and Western Rites of the Catholic Church came together in perfect harmony on the night of Friday, June 6, 2014 as La Salle Academy celebrated the Eighth Grade Graduation of its Class of 2014. La Salle Academy has a unique history as a school in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Scranton. It was formed in 1990 through the visionary leadership of several area clergy, including Bishop Gerald Dino, Bishop of the Eparchy of Phoenix, and then Pastor of Holy Ghost Church in Jessup.

La Salle Academy is the nation's only bi-ritual school; students gain the unique perspective of the wholeness of the Catholic Church by participating in both Roman and Byzantine Rite services through-out the school year. The Main Campus of La Salle Academy, housing grades 4 through 8, is located in the former Holy Ghost Parochial School next door to Holy Ghost Church in Jessup, Pennsylvania. The school's Primary Campus is located ten minutes away in Dickson City, and holds the school's Pre-School through 3rd Grade.

The distribution of the Bread of Life.

The commencement began with the classic procession of the graduates to Edward Elgar's "Pomp & Circumstance". His Grace, Bishop Kurt Burnette was then greeted at the doors of Holy Ghost Church by two of the graduates, Julianna Innocenti and Angelo Calciano. They presented Bishop Kurt with the symbolic gifts of bread and salt. An inspirational and poignantly amusing speech was given by the Student Council President and graduate, Cullen Myers, and then the Class of 2014 raised their voices in song. The Divine Liturgy included Roman Rite music that was chosen by the graduates themselves, beautiful liturgical hymns that held special memories of their time at La Salle Academy.

Bishop Kurt address the graduates.

This year's Graduation was very unique and special in that it combined the beauty of both Rites into one service. Bishop Kurt and the church's Pastor, Monsignor John Sekellick, were instrumental in working with faculty and administration of La Salle Academy and the Diocese of Scranton to create a beautiful Liturgy that embraced the beauty of the Eastern and Western Rites of the Catholic Church. The students fully participated in the Divine Liturgy with La Salle Academy's Eastern Rite Choir, the Singers of Saint Romanos, leading the responses. Graduates Neena Beggin, Victoria Booth, Emma Connolly, and Brigit Coolican, cantored the Roman Rite songs, one of which was accompanied by graduating members of the school's Show Band: Anthony Giolotti, Tyler Kuchwara, Kevin Parchinski, and percussionist Thomas Bright.

Cantors and Instrumentalists (l. to r.): Kevin Parchinski, Anthony Giollotti, Tyler Kuchwara, Victoria Booth, Emma Connolly, Brigit Coolican, and Neena Beggin.

His Grace, Bishop Kurt, was the main celebrant, assisted by participating clergy including Monsignor John Sekellick, Pastor of Holy Ghost Church; Deacon Robert Behrens, Holy Ghost Church; Father Thomas Petro, Pastor of Our Lady of the Abingtons Roman Catholic Parish; Father Christopher Sahd, Pastor of Christ the King Roman Catholic Parish; and Subdeacon Lewis Rabayda. Mrs. Ellen Murphy, the Principal of La Salle Academy, stated that the Liturgy was beautiful and inspirational, and it was very special to have the Eparchy of Passaic's Bishop celebrating with the graduates. Bishop Kurt's sermon was filled with excellent advice and a few laughs as he gave the graduates his blessing for continued success in high school. The Liturgy was followed by a dinner and party at nearby Fiorelli's Catering in Peckville.

Deacon Robert Behrens chants the Holy Gospel.

41st Annual Slavic American Festival

Sunday, September 7, 2014 · Epiphany of Our Lord Church
3410 Woodburn Road, Annandale, VA 22003

Featuring: Traditional Slavic foods: holupki, pirohi, kolbasi, haluski, and potato pancakes; dance to *John Stevens' Doubleshot*, from 12 Noon to 6 PM; Enjoy children's events; religious art & crafts sale; handmade Slavic art & crafts; rummage sale; bake sale; nutrolls; bingo; football on TV; raffles; and cold refreshments.

Church tours at 12:30 PM, 2:30 PM, 3:30 PM and 4:30 PM.

Byzantine Sacred Music Concert at 1:30 PM.

Liturgical schedule: Saturday, September 6th – 5 PM and Sunday, September 7th – 8 AM and 10:30 AM.

Rain or Shine - Noon to 6:30 pm – Free admission - Free shuttle parking - No pets please - Event times may vary - Quantities while they last - Proceeds benefit the Building Fund. Epiphany Church is served by Father John Basarab.

For more information call 703-573-3986 or visit www.epiphanyofourlord.org

Byzantine Liturgy at Saint Ann Novena

Bishop Kurt Celebrates Liturgy at Scranton Shrine

SCRANTON, PA – Bishop Kurt and clergy from across Pennsylvania, New Jersey, even as far as Rome, gathered with the faithful pilgrims of Northeast Pennsylvania for the annual celebration of the Byzantine Catholic Divine Liturgy at the Basilica of Saint Ann in Scranton, PA on the occasion of the Novena to Saint Ann. It has been a longstanding tradition for area Byzantine Catholics to participate in the novena with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

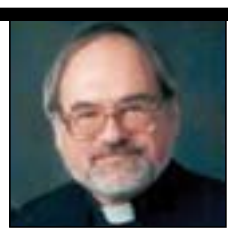
Begun during the time of Bishop Michael J. Dudick, of blessed memory, and continuing through the tenure of Bishop Andrew Pataki, also of blessed memory, and Bishop William Skurla, now Metropolitan Archbishop, there has been a continuous presence of the Eparchy of Passaic at the Novena to Saint Ann in Scranton. The annual novena draws thousands of faithful and is televised to thousands more. It is also an occasion of inspiration for many others who have never witnessed or participated in a service of the Eastern Church.

In addition to Bishop Kurt, concelebrating clergy included Father Gary Mensinger, Regional Syncellus; Msgr. John Sekellick, Regional Protopresbyter; Fathers Nestor Iwasiw; Robert Lozinki, CSC; Ronald Barusefski; Leonard Martin, SJ; Michael Kuchera, SJ; Eduard Shestak, Michael Salnicky, and Thomas Petro. Also in attendance were Archpriest James Hayer, Subdeacon Pavlo Cheketa and Subdeaon Lewis Rabayda. Father Edward Higgins served as Master of Ceremonies, and responses were led by Cantor Andrew Drozdik of Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Scranton, PA, and area and parish cantors and choir members.

Offering liturgical assistance were Altar Servers Jared and Caleb Grossman, and Max Mukerjee. Thanks to the labors of Father Leonard Martin, SJ, Pastor of the Scranton Byzantine Catholic Churches, the Basilica was properly appointed with icons and other liturgical items. The homilist this year was Father Rick Frechette, CP of Haiti.

O good Saint Ann, mother of the Mother of God, pray for us!

The Byzantine Liturgy



By Archpriest David Petras, SEOD

The Cross and the Resurrection

The Cross and the Resurrection are intertwined. We see this clearly in the Hymn of the Resurrection from Paschal/Sunday Matins: "Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ .... We bow to Your Cross, O Christ, and we praise and glorify Your holy Resurrection .... behold through the Cross, joy has come to the whole world. Always blessing the Lord, let us praise His Resurrection. By enduring the cross for us He destroyed Death by death."

The Cross and Resurrection are together one Paschal Mystery - humiliation and exaltation, death leading to life, embodied in the two frequent sayings of Jesus: "Whoever loses his life for my sake, will find it," and "Whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

For this reason, in the Gospel of Saint John, the hour of Jesus' glory is when He is exalted on the Cross. "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert (the story is in Numbers 21:9), so must the Son of Man be lifted up (on the cross) so that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life." (John 3:13-14) "Jesus answered, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life." (John 12:23-25)

The Cross is proclaimed over and over again as the triumph of Jesus. On the road to Emmaus, after the Resurrection, Jesus tells His disciples, "Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26) The glory of the Cross is the centerpiece of Paul's theology, and Paul's Gospel, as we have seen, was the Resurrection of Jesus: "For Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1 Corinthians 1:22-24)

Why is this so? The Cross is victory because it is a sign of God's love for us - a love so powerful that it becomes life-giving wisdom. A wisdom that the ordinary logical processes of the world cannot accept, because it brings glory out of humiliation. This is God's "strange work, his alien deed," (Isaiah 28:21) God's divine ability to take a terrible thing and twist it around to make something good. By the Cross, God illustrated His principle, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15:13) The story of Genesis is reversed. Where Adam and Eve attempt to seize life through disobedience to God's *oikonomia*, Jesus restores eternal life by a perfect obedience to His Father. Is the Father a bloodthirsty monster to demand the cruel death of His only Son? No - this sheds light on the story of Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 22), where God does not demand the death of Abraham's beloved son, Isaac, but only his faith, so, too, the story of the Cross is not in its gruesome details, but in its over-abiding love. This is the sign of Jonah given to the people. Jesus explained, "When a woman is in labor, she is in anguish because her hour has arrived; but when she has given birth to a child, she no longer remembers the pain because of her joy that a child has been born into the world." (John 16:21) Death, as suffered on the Cross because of the evil in human hearts, becomes the moment of the glory of a new birth.

It is no wonder, then, that in Christian daily life, the Cross has become the sign of faith and hope in Christ. The Cross is the form of every Christian life. It is life is found in the surrender of life, and glory is found in weakness. "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." (Mark 8:34)

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross is then a feast of glory and resurrection. It is the one Feast of our Lord outside Sunday and the Paschal season (Pascha-Ascension) that has the Prayer/Hymn of the Resurrection in Matins, "Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ ...." One of the phrases of this prayer replaces the Trisagion at the Divine Liturgy, "We bow to your Cross, O Lord, and we glorify Your holy resurrection." Through the Cross, Christ "destroyed the power of death and despoiled Hades." We sing, "All you faithful, venerate the cross of Christ; for through it, resurrection was granted to the world forever." There are many other passages where the Cross is the instrument by which death is destroyed and we are given life, when Jesus was lifted up on the Cross, we too were raised up. The Cross is the perfect manifestation of the Paschal Mystery, "By Your honorable ascent You fulfilled all humility and were revealed to the nations as the great power of the heavenly Father, the Most High and Unseen God," so that "we might attain to the eternal, perpetual and true exaltation granted to those whose destiny is to have You are their shepherd forever in the joy of your kingdom." (Ambon Prayer of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross) The Cross is our hope: "In your Cross, I possess my hope, O Christ!" (1st Aposticheron, Tone 6, Wednesday morning, Melkite Octoechos, Tones 5 and 6, 264) "Now that we have Your Cross as our hope, O Lord, we are no longer held back from the Tree of Life. Glory to You, O Lord!" (1st Aposticheron, Tone 7, Tuesday evening, Vespers, Uniontown, 137.) The fact that traditionally we fast on this day is not a negative indicator, but fasting is an instrument of glory, of setting aside the false vanity of the world to attain to the glory of everlasting life. This is why days of fasting are called "days of alleluia" - "give glory to God."

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross is celebrated on September 14th.

25th Ordination Anniversary and Reunion

Members of the Ordination Class of 1989 in attendance included (l. to r.): Father David Shortt, Father Ronald Barusefski, Bishop Kurt Burnette, Father Jody Baran, and Archpriest James Hayer. (photo credit: Mike Gimon)

Several members of the Ordination Class of 1989 recently gathered at the Cathedral of Saint Michael the Archangel Chapel in Woodland Park, NJ for a Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving on the occasion of their 25th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood. Bishop Kurt, a member of the Class of 1989, offered to host the reunion this year.

Following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, the classmates enjoyed fellowship at the Bishop's residence followed by lunch at a local eatery. The lunch lasted almost three hours as the classmates shared news, stories, and many fond memories!

Those in attendance included Bishop Kurt Burnette, Father Jody Baran, Father Ronald Barusefski, Archpriest James Hayer, and Father David Shortt. Unable to attend were Father Michael Kerestes, Father Ivan Mina, and Father James Barrand.

May God grant them many blessed years of fruitful ministry!

Respect Life Forum

By Mary McClusky

Healing Words for the Wounded

A recent article on communicating the pro-life message left me nodding in agreement – but sometimes shaking my head in disagreement. While it rightly states that words are powerful and can shape opinions, it also says to always use words like "kill" and "sin" in reference to abortion. The article should have mentioned the importance of being aware of our audience when we choose what words to speak—and when we choose whether to speak at all or to simply listen. While never avoiding the fact that abortion ends a life, as pro-life people we should be aware that our audience will almost always include women who have had an abortion or people who have been involved in one. We should take special care to use words of love and mercy, rather than judgment and condemnation, in order to better help those in need of Christ's healing touch and to help prevent greater loss of lives and souls.

Abortion's impact is extensive. After 41 years of legalized abortion in the United States, the death toll is over 55 million children. Because of repeat abortions, about 35 million women have lost one or more children to abortion. In addition, a roughly equal number of men have fathered a child who was then aborted. The grandparents of the deceased child or other family members are often involved, and they, too, may blame themselves for real or imagined failings that contributed to the death of a child.

A priest active in Project Rachel, the Church's post-abortion healing ministry, described the spiritual desolation experienced by women who have had an abortion: "Many feel they have committed 'the unforgivable sin' and are destined for hell, or that they deserve to be on death row. Most suffer this spiritual desolation in silence, too ashamed and feeling unworthy to seek reconciliation from God."

The terrible fact is that many suffer from this unresolved grief and guilt that restrict their ability to live fully in the presence of God's love. The good news is that Christ offers hope, healing, and his merciful love to all who have suffered from abortion.

The Lord calls us to help bring about that encounter with Christ, the Healer and Divine Physician, through our compassionate words, actions, and sometimes even our silent yet attentive presence. By listening to the stories of those wounded by abortion and expressing sorrow for their loss, we can witness to their child's life and affirm their right to grieve. Showing kindness and offering assistance to those leaving abortion facilities might even help prevent repeat abortions by encouraging them to turn to pro-life groups for support with a future unexpected pregnancy.

One caller to Project Rachel demonstrated the importance of a compassionate attitude. She said, "I had done a fine job of beating myself up for years and I certainly didn't need the person on the other end of the phone to make me feel any worse. But, when I finally called, it was not like that at all. The voice on the other end was warm and full of hope for me. My journey of healing began on that day that I made that phone call." Our use of language that conveys God's love, warmth and mercy can bring hope of his forgiveness and healing to those struggling from a past abortion.

The Church offers help for those suffering from abortion's aftermath through a diocesan-based ministry usually called Project Rachel. If you or someone you know needs help, please visit www.hopeafterabortion.org (www.esperanzaposaborto.org for assistance in Spanish) or call 1-888-456-HOPE.

[*Mary McClusky is the Assistant Director for Project Rachel Ministry Development at the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. To learn more about the bishops' pro-life activities, go to www.usccb.org/prolife. Join the Bishops' Call to Prayer for Life, Marriage & Religious Liberty by visiting www.usccb.org/pray or text "FAST" to 55000.*]

Rutgers University Outreach

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ – Saint Joseph Byzantine Catholic Church in New Brunswick, NJ has begun an outreach program to Rutgers University. Under the watchful eyes of Fathers Harry Untereiner and Ronald Hatton, several members of the Rutgers Catholic Campus Ministry are being trained to be cantors for the Byzantine Catholic Church. Andrew Stroffolino, Erick Chastain, and Sam Rowe, all of whom are actively involved in the music ministry at Rutgers, have been learning the various Byzantine Catholic services and chant tones.

These three cantors have been encouraged not only by the appreciation of their work by the various congregations they have prayed with, but also by the cooperation of the Rutgers Campus Ministry. They have already served with distinction as cantors at Saint Joseph Church, Saints Peter and Paul Byzantine Catholic Church in Somerset NJ, and Saint Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Hillsborough NJ over the last year.

Father Harry, the pastor of Saint Joseph, and the promoter of the training program said, "It has been a true joy to work with these three men. They are talented and eager to learn. I also believe their experience here has deepened their understanding of the Universal Church." Sam Rowe, the newest member of the group commented, "As an aspiring Roman Catholic church musician, participating regularly in the Byzantine Divine Liturgy has provided me with tremendous amounts of insight into the various forms of liturgical experience.

The reverence and exquisite beauty of the Byzantine Divine Liturgy is something that is not found in many other forms of worship, and I know it will help me approach the Roman Catholic services I also work at in such a way." Andrew Stroffolino noted, "We have already been training for an entire year. The Easter season was certainly the most challenging!" Erick Chastain, one of the original members of the group, agreed whole heartedly about how profound his experience has been. He said, "Since I started cantoring I have felt my love for the Theotokos grow by leaps and bounds. Byzantine liturgy is like heaven on earth, and I feel honored to be a part of it."

Father Harry, with the assistance of Glenn Sedar, the Assistant Cantor of Saint Mary Church in Hillsborough and Deacon Mark Koscinski, work with the men on a regular basis. Glenn commented, "We have been working on hymns and prayers with three part harmony. The parishioners have enthusiastically welcomed our new cantors." Saint Joseph had previously served as a base for a brief time for a Byzantine Catholic mission to Rutgers several years ago with Father Ed Cimbala and Deacon Mark. Father Harry looks forward to increasing our Church's cooperation with the Rutgers Community.

Rutgers Outreach: (left to right): Nicholle Swindell (daily cantor at Saint Mary's Hillsborough), Andrew Stroffolino, Glenn Sedar (assistant cantor at Saint Mary's Hillsborough), Father Harry Untereiner (pastor of Saint Joseph Church), Anthony Nardino (Music Director, Rutgers Campus Ministry), and Sam Rowe. Missing from photo: Erick Chastain.

Faith and Community Issues

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

The Family: A Community of Persons

The Role of the Person in Family Life

It is the activity of Love Itself that founds and vivifies the family constellation. Constellation is a specific term used in psychology to define the cluster of persons that compose the grouping known as the family, viz. the husband, the wife, their stewardship of the family in their respective roles as parents to their children; then the extended familial relations in-laws, "out-laws" and close friends.

The prime task of this constellation is the authentic living out of the commitment to fidelity to their union as husband and wife, the object of which is the successful development of a community of persons fully alive and integrative. The guiding principal and chief source of power in bringing this commitment to fruition is love. In the words of *Familiaris Consortio* (1981 §18): "without love the family is not a community of persons and, in the same way, without love the family cannot live, grow and perfect itself as a community of persons (emphasis, text)." According to the vision of Saint John Paul II, without love the human person sees their existence as incomprehensible, senseless, without direction or hope. Intimate participation in the sacrificial giving that comprises authentic love is the seed-bed upon which grows the family dynamic in all of its splendor and mystery. Such sacrificial love between a man and wife and by extension the rest of the family constellation (Sisters, brothers, relatives and household members) is sustained and vivified through an ever more profound sharing in the inter-communion which comprises the heart and soul of the communion of spirits that constitutes marriage and the family.

The first place in this communion is brought about through the workings of the husband and wife. The foundation of this work is found in the covenant relationship forged by the man and women in their marriage. In the words of *Familiaris Consortio* (1981 §19): "by virtue of the covenant of married life, the man and woman 'are no longer two but one flesh' (Mt 19:26; cf., Gen 2:24) and they are called to grow continually in their communion through day-to-day fidelity to their marriage promise of total mutual self-giving."

The covenant of marriage finds it rock foundation in the natural complementarity that God gave to man and woman upon their creation. Man and woman were made "no longer two but one flesh" (Mt 19:26; cf., Gen 2:24) continually growing day-by-day in that faithful intimate unicity constituted by their marriage vows to total, exclusive, unconditional self-giving one to the other. Concretely, this is expressed in the words of the document (§19): "through the personal willingness of the spouses to share their entire life-project, what they have and what they are: for this reason such communion is the fruit and the sign of a profoundly human need."

The need for such intimacy is taken by the Lord Jesus the Christ and through the action of the Spirit of the Father and Himself deifies the relationship by transformation into a life-sustaining, grace giving event: The Mystery of Matrimony. This Gift of the Holy Spirit transforms the mutual self-giving inherent in marriage into a living image of the very same unification that Christ has for His Church, transforming it into His Mystical Body. The gift the Holy Spirit generously pours out upon the married couple, and their family, is both gift and commandment. It impells the couple toward greater progress in the mystery of union to which the two have, by the vows they have taken, dedicated themselves.

This progressive transformation is multi-dimensional in scope. It touches all levels of the shared life together, "of the body, of the character, of the heart, of the intelligence and will, of the soul—revealing in this way to the Church and to the world the new communion of love, given by the grace of Christ" (*Familiaris Consortio*, 1981 §19).

Such a covenantal relationship is exclusive by its very nature. The document makes direct reference to the practice of polygamy as a radical contradiction, which acts to negate the God's plan of one man and one woman giving of themselves one to the other in a way that is "total, unique and exclusive" (§19). In the words of Vatican Council II: "Firmly established by the Lord, the unity of marriage will radiate from the equal personal dignity of husband and wife, a dignity acknowledged by mutual and total love" (*Gaudium et Spes*, §49).

Conjugal Communion within Marriage

One of the Chief characteristics of matrimony resides not only in its unity but in the fact of its indissolubility. So much so, that the depth of gifting on oneself to the other in the intimate union of marriage that for the good of the union and the fruit borne from it, children, the level of fidelity on the spousal level must be total witnessing to this fidelity in a credible way through a oneness that is unbreakable by any power save death.

This issue of indissolubility of the marriage contract and its consequence upon the family constellation; the place of continual conversion on the part of the couple who are united in covenantal love and the concept of "vocation" in the married state, will be among the topic discussed in the next installment.

Protection of the Mother of God

The Protection of the Mother of God

Sketch: Protection of the Mother of God / Pearson

2014 Icon retreat led by iconographer Peter Pearson

October 23-26

Retreatants will follow step by step instructions to produce an icon of The Protection of the Mother of God. We will also discuss the development of iconography, the spirituality of creating an icon, and praying with icons.

Peter Pearson has forty years experience writing icons for churches, private individuals, and institutions around the world. He is noted for teaching both painting technique and the spirituality of creating icons. He has given presentations to groups ranging from school children and senior citizen groups to artists and seminarians. Samples of his iconography are available online at http://www.nb.net/~pearson or may be seen in Hazleton at St John Byzantine Catholic Church or Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church.

Schedule: Thursday October 23 & Friday October 24, 6:30pm-9:30pm
Saturday October 25, 9:30am-4:30pm; and Sunday October 26, 1-5pm

Cost: $275 ($285 after October 10), includes all supplies and materials for completing this icon, plus Saturday lunch.
Optional room & board starts at $50/night ($75 for private room).

Contact: Fr Carmen at holydormition@gmail.com or 570-788-1212 x 407

Holy Dormition Friary
712 State Highway 93 - PO Box 270 - Sybertsville, PA 18251
570-788-1212 – http://hdbfm.com – holydormition@gmail.com

Seasonal Reflections

Msgr. John. T. Sekellick, JCL

Saint Paul's Letter to the Galatians

During most of the month of September, our Church presents readings from Saint Paul's epistle to the Galatians. Scripture scholars are mostly in agreement that this is among his earliest writings possibly in the late 40's or early 50's A.D. Galatia is situated in the central southern heartland of modern day Turkey. Paul had visited the area during his first missionary journey and passed through it again at least twice.

This letter is among some of his more brief writings, just some short six chapters. The letter, though brief, is firm in its content and deals with rather controversial matters. Its central message is Paul's personal commitment to salvation in Christ Jesus as he declares, "God forbid that I should boast save in the cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world" (6:14)

Saint Paul is on the defensive. He doesn't mince words as he even calls the Galatians "fools" (3:1) because they have accepted the teachings of the Jewish religious leaders who insist that salvation rests with keeping the Mosaic Law, particularly the requirement of circumcision. He argues that to impose this Law upon non-Jewish (Gentile) converts is actually to say that faith in Christ is not sufficient and that only those willing to become Jews can belong to God's people. This is a direct threat to Paul's teaching, and he devotes chapters 1 and 2 to a sustained and powerful explanation of what he had preached to them. He even reproves Peter declaring, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like the Jews?" (2:14)

Paul argues that people are restored to a relationship with God by having faith in Christ Jesus. Accordingly, there is no requirement for Gentiles to keep the Mosaic Law and submit to circumcision. This means that if the Galatians choose the Law, they will forgo their position as the true descendants of Abraham by faith and lose their new found freedom in Christ. He brings out the example of Hagar, the slave and Sarah, the freed woman, to make his point about the two covenants: "We are children, not of the slave but of the free woman. For Christ has set us free. Stand firm, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery!" (4:31-5:1) For Paul, circumcision is irrelevant. To be in Christ is to be a new creation.

In this letter is found the beautiful verse which replaces the Trisagion in our Divine Liturgy at Christmas, Theophany, Lazarus Saturday, Pascha and Pentecost: "All you who have been baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ" (3:27) Saint Paul is telling the Galatians (and us) that as His followers, they become children of God through faith in Jesus eliminating any distinction of race, status or gender: "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female; for you are one in Christ Jesus." (3:28).

As in all his writings, Saint Paul also directs his listeners to a life befitting a Christian. He makes it very simple: "For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word – you shall love your neighbor as yourself….Walk in the Spirit." (6:14, 16) He enumerates the gifts of the Spirit: charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, modesty and continence. (5:22) He brings his letter to a close by reminding the Galatians (and us) that what someone sows, he will also reap: "For he who sows in the flesh, from the flesh also will reap corruption. But he who sows in the spirit, from the spirit will reap everlasting life." (6:8) Saint Paul's sound advice resonates so well down to our own time.

Pilgrimage

8 Days in Rome & Assisi!

January 26 – February 2, 2015

Hosted by Father Charles M. Yastishock and Father Edward G. Cimbala

$2399 per person from Newark

(Air/land tour price is $1780 plus $619 govt. taxes/airline fuel surcharges)

Tour Includes:
Roundtrip Air from Newark, $619 Govt. taxes/ Airline fuel surcharges, First Class/Select Hotel, Comprehensive Sightseeing with Professional Tour Escort, Most Meals, Admission Fees, Porterage and Hotel Service Charges

Tour includes:
Vatican City Museum & Sistine Chapel, Papal Audience, Major Basilicas, Ancient Rome and Full-day Excursion to Assisi

For a brochure and more information contact Father Charles Yastishock

Tel: (732) 255-6272
Email: czarcmy@comcast.net

Space is Limited! Call Today!

Basilian Sister Jubilarians

Celebrate the Gift of Vocation

Sister Ann with her sister, Sister Margaret, Sister Seraphim and her brother, Joe.

During Community Days in late July, the Sisters of Saint Basil gathered to celebrate the 60th and 70th Anniversaries of three of their Sisters. Jubilees are occasions for all of the community to reflect on their lives as an affirmation of love, a love story of God and a person. For God did not address his invitation "to whom it may concern." Rather, He called each one by name; each one was chosen for the unique gifts which she would offer in service to God and to the entire Church. At the Divine Liturgy, the community raised their voices in thanksgiving to God for the accumulated years of fidelity of these Sisters. For the special gift of vocation, there was rejoicing with those who faithfully answered that call, not once but each day of their lives. Following the Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving in the Chapel at Mount Macrina Manor, all then proceeded to continue the celebration at a festive meal in the Grove Dining Room.

Celebrating their 70th Anniversary of Religious Life were Sister Vladimir Chabala and Sister Mary Ann Vasilcheck; celebrating 60 years as a Sister of Saint Basil was Sister Ann Fedyszak.

Sister Vladimir entered the Sisters of Saint Basil from Saint Mary Church, New York, NY. She brought to the Community her special gift in the culinary arts, which she generously offers in service to the present time. Besides caring for the Sisters' needs in the various parishes of Archeparchy, Sister Vladimir also served at Saint Basil's Home for Aged Women and at the Archbishop's Residence in Pittsburgh, PA. In addition to baking throughout the year, Sister Vladimir brings her unique abilities to the "medovniki" project for the annual Pilgrimage. Sister Vladimir has fine-tuned this particular ministry down to its minutest details. Sister is also responsible for preparing the Holy Chrism which is consecrated for use in all the Eparchies, another ministry to which she has been devoted for a number of years.

Sister Mary Ann came to the Community from Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Struthers, OH. Throughout her religious life, Sister Mary Ann was called upon to serve as a teacher and catechist as well as caring for the needs of the Sisters in the parish missions. Sister also served at Saint Basil's Home for the Aged and in the Bishop's residence in Pittsburgh, PA. Upon her assignment to the Monastery, Sister assisted the director in various duties. While she was still active, Sister Mary Ann volunteered at Mount Macrina Manor, helped with phone duty, and offered her willingness to be a "personal shopper" for those who need this service. Presently, Sister Mary Ann is a resident at Mount Macrina Manor.

Sister Ann entered the Community from Saints Peter and Paul Church, Warren, OH. Initially, Sister Ann was assigned to the teaching apostolate in a number of schools that were staffed by the Sisters of Saint Basil. She was one of the Sisters assigned to help establish the Office of Religious Education in Pittsburgh. Her Degree in Education from Duquesne University and further graduate studies which focused on various aspects of Eastern Spirituality and Theology enabled her to make a significant contribution in this area. Sister Ann also served the Community in Provincial Administration as Assistant Provincial and Motherhouse Director. Following this, she served part-time in the Office of Religious Education and part-time in parish ministry at Holy Ghost parish in McKees Rocks, PA for five years then moving on to serve full time in parish ministry in McKees Rocks. Presently, Sister Ann is a resident at Mount Macrina Manor.

Sister Ann expressing gratitude for her celebration.

Not present for photos were Sister Vladimir and Sister Mary Ann.

Sisters in chapel at Manor for Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving.

Pilgrim House Announcement!

The Sisters at Mount Saint Macrina announce the re-opening of one section of the Pilgrimage Houses in time for the upcoming 80th Annual Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

Approximately twenty beds (in small dormitories) will be available this year exclusively for pilgrims who are physically challenged and cannot climb stairs.

Due to the limited number of beds, please note that we are unable to accommodate caregivers. Pilgrims staying in these dormitories must be able to navigate on their own.

The fee for these beds is $40.00 per night and are available on a first come, first serve basis. To reserve a bed, please call Sister Carol at 724-438-7149.

During the renovation, a beam was discovered with the date July 19, 1938 written in beautiful script. This was the year the buildings were constructed. Since the roof and foundation were found in good condition, the current renovation was undertaken.

It is hoped that more of the interior will be developed in the future. The Sisters are gratefully accepting donations toward this project.

The Daily Pilgrimage Schedule For the 80th Annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Labor Day Weekend 2014

Sisters of the Order of Saint Basil the Great
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Province
Mount Saint Macrina
Uniontown, Pennsylvania
Sister Seraphim, OSBM, Provincial
The Eightieth Annual Pilgrimage
In Honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE SCHEDULE
Saturday, August 30th, 2014

7:30 am - 12 noon
Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions)
House of Prayer Patio

OPENING OF THE PILGRIMAGE

8:00 am
MATINS - Shrine Altar

9:45 am
Procession with Icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help
House of Prayer to Shrine Altar

10:00 am
DIVINE LITURGY
Welcome: Sister Seraphim, OSBM
Divine Liturgy to be followed by the 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 pm - 5:00 pm
Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions)
House of Prayer Patio

1:00 am
Paraklis - Shrine Altar

2:00 pm
Children's Pilgrimage - Children's Tent
Orientation for Teens - Prayer Garden Area
Enrichment Sessions - Trinity Center

3:00 pm
Teen Pilgrimage - Prayer Garden Area

4:00 pm
Vespers with Divine Liturgy - Shrine Altar

6:00 pm
Enrichment Session - Mausoleum

7:15 pm
Procession - House of Prayer to Mount Macrina Cemetery

7:30 pm
Parastas - Mount Macrina Cemetery
Candlelight Procession - Mount Macrina Cemetery to Shrine Altar
Akathist to the Mother of God - Shrine Altar

Following Akathist...
Teen Social - Prayer Garden Area
Young Adult Social - Trinity Center Courtyard

Sunday, August 31st, 2014

7:00 am
MATINS - Shrine Altar

7:00 am
DIVINE LITURGY - House of Prayer Chapel

7:30 am - 12 noon
Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions)
House of Prayer Patio

8:30 am
DIVINE LITURGY (Slavonic) - Shrine Altar

10:30 am
DIVINE LITURGY - Shrine Altar

11:00 am
Mystery of Anointing - Trinity Center

12:30 pm to 5:00 pm
Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions)
House of Prayer Patio

1:00 pm
Children's Procession with Special Blessing for Youth and Young Adults - House of Prayer to Mother of God Shrine

1:30 pm to 2:30 pm
Mystery of Reconciliation (Confessions) for infirm, sick and physically challenged - Manor Gazebo

2:00 pm
Children's Pilgrimage - Children's Tent
Teen Pilgrimage - Prayer Garden Area
Adult Enrichment Session - Trinity Center
Mystery of Anointing - Shrine Altar

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

4:00 pm
DIVINE LITURGY - Mother of God Shrine
Words of Gratitude by Sister Seraphim, OSBM, Provincial

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

7:30 pm
Candlelight Procession
Beginning and ending at Mother of God Shrine

CLOSING OF THE PILGRIMAGE

Following Candlelight Procession...
Teen Social - Prayer Garden Area
Young Adult Social - Trinity Center Courtyard

Seminarian Reflections

Subdeacon Lewis Rabayda

"Allow Yourself to be with God"

No matter how we choose to spend it, each of us has twenty-four hours in a day. Some of the things we do in those hours are active decisions and some are passive decisions. We *passively* decide to eat because our bodies will tell us sooner or later that if we don't eat, we will not have the energy needed to do what we need to do. However, we *actively* decide *what* to eat. Our bodies do not tell us that a tomato and mozzarella sandwich with some fresh basil is the only thing that will stop this feeling of hunger; but we consciously choose this food to satisfy our need. We also *passively* choose to entertain ourselves through the day. We may do this because of habits or because we don't like to be alone. So on our way to work, or while we eat breakfast, or iron the clothes, we watch TV and listen to music, which can help us to feel less alone or more connected to a larger world. We make, or allow these decisions and others like it to happen everyday.

Odds are, that our prayer lives are still living in the realm of active decision. It is most likely the case that in order for us to pray, we need to make a conscious, well thought out and planned, decision to do so. Our lives are busy. We let distractions sway us in many different directions until it is time to go to bed and we are too tired, or have to get up too early, and we push prayer off to some distant future time—say, the 12th of Never. This is the state of many of us, but it is not a reason to despair, because we *can* allow ourselves to be with God through the moments of our day.

A way of life that I find helpful to glean spiritual insight from is the simple contemplative monastic lifestyle. The simple monastic lifestyle consists ideally of eight hours of prayer, eight hours of work, and eight hours of sleep each day. There are very few orders that keep this rule, but it is an example that reminds us of the possibilities for prayer in our lives. We see that this daily cycle of prayer crosses the divide of being an active decision in the monk, to being one of passivity. When the monk first enters the monastery, they encounter a new rhythm to life they had not previously experienced. They find themselves spending what seems to be most of their day in the chapel for formal prayer services (The Divine Office). But after a few months or a year, they begin to align themselves with this new rhythm of prayer. Prayer then becomes as natural as eating. They no longer say to themselves, "I should make time to pray." But they now say, "It *is* time to pray." The monastic now prays willingly and frequently. Prayer has become a passive decision on their part because of their life in the monastery.

The monk has not arrived at this good habit of prayer by mistake or chance. It took that monk many months of actively choosing to attend the chapel services—however, if they did not, they would have been asked to leave the monastery. But they could have chose to leave and they did not. Each time they entered the chapel it was because they said to themselves, "I am asked to pray to God, and I will pray for my sake and for the sake of my fellow monastics. I choose to pray because it pleases God to hear from His creation." This choice of the monk becomes as natural as having a meal. To the monk, prayer is as nourishing as food is—each one sustaining both body and spirit. Prayer has then become a more passive choice for the monk. It is no longer a question of whether or not they should pray, but how they should pray.

In the middle of our busyness, we can make a choice for nourishment, but we must allow ourselves to do so. We must get past the horizon of making prayer a chore, an active choice, if we are to become holier and spiritually healthier people. We allow ourselves to get caught up in all sorts of things in our lives, but the best thing we can let ourselves be passively swept up into, is an intimate relationship with God.

Upcoming Events for September

Eparchial and Parish Events

Glory to Jesus Christ!
Glory Forever!

September

1 Beginning of the Church Year · *Labor Day*
Chancery Closed

3 Annual Pet Blessing · *Wilkes-Barre, PA*

7 Sunday Before the Exaltation of the Cross

8 Birth of the Theotokos
Solemn Holyday

14 Exaltation of the Holy Cross

21 Sunday After the Exaltation of the Cross
Wedding Jubilee · Hillsborough, NJ
Pilgrimage for Peace · Sybertsville, PA

22-25 Annual Clergy Retreat
Long Branch, NJ

24 Priestly Ordination of Deacon Steven Galuschik
St. Thomas Church · Rahway, NJ

27 Ruthenian Chapel Celebration
Immaculate Conception Shrine · Washington, DC

28 16th Sunday After Pentecost

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